

South Yorkshire Weekly Policy Briefing

20th January 2023

SYMCA Policy Team

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This Week's Policy Highlights:

- ❑ The Government awarded allocations in Round 2 of its flagship £2.1 billion [Levelling Up Fund](#), with over 100 successful projects, including the 'Barnsley Futures' bid.
- ❑ Recent figures from the [Office for National Statistics](#) show wages have grown at the fastest rate in more than 20 years, but are still failing to keep up with rising prices.
- ❑ Sheffield was revealed as the winner of the [Startups Cities Index](#), an annual ranking of the top cities in the UK – outside of London – for starting a business.
- ❑ Local Transport Data from SYMCA shows the proportion of weekly bus use is 74.6% of pre-Covid figures and tram patronage is at 80.8% whilst the number of people counted overall at interchanges increased by +932 (+2.3%) to 40,655 from the previous week.

Levelling Up Fund Round 2



**LEVELLING
— UP —**

New Projects

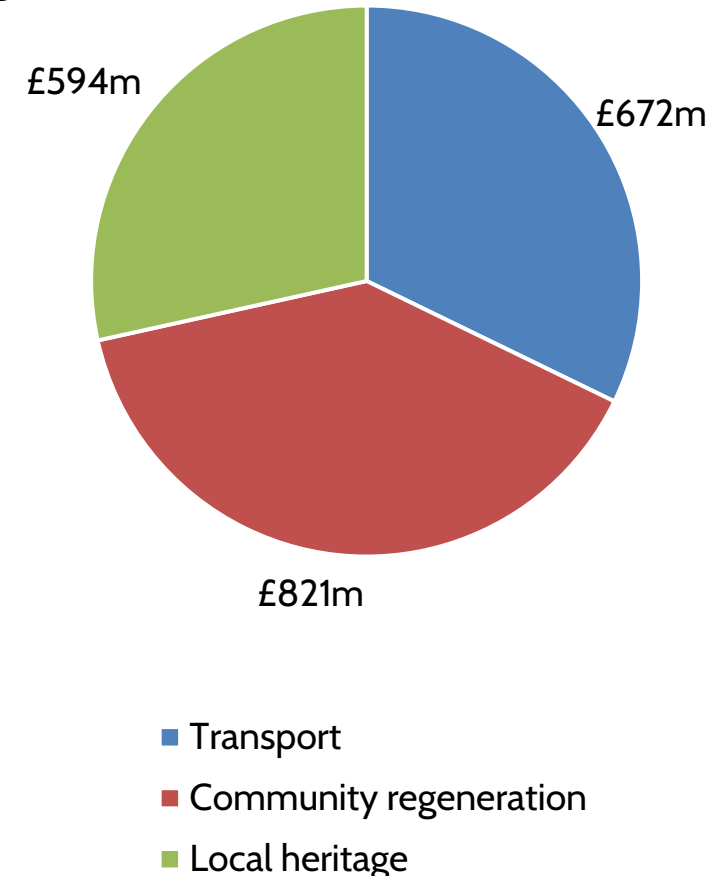
More than 100 projects awarded share of £2.1 billion from Round 2 of government's flagship [Levelling Up Fund](#) to create jobs and boost the economy.

A total of 111 areas have been rewarded funding from the from the second of the government's flagship Levelling Up Fund. Some of the headline projects are:

- **The Eden Project North:** £50 million to transform a derelict site on Morecambe's seafront into a world class visitor attraction.
- **Rail improvements in Cornwall:** £50 million grant will help create a new direct train service, linking 4 of Cornwall's largest urban areas.
- **Artificial Intelligence campus in Blackpool:** £40 million to deliver a new Multiversity, a carbon-neutral, education campus in Blackpool's Talbot Gateway Central Business District.
- **West Yorkshire's buses:** £40 million to WYMCA to transform its bus services, especially in areas of deprivation.

See a full list of projects funded by LUF in an interactive map [here](#).

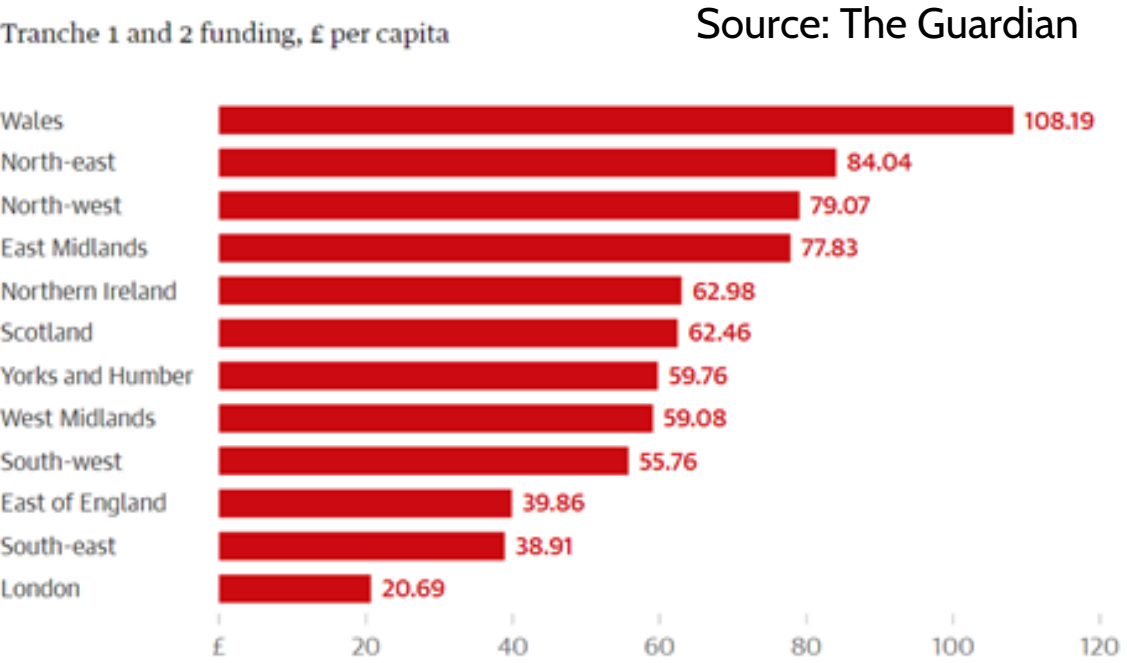
Levelling Up Fund Round 2



Yorkshire & The Humber

£120 million was given to Yorkshire which made up 6 projects:

- Barnsley – new outdoor activity park next for revamped youth centre, new vocal academy, wellbeing hub and theatre renovation (£10m)
- Kirklees – town centre regeneration in Batley (£12m)
- Cleethorpes – regeneration of seafront (£18m)
- Barton – transport improvements incl. active travel and alleviated congestion (£20m)
- Richmond – active travel, town centre and community facility in Catterick Garrison (£19m)
- West Yorkshire – bus service and journey time improvements (£41m)



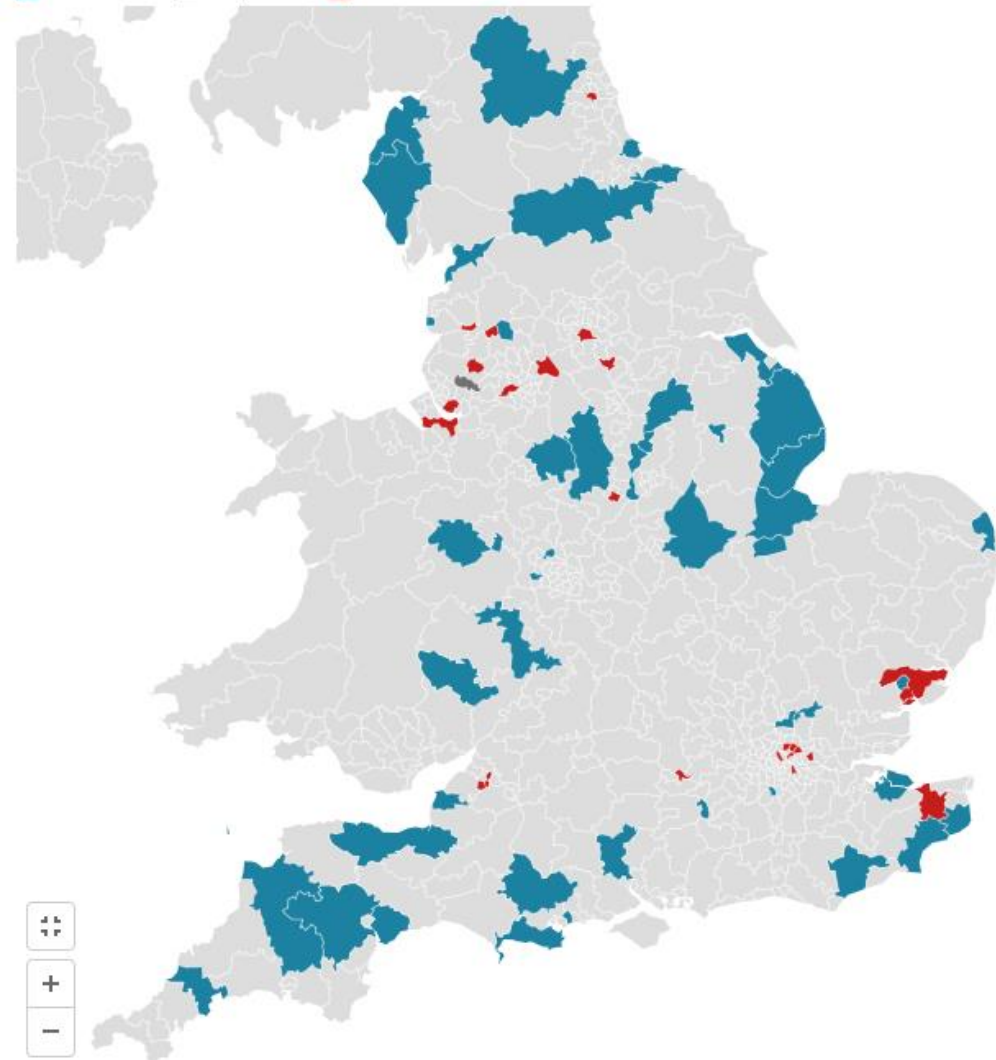
Although South East was awarded (£210m) almost twice as much as Yorkshire (£120m) the table shows when looking at funding per capita Yorkshire gains more.

However, Yorkshire & Humber have had biggest decrease in funding compared to the last Levelling Up fund a change of -5.3%, compared to London which got the biggest increase (3.2%) of funding.

Levelling Up funding - Round 2

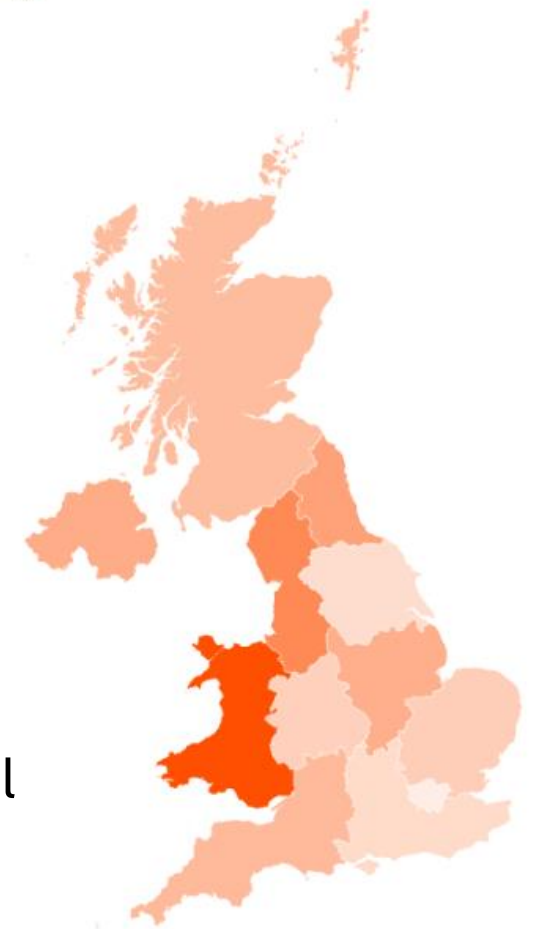
The 74 awards in England which can be matched to a particular constituency

Conservative Independent Labour



Levelling Up awards (Round 2)

£ per head in region
£15 £70



Spatial analysis by 'Northern Agenda' identifies how settlements correspond to population sizes and electoral outcomes.

Per head, funding has been most concentrated in Wales, followed by the North West and North East.

Analysis at constituency level shows that Conservative constituencies totaled around 50% more successful bids than Labour (50 to 23).

However, this matches almost exactly the proportion of sitting MPs (261 to 174).

Levelling Up in South Yorkshire

From these, South Yorkshire was awarded £10.2m for the 'Barnsley Futures' bid which will help transform young people's cultural and well-being facilities in the newly redeveloped town centre. It includes:

- The creation of an activity park next to the town centre's forthcoming Youth Zone, including a skate park, bike track, new active routes and play spaces.
- Redevelopment of the Young People's Wellbeing Hub 'H.O.M.E.' based at the YMCA to provide fit-for-purpose places for services focused on emotional well-being and resilience including a broad range of mental health and well-being activity.
- Creation of a new Northern Academy for Vocal Excellence (NAVE) to deliver outstanding singing tuition to young people, serving as a permanent home to the world-renowned Barnsley Youth Choir.
- Contributions to the major project to refurbish The Civic cultural centre to secure its future and extend its reach, bringing into use parts of the building not used for many years so it can work with and attract new audiences to develop their skills and talents.



Rising Pay



Rising Pay

Recent figures from the [Office for National Statistics](#) show wages have grown at the fastest rate in more than 20 years, but are still failing to keep up with rising prices.

Average pay, including and excluding bonuses, rose by 6.4% between September and November compared with the same period in 2021.

It is the fastest growth since 2001, but when adjusted for rising prices, wages fell in real terms by 2.6%.

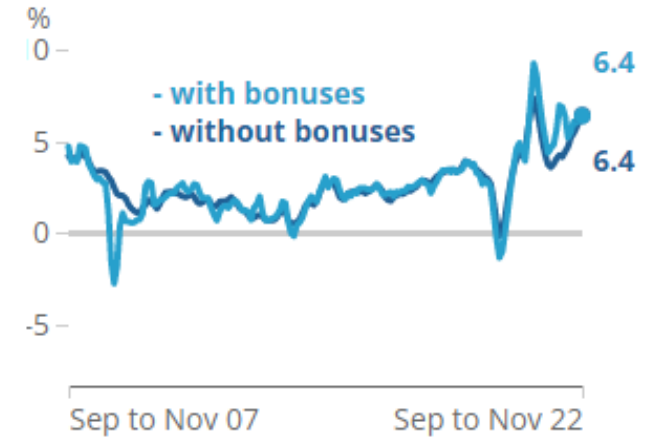
Nominal Earnings

Average Weekly Earnings annual growth rates - nominal pay

Outside of the pandemic period, regular pay has seen the strongest growth in the latest quarter.

Source: ONS MWSS

[Read more](#)



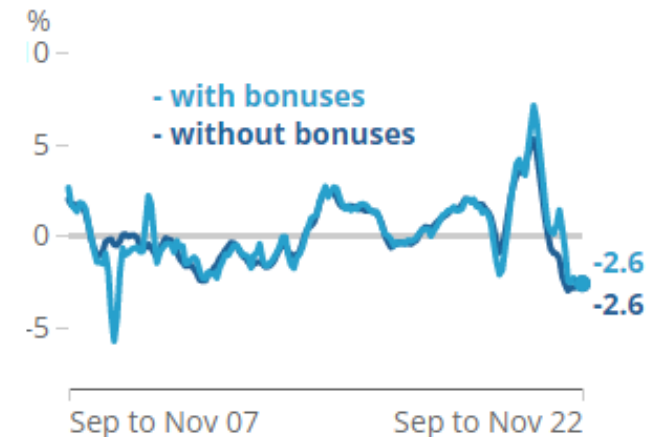
Real Earnings

Average Weekly Earnings annual growth rates - real pay

Increases in inflation in recent months are causing real pay growth rates to decrease.

Source: ONS MWSS

[Read more](#)



Private vs Public Sector

The gap between public and private sector pay also remained close to a record high.

Excluding the height of the Covid pandemic, when people got big pay rises after returning to work, private sector wages grew 7.2% annually in the three months to November.

This was more than double that of the 3.3% increase in the public sector

Private sector wage rises are being driven by employers contending with market forces in the shape of one of the tightest labour markets in decades, with vacancies still exceeding 1.1 million and unemployment at 3.7%.

Hours worked

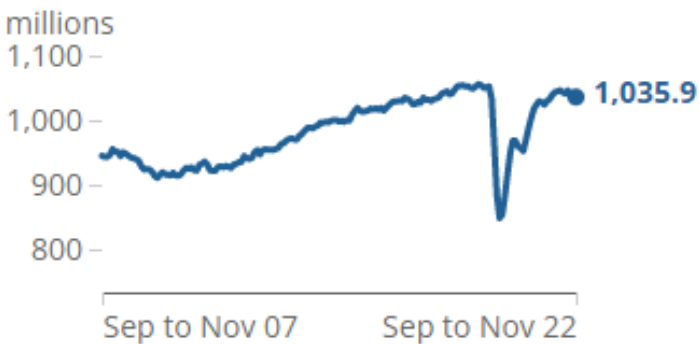
Total actual weekly hours worked

Quarterly change: ▼ -10.0 million
Since Dec-Feb 2020: ▼ -16.3 million

Total actual weekly hours worked decreased on the quarter, and are still below pre-pandemic levels.

Source: ONS LFS

[Read more](#)



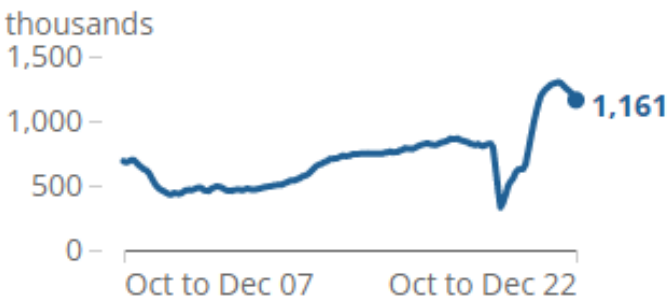
Job vacancies

Number of job vacancies

Quarterly change: ▼ -75,000
Since Jan-Mar 2020: ▲ 365,000

Vacancies decreased on the quarter but are above pre-pandemic levels.

Source: ONS Vacancy Survey



Inflation

Living costs are rising at the fastest rate in almost 40 years, with energy and food prices shooting up, largely due to the war in Ukraine.

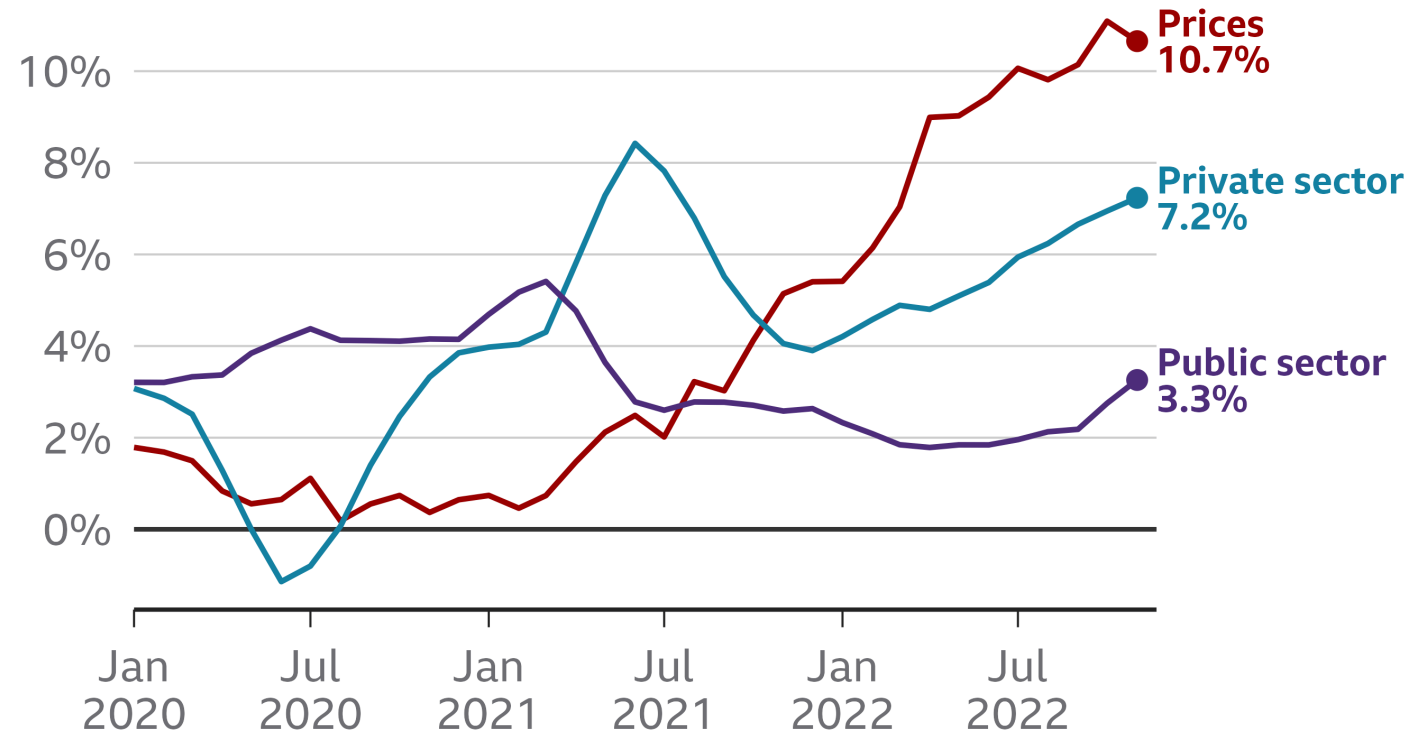
Inflation, the rate at which prices rise, is currently at 10.7%, the highest since the 1970's

The average earnings rise of 6.4% (both including and excluding bonuses) may be the highest in cash terms, but because each pound buys you less and less, it's one of the biggest pay cuts in real terms that we've seen this century.

For public sector workers on an average rise of only 3.3%, it works out as a real-terms pay cut of over 5.5%

Pay is not keeping up with inflation

Annual wage and price growth, Jan 2020 to Nov 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics

Startups Cities Index



Sheffield Tops the List

Startups.co.uk recently unveiled its [Startups Cities Index](#), an annual ranking of the top cities in the UK – outside of London – for starting a business.

The index looks at 42 research categories covering everything from digital infrastructure to high street funding, and with this information determines the best overall city for start-ups to thrive in.

This year, ***Sheffield*** has been revealed as the ultimate winner, thanks to the city’s strong performance across the research areas, with the industrial powerhouse impressing the researchers with the low cost of living, large working population and fantastic transport links.

1. Sheffield	14. Coventry
2. Glasgow	15. Southampton
3. Liverpool	16. Hull
4. Bristol	17. Belfast
5. Leeds	18. Plymouth
6. Cardiff	19. Swansea
7. Newcastle	20. Oxford
8. Edinburgh	21. York
9. Manchester	22. Derby
10. Birmingham	23. Cambridge
11. Brighton	24. Norwich
12. Leicester	25. Portsmouth
13. Nottingham	

Impressing Across the Board

The city impressed in multiple categories, making the top 10 in four out of our five main research categories, including second for business support and third for talent.

The panel made reference to the impressive business profile of South Yorkshire that is home to world-class brands, including Boeing and HSBC.

Also, they described the impact of the Innovation District, the globally significant centre for innovation and translational research that spans over 20,000 acres, as a major driver of growth in the north of England and across the UK.

Not only this but the role of being a university city, meaning it is home to thousands of highly skilled workers and graduates, creating a huge pool of talent for recruiters to pick from.



Looking away from London

Many often automatically assume that the capital is the best place to launch a new product or service, which can lead to data bias.

In actuality, the latest [ONS figures](#) on the UK’s business demography show that, while London has one of the most startups (14.1%), it also has one of the highest death rate (11.5%).

This figure is higher than in the Yorkshire and Humber region (10.9%), where Sheffield is located.

The UK government Levelling Up white paper promises that regions across the country will receive additional funding to encourage entrepreneurship and level out the playing field.

Table 5: Birth and death rates by region
UK, 2021

	Counts given to the nearest thousand				
	Active	Births		Deaths	
	Count	Count	Rate (%)	Count	Rate (%)
North East	78	10	13.0	9	11.0
North West	291	39	13.4	34	11.6
Yorkshire and The Humber	203	25	12.3	22	10.9
East Midlands	198	23	11.8	22	10.9
West Midlands	240	34	14.2	31	13.0
East	291	33	11.4	31	10.7
London	606	85	14.1	70	11.5
South East	449	48	10.8	49	10.8
South West	237	26	10.9	23	9.8
Wales	106	14	13.2	12	11.5
Scotland	176	19	10.7	20	11.2
Northern Ireland	65	7	10.3	5	8.0
Total	2,940	364	12.4	327	11.1

Source: Office for National Statistics – Inter-Departmental Business Register

Potential in Levelling Up

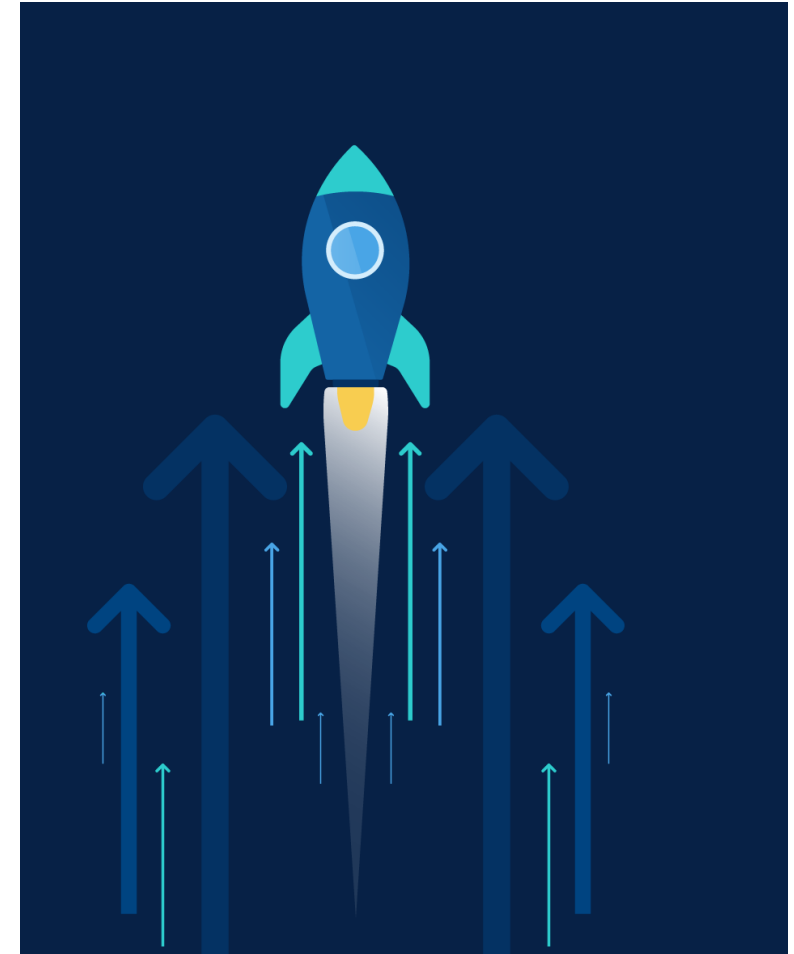
Despite Sheffield's success, it is impossible to state categorically that one city is a better guarantor of start-up success than another.

The lottery of entrepreneurship means that one firm in a rural setting may prosper, while an urban company may fail.

The Index shows that every UK city is different and empowers new business in unique ways.

Remote-working businesses, for example, will do best in Liverpool, which topped our ranking for digital infrastructure. Offline businesses are more likely to thrive in Swansea, which shows the best high street recovery post-COVID *and* has the lowest average commercial rent.

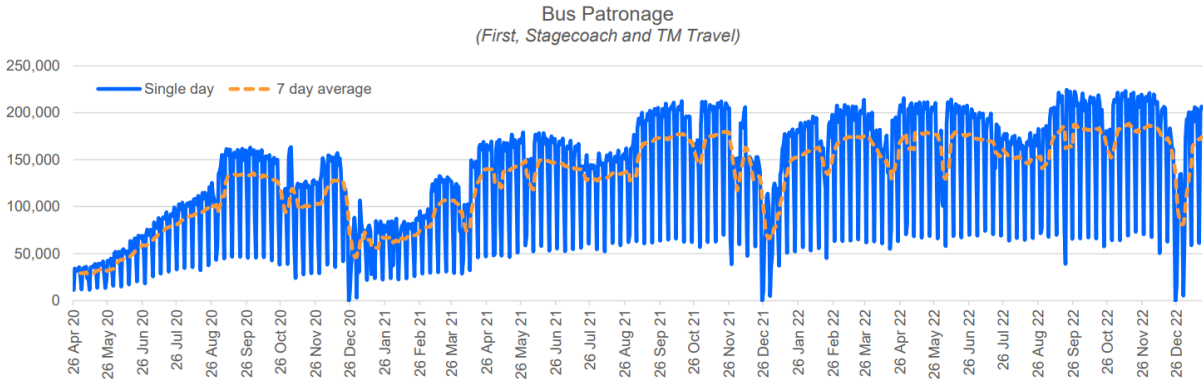
So, whether they're based in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, every one of our top 25 cities and communities are providing unique and inventive solutions that can bring value to any startup.



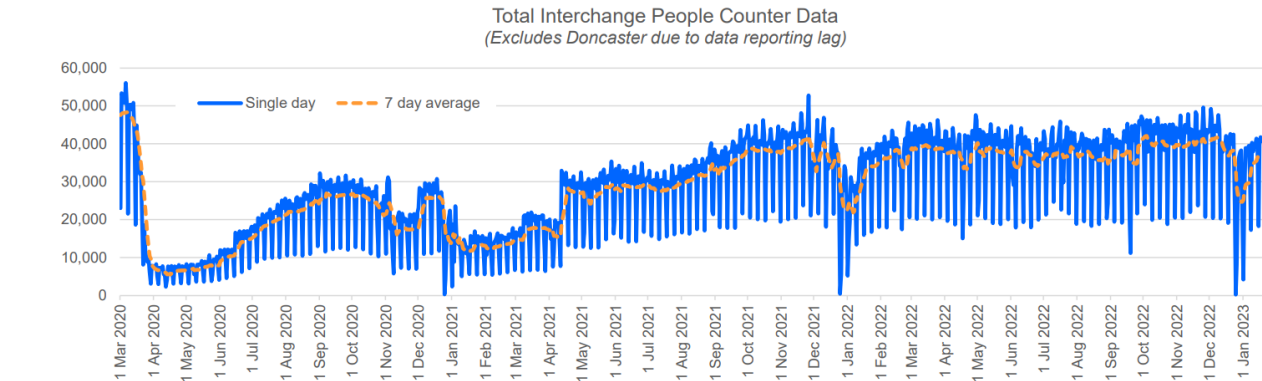
Local Data



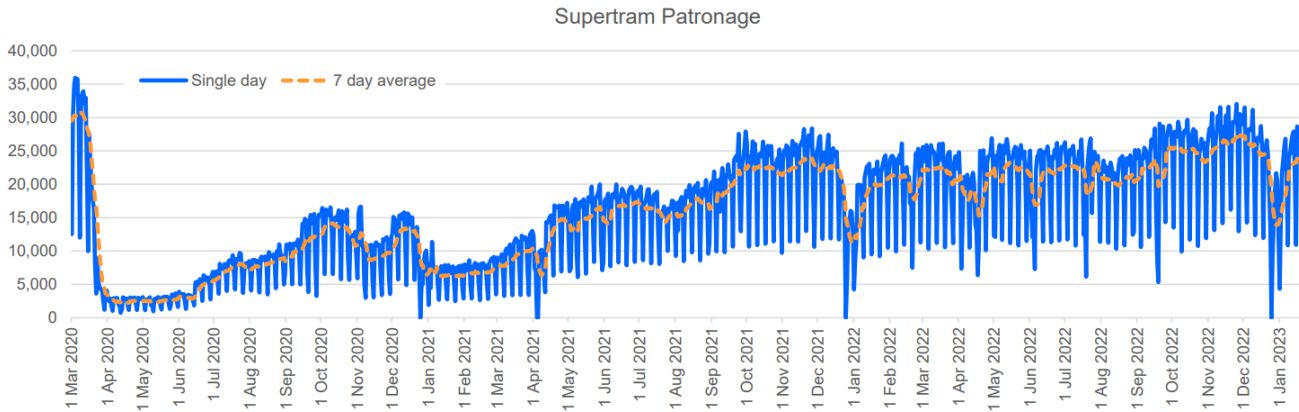
Public Transport Tracking



Latest day compared to same day last week: **+891** **+3.4%**
7 day average compared to previous 7 day average: **+1,811** **+8.0%**
Latest week proportion of pre-Covid: **80.8%**
The pre-Covid value is defined as the weekly total for January 19th to 25th 2020



Latest day compared to same day last week: **+16,289** **+8.6%**
7 day average compared to previous 7 day average: **+7,849** **+4.7%**
Latest week proportion of pre-Covid: **74.6%**
The pre-Covid value is defined as the weekly total for January 19th to 25th 2020
Note that this information is only available to 17th January due to a data lag



Latest day compared to same day last week: **+932** **+2.3%**
7 day average compared to previous 7 day average: **+2,341** **+6.7%**

Source: SYMCA

And in other news.....

South Yorkshire Data & Intelligence Hub

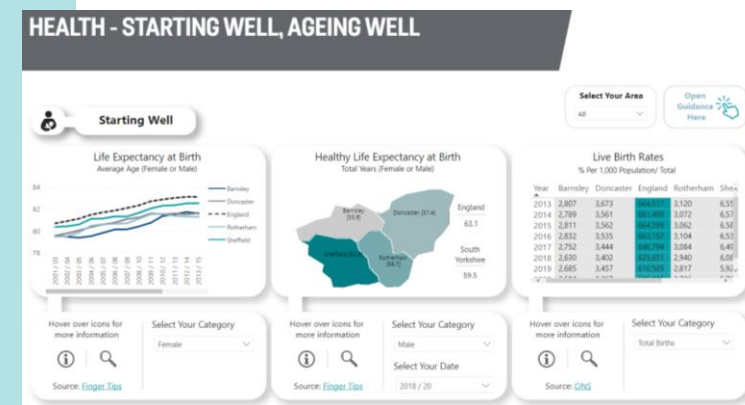
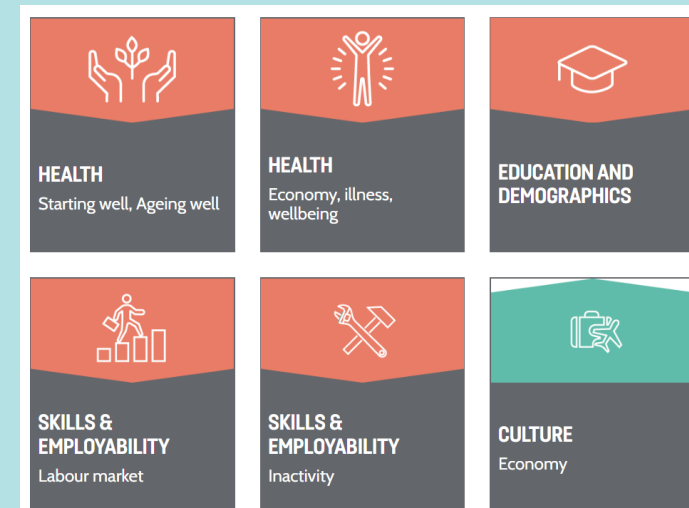
Want to access data and trends relating to South Yorkshire?

Head to the [South Yorkshire Data & Intelligence Hub](https://southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/Data-Intelligence-Hub), which provides a range of data useful for understanding the local economy, as well as social and environmental outcomes.

It also helps to understand relative performance and changes in data. See how it works on YouTube [here](#).

Whether you're a resident, employer, academic, researcher or just interested in data, this can help you understand South Yorkshire's economy and develop evidence-based solutions.

Visit the dashboard now at <https://southyorkshire-ca.gov.uk/Data-Intelligence-Hub>



End of Levelling Up?

Alongside the Levelling Up Fund allocations, this week [The Times](#) revealed that Conservative MPs in marginal seats have been told to ditch the phrase as ‘no one knows what it means’.

Those at risk of losing their seats have been advised by party staff to use phrases such as “stepping up”, “gauging up” or “enhancing communities” instead.

Whilst these phrases aren’t as catchy, they have potential to create some eye-opening political set pieces (think poses on steps or being surrounded by huge gauges).

Here at SYMCA, we have dug into our thesaurus and proposed our alternatives that have the same meaning including: **Abreast Up**, **On Par Up**, **Nip and Tuck Up**, **Align Up** and **Equalize Up**.

If you see any of these feature in the 2024 election, you heard it hear first...



The Rising Price of Coffee (Bean)

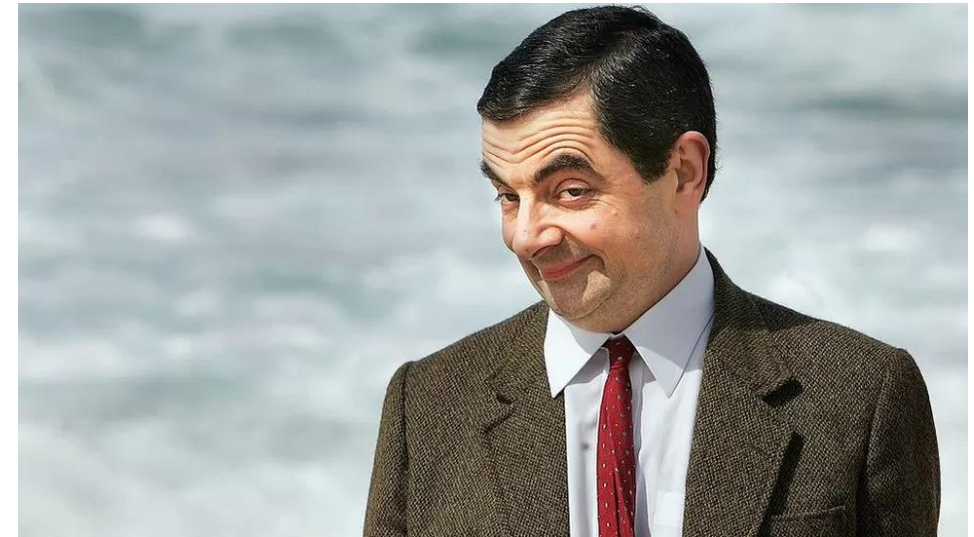
We have all noticed the rising price of everything around us thanks to rising inflation caused by several complicated international and economic factors.

But don't worry, our Chancellor has sought to give us a lesson in global economics whilst ordering a cup of coffee.

Despite his best attempts (even using props to visualise), there are similarities with a well known film character....

If you haven't had the joy yet, you can watch it here:

<https://twitter.com/hmtreasury/status/1615610241361534977?s=20&t=Sujs-hudtcP7cJV3NpPF1w>



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