

# West Sussex Economy Snapshot

**February 2023 (Issue 31)**

West Sussex County Council

This is a monthly 'snapshot' of the West Sussex economy, produced by the County Council's Performance & Intelligence team with contributions from partners. The data presented here is publicly available and any analysis provided is for information purposes only.

This report includes national data that can provide a context to the trends seen from the data in West Sussex.

The latest COVID-19 figures relating to West Sussex are available on the [county dashboard](#).

Previous reports can be found on the [Business West Sussex](#) pages.

If you have any questions relating to the information in this report, please email [business.support@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:business.support@westsussex.gov.uk) or [sue.cooper@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:sue.cooper@westsussex.gov.uk)

# West Sussex Headlines

Over the last month, December '22-January '23, there was a decrease of -0.5% in the number of claimants aged 16+ in West Sussex, regional and national figures increased by 0.6% and 0.5% each. Except for Crawley, Horsham and Worthing, all districts & boroughs in West Sussex saw an increase over this time. Arun has the highest numbers of claimants and Crawley the highest claimant count rate, which at 3.6% is higher than the county and regional rates. Mid Sussex has the lowest claimant count rate.

The number of employees on payrolls is continuing to increase in West Sussex. The number of employees on payrolls, from this data, is above that seen before April 2020. West Sussex's employees increased by 0.48% from December 2022, higher growth than South East and the UK. Within West Sussex, Mid Sussex has the highest number of employees at 71,531 and Adur the lowest at 26,561. Similarly, the median monthly pay levels have risen to levels higher than seen at the beginning of 2020. Compared to the regional and national median monthly pay, North East West Sussex (Crawley, Horsham & Mid Sussex) has higher monthly pay levels than South West Sussex (Adur, Arun, Chichester & Worthing).

Job postings continue to be higher than pre-pandemic. Unique job postings increased by 34% from the previous month. Care workers and home carers continue to be in highest demand. Other administrative occupations, customer service occupations, sales, nurses also continue to be in top 10 occupations. Demand is also strong for programming & software developing professions and catering related occupations – kitchen and catering assistants as well as chefs. From postings, over the last six months, Finance has been the most sought 'specialised' skill.

The number of new business incorporations in West Sussex over the last year- Feb 2022 – Jan 2023 was higher than the number of businesses that have been dissolved or have gone into liquidation – by around 300 businesses. In the last three months Nov '22– Jan '23 there were 16 more new business incorporations than there had been for those which were dissolved or gone into liquidation. Mid Sussex has the highest number of new business incorporations, also companies dissolved, or had gone into liquidation. In West Sussex, the highest numbers of new businesses were seen in the business services sector which also had the highest number of businesses that were dissolved or in liquidation.

The Census data is continuing to be released. Looking at occupations of residents in work the highest percentage are employed in professional occupations, though it is a lower % than the regional average. West Sussex has a higher % working in caring, leisure, and other service occupations than the regional and national average and is highest in Arun.

ONS released an experimental statistics in January '23 on GVA and productivity estimates, measured as GVA per job filled, for travel to work areas and towns and cities. The data is only available for the period up to 2020. In West Sussex Worthing has the highest productivity levels, and Chichester the lowest.

# Inside this report

This report is split into two sections - local West Sussex data and National trends.

## West Sussex

New Businesses	5
Businesses	6
Claimant Count	7
Universal Credit Claimants	9
Real Time Information Pay as you Earn Employees	10
Job Postings	12
Census	13
Productivity	14

## National

Gross Domestic Product	15
Labour Market	16
Businesses currently trading	17
Business Closures	18

# National Headlines

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) fell in December by 0.5% following a growth in the previous month (an increase of 0.1% in November). Monthly GDP is now estimated to be 0.5% below its pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) levels (February 2020). Service sector fell by 0.8% in December 2022. Human health and social work activities was the largest contributor to the fall of services. Consumer-facing services fell in December 2022 by 1.2%, following a growth of 0.4% in November 2022 - sports activities and amusement and recreation activities was the major contributor to this fall. Production grew by 0.3% in December 2022 after a growth of 0.1% in November 2022. Construction was flat in December 2022, following a growth of 0.1% in November.

The number of payrolled employees has continued to increase nationally, albeit at a slower rate, and over the year January 2022-January 2023 rose by 2.6%. Early estimates suggest that median monthly pay increased by over 6.8% since January 2022 and by 17.6% compared with February 2020.

From the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICs), 95% of businesses reported they were trading. 30% of trading businesses reported turnover was lower compared with December 2022 and 16% reported their turnover was higher. 39% of trading businesses reported an increase in the prices of goods or services bought in January 2023 compared to the previous month. Energy prices remain the top reason businesses are considering raising their prices in February 2023. 10% businesses reported difficulties recruiting employees in January 2023.

Data for England and Wales on company insolvencies shows that there were 1,671 in January 2023, 7% higher than in the same month in the previous year and 11% higher than three years previously.

# New Businesses, West Sussex

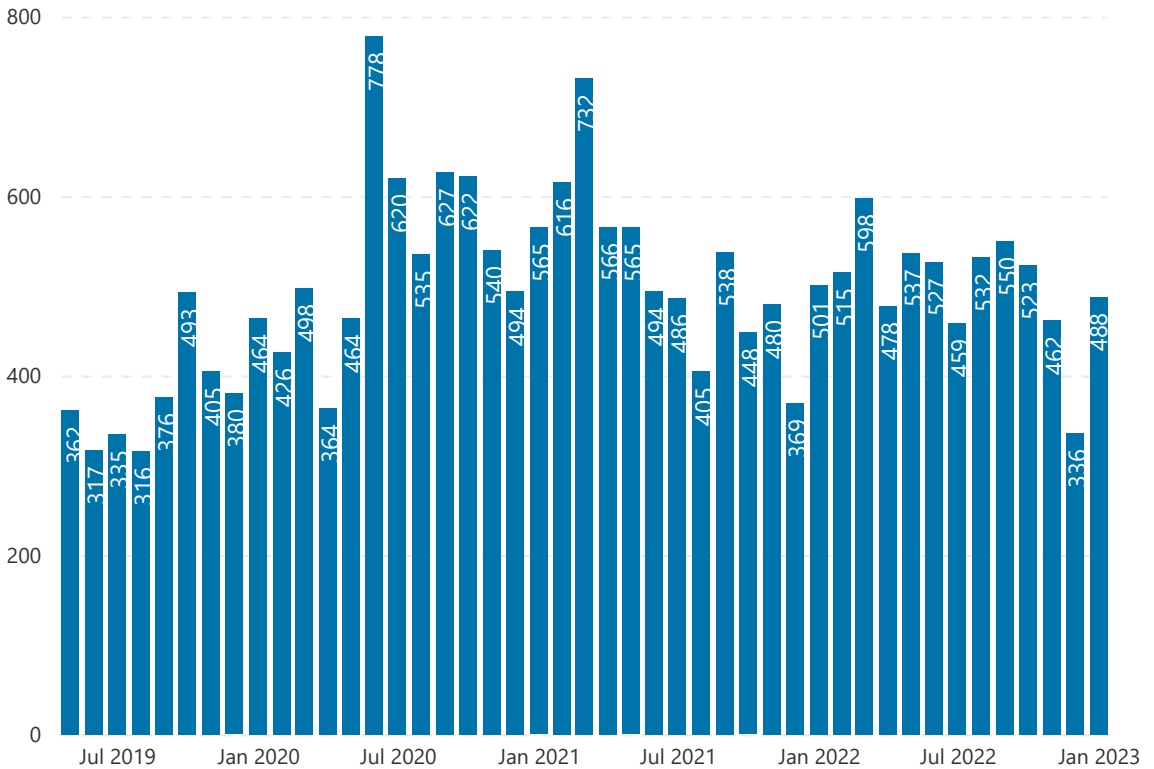
Source: FAME

Released: February 2023

There is no doubt that the time series shows fluctuations month on month, but generally, the numbers of new business formations have tended to be at levels greater than those seen pre-pandemic. In the last 12 months, February 2022- January 2023, there were around 5,818 new business incorporations, 300 more than the 5517 businesses that were dissolved, or which had gone into liquidation.

In the last 3 months – November '22 –Jan '23 there were 16 more businesses that had gone into liquidation, or been dissolved (1287) than there had been new business incorporations (1271).

## New business incorporations in West Sussex



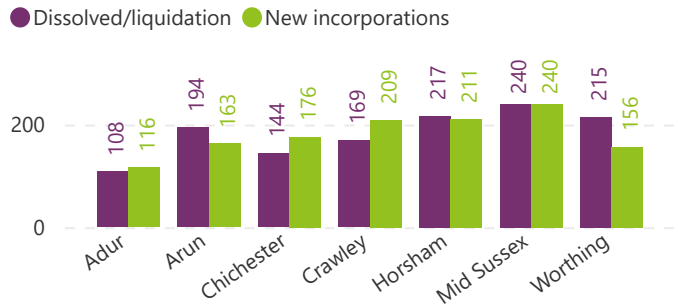
# Businesses, West Sussex

Source: FAME

Released: February 2023

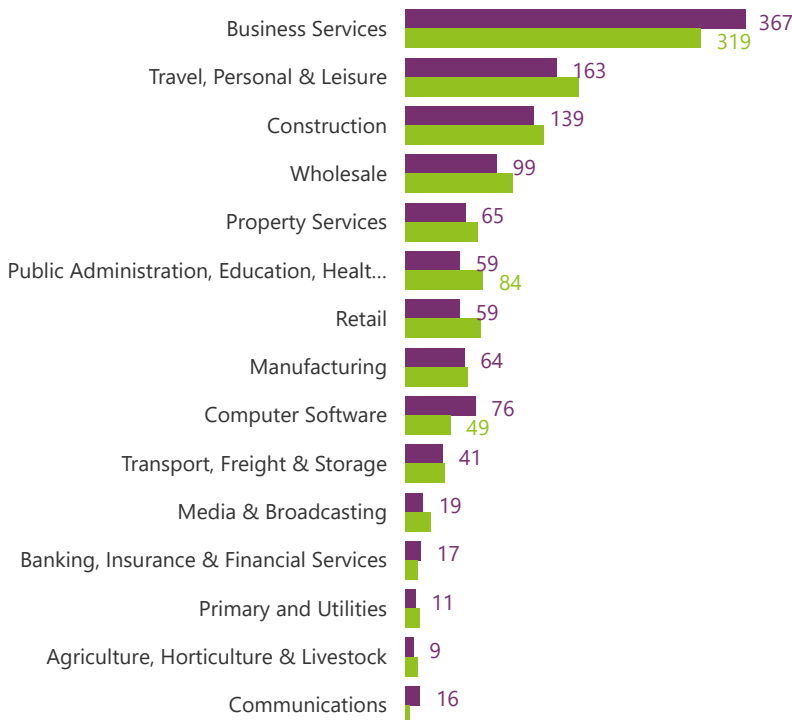
Over the last three-month period – Nov 2022- Jan 2023 Mid Sussex continues to have the highest number of new business incorporations, and the same number of businesses that have dissolved or are in liquidation. Adur, Chichester and Crawley saw more new businesses than business closures than the four other local authorities in the county, and there is increasing speculation that with high inflation levels as well as rising fuel and energy costs more businesses will close.

**Number of new business incorporations and businesses dissolved/in liquidation by local authority (Nov '22-Jan '23)**



**Number of new business incorporations and businesses dissolved/in liquidation by industry (Nov '22-Jan '23)**

● Dissolved/liquidation ● New incorporations



Business services has the highest number of new incorporations as well as numbers dissolved or in liquidation over the last 3 months, a continuation of the past trends, though along with computer software, banking, insurance & financial services and communications saw more closed businesses than new business formations. The top three sectors for new business formations are as in previous months – business services, travel personal and leisure, and construction.

# Claimant Count, West Sussex

Source: [ONS, Claimant Count](#)

Released: 14 February 2023 (January 2023 figures are provisional)

The claimant count includes those people who are claiming either Job Seekers Allowance or Universal Credit principally because they are out of work or working very few hours and/or have a very low wage.

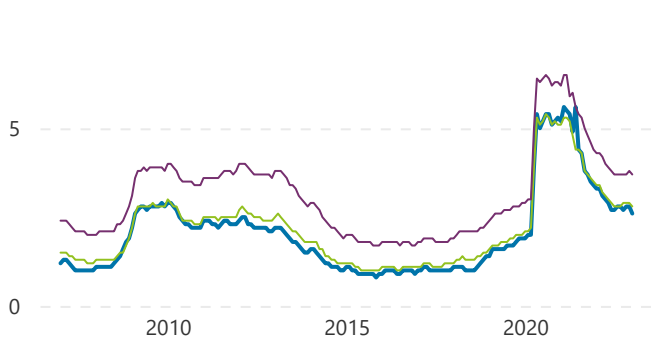
There were 13,825 claimants aged 16+ in West Sussex in January 2023, a decrease of -0.5% from the previous month, compared with a regional and national (England) increase of 0.6% and 0.5%.

Within West Sussex, Adur, Arun, Chichester and Worthing saw an increase in claimants from Dec'22. Chichester saw the highest increase in claimants at 2.5%.

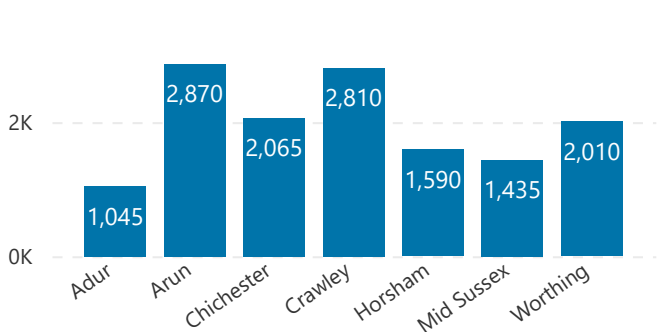
Arun has the highest number of claimants at 2,870 and Crawley the highest claimant count rate at 3.6%, higher than the regional and lower than the national rates. Mid Sussex has the lowest claimant count rate at 1.6%. In West Sussex, % of male claimants aged 16+ increased by 0.4% and female fell by -1.6%.

## Claimant count rate

● West Sussex ● South East ● England

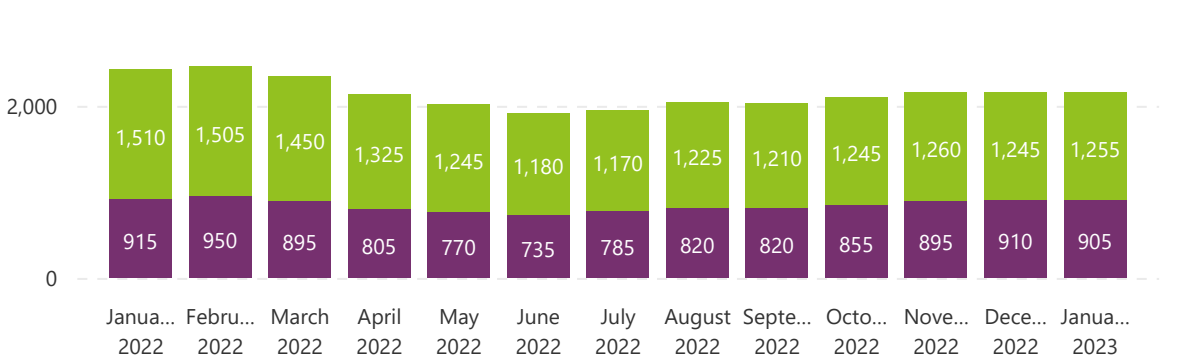


## Number of claimants



## Claimant count by gender, 18-24 age group

● Female ● Male



# Claimant Count, West Sussex

Source: [ONS, Claimant Count](#)

Released: 14 February 2023 (January 2023 figures are provisional)

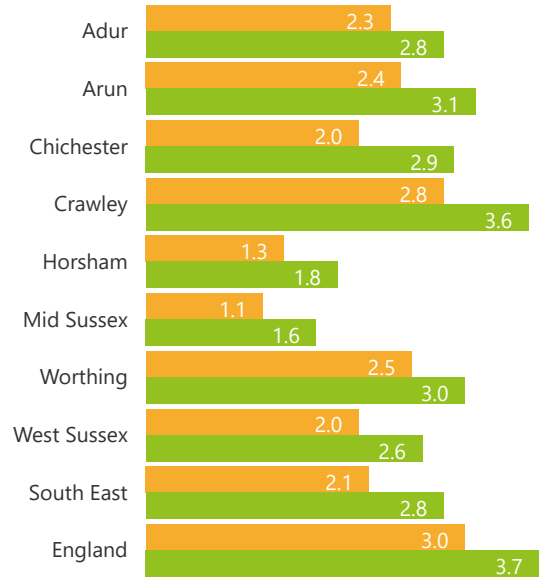
Age profile of claimants: Worthing (20.5%) has the highest proportion of 16-24 year olds, and Chichester the lowest at 12.4%. Chichester has a higher proportion of claimants who are over 50 years.

There are 2,160 claimants aged 18-24 in West Sussex, which is an increase of 2% from the previous month. National (England) and regional figures also increased by 0.4% and 1% for this age category. Arun has the highest number of claimants in this age group at 450. It was only Horsham (-6%) and Crawley (-3%) in West Sussex that saw a fall, in the claimants aged 18-24 over the last month, and all other local authorities in the county saw an increase.

Within West Sussex, over the last month, there was an increase of 2.4% in claimants amongst males aged 18-24 years; females by 0.6%.

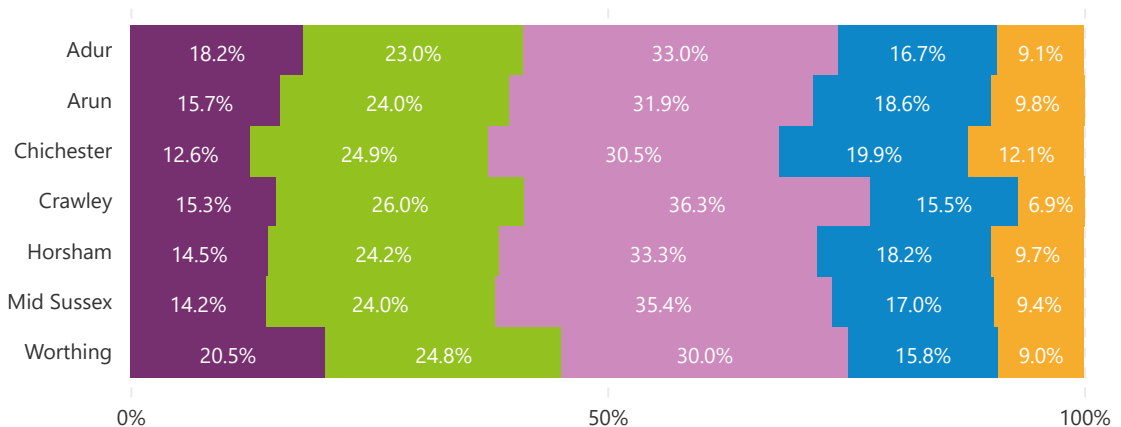
## Claimant count rates change

● March 2020 ● January 2023



## Distribution of claimants by age band

● Aged 16-24 ● Aged 25-34 ● Aged 35-49 ● Aged 50-59 ● Aged 60+





# Universal Credit Claimants, West Sussex

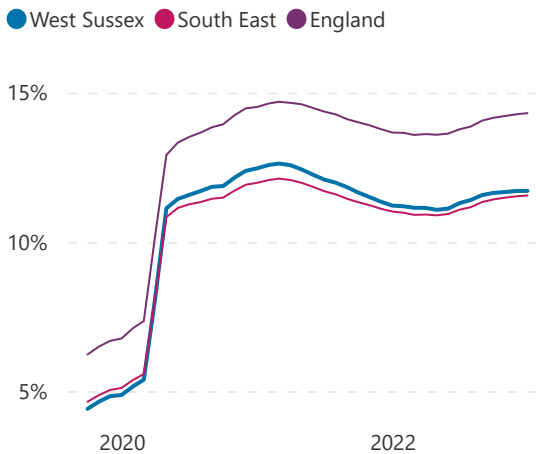
Source: [Department for Work and Pensions](#)

Released: 14 February 2023 (January 2023 figures are provisional)

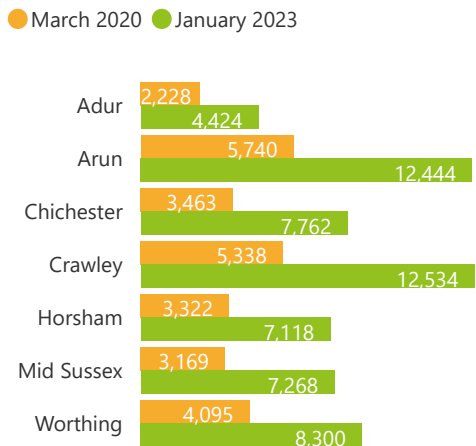
Universal Credit is a single payment for each household to help with living costs for those on a low income or out of work. In January 2023, there were 59,844 Universal Credit claimants, which is a 1% increase from previous month. The numbers of people claiming Universal Credit in West Sussex has increased 119% since March 2020 - from 27,355 to 59,844 in January 2023. In West Sussex, the percentage of people in employment claiming Universal Credit increased since Mar'20 from 41.14% to 45.4% in Dec'22. In Dec'22, within West Sussex, Mid Sussex (3,433) has seen the highest percentage of Universal Credit claimants who are in work at 48% followed by Crawley (5,839) and Horsham (3,294) at 47%.

Crawley has seen the highest % rise (135%) over the period from March 2020 (at the start of the pandemic) to January 2023 though there has been a significant rise in the number of residents claiming Universal Credit across the county. Please note January 2023 employment/not in employment breakdown hasn't released yet.

## Percentage of people aged 16-64 years claiming Universal Credit



## Universal Credit claimants in West Sussex change



## Universal Credit claimants in West Sussex by employment status



# Real Time Information Pay As You Earn (RTI PAYE), Employees, West Sussex

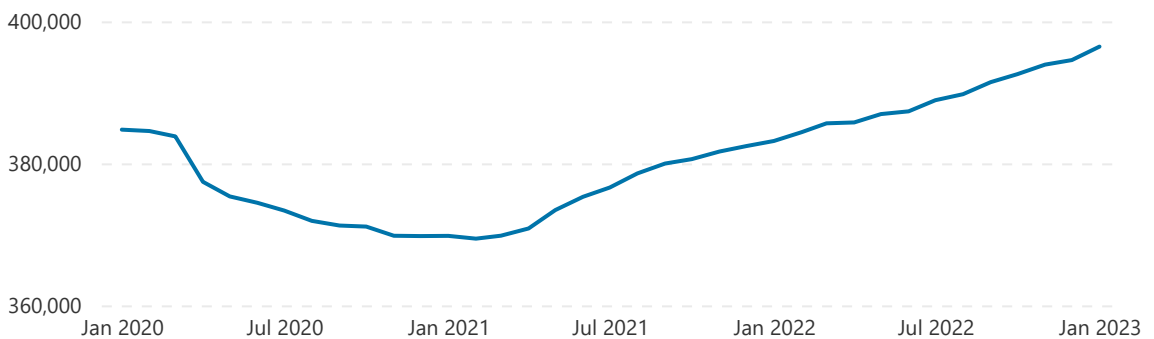
Source: ONS - [Earnings and employment from Pay As You Earn Real Time Information, seasonally adjusted](#)

Released: 14 February 2023

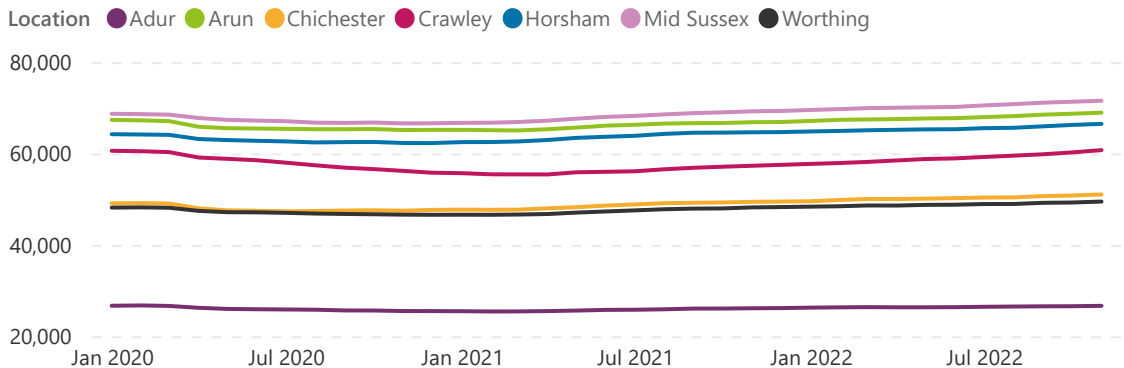
These figures are from a set of 'experimental statistics' from ONS from the earnings and employment statistics Pay as You Earn (PAYE) Real Time Information (RTI) seasonally adjusted data set. The latest data is up to the month of January 2023 for Counties and November 2022 for Local Authorities. West Sussex's employees increased by 0.48% from December 2022. The South East's employees grew by 0.43% and the UKs employees grew by 0.34%. The local authority with the largest growth from October was Crawley with 0.84%. Adur and Mid Sussex both saw the smallest growth in employees with 0.29%.

The latest data shows that Mid Sussex has the highest number of employees at 71,531 in West Sussex and Adur the lowest at 26,561. The timeline of employees in West Sussex shows a decrease from April 2020, at the beginning of the first lockdown and continuing to decrease until March 2021 at which point the employee figures begin to increase again. This increase has continued to the current date where all districts and boroughs have exceeded the employee figures seen pre-April 2020.

## West Sussex Number of Employees



## District Number of Employees



# Real Time Information Pay As You Earn (RTI PAYE), Median Pay, West Sussex

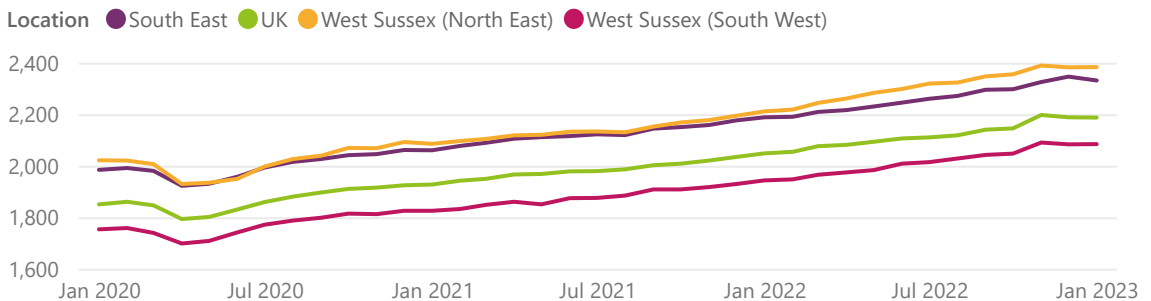
Source: ONS - [Earnings and employment from Pay As You Earn Real Time Information, seasonally adjusted](#)

Released: 14 February 2023

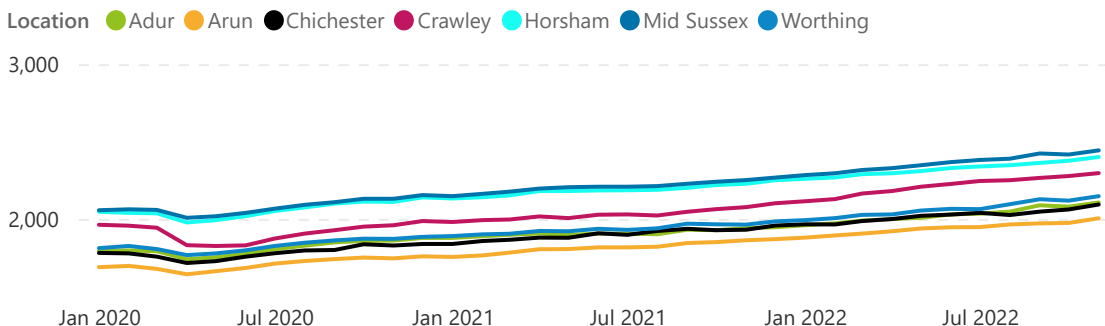
As in the previous page, these figures are based on the ONS statistics from the earnings and employment Pay As You Earn (Seasonally Adjusted) RTI data set and are up to the month of January 2023 for County level and above and up to November 2022 for local authorities. The local authority with the largest percentage increase of pay from October 2022 was Chichester with 1.55% compared to an increase of 0.83% in Crawley which saw the lowest increase. West Sussex South West had a decrease in median monthly pay by -0.05% and the North East had a decrease in median monthly pay by -0.04% from December 2022. The South East's monthly median pay decreased by -0.64% and the UK's fell by -0.05% since December 2022.

The local authority with the highest median monthly pay is Mid Sussex at £2,443, and the lowest is seen in Arun at £2,004. A decrease in median pay can be seen in between the month of March and April 2020 which was the beginning of the first lockdown. Median monthly pay trends then return to pre lockdown levels by July 2020 for all local authorities. Compared to the regional and national median monthly pay, North East West Sussex (Crawley, Horsham & Mid Sussex) has higher monthly pay levels than South West Sussex (Adur, Arun, Chichester & Worthing).

## Median Pay National and Regional Figures



## Median Pay in West Sussex



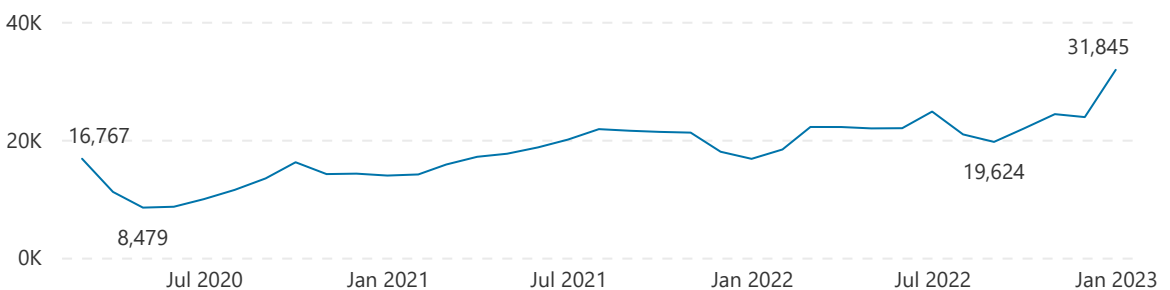
# Job Postings, West Sussex

Source: Lightcast

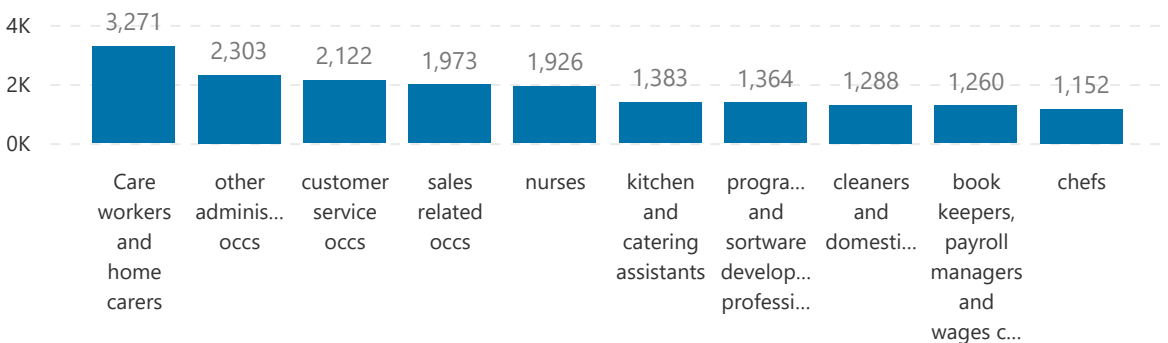
Released: February 2023

Job postings continue to be generally higher than pre-pandemic levels and there has been a significant increase between December '22 and January '23. In terms of the 'top' posted occupations over the last six months to December 2022, care workers and home carers continue to make up the highest numbers of job postings, followed by other administrative occupations. Customer service occupations, sales related and nurses also continue to be in demand. Programmers and software development professional along with occupations within the catering sector continue to be in the top 10 occupations posted

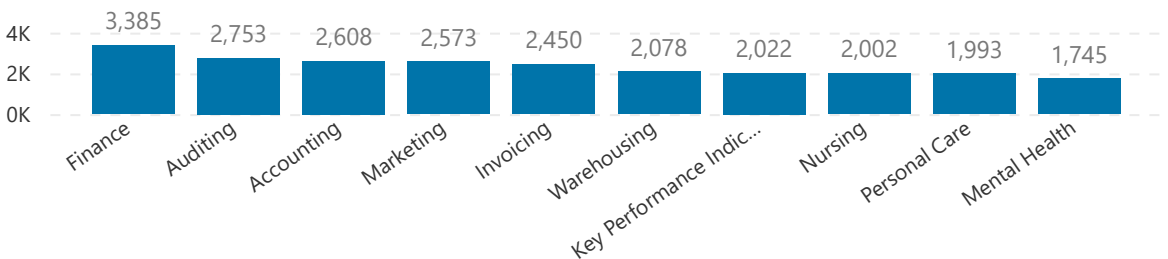
## Unique job postings over time in West Sussex



## Top 10 posted occupations (unique postings August '22 - Jan '23)



## Top 10 hard skills (unique postings August '22 - Jan '23)



# 2021 Census Release, West Sussex

Source: ONS

Released: February 2023

## 2021 Census of Population

Data releases from the 2021 Census have continued over the last month, and future releases are outlined in the ONS [release calendar](#). The intended Topic Summaries are now available, these include demography and migration; UK armed forces veterans; ethnic group, national identity, language and religion; labour market and travel to work; housing; sexual orientation and gender identity, education; and health, disability and unpaid care. There is now data available at the ward level.

Further details can be found [here](#). ONS have also put together some [interactive mapping](#) that allows for the comparison of Census data across different areas across England and Wales, along with some [interactive tools](#) that look at how some things have changed in the 10 years between Census', and from the nomis website there are some [Census profiles](#) already put together for areas in England and Wales, and ONS has developed a tool to allow you to build a [custom area profile](#) – either by choosing a geography or drawing your own area on a map.

## Occupation of residents

Amongst residents of West Sussex, aged 16 and over, who are in employment the highest percentage are employed in professional occupations, though it is a lower % than the regional average. Mid Sussex has the highest % of residents working in these occupations. West Sussex has a higher % working in caring, leisure, and other service occupations than the regional and national average and is highest in Arun. Crawley has the lower proportion of residents working in managers, directors, and senior officials' occupations in the county.



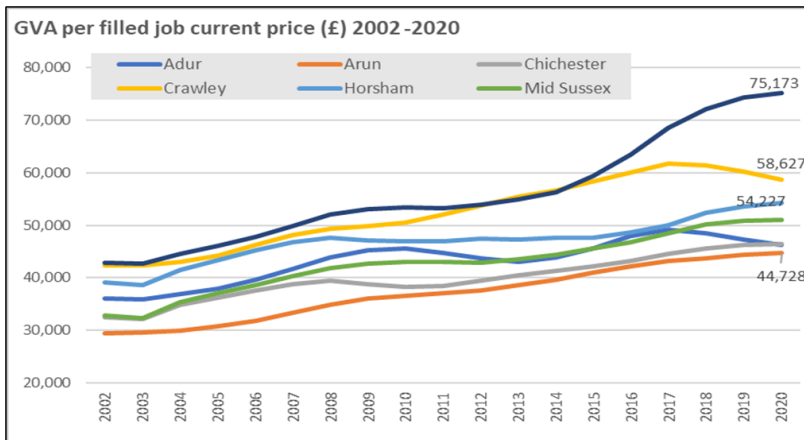
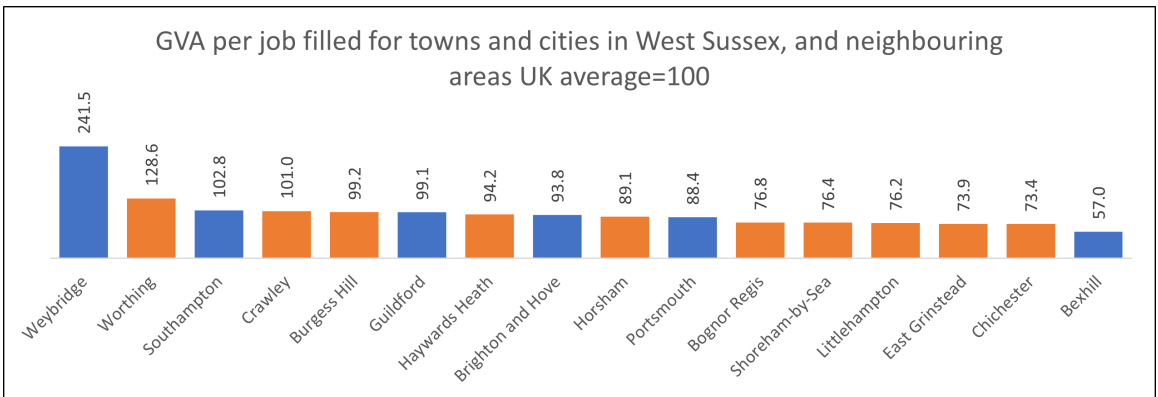
Percentage of residents aged 16 years and over who are in employment by broad occupation type								
Occupation (current)	Adur	Arun	Chichester	Crawley	Horsham	Mid Sussex	Worthing	England
1. Managers, directors and senior officials	12.5	13.3	17.0	10.1	17.6	17.2	12.5	12.9
2. Professional occupations	17.9	14.4	19.9	14.9	21.1	22.9	20.0	20.3
3. Associate professional and technical occupations	14.1	11.7	14.5	12.3	15.9	15.7	14.2	13.3
4. Administrative and secretarial occupations	9.5	9.3	8.0	9.8	9.5	9.4	9.9	9.3
5. Skilled trades occupations	12.8	12.6	11.6	9.0	9.8	9.0	10.5	10.2
6. Caring, leisure and other service occupations	10.4	11.7	9.3	11.6	8.8	9.0	11.5	9.3
7. Sales and customer service occupations	8.1	8.0	6.5	9.5	6.3	6.0	7.5	7.5
8. Process, plant and machine operatives	6.1	7.5	4.4	9.4	4.1	3.9	5.4	6.9
9. Elementary occupations	8.6	11.4	8.8	13.3	6.9	6.9	8.5	10.5

# Productivity, West Sussex

Source: [ONS](#)

Released: January 2023

GVA and now productivity estimates, measured as GVA per job filled, have been made available for travel to work areas and towns and cities. The data is in current prices. They are experimental statistics and are still under review, but nevertheless is gives interesting, indicative trends and enables comparison across wider areas. The data, released in January 2023, is available for the period up to 2020 so it will be some time before the impact of COVID on productivity levels at local levels will become evident. Towns are defined built up areas (by ONS) with a population between 5,000 and 225,000 at the time of the 2011 Census and cities with a population of over 225,000. In West Sussex there are ten 'towns and cities' from this definition, though to note that given the urban nature of Crawley and Worthing, the town areas include the whole borough area. In West Sussex Worthing has the highest productivity levels, and Chichester the lowest. Weybridge has the highest productivity of all towns in the South East region, and Bexhill the lowest.



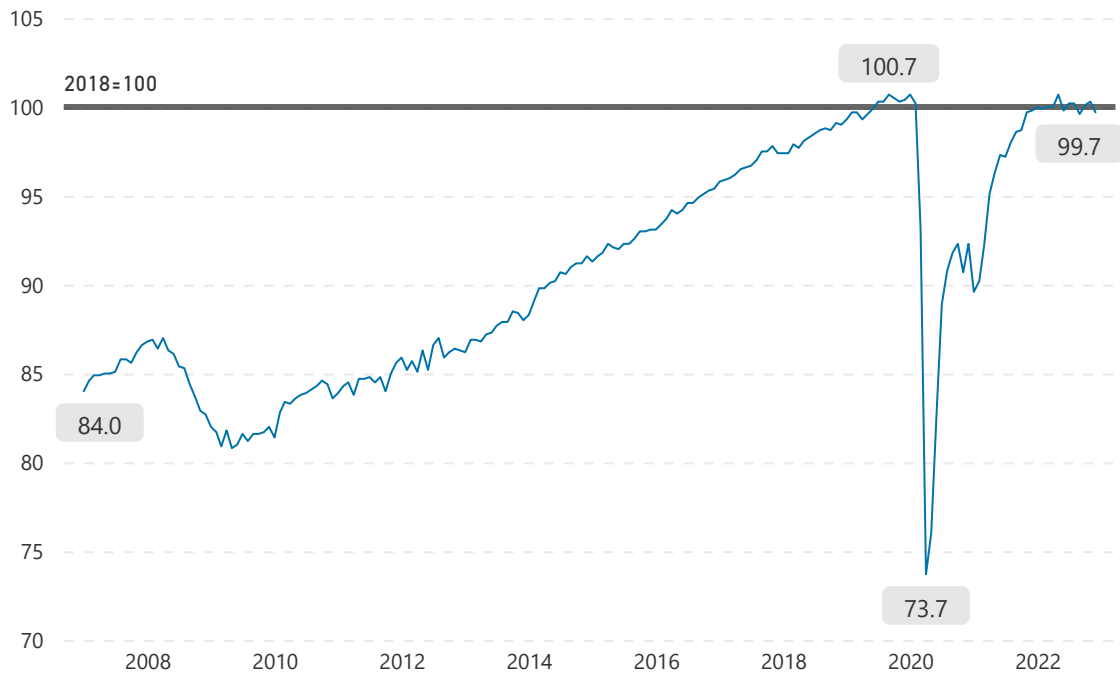
# National Headlines - Gross Domestic Product (GDP), UK

Source: [ONS, GDP Monthly Estimate](#)

Released: 10 February 2023

- Gross domestic product (GDP) is estimated to have fallen by 0.5% in December 2022, after a growth of 0.1% in November 2022. Looking at the broader picture, GDP was flat in the three months to December 2022. Monthly GDP is now estimated to be 0.5% below its pre-coronavirus (COVID-19) levels (February 2020).
- Services fell by 0.8% in December 2022 after a growth of 0.2% in November 2022. Human health and social work activities was the largest contributor to the fall of services (2.8%).
- Consumer-facing services fell by 1.2% in December 2022, after a growth of 0.4% in November 2022. The largest negative contributor in consumer-facing services was sports activities and amusement and recreation activities (17.0%).
- Production grew by 0.3% in December 2022 after a growth of 0.1% in November 2022. Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply was the main driver of positive production growth.
- Construction was flat in December 2022 after a decrease of 0.5% in November 2022. This flat growth in construction output came from an increase in new jobs (0.5%) which was then offset by a fall in repair and maintenance (-0.7%).

## Monthly index, UK



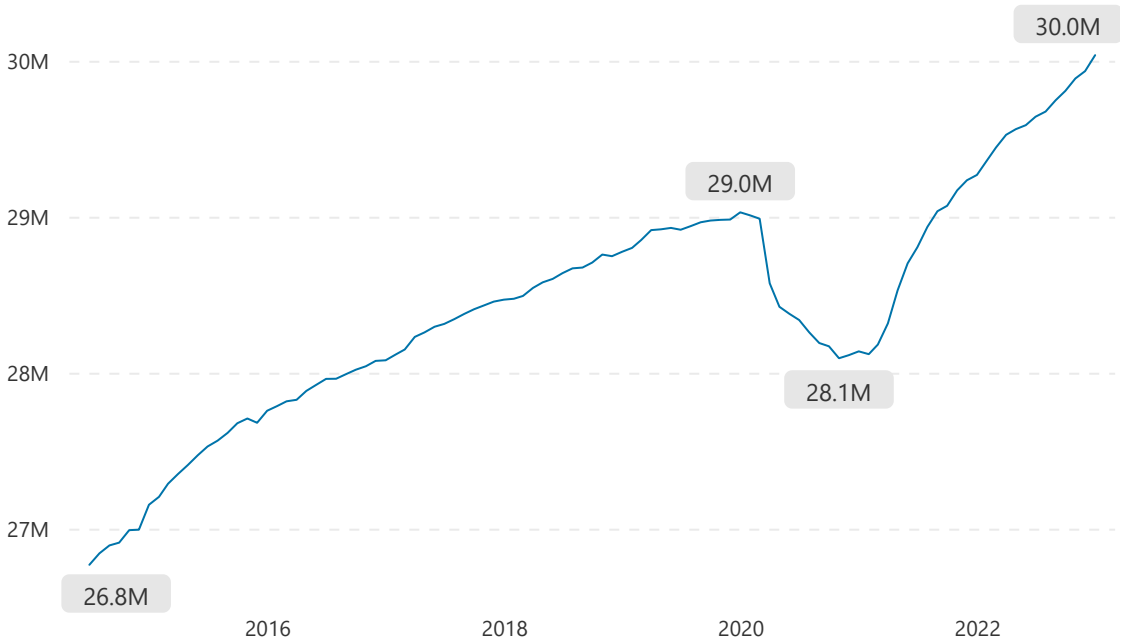
# Labour Market, UK

Source: [ONS, Earning and Employment from Pay As You Earn](#)

Released: 14 February 2023

- Early estimates for January 2023 indicate that the number of payrolled employees rose by 2.6% compared with January 2022, a rise of 768,000 employees; the number of payrolled employees was up by 3.5% since February 2020, a rise of 1,028,000.
- Payrolled employment increased by 102,000 employees (0.3%) in January 2023 when compared with December 2022, though this should be treated as a provisional estimate and is likely to be revised when more data are received next month.
- UK payrolled employee growth for December 2022 compared with November 2022 has been revised from an increase of 28,000 reported in the last bulletin to an increase of 47,000, because of the incorporation of additional real time information (RTI) submissions into the statistics, which takes place every publication and reduces the need for imputation.
- Early estimates for January 2023 indicate that median monthly pay increased by 6.8% compared with January 2022, and increased by 17.6% when compared with February 2020.
- All age groups saw an increase in payrolled employees between January 2022 and January 2023; there was an increase of 107,000 payrolled employees aged under 25 years.

## Payrolled employees, seasonally adjusted, UK





# Businesses currently trading, UK

Source: [ONS, Business insights and impact on the UK economy](#)

Released: 23 February 2023

The data presented in this bulletin are the final results from Wave 76 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey (BICS), which was live for the period of 6 to 19 February 2023.

- In mid-January 2023, 95% of businesses reported they were trading, with 85% fully trading and 10% partially trading.
- In January 2023, two in seven (30%) trading businesses reported turnover was lower compared with December 2022, while 16% reported their turnover was higher across this period, up 3 percentage points from December 2022 compared to November 2022.
- Of trading businesses, 39% reported an increase in the prices of goods or services bought in January 2023 compared with December 2022; this percentage has gradually fallen each month from 48% in September 2022.
- Energy prices remain the top reason businesses are considering raising their prices in February 2023 with 35% of trading businesses reporting this.
- One in five (21%) businesses reported that they had passed on less than 50% of their input price increases to customers over the last six months, while 13% reported that they had passed on 50% or more.
- One in ten (10%) businesses reported difficulties recruiting employees in January 2023. This percentage was higher for businesses with 10 or more employees at 28%. The human health and social work activities industry (private sector businesses only) reported the largest percentage of businesses experiencing difficulties (49%).

# Businesses Closures, UK

Source: Gov.uk, [Monthly Insolvency Statistics](#)

Released: 14 February 2023

Data for England and Wales on company insolvencies shows that there were 1,671 in January 2023, 7% higher than in the same month in the previous year (1,567 in January 2022), and 11% higher than the number registered three years previously (1,502 in January 2020).

There were 189 compulsory liquidations in January 2023, 52% more than in January 2022 and 36% lower than in January 2020. Numbers of compulsory liquidations have increased from historical lows seen during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

There were 1,741 Debt Relief Orders (DROs) in January 2023, which was 7% lower than January 2022 and 21% lower than the pre-pandemic comparison month (December 2019).

There were, on average, 6,328 Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVAs) registered per month in the three-month period ending January 2023, which is 1% higher than the three-month period ending January 2022, and 6% higher than the three-month period ending January 2020.

## Company insolvencies in England & Wales

