

WALSALL ECONOMIC DASHBOARD – FEBRUARY 2025

Indicator ¹	Pre-Pandemic (Context) ²	January 2024	February 2024	March 2024	April 2024	May 2024	June 2024	July 2024	August 2024	September 2024	October 2024	November 2024	December 2024	January 2025	Trend	National/ Regional or LA Comparator ³	Commentary/ Context
Regional Business Activity Index	51.2 (Feb 2020)	53.1	53.1	52.8	55.5	54.2	51.6	51.2	52.2	51.2	50.0	49.9	48.9	47.2		WM: 2 nd Lowest Region UK: 50.6 Northern Ireland: 45.0 (1 st) London: 54.8 (12 th)	The West Midlands Business Activity Index decreased from 48.9 in December 2024 to 47.2 in January 2025, a third successive fall in business activity across the region.
Regional Future Business Activity Index	72.3 (Feb 2020)	78.1	76.8	79.7	78.7	80.5	74.8	77.9	76.1	69.8	71.0	68.6	67.2			WM: 5 th Highest Region East Midlands: 70.4 (1 st) Scotland: 54.7 (12 th)	The West Midlands Future Business Activity Index decreased from 68.6 in November 2024 to 67.2 in December 2024, a two-year low. Firms remained confident that output would increase in 2025 with optimism being underpinned by advertising, investment and hopes of a recovery in client demand.
Employment Rate (Aged 16-64) ⁴	70.6% Full Year (Jan-Dec) 2019 71.4% Apr 2019 – Mar 2020			73.8% Apr 2023 – Mar 2024			76.0% Jul 2023 – Jun 2024			76.0% Oct 2023 – Sep 2024						Walsall: Joint 186 th LA (with Torbay) / 361 UK: 75.4% Wyre Forest: 88.8% (1 st) West Lindsey: 60.2% (348 th)	Since the year ending September 2023, the employment rate for Walsall increased by 5.8 percentage points (pp) to 76.0% in the year ending September 2024. The UK-wide employment rate decreased by 0.3pp to 75.4%. Notably, Walsall's employment rate was above the national average.
Youth Claimants (Aged 16-24)	1,940 (6.5% of 16 – 24 years old pop.) (Mar 2020)	2,150 (7.2% of 16 – 24 years old pop.)	2,165 (7.2% of 16 – 24 years old pop.)	2,215 (7.4% of 16 – 24 years old pop.)	2,160 (7.2% of 16 – 24 years old pop.)	2,110 (7.0% of 16 – 24 years old pop.)	2,085 (7.0% of 16 – 24 years old pop.)	2,130 (7.1% of 16 – 24 years old pop.)	2,215 (7.4% of 16 – 24 years old pop.)	2,295 (7.7% of 16 – 24 years old pop.)	2,355 (7.9% of 16 – 24 years old pop.)	2,350 (7.8% of 16 – 24 years old pop.)	2,305 (7.7% of 16 – 24 years old pop.)	2,295 (7.7% of 16 – 24 years old pop.)		Walsall: Joint 5 th Highest LA (with Thanet) / 361 UK: 4.3% of Pop. aged 16-24 years old Birmingham: 8.7% (1 st) Isles of Scilly: 0% (361 st)	Walsall had 2,295 youth claimants in January 2025, a decrease of 10 (-0.4%, UK +1.4%) compared to the previous month. When compared to November 2023, the number of youth claimants increased by 145 (+6.7%, UK +8.1%).

¹ Indicators that are in hatched marked boxes represent regional level analysis. The dashboard sources are as followed: NatWest, UK Regional Tracker report, released February 2025, NatWest, UK Regional Growth Tracker for December 2024, released January 2025 (please note, the index is seasonally adjusted and measures the month-on-month change in the combined output of the region's manufacturing and service sectors), Office for National Statistics (ONS)/Annual Population Survey (APS), released January 2025, ONS/Department for Work and Pensions, Claimant count, released February 2025 (provisional), Department for Education, released January 2025, Adzuna Intelligence accessed February 2025.

² A pre-pandemic column has been included which will not be RAG rated as this is to show where we were before the impacts of Covid-19 were seen. However, across the dashboard RAG rating is based on change from each month (and not compared to March 2020), green shading illustrates indicators which have moved in a positive direction compared to the UK or England average. The red shading indicates the reverse and amber indicates a change in the right direction but less than the UK or national average (excluding the Business Activity Index and Future Business Activity Index indicators where the threshold mark is 50 for growth – figures below 50 are red, amber if it has decreased from the previous but remains above 50 or is at 50, green if improved from previous month).

³ The peer group selected varies by indicator – regional is based on all the regions in the UK – showing a range from highest to lowest to understand how the West Midlands compares and then where available, Walsall has been used and compared to all available local authorities.

⁴ Data is not comparable across the table as they are rolling quarterly years.

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Claimants (Aged 16+)	8,605 (3.8% of pop. aged 16+) (Mar 2020)	9,480 (4.2% of pop. aged 16+)	9,600 (4.3% of pop. aged 16+)	9,775 (4.4% of pop. aged 16+)	9,510 (4.3% of pop. aged 16+)	9,620 (4.3% of pop. aged 16+)	10,200 (4.6% of pop. aged 16+)	11,195 (5.0% of pop. aged 16+)	11,315 (5.1% of pop. aged 16+)	11,455 (5.1% of pop. aged 16+)	11,405 (5.1% of pop. aged 16+)	11,170 (5.0% of pop. aged 16+)	10,965 (4.9% of pop. aged 16+)	10,990 (4.9% of pop. aged 16+)		Walsall: Joint 31 st Highest LA (with Kingston upon Hull, and Liverpool /361) UK: 3.2% of Pop. Aged 16+ Birmingham: 8.9% (1 st) Isles of Scilly: 0.8% (361 st)	Walsall had 10,990 claimants aged 16 years and over in January 2025, an increase of 25 (+0.2%, UK +1.7%) claimants from the previous month. Compared to January 2024, claimants in Walsall increased by 1,510 (+15.9%, UK +11.5%).
Apprenticeship Starts ⁵	2,310 (Q4 Full Year 2018/19)	1,010 (Q2 Aug-Jan 2023/24)			1,410 (Q3 Aug-Apr 2023/24)			1,770 (Q4 Full Year 2023/24)								Walsall: 46 th Highest LA / 296 Birmingham: 6,020 (1 st) Isles of Scilly: low (296 th) (Full year)	In the 2023/24 academic year there were 1,770 apprenticeship starts in Walsall, a decrease of 0.6% (-10) since 2022/23. Whereas over this period, England-wide there was an increase of 0.7%.
Adzuna Unique Job Postings	2,159 (Mar 2020)	2,874	3,320	3,067	3,043	3,218	2,863	3,584	4,071	3,125	3,521	2,826	2,380	2,813		Latest number of postings is average compared to the average for all local authority districts	In Walsall, there were 2,813 unique active job postings on Adzuna in January 2025. This increased by 433 postings since the previous month. When compared to January 2024, job postings on Adzuna decreased by 61. In January 2025, Interest Quotient is high at 1.5.
Adzuna Apprenticeship Postings	10 (Mar 2020)	84	109	99	79	108	73	30	35	20	23	15	22	28		-	In Walsall, there were 28 apprenticeship postings on Adzuna in January 2025. This increased by 6 from the previous month. When compared to January 2024, apprenticeship postings on Adzuna were 56 lower.

⁵ Data is not comparable across the table.