

Analysis of regional and sub-regional trends in the WMCA area

This report has been produced with the WMCA to support the identification of different groups and places which may be influencing regional growth for good or for bad, and which may merit more detailed consideration through potential deeper dive discussions.

The report draws on ad-hoc analyses and interactive insights from the [Jobs and Labour Market in the WMCA \(arcgis.com\)](https://www.arcgis.com) tool.

WMCA 7 Met. Worklessness

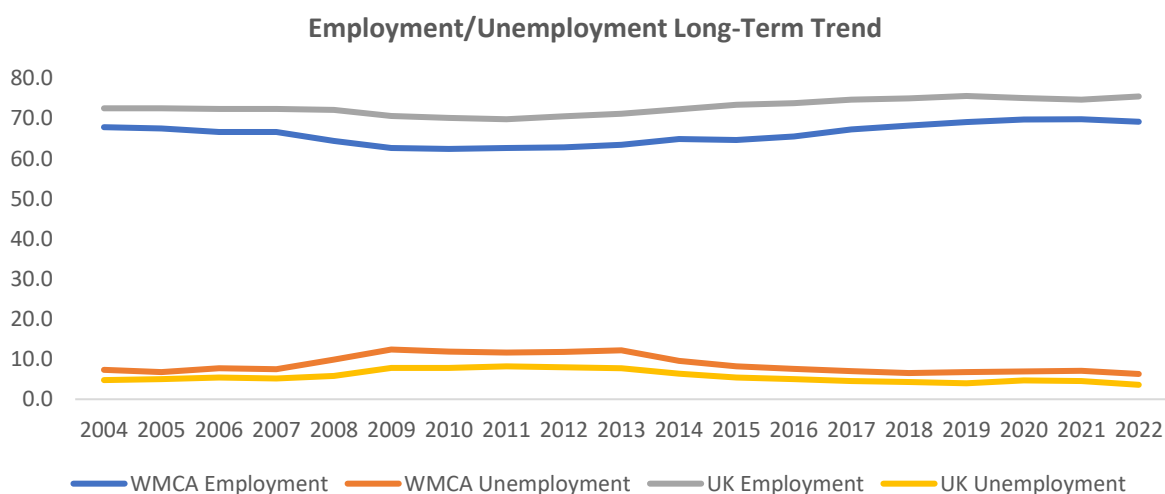
Current National and Regional Context

Nationally, the latest Labour Force Survey for May 2023 shows a labour market that continues to soften. The employment rate is up by 0.3 percentage points (pp) on the quarter to 75.9% – almost back to where it was in mid-2020 – while unemployment is still just below 4% (at 3.9%), although there are signs that it is beginning to tick up. More troubling, the number of people out of work due to long-term health conditions has risen by 440,000 since the start of the pandemic to over 2.5 million people, whilst at the same time, economic inactivity for every other reason is falling – with particularly large falls in student numbers and those reporting ‘other’ reasons.

At the regional level, the current employment rate is equal to what it was in mid-2020 but remains 1.7pp below the national average at 74.2%. However, the West Midlands, was one of only four regions nationally where employment narrowed in the last quarter (-0.4%). This is reflected to a degree in the unemployment rate, which is 1.2pp higher than the national average, and the highest across all the other regions at 5.1%. Additionally, inactivity across the region has increased by 28,000 since March 2020.

WMCA 7 Met. Employment and Unemployment

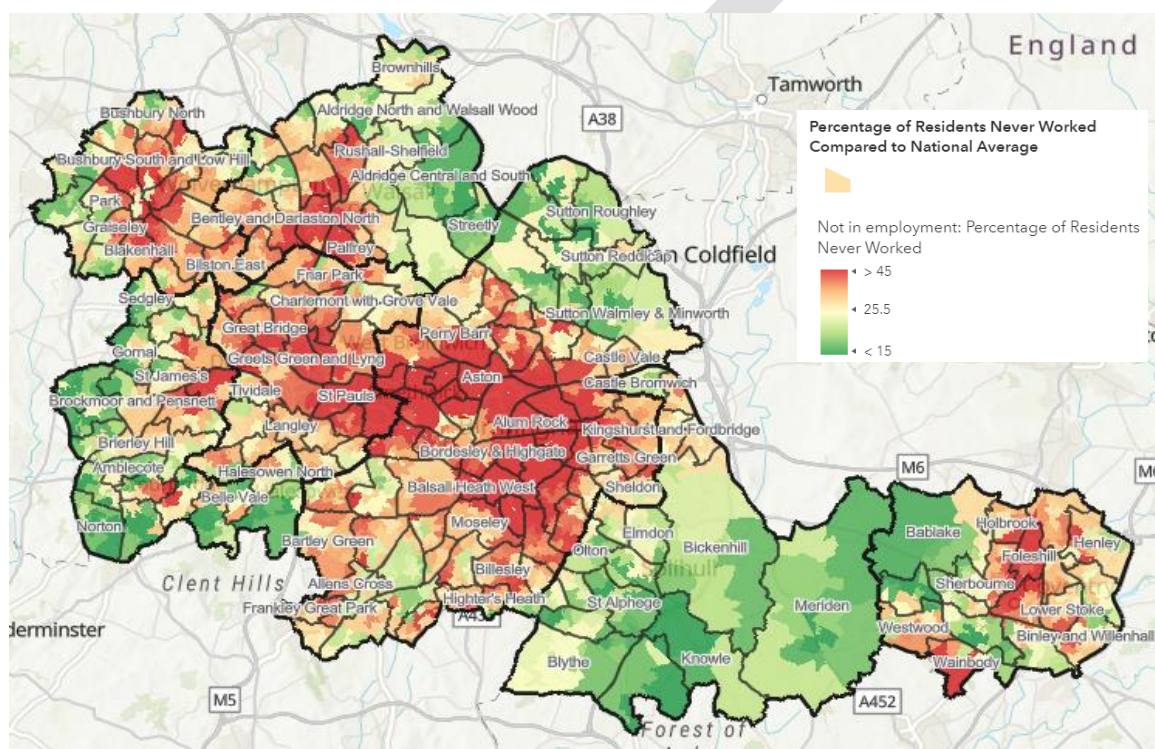
Mirroring the latest trends across the West Midlands as a whole, the employment rate in the WMCA 7 Met. area dropped -0.6pp in the last year to 69.2% and is 1.3pp below the comparable period in mid-2020. *This now means that for the WMCA 7 Met. area to match the national average of 75.9%, an additional 116,182 more people are needed to be moved into employment.*



Conversely, over the same period, the unemployment rate fell across the WMCA 7 Met. area by 0.5pp to 6.2% and remains 0.6pp below the level recorded in mid-2020. *This coupled with the fall in employment would suggest decreasing participation with a lot of people who have left the workforce not returning.*

Furthermore, the latest Census shows that of the 1,095,001 usual residents aged 16 years and over 35.5% (388,909) had never worked, 10pp above the England-wide proportion of 25.6%.

Within the WMCA 7 Met. area, proportions vary from 41.6% (186,119) in Birmingham, 38.2% (47,741) in Sandwell, 33.3% (32,297) in Wolverhampton, 32.6% (34,087) in Walsall, 32.5% (41,191) in Coventry, 25.6% (30,193) in Dudley to 22.6% (17,281) in Solihull.



Universal Credit Claimants (UC)¹

There are now 366,814 people claiming UC across the WMCA 7 Met. area. This has increased by 6.2% or 21,302 people over the last year and by 169,807 people (86.2%) since March 2020. This trend is replicated in each of the seven local authority areas, with both Coventry and Sandwell particularly impacted with those claiming UC having more than doubled.

The most prevalent changes by age groups (percentage wise), excluding those aged 65+, occurred for those aged 40-44 and 60-65; whereas in absolute numbers the biggest change was recorded in the 35-39 cohort. The data also now identifies higher numbers of females claiming than before the pandemic, particularly those aged 30-49.

¹ Universal Credit is a monthly payment designed to help people who are unemployed, off work due to sickness, or on a low income to meet their basic living costs.

In terms of duration:

- Those claiming for 0 to 6 months increased by 9.1%
- Those claiming for 6 months to 2 years decreased by -31.2%, mainly due to those claiming for 1 to 2 years decreasing by -44.5%
- Those claiming for 2-5 years increased by 33.6%
- Those claiming for over 5 years increased by 224.3%

Using the UC data as a proxy for unemployment, higher short-term unemployment (0-6 months) could indicate people who were previously economically inactive (re)entering the labour market, particularly students, (as we see later in this report). However, if employment demand begins to weaken, or if there are mismatches between the people who want jobs and the jobs that are being advertised, then this may lead to higher unemployment in the 6 months to 2-year group. Of more concern is the notable increase in longer-term unemployment, which could be a consequence of the pandemic, or that again there is a mismatch in skills or locations.

Claimants Count (16+ looking for work)

Total claimant numbers remain heightened across the WMCA 7 Met. area. The latest data (May 2023) shows that there were 128,820 people *claiming benefits looking for work*. This equates to 7.0% of the population aged 16+, nudging double the rate nationally at 3.8%.

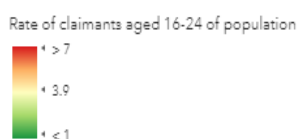
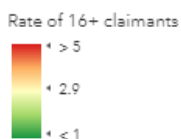
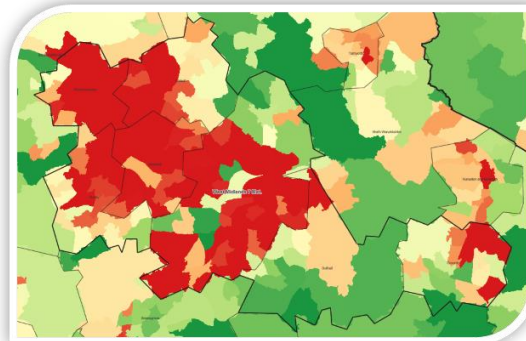
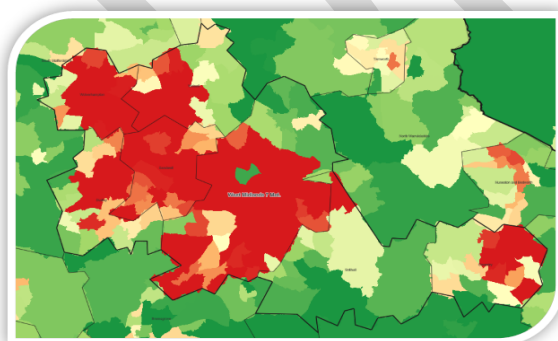
In the last year, the number of claimants has increased by 1,035 or 0.8% compared to -2.0% reduction across the UK over the same period. When compared to March 2020 and the onset of the pandemic, there are 29,520 more claimants, an increase of 29.7% compared to 26.1% nationally.

Youth Claimants (Aged 18-24)

Echoing the trends for all claimants, youth claimants totalled 23,130 in May 2023; an increase of 1,600 or 7.4% over the last year compared to 6.4% for the UK. Additionally, when compared to March 2020, youth claimants have increased by 20.8% (+3,975) in the WMCA 7 Met. area, with the UK increasing by 14.0%.

Total Claimants

Youth Claimants



This data can be interrogated further by accessing the interactive storyboard:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/3d6c9724413d4d199791d476bf08376e?item=6>

WMCA 7 Met. Demand and Interest Trend

Over the course of 2022, job postings and vacancies rose to record levels. However, the latest indicators suggest that the demand for labour has begun to cool off. This could signal a potential inflection point in the labour market; with expectations of lower turnover putting less pressure on employers to recruit new staff, while employees exert greater caution before moving jobs reflecting the softening labour market.

This is indicated in the latest job postings data, which shows that the number of job postings across the WMCA 7 Met. area has decreased by -28.7% year-on-year and in real-terms by almost 8,000 in the last six months.



Conversely, despite employer demand narrowing, those seeking work - wanting a job², remains heightened at 5.4pp above the same comparable period last year.

This would imply that those wanting a job are increasing their efforts but are unable to find suitable work in a narrowing jobs market.

Inactivity

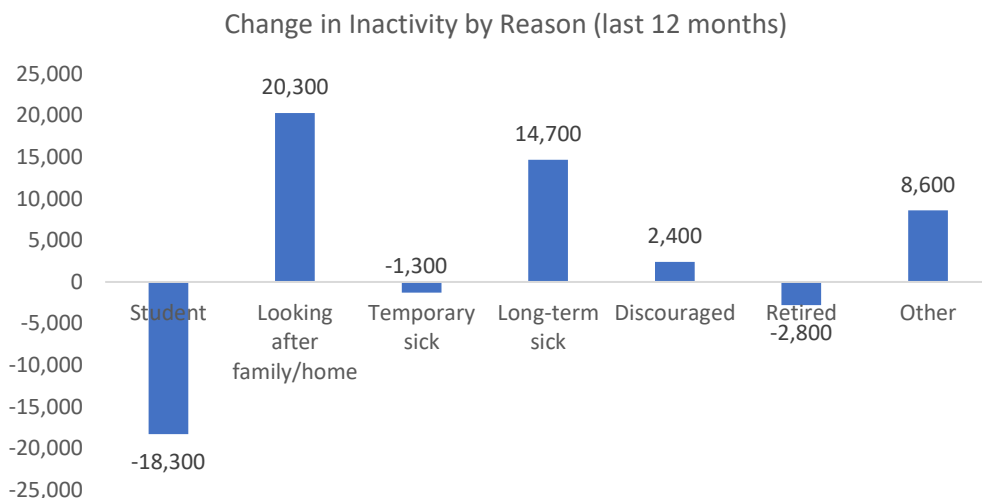
Reflecting trends nationally, increases in economic inactivity have been heavily influenced by the numbers of individuals inactive due to long-term health problems, which have increased by 14.8% across the WMCA 7 Met. area in the last year.

Other important contributors to economic inactivity include the number of people inactive due to family / home responsibilities which has increased by 18.9% and those that are inactive 'Other' which has increased by 19.1%. The increase of 8,600 individuals inactive due to other reasons is also worthy of further attention, as this contrasts to the trends reported nationally (UK – down 75,000 on the previous quarter, May 2023).

Conversely, the number of individuals economically inactive 'student' has decreased by -11.4% again mirroring national trends with additional reductions in the number inactive due to retirement, which fell by -8.2% along with a -10% decrease in those that are temporary sick.

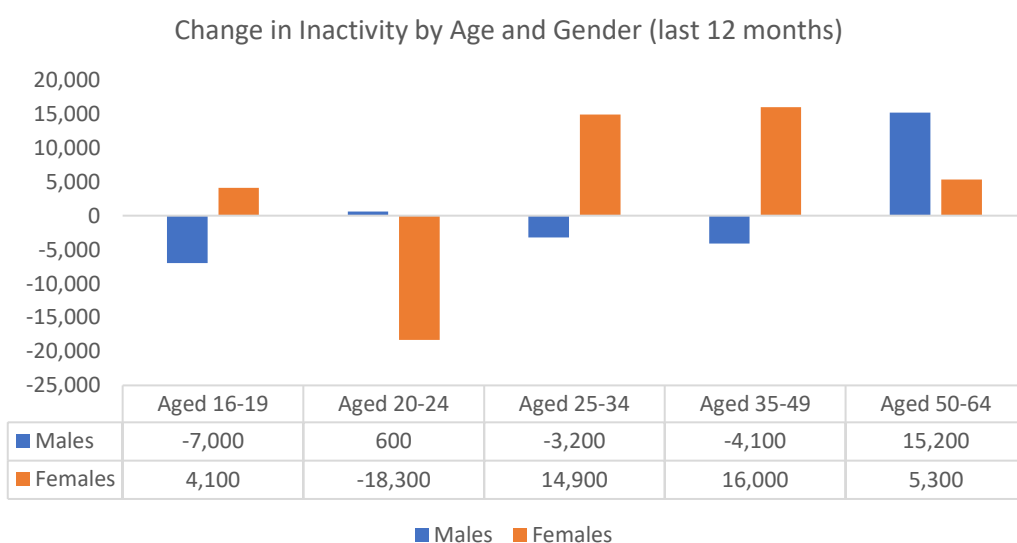
² The Interest Quotient uses jobseeker data to quantify the level of interest in particular roles.

Scale of challenge: to meet the national average on inactivity an additional 81,782 people across the WMCA 7 Met. area need to be either in employment or looking for work.



In terms of age and gender, the rise in inactivity is mainly concentrated among females, particularly mid-aged ones from 25-49 years old and older people aged 50+, both males and females. The increase in those females aged 25-49 would appear to reflect some of the sizeable surge in those looking after the family/home; whilst the increase in the older age cohort could mean more older people leaving work and not returning. This could in-part be due to ill-health because older people are more likely to have long-term health conditions than younger people, particularly when the number inactive due to retirement has decreased over the last 12 months.

It is also important to note the deviating trend for males and females aged 16-19. NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) levels across the WMCA 7 Met. area is 0.8pp higher than the England average at 5.5%. As the area is disproportionately young compared to other places, it is crucial that there are clear pathways for young people in transition points between school and FE, and FE and University.



Work Limiting Disability

Data on employment for people with work limiting disabilities can also help to shed some light on what is driving higher economic inactivity. This shows that there has been a significant growth in the number of people reporting having long-term conditions that limit their day-to-day activities, particularly since 2020.

In the UK there are 7.5 million people aged 16-64 who are work-limited core disabled (around 18% of the population), with this figure rising by around 744,500 or 18.0% over the last three years, compared with a rise of 262,400 over the previous three years. Over the same period across the WMCA 7 Met. area, the number of people reporting as such has increased by 21.8% (59,700 people) since 2020 compared to just 14,600 over the previous three years.

Nationally, the employment rate for disabled people is unchanged at 53.7% while for non-disabled people it has risen from 81.9% to 82.7%. This means that disabled people are more than two-and-a-half times more likely to be out of work than non-disabled people, and the employment rate 'gap' has widened to 29pp. Disabled people now make up nearly half (47%) of all of those who are economically inactive.

This potentially suggests that people acquiring health conditions in work are no more or less likely to be able to stay in work, but that those out of work are finding it harder to get into work (and/or may be seeing their health deteriorate further).

This is reflected to a degree in the number of people reporting a long-term illness, which has increased by 29.3% since 2019 (i.e., before covid) from 107,200 to 138,600. Of those with a long-term illness 46.7% are in employment, 3.6% unemployed and 49.7% are inactive compared to 49.3%, 2.4% and 48.3% respectively nationally.

Almost one-in-three (30.6%) of those with a long-term illness report 'Depression, Learning Problems, Mental Problems and Nervous Disorders' as a barrier to work, with 13,000 unemployed and 138,600 economically inactive.

Ethnicity and Employment

Nationally research by the Institute for Fiscal Studies found that employment for ethnic minority groups has continued to rise (up by 1.1pp on a year ago), while employment for white people has risen by 0.2pp. Overall however, people from ethnic minority groups are nearly 8pp less likely to be in work than white people.

Across the WMCA 7 Met. area employment for white people has decreased by -0.4pp in the last year and -1.2pp since 2020. Conversely, employment for ethnic minority groups has increased by 0.1pp in the last year and 1.1pp since 2020; but remains 9.2pp below the overall employment rate for whites.

The reduction in white employment is contributable to white males, whose employment rate has decreased by -1.3pp or by 23,300 people; whereas white female employment has increased by 27,000 or 0.5pp.

The employment rate for ethnic minority groups increased for both males and females. Males up 4.3pp or 28,900 people and females up 13,400 people to 54.2%. Despite this increase, the employment rate for ethnic minority females is 15pp below the overall employment rate for the WMCA 7 Met. area.

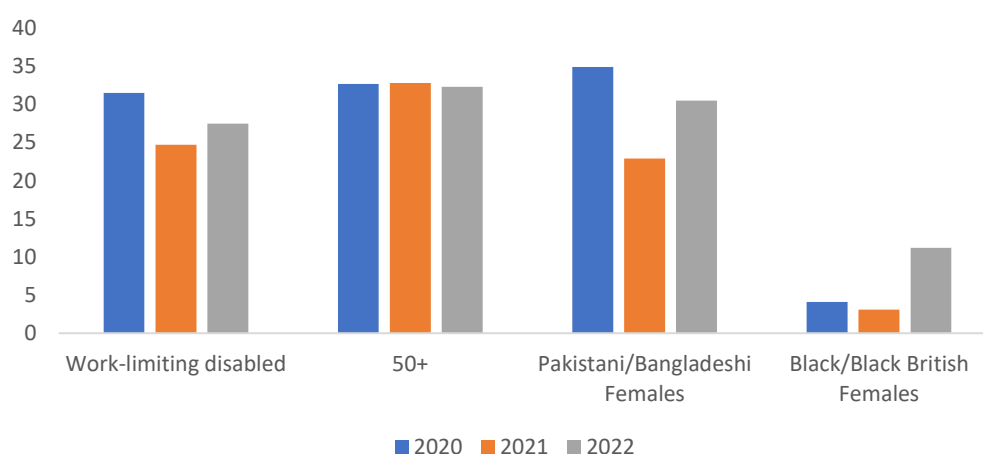
Ethnicity and Inactivity

There is significant variation between ethnic groups, though all groups recorded increases in inactivity over the last year.

Although inactivity levels increased for both whites and Indians, 0.3pp and 0.4pp respectively, both groups remained below the overall inactivity rate for the WMCA 7 Met. area. In contrast, the inactivity rates for Pakistani/Bangladeshi increased by 5.7pp and those Black or Black British by 8.0pp. This means that the inactivity rates for Pakistani/Bangladeshi is now 12.2pp higher than the overall activity rate at 38.3% and for Black and Black British it is 5.6pp higher at 31.7%.

Of note within these two ethnic groups are significant differences in gender. Over half (56.6%) of all Pakistani/Bangladeshi females are described as inactive. This is an increase of 11.2pp or 11,500 people in the last year compared to just 20.8% of Pakistani/Bangladeshi men. Likewise, 37.3% of Black and Black British females are inactive compared to 23.1% of all Black and Black British men.

Inactivity 'gaps'³ for older people, work-limiting disabled and selected ethnic groups:



WMCA 7 Met. Local Authority Areas

The table below contains the latest labour market data and recent trends⁴ across each of the WMCA 7 Met. local authority areas:

	Economic Activity 2022 (%)	Total Economic Inactive (16-64)	Economic Inactivity 2022 (%)	% Change 2019	Unemploy' rate 2022 (%)	Unemploy' change 2021	Total Claimants June 2023	Total Rate June 2023	% change March 2020	Youth Claimant Rate June 2023	% change March 2020
Birmingham	71.4	213,200	28.6	0.2	7.1	-2.5	63,440	8.6	28.5	8.9	25.0
Coventry	75.7	61,100	24.3	1.5	4.8	-1.1	13,115	5.8	63.9	5.2	45.0
Dudley	81.3	35,400	18.7	-5.1	4.2	-0.2	9,205	4.7	8.1	7.4	0.6
Sandwell	68.0	66,900	32.0	6.7	6.0	0.7	13,640	6.3	26.5	8.9	20.1
Solihull	81.7	23,200	18.3	-2.0	4.6	0.7	4,180	3.2	14.5	5.2	-6.1
Walsall	78.2	37,600	21.8	-2.5	8.4	1.1	9,925	5.7	15.3	8.8	3.9
Wolverhampton	71.3	47,000	28.7	0.9	7.5	0.9	12,735	7.7	22.7	10.6	18.8
UK	78.3	9,001,600	21.7	0.0	3.6	-0.2	1,549,600	3.7	22.1	4.8	11.3

³ Gaps are calculated as the percentage point difference in activity rates between the 'disadvantaged' group and overall, 16-64 inactivity.

⁴ Colour coding: Light red fill with red text signifies above the national average. The graduated colour scales show change over a given period. Red denotes that the indicator is getting worse.

The economic activity rate has decreased by 0.9pp across the WMCA 7 Met. area since 2019 to 73.9%, with the gap to the national average widening by 0.2pp over the same period. Only Solihull and Dudley record rates higher than the UK average.

In terms of inactivity, there are mixed local authority trends. Solihull and Dudley log an economic inactivity rate below the UK average, with notable positive change in Dudley of -5.1pp since 2019. Walsall also recorded a positive change over this period (-2.5pp) which now means it is broadly in-line with the UK average. Conversely, Sandwell's inactivity rate is over 10pp higher than that of the UK, increasing by 6.7pp since 2019. This now means that almost one-in-three people are inactive. Inactivity levels in Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton also continue to increase.

Each of the WMCA 7 Met. local authority areas report an unemployment rate higher than the UK average. Unemployment is highest in Walsall (8.4%), Wolverhampton (7.5%) and Birmingham (7.1%), with unemployment in both Walsall and Wolverhampton over twice the national average.

Mirroring the unemployment rate, the number of claimants seeking work remains heightened in each of the WMCA 7 Met. areas, with Birmingham and Wolverhampton logging both the highest rates for total claimants and youth claimants, again at twice the national average. Indeed, Wolverhampton has consistently recorded the second highest rates of youth claimants nationally for the past year (behind Blackpool).

Birmingham

Birmingham is characterised by high unemployment and low economic activity.

Economic inactivity is particularly prevalent at both ends of the age spectrum (16-24 and 50-64). These two age cohorts account for just over half of all those economically inactive (50.3%).

More women than men are inactive (57.7% vs 42.3%), likewise more people from ethnic minorities compared to those who are white (56.8% vs 43.2%).

One-in-three (33%) of those economically inactive are described as work-limiting disabled.

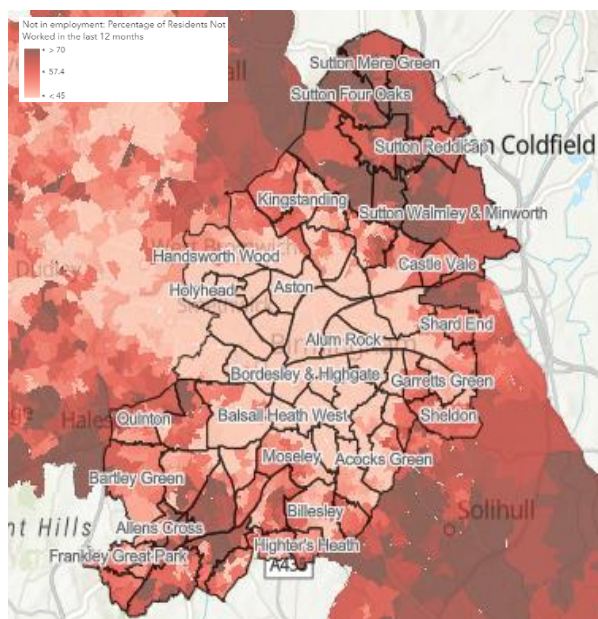
In addition to those who are work limited disabled, a further 312,500 people report a long-term illness, of which 44.7% are in employment, 4.8% unemployed and 50.5% are inactive.

Just over a third (35.5%) of those with a long-term illness report 'Depression, Learning Problems, Mental Problems and Nervous Disorders' as a barrier to work with 8,200 unemployed and 63,100 economically inactive.

Of all those with a long-term illness, 'Depression, Learning Problems, Mental Problems and Nervous Disorders' is the most prevalent reason for unemployment.

There is a correlation between the areas of high female inactivity and those inactive due to looking after the family/home.

Residents Not Worked in the last 12 months:



Of the 447,205 usual residents aged 16+ in Birmingham who were not in employment the week before the Census 2021, 44.8% (200,437) had not worked in the last 12 months. **Furthermore, 41.6% (the highest across the WMCA 7 Met. area) or 186,119 people have never worked.**

The wards with the highest proportions who had not worked in the last 12 months were Sutton Four Oaks (71.5%), Sutton Mere Green (70.6%) and Sutton Walmley & Minworth (69.3%).

In contrast, the wards with the lowest proportions were Alum Rock (23.8%), Small Heath (24.6%), Lozells and Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East (both 25.5%).

Universal Credit

There are now 164,329 people claiming Universal Credit in Birmingham. This has increased by 5.7% (8,798 people) over the last year and by 80.6% (73,314 people) since March 2020. Females account for 53.4% (87,763) and males 46.6% (76,567) of claims.

Since March 2020, and excluding those aged 65+, the largest change percentage wise was recorded for those aged 40-44 at 120.2% (11,238 people); whereas in absolute numbers the biggest change was recorded in the 35-39 cohort which increased by 12,425 people (102.4%).

In terms of duration:

- Those claiming for 0 to 6 months increased by 9.7% (+2,082)
- Those claiming for 6 months to 2 years decreased by -31.4% (-19,623), mainly due to those claiming for 1 to 2 years decreasing by -44% (-20,453)
- Those claiming for 2-5 years increased by 30.9% (+21,367)
- Those claiming for over 5 years increased by 213.4% (+4,974)

Coventry

Unemployment is relatively low in Coventry.

However, Coventry has a comparatively high number of youth claimants looking for work.

Economic inactivity is high at both ends of the age spectrum (16-24 and 50-64). These two age cohorts account for 56.2% of all those economically inactive.

Almost two-thirds (63.9%) of those inactive are women. There are over twice as many young females (16-19) inactive than males. Furthermore, almost one-in-three of all those inactive are female aged between 35-64.

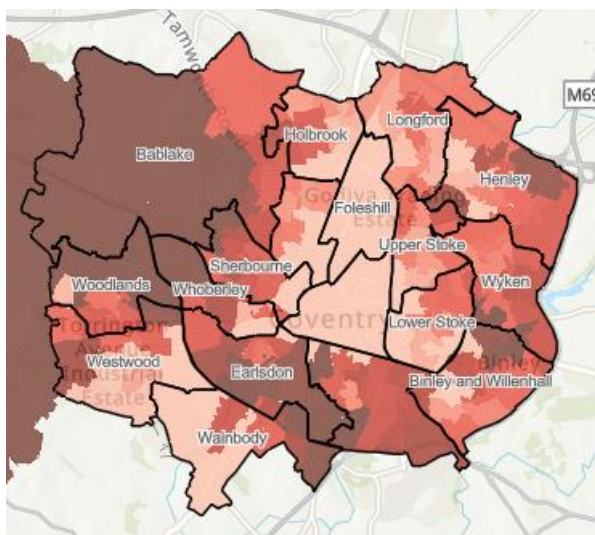
There are 25,600 people described as work-limiting disabled (42%).

In addition to those who are work limited disabled, a further 105,800 report a long-term illness, of which 50.4% are in employment, 3.3% unemployed and 46.3% are inactive.

One-in-three (33.3%) of those with a long-term illness report 'Depression, Learning Problems, Mental Problems and Nervous Disorders' as a barrier to work with 1,500 unemployed and 18,000 economically inactive.

The number of people reporting 'Depression, Learning Problems, Mental Problems and Nervous Disorders' has increased by 2,800 to 35,200 in the last year or 1.9pp.

Residents Not Worked in the last 12 months:



Of the 126,730 usual residents aged 16+ in Coventry who were not in employment the week before the Census 2021, 51.0% (64,571) had not worked in the last 12 months. **Furthermore, a third (32.5%) or 41,191 people have never worked.**

The wards with the highest proportions who had not worked were Woodlands (69.3%), Bablake (66.4%) and Earlsdon (65.3%).

In contrast, the wards with the lowest proportions were St Michael's (27.9%), Foleshill (33.9%), Radford and Wainbody (both 46.7%).

Universal Claimants

There are now 38,423 people claiming Universal Credit in Coventry. This has increased by 9.2% (3,243 people) over the last year but more than doubled by 121.5% (21,078 people) since March 2020. Females account for 55.8% and males 44.2% of claims.

Since March 2020, and excluding those aged 65+, the largest change percentage wise was recorded for those aged 60-65 at 173.4% (1,332), followed by those aged 40-44 by 161.5% (2,976); whereas in absolute numbers the biggest change was recorded in the 35-39 cohort which increased by 3,499 people (144.1%).

In terms of duration:

- Those claiming for 0-6 months increased by 13.5% (+724)
- Those claiming for 6 months – 2 years decreased by 32.9% (-5,363) – due to those claiming 1-2 years decreasing by 47.3% (-5,814)
- Those claiming for 2-5 years increased by 58.0% (+7,643)
- Those claiming for over 5 years increased by 73.0% (+238)

Dudley

Dudley currently performs relatively well against national comparators for economic activity and employment. Nevertheless, those claimants seeking work remain heightened, particularly youth claimants (16-24).

In terms of inactivity, 62.4% of those inactive are women, with almost one-in-three of all those inactive being female aged between 35-64.

Conversely, there are over three times more young males (16-19) inactive than females (4,900 vs 1,600).

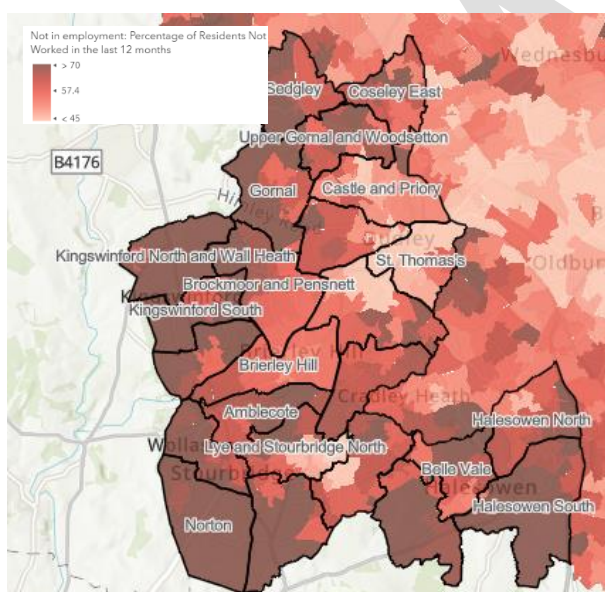
Almost 75% of all those inactive in Dudley are white.

One-in-five (19.3%) of people economically inactive are described as work-limiting disabled.

In addition to those who are work limited disabled, a further 97,900 report a long-term illness, of which 50.7% are in employment, 2.3% unemployed and 47.0% are inactive.

Almost a quarter (24.0%) of those with a long-term illness report 'Depression, Learning Problems, Mental Problems and Nervous Disorders' as a barrier to work with 1,100 unemployed and 7,900 economically inactive.

Residents Not Worked in the last 12 months:



Of the 117,848 usual residents aged 16+ in Dudley who were not in employment the week before the Census 2021, 64.3% (75,739) had not worked in the last 12 months. **Furthermore, a quarter (25.6%) or 30,193 people have never worked.**

The wards with the highest proportions who had not worked were Norton (74.0%), Kingswinford North & Wall Heath (73.9%), Kingswinford South and Pedmore & Stourbridge East (both 72.1%).

In contrast, the wards with the lowest proportions were St Thomas's (46.1%), Castle & Priory (52.9%) and Netherton, Woodside & St Andrews (57.0%).

Universal Claimants

There are now 31,903 people claiming Universal Credit in Dudley. This has increased by 5.9% (1,789 people) over the last year and by 66.9% (12,790 people) since March 2020. Females account for 57.5% and males 42.5% of claims.

Since March 2020, and excluding those aged 65+, the largest change percentage wise was recorded for those aged 40-44 at 110.9% (1,889), followed by those aged 60-65 by 101.9% (1,098); whereas in absolute numbers the biggest change was recorded in the 30-34 cohort which increased by 2,236 people (78.7%).

In terms of duration:

- Those claiming for 0-6 months increased by 18.0% (+734)
- Those claiming for 6 months – 2 years decreased by 30.7% (-3,434), mainly due to those claiming 1-2 years decreasing by 44.9% (-3,746)
- Those claiming for 2-5 years increased by 13.0% (+1,855)
- Those claiming for over 5 years increased by 461.0% (+2,637)

Sandwell

Sandwell has high levels of inactivity.

Those claimants seeking work also remain heightened, particularly youth claimants (16-24).

More women than men are inactive (56.7% vs 43.3%), with 62% described as white.

By far the biggest age cohort of inactivity are those aged 50-64 (both male and female) which accounts for 43.7% of all those inactive.

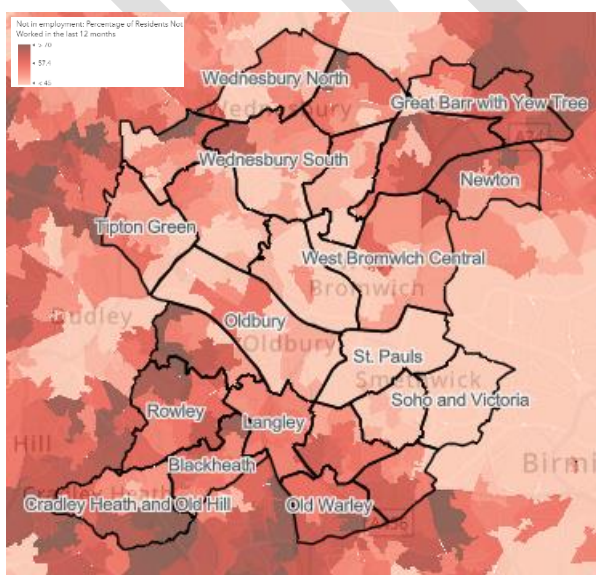
There are 64,500 people inactive in Sandwell, the second highest behind Birmingham. Approaching half of all those (29,000) are described as work-limiting disabled.

In addition to those who are work limited disabled, a further 95,700 report a long-term illness, of which 36.9% are in employment, 2.7% unemployed and 60.3% are inactive (the highest level across the WMCA 7 Met. area).

Around a third (31.3%) of those with a long-term illness report 'Depression, Learning Problems, Mental Problems and Nervous Disorders' as a barrier to work, an increase 5,200 people or 6.9pp in the last year.

There are notable higher levels of those inactive due to looking after the family/home, inactive due to long-term sick and inactive other than the national average.

Residents Not Worked in the last 12 months:



Of the 124,956 usual residents aged 16+ in Sandwell who were not in employment the week before the Census 2021. Of these, 50.2% (62,719) had not worked in the last 12 months. **Furthermore, 38.2% or 47,741 people have never worked.**

The wards with the highest proportions who had not worked in the last 12 months were Old Warley (60.2%), Rowley (59.6%) and Blackheath (59.1%).

In contrast, the wards with the lowest proportions were Soho & Victoria (29.7%), St Pauls (33.1%) and Smethwick (42.5%).

Universal Claimants

There are now 44,148 people claiming Universal Credit in Sandwell. This has increased by 7.1% (2,945 people) over the last year but more than doubled by 106.7% (22,786 people) since March 2020. Females account for 57.3% and males 42.7% of claims.

Since March 2020, and excluding those aged 65+, the largest change percentage wise was recorded for those aged 60-65 at 154.3% (+1,788), followed closely by those aged 40-44 by 154.1% (3,332); whereas in absolute numbers the biggest change was recorded in the 35-39 cohort which increased by 3,815 people (132.5%).

In terms of duration:

- Those claiming for 0-6 months increased by 7.7% (+485)
- Those claiming for 6 months – 2 years decreased by 30.9% (-5,758), mainly due to those claiming 1-2 years decreasing by 44% (-6,052)
- Those claiming for 2-5 years increased by 47.9% (+7,542)
- Those claiming for over 5 years increased by 128.4% (+670)

Solihull

Solihull performs strongly against national comparators for economic activity and employment.

There are however 23,200 people inactive in Solihull.

Almost two-thirds (62.4%) are women, with over one-in-three of all those inactive being female aged between 35-64.

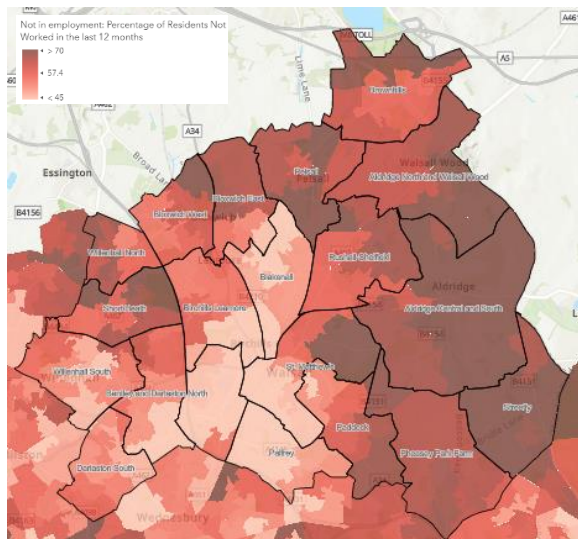
A further 23.7% (5,400) are aged 16-19 both male and female.

Around 40% are described as work-limiting disabled with 93% white.

In addition to those who are work limited disabled, a further 53,000 report a long-term illness, of which 49.6% are in employment, 7.2% unemployed (the highest across the WMCA 7 Met. area) and 43.2% are inactive.

Almost a third (31.0%) of those with a long-term illness report 'Depression, Learning Problems, Mental Problems and Nervous Disorders' as a barrier to work with 1,600 unemployed and 7,300 economically inactive.

Residents Not Worked in the last 12 months:



Of the 76,562 usual residents aged 16+ who were not in employment the week before the Census 2021, 66.4% (50,849) had not worked in the last 12 months. **Furthermore, over one-in-five (22.6%) or 17,281 people have never worked.**

The wards with the highest proportions who had not worked in the last 12 months were Knowle (75.2%), Dorridge & Hockley Heath (73.2%) and Meriden (72.4%).

In contrast, the wards with the lowest proportions were Smith's Wood (55.4%), Kingshurst & Fordbridge (58.3%) and Chelmsley Wood (58.8%).

Universal Claimants

There are now 16,061 people claiming Universal Credit in Solihull. This has increased by 3.1% (482 people) over the last year and by 70.0% (6,611 people) since March 2020. Females account for 60.7% and males 39.3% of claims.

Since March 2020, and excluding those aged 65+, the largest change percentage wise was recorded for those aged 40-44 by 130.6% (1,029); whereas in absolute numbers the biggest change was recorded in the 35-39 cohort which increased by 1,217 people (109.4%).

In terms of duration:

- Those claiming for 0-6 months increased by 5.9% (+119)
- Those claiming for 6 months – 2 years decreased by 36.4% (-2,176), mainly due to those claiming 1-2 years decreasing by 50% (-2,261)
- Those claiming for 2-5 years increased by 16.3% (+1,198)
- Those claiming for over 5 years increased by 566.0% (+1,347)

Walsall

Whilst the rate of economic activity is close to national comparators in Walsall, unemployment is significantly high.

In terms of inactivity, 62.2% of those inactive are women, with almost one-in-three of all those inactive being female aged between 35-64.

Furthermore, inactivity for those aged 50-64 (both male and female) accounts for 43.4% of all those inactive.

There are relatively low numbers of young males and females inactive.

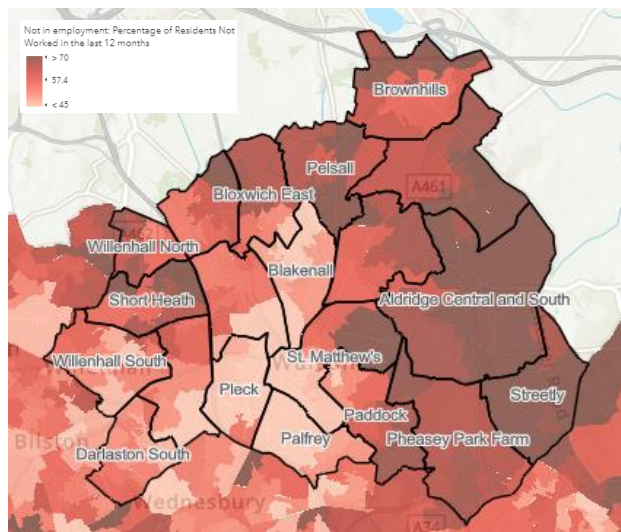
Almost 40% of those inactive are described as work-limiting disabled with 81.6% white.

In addition to those who are work limited disabled, a further 89,100 report a long-term illness, of which 53.5% are in employment, 3.3% unemployed and 43.2% are inactive.

Almost a third (29.4%) of those with a long-term illness report 'Depression, Learning Problems, Mental Problems and Nervous Disorders' as a barrier to work with 1,800 unemployed and 11,800 economically inactive.

Walsall has notable high levels of people inactive due to looking after the family/home.

Residents Not Worked in the last 12 months:



Of the 104,567 usual residents aged 16+ in Walsall were not in employment the week before the Census 2021, 56.9% (59,548) had not worked in the last 12 months. **Furthermore, a third (32.6%) or 34,087 people have never worked.**

The wards with the highest proportions who had not worked in the last 12 months were Streetly (71.8%), Aldridge Central & South (71.6%) and Pelsall (69.8%).

In contrast, the wards with the lowest proportions were Palfrey (37.6%), Pleck (41.6%) and Blakenall (45.2%).

Universal Claimants

There are now 34,516 people claiming Universal Credit in Walsall. This has increased by 7.6% (2,427 people) over the last year and almost doubled by 95.4% (16,854 people) since March 2020. Females account for 57.9% and males 42.1% of claims.

Since March 2020, and excluding those aged 65+, the largest change percentage wise was recorded for those aged 60-65 at 154.3% (1,376), followed closely by those aged 40-44 by 147.9% (2,398); whereas in absolute numbers the biggest change was recorded in the 35-39 cohort which increased by 2,925 people (134.5%).

In terms of duration:

- Those claiming for 0-6 months increased by 3.7% (+180)
- Those claiming for 6 months - 2 years decreased by -28.6% (-3,900), mainly due to those claiming 1-2 years decreasing by -42.5% (-4,293)
- Those claiming for 2-5 years increased by 44.9% (+5,850)
- Those claiming for over 5 years increased by 59.1% (+295)

Wolverhampton

Unemployment remains high in Wolverhampton along with the number of claimants, particularly those claimants aged 16-24. Indeed, Wolverhampton has consistently recorded the second highest rates of youth claimants nationally for the past year (behind Blackpool).

Economic inactivity is particularly prevalent at both ends of the age spectrum (16-24 and 50-64). These two age cohorts account for exactly half of all those economically inactive (50%).

Women account for 63.0% of those inactive, with one-in-three being female aged between 35-64.

Conversely, there are more young males (16-19) inactive than females (5,100 vs 4,200).

Over one-in-three (34%) of those inactive are described as work-limiting disabled with 58.3% white.

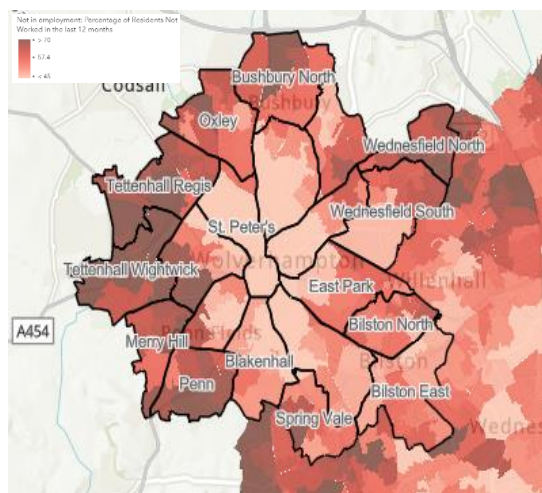
In addition to those who are work limited disabled, a further 64,600 report a long-term illness, of which 47.1% are in employment, 3.3% unemployed and 49.6% are inactive.

Just over a third (35.3%) of those with a long-term illness report 'Depression, Learning Problems, Mental Problems and Nervous Disorders' as a barrier to work with 1,400 unemployed and 14,500 economically inactive.

Of all those with a long-term illness, 'Depression, Learning Problems, Mental Problems and Nervous Disorders' is the most prevalent reason for unemployment.

Wolverhampton has notable high level of people inactive due to looking after the family/home and those inactive due to long-term sick.

Residents Not Worked in the last 12 months:



Of the 97,133 usual residents aged 16+ in Wolverhampton who were not in employment the week before the Census 2021, 54.8% (53,234) had not worked in the last 12 months. **Furthermore, a third (33.3%) or 32,297 people have never worked.**

The wards with the highest proportions who had not worked in the last 12 months were Tettenhall Wightwick (71.0%), Tettenhall Regis (67.3%) and Wednesfield North (66.3%).

In contrast, the wards with the lowest proportions were St Peter's (35.8%), Ettingshall (44.8%) and Blakenhall (44.9%).

Universal Claimants

There are now 37,434 people claiming Universal Credit in Wolverhampton. This has increased by 4.5% (1,618 people) over the last year and by 77.7% (16,374 people) since March 2020. Females account for 55.9% and males 44.1% of claims.

Since March 2020, and excluding those aged 65+, the largest change percentage wise was recorded for those aged 60-65 at 120.2% (1,388), followed closely by those aged 40-44 by 112.4% (2,466); whereas in absolute numbers the biggest change was recorded in the 35-39 cohort which increased by 2,848 people (103.9%).

In terms of duration:

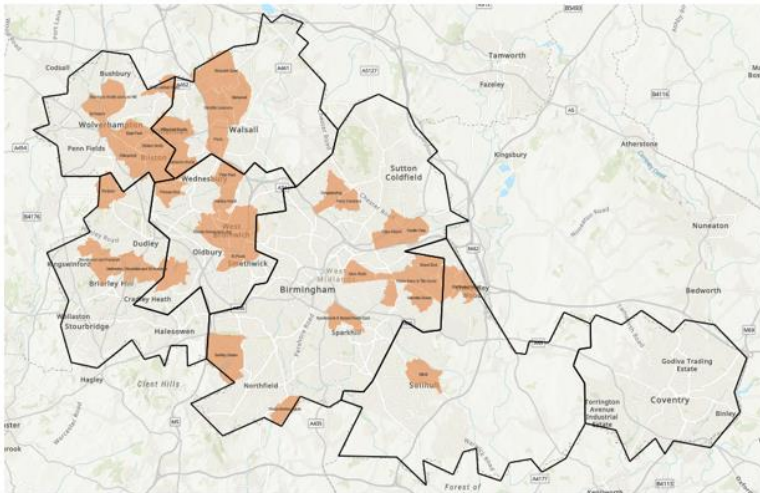
- Those claiming for 0-6 months increased by 3.0% (+154)
- Those claiming for 6 months – 2 years decreased by -28.9% (-4,095), mainly due to those claiming 1-2 years decreasing by -42.6% (-4,445)
- Those claiming for 2-5 years increased by 28.6% (+4,561)
- Those claiming for over 5 years increased by 206.9% (+995)

Longitudinal Ward Analysis

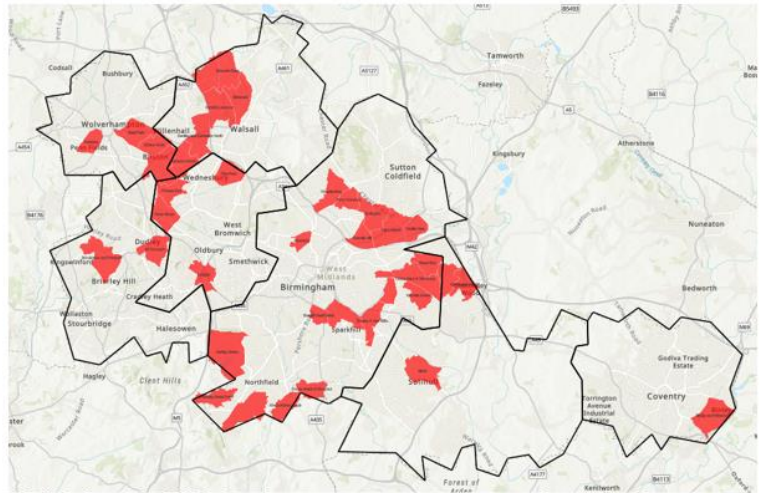
Key workless related indicators (identified in the supporting data tables) have been indexed and put into quintiles to help understand change over time.

The map on the left shows the top 20% most affected wards in 2011 and the map on the right shows the top 20% most affected wards in 2021.

2011:

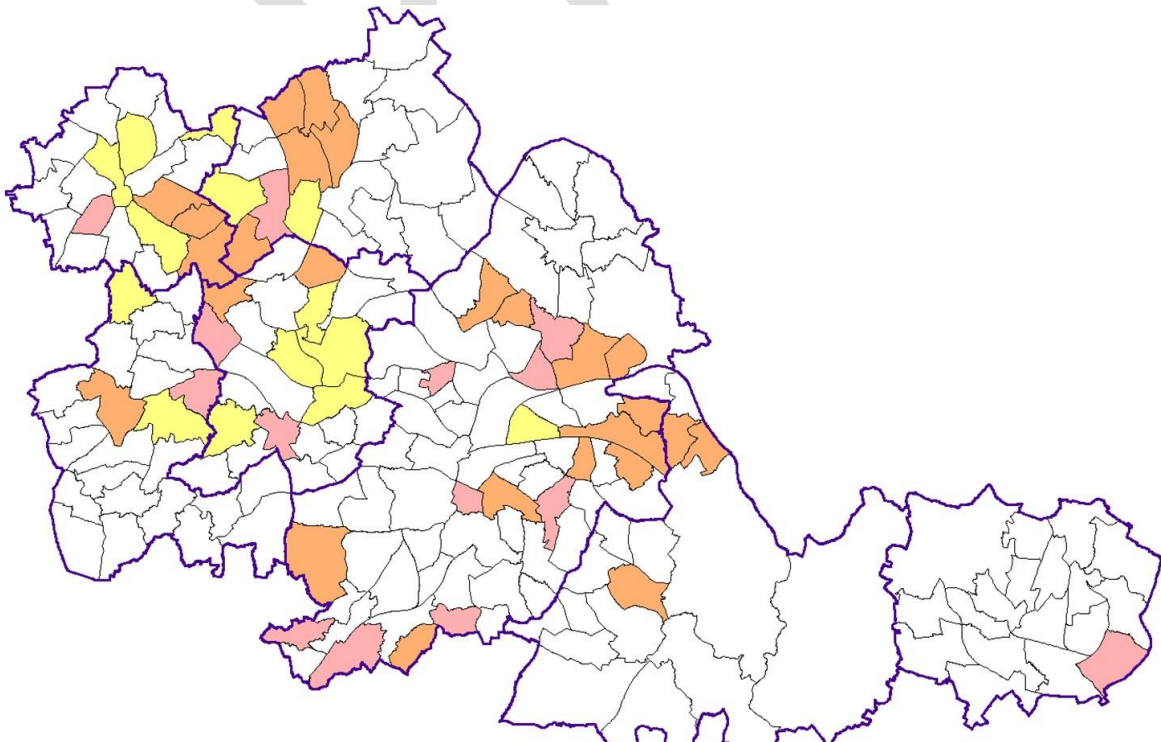


2021:



Interactive versions can be found [here](#). Also a version with all quintiles is available [here](#).

Analysis shows that 25 wards out of 39 were in the topmost affected areas for both 2011 and 2021. These 25 wards are highlighted in the following map in orange (please note yellow indicates top 20% most affected in 2011 and pink indicates top 20% most affected in 2021).



The 25 Wards in top 20% in 2011 and 2021:

Bartley Green	Bloxwich East	Darlaston South	King's Norton South	Pype Hayes
Bilston East	Bloxwich West	East Park	Kingshurst and Fordbridge	Shard End
Bilston North	Brockmoor and Pensnett	Friar Park	Kingstanding	Silhill
Birchills Leamore	Castle Vale	Garretts Green	Perry Common	Sparkbrook & Balsall Heath East
Blakenall	Chelmsley Wood	Glebe Farm & Tile Cross	Princes End	Yardley West & Stechford

We are analysing the data to identify which indicators are most acute in these wards and the groups effected.