

Greater Essex Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)

(Essex, Southend
and Thurrock)

Annex C Data Report

(This is a supporting report to the Essex
LSIP.)

June 2025 Update



Funded by
UK Government

Updates

We will periodically be reviewing and updating the data as new data becomes available.

Update 1	Page 5	Fig 6	Employment by Occupation. Essex & East England. Source: Annual Population Survey ONS May 2025.
Update 2	Page 31	Fig 22	Apprenticeship Achievement by Subject Sector Area and Local Authority 2023/24. Basildon, Braintree, Brentwood, Castle Point, Chelmsford, Colchester, and Epping Forest. Source: Apprenticeship Achievements 2023/24 DfE.
Update 3	Page 32	Fig 23	Apprenticeship Achievement by Subject Sector Area and Local Authority 2023/24. Harlow, Maldon, Rochford, Southend-on-Sea, Tendring, Thurrock, and Uttlesford. Source: Apprenticeship Achievements 2023/24 DfE.

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Introduction

The Local Skills Improvement Plan data pack is provided to give in depth information about Greater Essex.

Greater Essex when mentioned within the report is the local authorities which sit under Essex County Council (as described in the table to the right) and the unitary authorities of Southend on Sea (Southend City Council) and Thurrock.

This report pulls data from numerous sources to provide an overview of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges that face Greater Essex.

This report is meant to be read in conjunction with the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP).

Greater Essex

Essex County Council Local Authorities
Basildon Borough Council
Braintree District Council
Brentwood Borough Council
Castle Point Borough Council
Chelmsford City Council
Colchester Borough Council
Epping Forest District Council
Harlow District Council
Maldon District Council
Rochford District Council
Tendring District Council
Uttlesford District Council
Southend-on-Sea City Council
Thurrock Council

Employment

There are 756,000 jobs across the greater Essex area, this has seen an increase of over 36,000 jobs since 2019.

Essex is home to over 80,000 businesses, split across the seventeen sectors.

The sectors where most employment is notably higher than average are construction, transportation & storage, accommodation & food services, information & communications & education. Some of this can be attributed to main transport hubs such as Stansted and Southend Airports and the ports of Harwich and Tilbury. The high number of accommodation & food service jobs can in part be linked to the two big coastal areas of Tendring and Southend on Sea and the close proximity to London.

Essex employment sits below the national average in several areas, most notably manufacturing, property, professional, scientific & technical, and public administration & defence.

The Human health and social work activities sector remains the largest employer, with a 0.5% increase in employment over the past twelve months, both regionally and nationally.

Similarly, the accommodation and food services sector has experienced a 0.5% growth since last year.

Conversely, the retail sector has seen the most significant decline, with a 0.5% decrease in employment both regionally and nationally. The education sector has also faced a downturn, with a regional decrease of over 0.5% and a national decrease of 0.2% in the last twelve months.

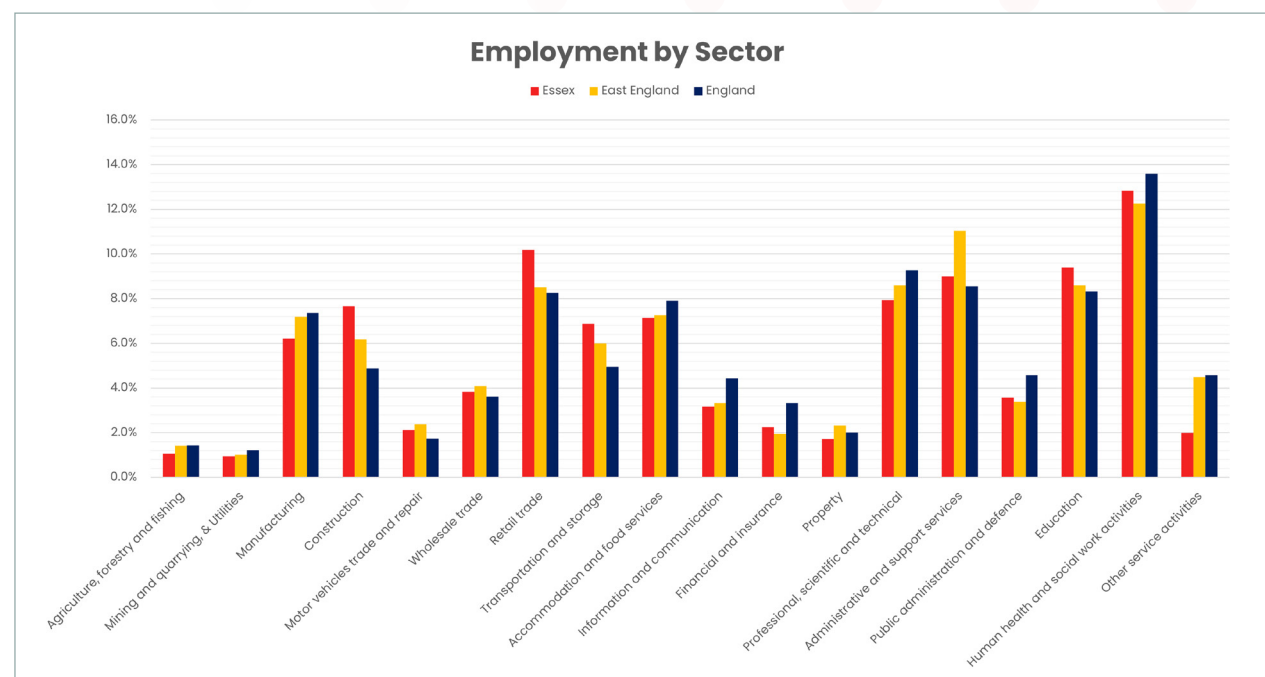


Fig 1: Employment by Sector – Essex, East England & England. This data uses ONS Standard Industry Classification (SIC) codes 2007 at the section level. Source: Business Register and Employment Survey ONS Dec 24.

Employment (continued)

In Basildon, the key sectors for employment are retail (16.8%), human health activities (15.4%) and professional, scientific, and technical (9.9%). This accounts for nearly half of the 91,700 jobs within the district.

In Braintree, the key sectors for employment are retail (16.5%), human health activities (10.7%) followed by construction, manufacturing, professional, scientific & technical and education (8.9%). These sectors account for over half of the 55,150 jobs within the district.

In Brentwood, the key sectors for employment are administrative and support services (13.9%), followed by construction (12.5%) and professional, scientific & technical (11.1%). This accounts for around a third of the 36,285 jobs within the district.

In Castle Point, the key sectors for employment are retail (19.1%), followed by education (15.5%) and administrative & support services (10.2%). These sectors account for nearly half of the 22,370 jobs within the district.

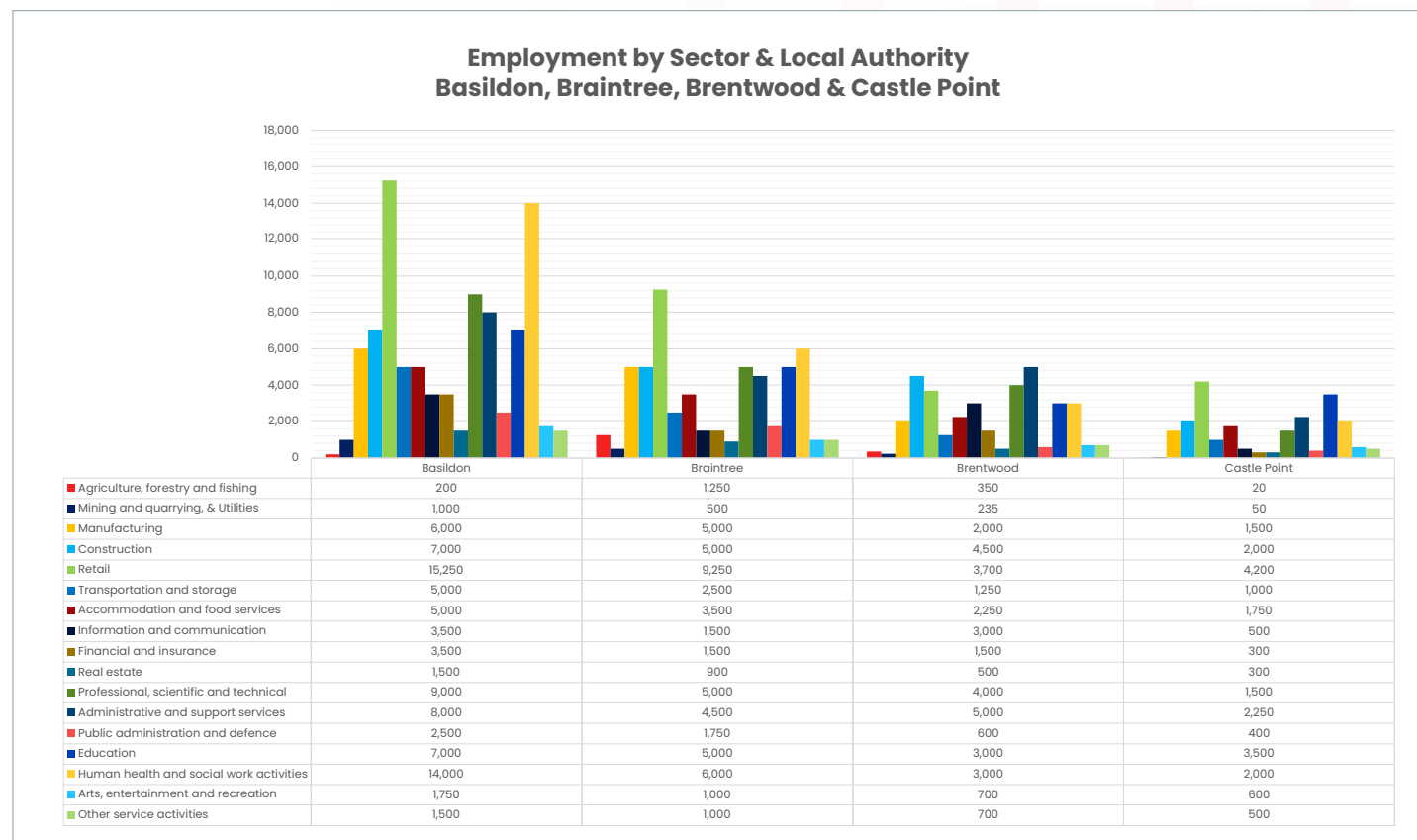


Fig 2: Employment by Sector & Local Authority – Basildon, Braintree, Brentwood and Castle Point. This data uses ONS Standard Industry Classification (SIC) codes 2007 at the section level. Source: Business Register and Employment Survey ONS Dec 22.



Employment (continued)

In Chelmsford, the key sectors for employment are human health & social work activities (17.4%), retail (12%) and education (9.8%). This accounts for over a third of the 92,700 jobs within the district.

In Colchester, the key sectors for employment are human health & social work activities (16.5%), retail (16.5%) and education (11.8%). This accounts for nearly half of the 84,420 jobs within the district.

In Epping Forest, the key sectors of employment are retail, administration & support services (14.5%) human health & social work activities and construction (12.8%). This accounts for nearly half of the 55,850 jobs within the district.

In Harlow, the key sectors of employment are retail (17.5%), human health & social work activities (15.9%) and administration & support services (10.2%). This accounts for over half of the 42,350 jobs within the district.



Fig 3: Employment by Sector & Local Authority. Chelmsford, Colchester, Epping Forest, and Harlow. This data uses ONS Standard Industry Classification (SIC) codes 2007 at the section level. Source: Business Register and Employment Survey ONS Dec 22.

Employment (continued)

In Maldon, the key sectors are retail (18.3%), construction and manufacturing (both 11.9%). This accounts for nearly half of the 21,045 jobs within the district.

In Rochford, the key sectors are retail (15.2%), human health & social work activities and education (both 12.5%). This accounts for around half of the 24,952 jobs within the district.

In Southend on Sea, the key sectors are human health and social work activities (16.7%), retail (14.4%) and education (10.6%). This accounts for just under half of the 65,255 jobs within the area.

Employment by Sector and Local Authority
Maldon, Rochford & Southend-on-Sea

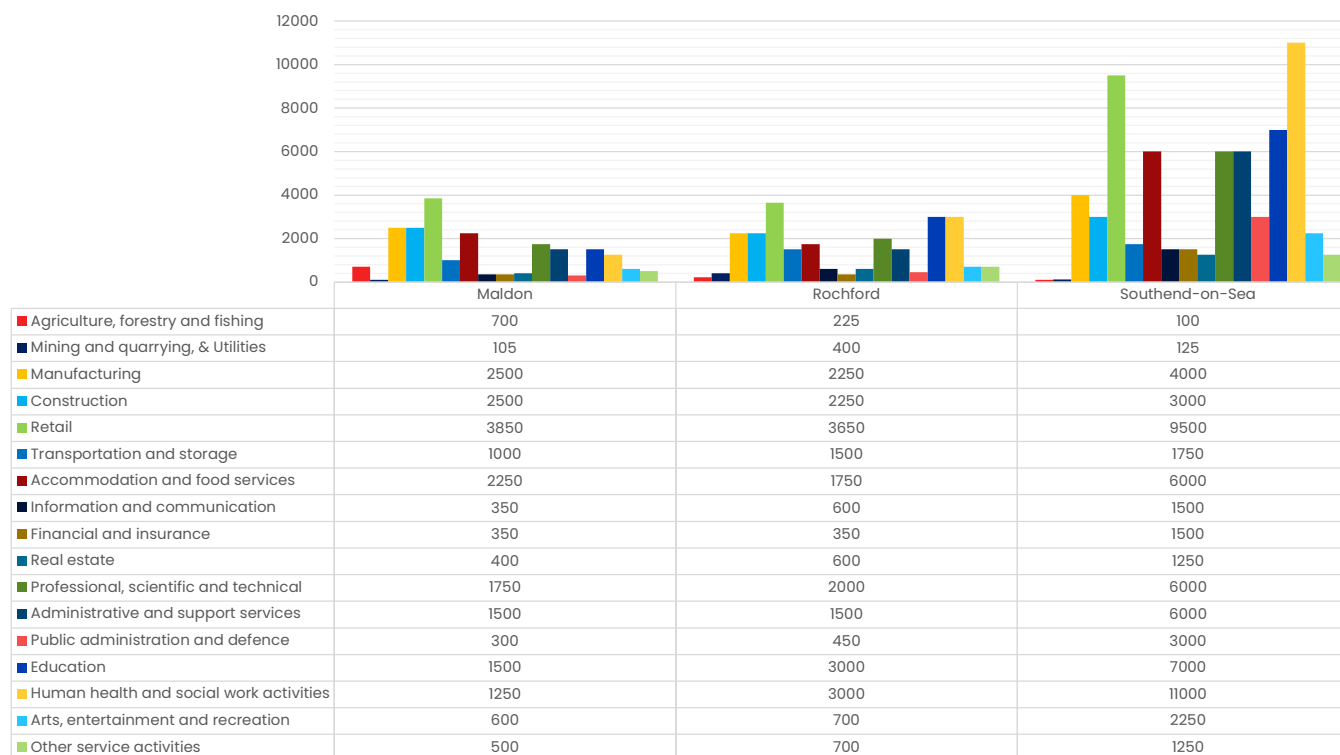


Fig 4: Employment by Sector and Local Authority. Maldon, Rochford & Southend-on-Sea. This data uses ONS Standard Industry Classification (SIC) codes 2007 at the section level. Source: Business Register and Employment Survey ONS Dec 22.

Employment (continued)

In Tendring, the key sectors are retail (17.4%), human health & social work activities (16.3%) and accommodation & food services (11.6%). This accounts for just over a third of the 43,250 jobs within the district.

In Thurrock, the key sectors are transportation & storage (21.1%), construction, education, human health & social work activities and public administration & defence (all 7.9%). This accounts for just over half of the 74,755 jobs.

In Uttlesford, the key sectors are transportation & storage (20%), retail (11.6%), professional, scientific & technical and administrative & support services (both 8.9%). This accounts for around half of the 45,320 jobs within the district.

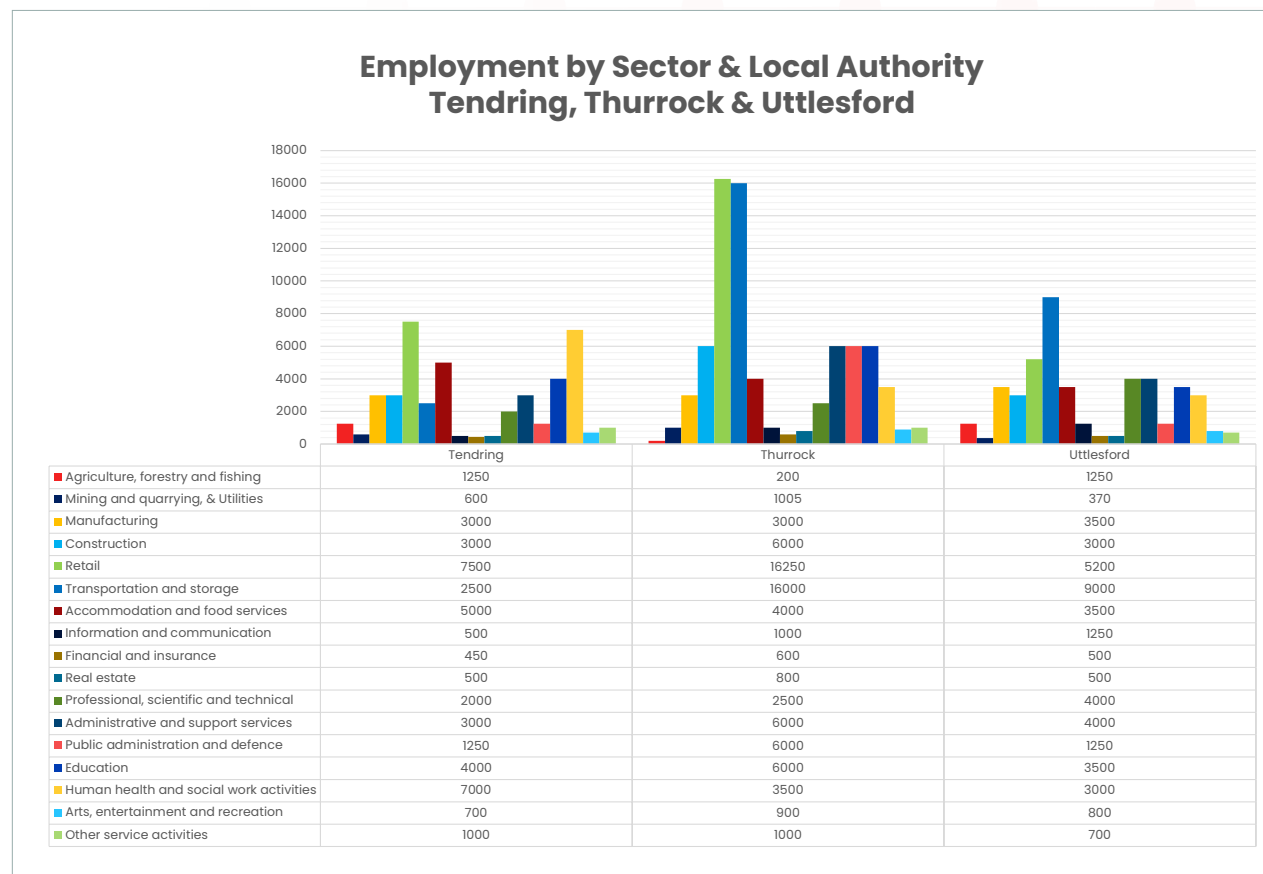


Fig 5: Employment by Sector and Local Authority. Tendring, Thurrock and Uttlesford. This data uses ONS Standard Industry Classification (SIC) codes 2007 at the section level. Source: Business Register and Employment Survey ONS Dec 22.

Employment (continued)

In Essex, despite a slight decrease in the first half of 2025 most roles still sit in professional occupations, with just over a quarter of the county's jobs now in this sector. This mirrors the trend observed in the East of England region

Meanwhile, there has been growth in skilled trades and elementary occupations during the same period. Sales and customer service roles represent the smallest share of employment in the county.

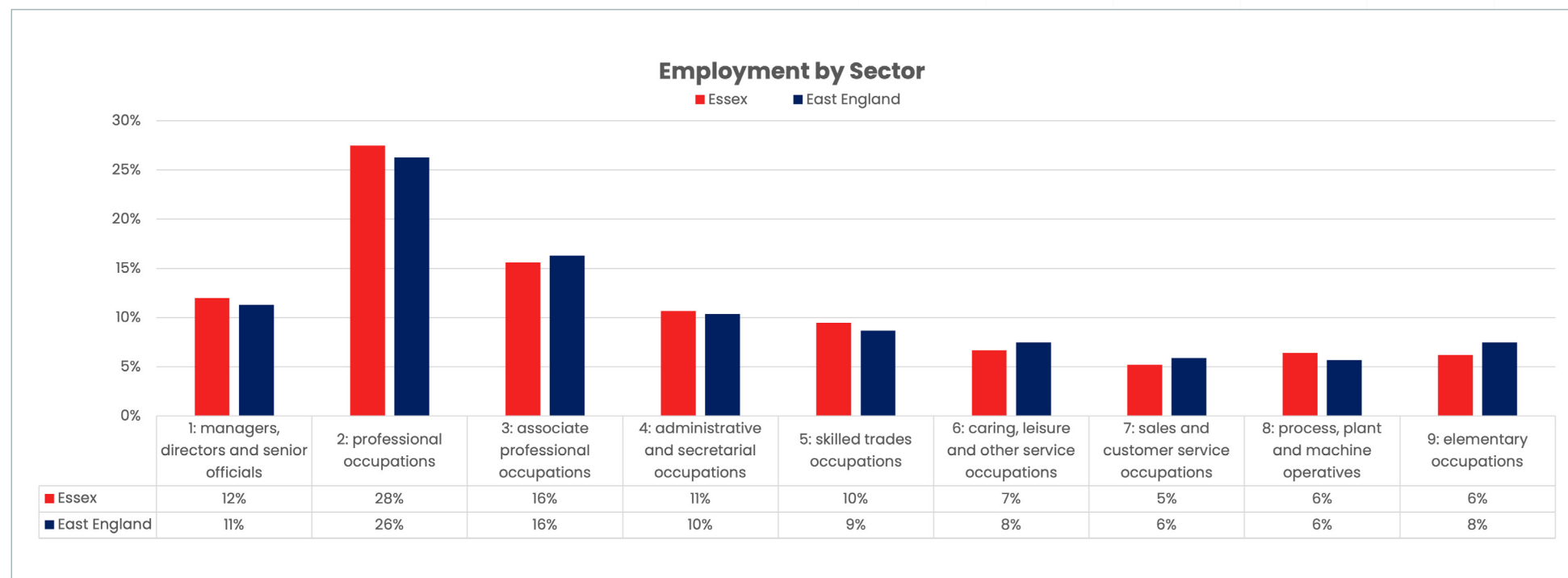


Fig 6: Employment by Occupation. Essex & East England. Source: Annual Population Survey ONS May 2025.

Employment Rate & Employment Level

Regarding employment levels in Essex, there is a significantly higher proportion of employed individuals compared to self-employed individuals, a trend that has remained consistent over time.

Over the past twelve months, both employment and self-employment levels have seen a modest increase. Specifically, there are 3,100 more employed individuals and 2,700 more self-employed individuals. This data suggests that employment levels in Essex are on the rise following the pandemic.

Since 2013, employment levels in Essex have increased by 3%, consistently maintaining around 78% in recent years. Notably, Essex has consistently had a higher employment rate than the national average, which is currently 75%, compared to Essex's 77%.

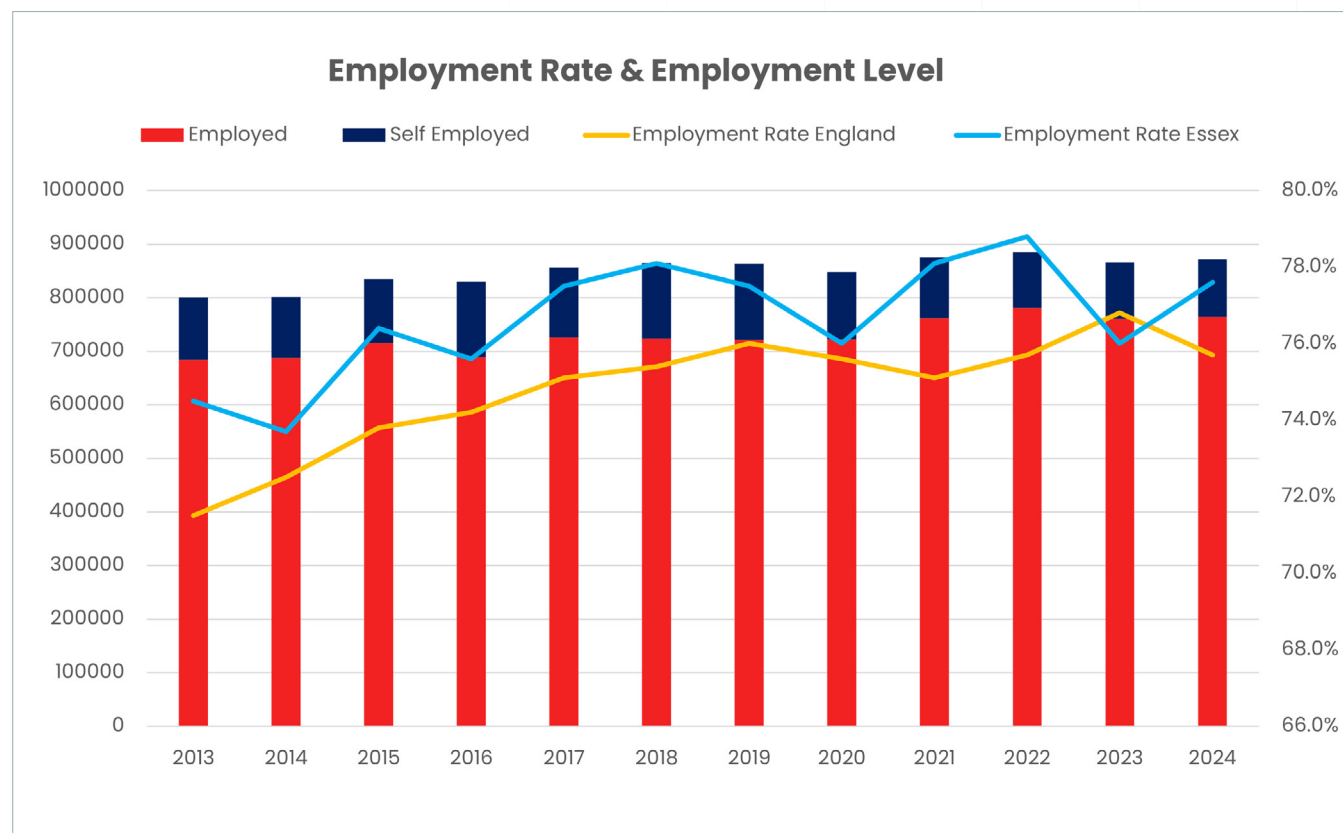


Fig 7: Employment Rate and Employment Level for Essex & England. Source: Annual Population Survey ONS Dec 24

Employment Rate & Employment Level (continued)

Analysing employment rates by local authority since 2019, we observe that in the past twelve months, Maldon district experienced the highest employment growth at 14%, followed by Colchester district at 7% and Chelmsford district at 4%.

Conversely, there has been a decline in employment rates in several districts over the same period, most notably in Uttlesford district (16.8%), Braintree district (12.5%), and Tendring district (5.9%).

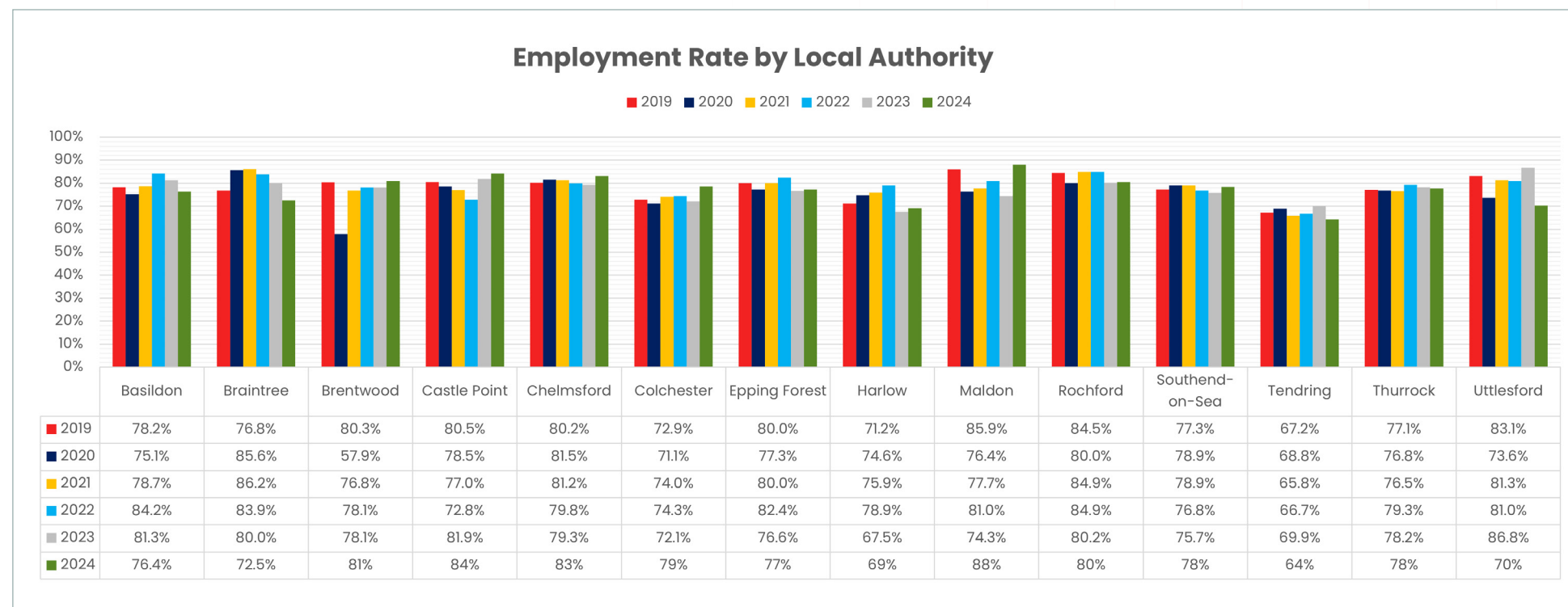


Fig 8: Employment Rate by Local Authority 2019 – 2024. Source Annual Population Survey ONS December 24.

Employment Rate & Employment Level (continued)

Examining the self-employment rate by district over the past twelve months, the most significant growth has been observed in Epping Forest district (7.8%), Colchester district (7.6%), and Basildon district (6.8%).

Conversely, the districts that have experienced the largest decreases in self-employment during the same period are Castle Point district (4.3%), Uttlesford district (1.9%), and Thurrock district (0.5%).

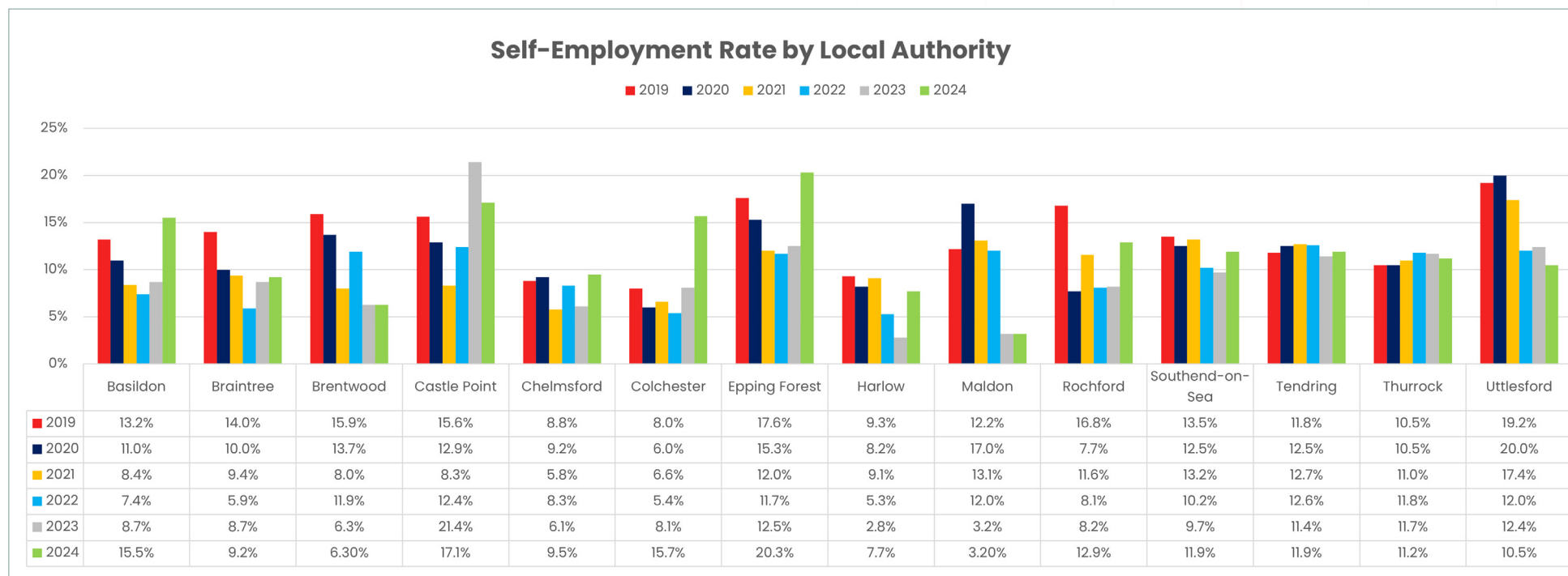


Fig 9: Self-Employment Rate by Local Authority 2019 – 2024. Source Annual Population Survey ONS December 2024.

Business Environment

Essex is home to 80,800 businesses, with 72,755 classified as micro, making up the majority of the business landscape. Additionally, there are 6,675 small businesses, 1,135 medium-sized businesses, and 235 large businesses.

Over the past twelve months, there has been minimal change in the business landscape of Essex, with micro businesses continuing to dominate. Essex's business composition is consistent with that of the East of England and England as a whole.

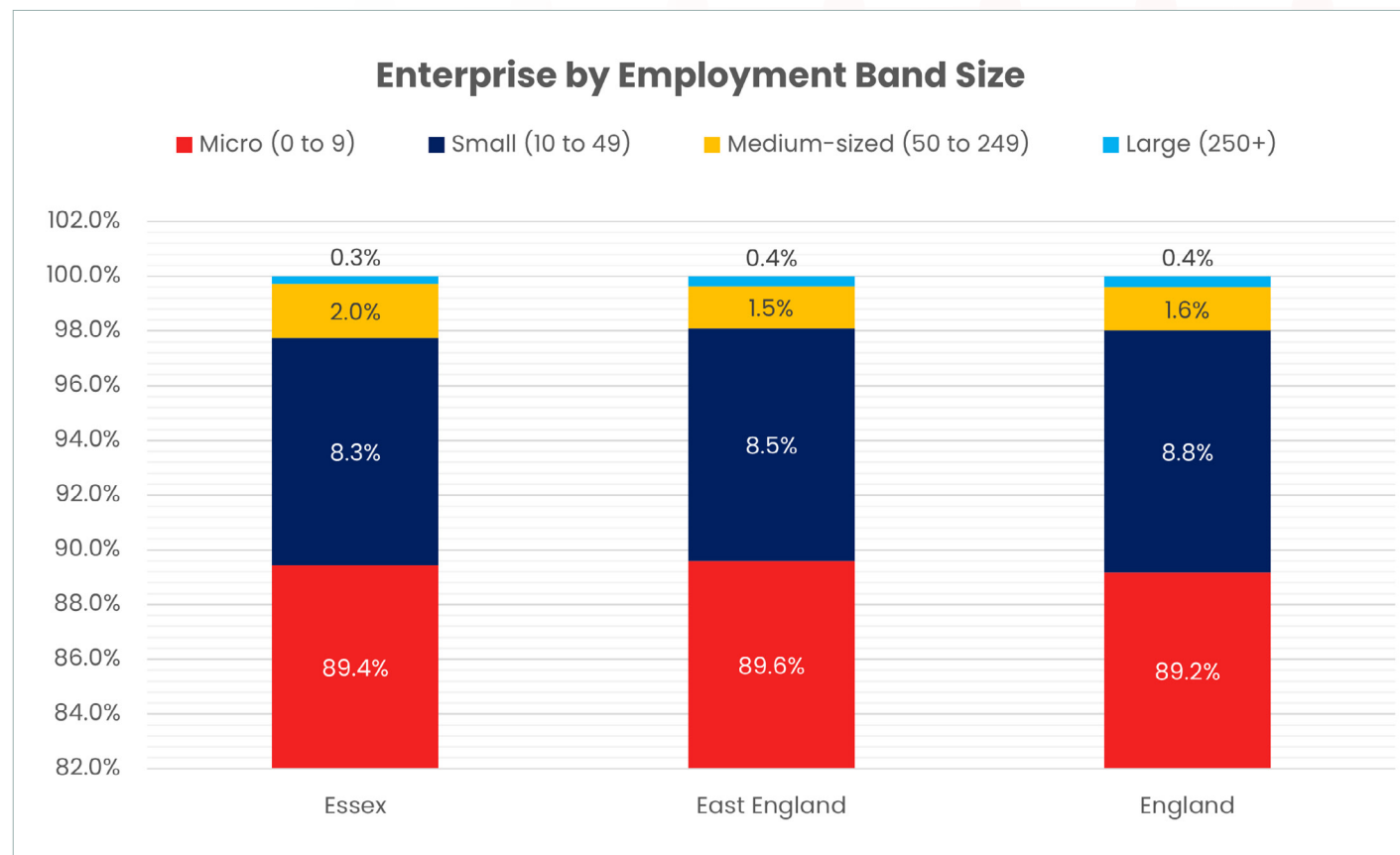


Fig 10: Enterprise by Employment Band Size – 2024 – Essex, East England & England. Source: UK Business Counts – Enterprises by Industry and Employment Size Band ONS Nov 24.

Business Environment (continued)

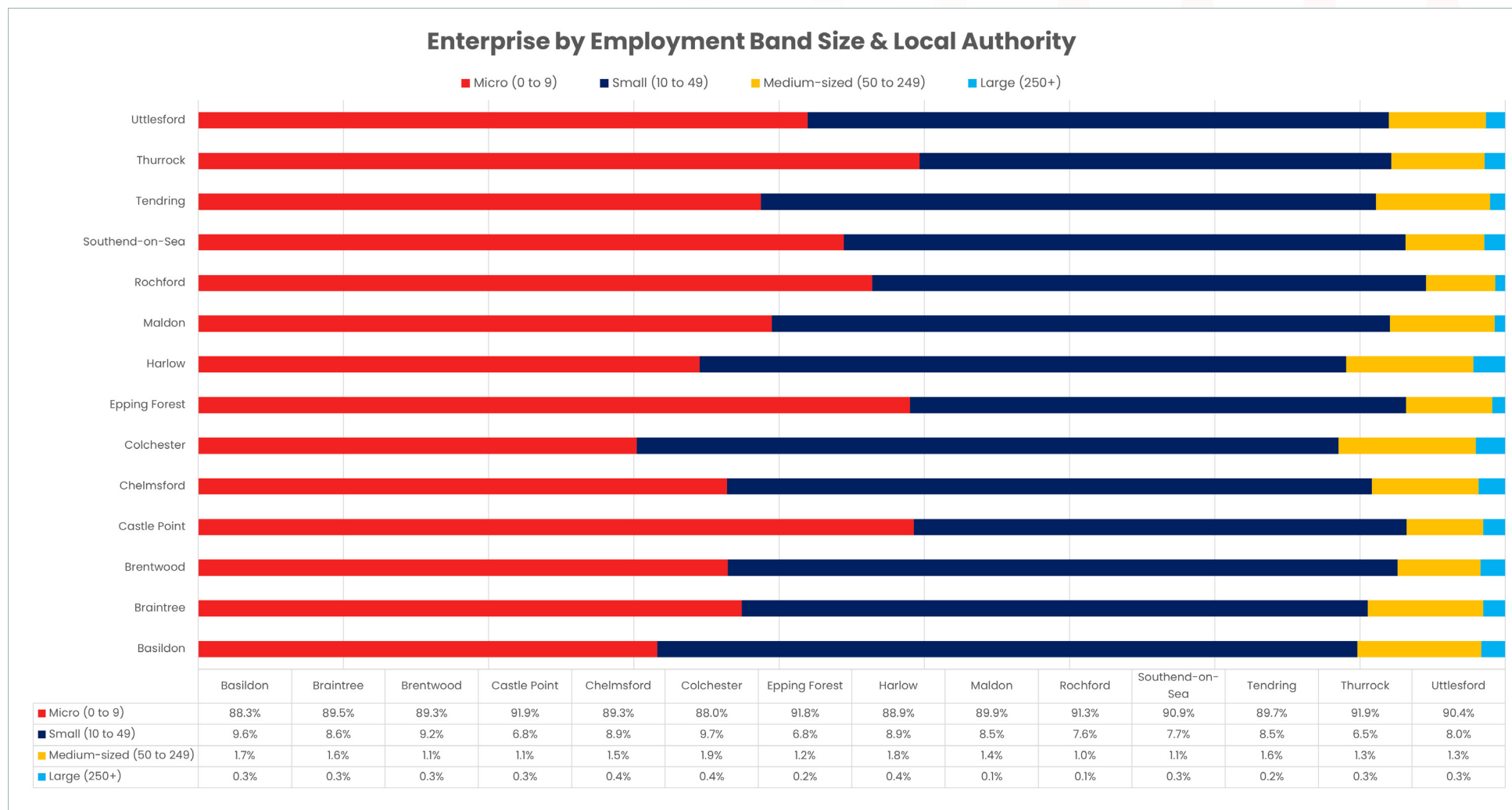


Fig 11: Enterprise by Employment Band Size and Local Authority. Source: UK Business Counts – Enterprises by Industry and Employment Size Band ONS November 2024.

Business Environment (continued)

When we look at the enterprise size at a district level, we are once again reminded of the diverse landscape of Essex businesses.

The tables below give an estimate for each district of how employment numbers are distributed across enterprises by employment band size. Micro businesses are assumed to have an average of 1.7 employees and Medium sized businesses an average of 100, based on national level PAYE information from HMRC. Enterprise counts include public sector bodies and over 20% of large enterprises are public sector bodies.

Basildon has a total of 7,620 businesses across the district, with an estimate of 82,311 jobs.

Business Type	Number of Business	Estimate of employment jobs
Micro	6,730	11,441
Small	735	12,495
Medium	130	13,000
Large	25	45,375

Braintree has a total of 6,610 businesses across the district, with an estimate of 66,545 jobs.

Business Type	Number of Business	Estimate of employment jobs
Micro	5,915	10,055
Small	570	9,690
Medium	105	10,500
Large	20	36,300

Brentwood has a total of 4,390 businesses across the district, with an estimate of 45,774 jobs.

Business Type	Number of Business	Estimate of employment jobs
Micro	3920	6,664
Small	405	6,885
Medium	50	5,000
Large	15	27,225

Castle Point has a total of 3,315 businesses across the district, with an estimate of 30,651 jobs.

Business Type	Number of Business	Estimate of employment jobs
Micro	3,045	5,176
Small	225	3,825
Medium	35	3,500
Large	10	18,150

Chelmsford has a total of 8,165 businesses across the district, with an estimate of 91,168 jobs.

Business Type	Number of Business	Estimate of employment jobs
Micro	7,290	12,393
Small	725	12,325
Medium	120	12,000
Large	30	54,450

Business Environment (continued)

Colchester has a total of 7,400 businesses across the district, with an estimate of 91,680 jobs.

Business Type	Number of Business	Estimate of employment jobs
Micro	6,615	11,075
Small	715	12,155
Medium	140	14,000
Large	30	54,450

Epping Forest has a total of 8,415 businesses across the district, with an estimate of 60,125 jobs.

Business Type	Number of Business	Estimate of employment jobs
Micro	7,725	13,125
Small	575	9,775
Medium	100	10,000
Large	30	27,225

Harlow has a total of 3,425 businesses across the district, with an estimate of 43,586 jobs.

Business Type	Number of Business	Estimate of employment jobs
Micro	3,045	5,176
Small	305	5,185
Medium	60	6,000
Large	30	27,225

Maldon has a total of 3,465 businesses across the district, with an estimate of 24,385 jobs.

Business Type	Number of Business	Estimate of employment jobs
Micro	3,115	5,295
Small	295	5,015
Medium	50	5,000
Large	5	9,075

Rochford has a total of 3,670 businesses across the district, with an estimate of 23,030 jobs.

Business Type	Number of Business	Estimate of employment jobs
Micro	3,350	5,695
Small	280	4,760
Medium	35	3,500
Large	5	9,075

Southend-on-Sea has a total of 6,915 businesses across the district, with an estimate of 63,579 jobs.

Business Type	Number of Business	Estimate of employment jobs
Micro	6,285	10,684
Small	535	9,095
Medium	75	7,500
Large	20	36,300

Business Environment (continued)

Tendring has a total of 4,780 businesses across the district, with an estimate of 39,828 jobs.

Business Type	Number of Business	Estimate of employment jobs
Micro	4,290	7,293
Small	405	6,885
Medium	90	7,500
Large	20	18,150

Uttlesford has a total of 5,620 businesses across the district, with an estimate of 51,011 jobs.

Business Type	Number of Business	Estimate of employment jobs
Micro	5,080	8,636
Small	450	7,650
Medium	75	7,500
Large	15	27,225

Thurrock has a total of 7,005 businesses across the district, with an estimate of 63,983 jobs.

Business Type	Number of Business	Estimate of employment jobs
Micro	6,440	10,948
Small	455	7,735
Medium	90	9,000
Large	20	36,300

Enterprise Starts & Closures

Examining the growth of new businesses in Essex over the past few years, the Covid-19 pandemic caused a slight decline. Notably, business growth in Colchester and Thurrock has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels, with Colchester seeing a decrease from 1,165 new businesses in 2019 to 825 in 2023, and Thurrock from 1,315 in 2019 to 1,055 in 2021.

However, some districts have experienced growth surpassing pre-pandemic levels. For instance, Tendring district and Braintree district have seen increases of 55 and 45 new businesses, respectively.

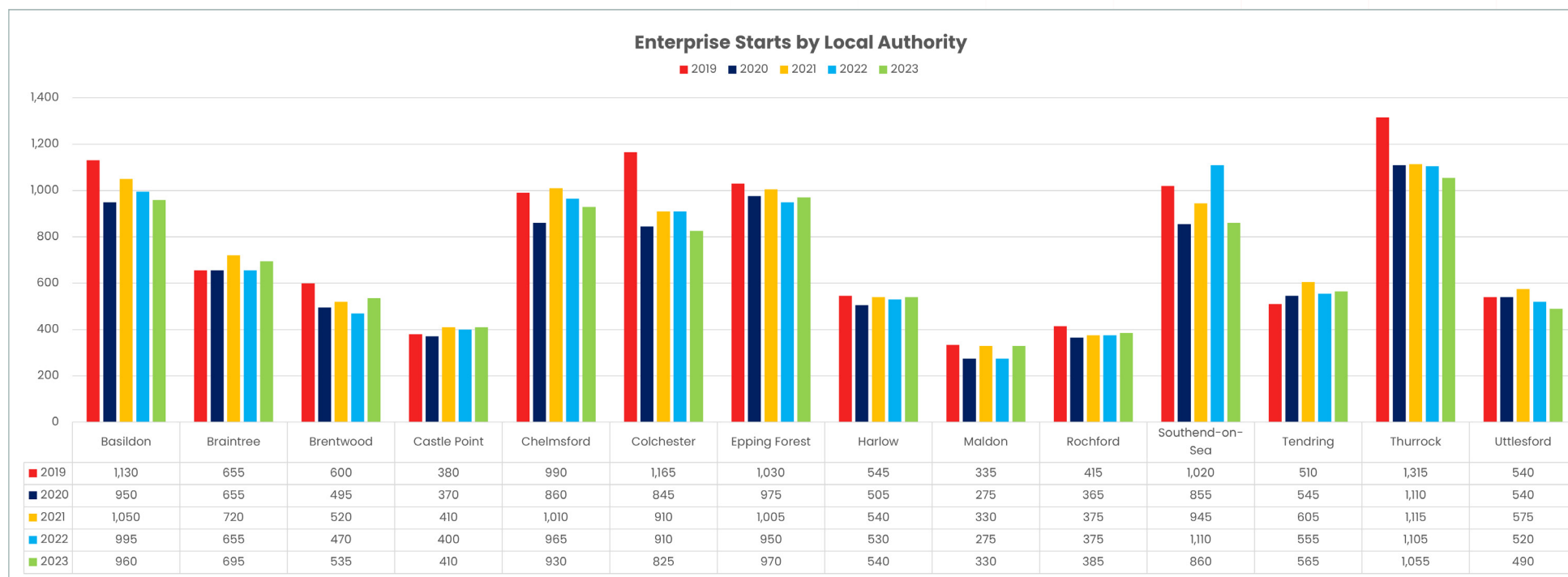


Fig 12: Enterprise Starts by Local Authority 2019 – 2023. Source: ONS, Business Demography ONS 24.

Enterprise Starts & Closures (continued)

When examining business start-ups and closures within Essex over the same period, there is a general consistency across the districts, with the number of business closures being minimal compared to business births.

However, three notable exceptions are Thurrock, which saw an increase of 215 business closures, Basildon with 160 closures, and Brentwood, Colchester, and Chelmsford each with 110 closures.

Considering these figures alongside business births, it is evident that Basildon and Thurrock are the areas with the least growth.

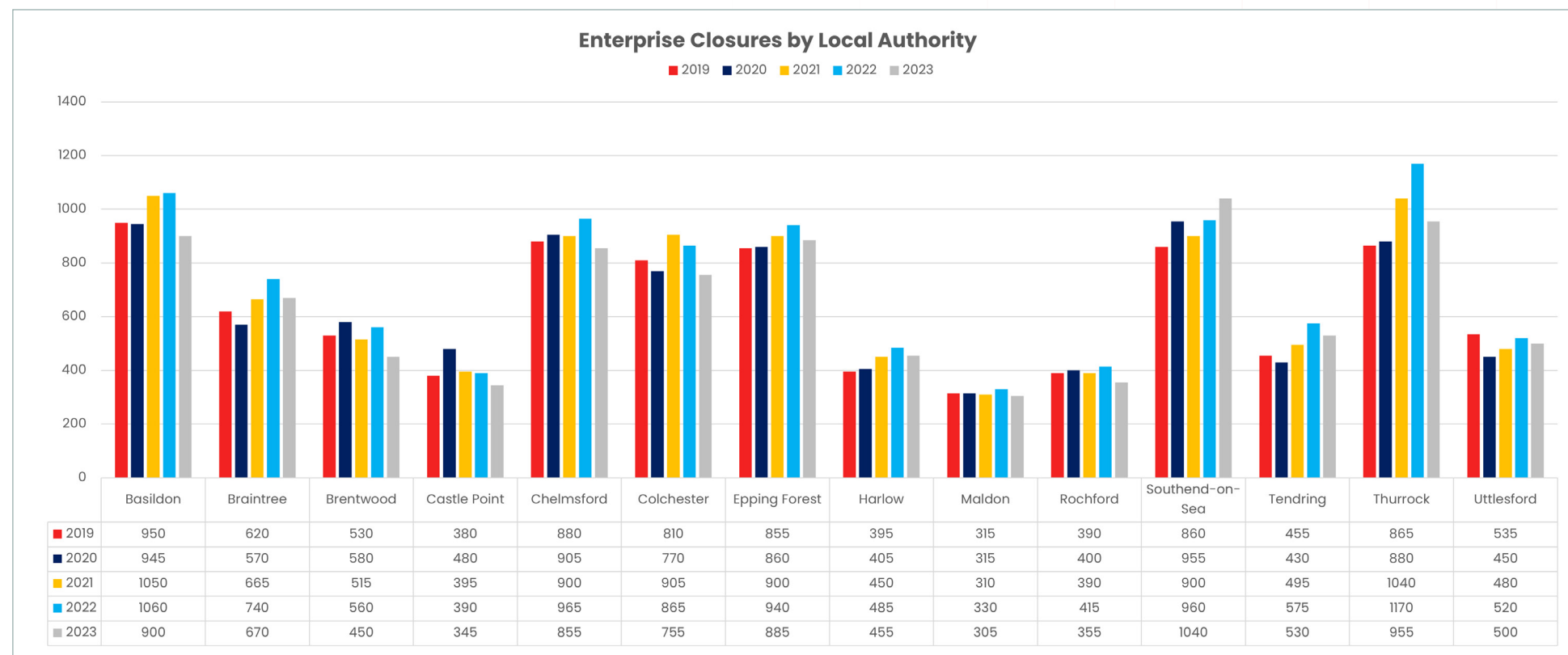


Fig 13: Enterprise Closures by Local Authority 2019–2023. Source: ONS, Business Demography ONS 24.

Economic Output

When examining the Gross Value Added (GVA) across districts and at the national level, Essex has demonstrated a steady increase. Since 2015, Essex's GVA has risen by £6.00. Although this is slightly lower than the regional increase of £6.60, it reflects consistent growth.

Nationally, the GVA has increased by £6.80 since 2015, indicating that while the national growth rate is higher than that of Essex, both Essex and the nation have experienced consistent growth.

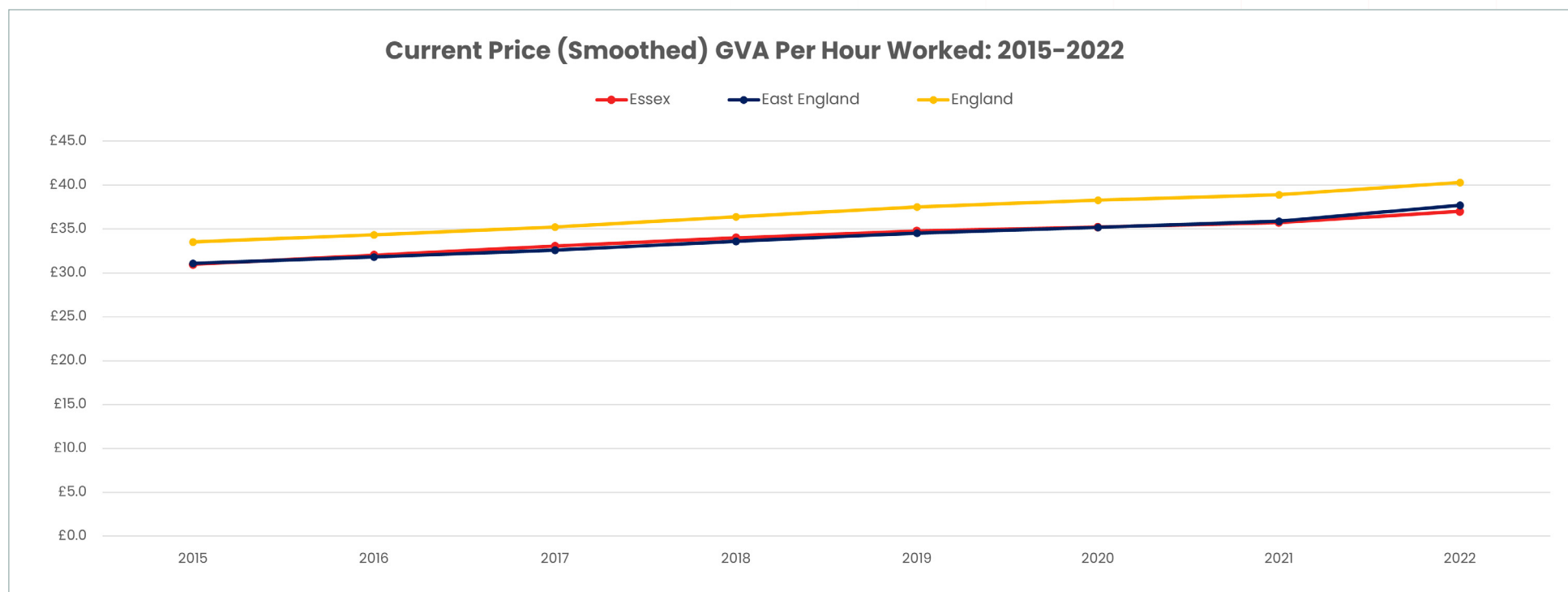


Fig 14: Current Price (Smoothed) GVA Per Hour Worked – 2015–2022. Essex, East England & England. Source: ONS, Sub-regional Productivity.

Economic Output (continued)

The Gross Value Added (GVA) has seen the most significant increase in the Braintree district, with a rise of £11.88 since 2015. This is followed by the Colchester district, which experienced an increase of £11.31, and the Rochford district, with an increase of £11.14.

Notably, there has been an improvement from previous data, as no local authorities within Essex have experienced a decrease in GVA.

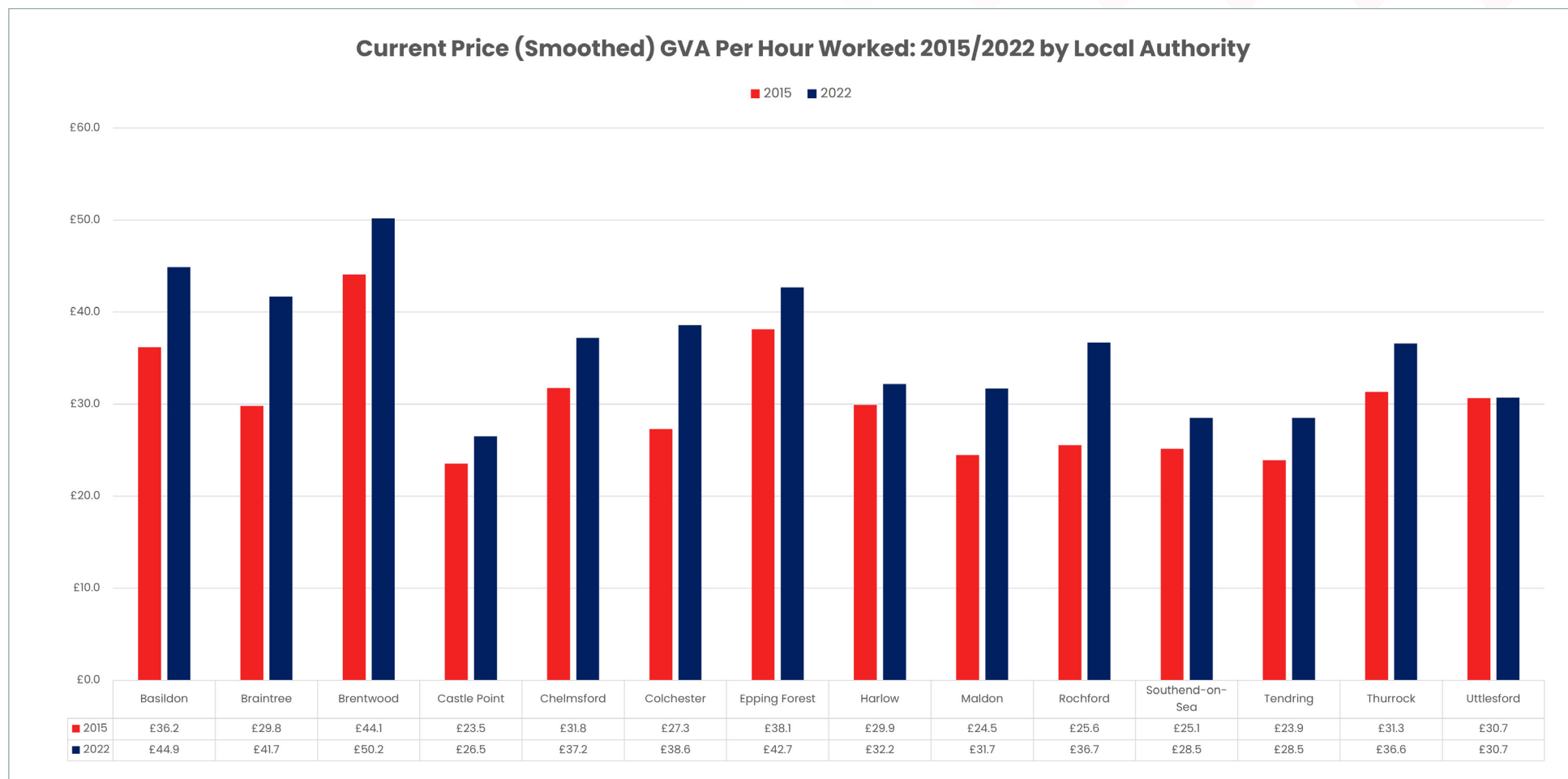


Fig 15: Current Price (Smoothed) GVA Per Hour Worked by Local Authority – 2015/2022. Source: ONS, Sub-regional Productivity.

Economic Output (continued)

If we look at the average weekly wages for full time workers, we can look at those who work in Essex and those who are residents in Essex. As a place to work the average wage for Essex is in the middle, slightly higher than those of our SELEP neighbours and slightly lower than the East of England. In contrast Essex average wage for residents is

higher than both SELEP and the East of England. This in part could be due to the region's proximity to London and the likelihood that Essex residents are commuting into London or working from home for a London based company.

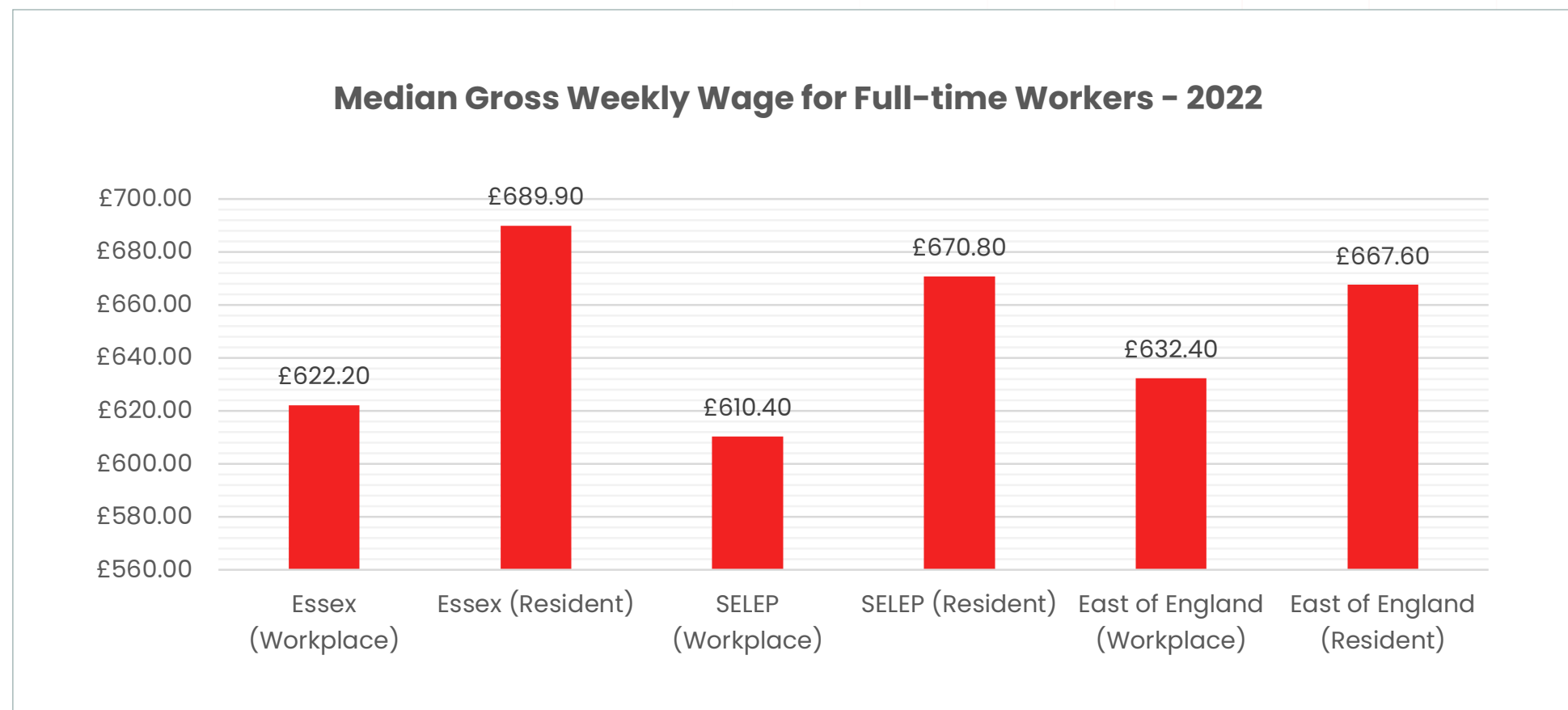


Fig 16: Median Gross Weekly Wage for Full-time Workers – 2022. Essex, SELEP & East England (Resident & Workplace) Source: Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings – Resident and Workplace Analysis ONS, Jan 22.

Population Demographics

Essex has an ageing population, with a proportion of residents aged 65 and over that exceeds the national average. At the district level, several areas have a notably higher percentage of residents in this age group.

This demographic trend impacts various factors, including employment numbers, wage levels, and the demand for care services.

The districts with the highest proportions of residents aged 65 and over remain consistent: Tendring has 29% of its residents in this age group, while Castle Point and Maldon each have 25%.

	Under 16	16–19	20–24	25–34	35–49	50–64	65+
Essex	18.6%	4.2%	5.2%	12.4%	19%	20.1%	20.6%
East of England	18.7%	4.3%	5.4%	12.8%	19.5%	19.6%	19.6%
England	18.6%	4.6%	6%	13.6%	19.4%	19.4%	18.4%

Source: NOMIS 30th December 2024.

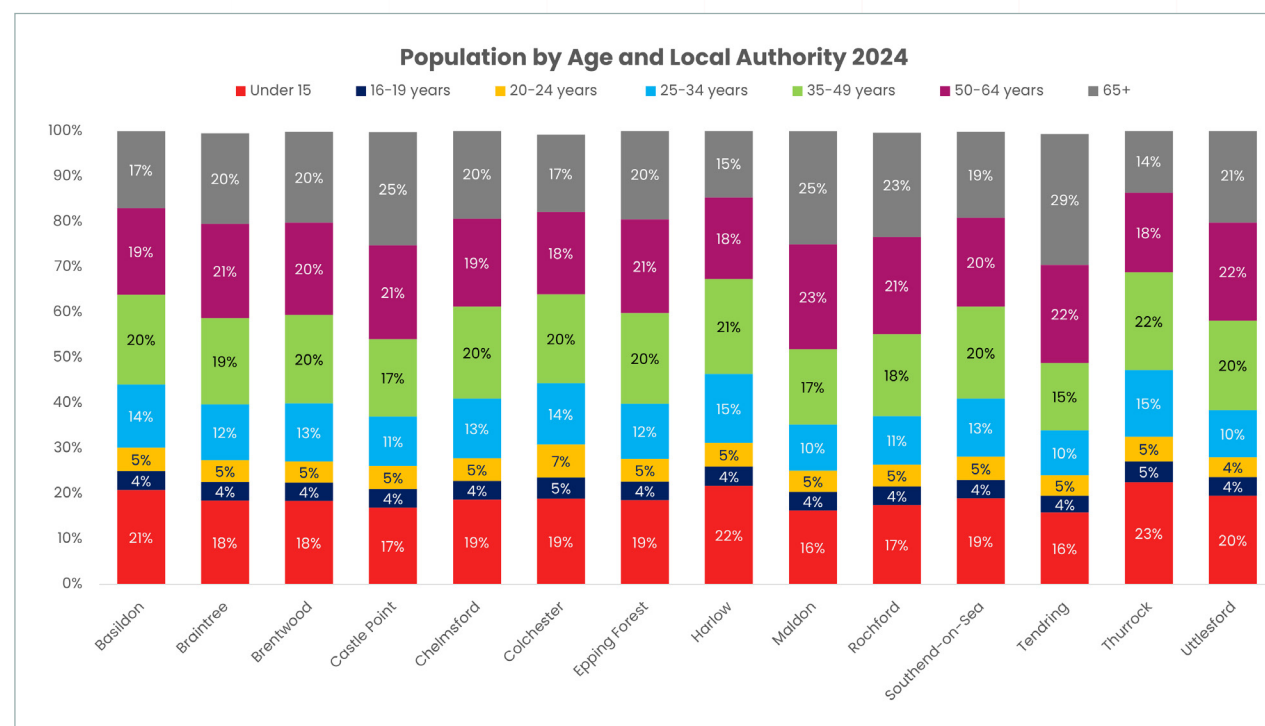


Fig 17: Population by Age and Local Authority 2024. Source: ONS 2024.



Population Demographics (continued)

When looking at deprivation within Essex, for this report we have focused on three of the seven areas of deprivation. Income, employment, and education, skills and training.

The figures on the right show the proportion of neighbourhoods in the 10% most deprived nationally.

Essex has a lot of disparity across the region, the level of deprivation in some areas is nil, these areas being Uttlesford, Maldon, Harlow & Brentwood. There are however, some areas where the level of deprivation is quite high such as Tendring, Basildon, Castle Point and Southend-on-sea.

	Income Domain	Employment Domain	Education, Skills and Training Domain	Overall IMD
Basildon	18%	7%	19%	11%
Braintree	0%	0%	5%	0%
Brentwood	0%	0%	0%	0%
Castle Point	5%	2%	14%	2%
Chelmsford	1%	1%	1%	0%
Colchester	1%	1%	6%	1%
Epping Forest	0%	0%	1%	0%
Harlow	0%	0%	0%	0%
Maldon	0%	0%	0%	0%
Rochford	2%	0%	2%	0%
Southend-on-Sea	12%	12%	8%	8%
Tendring	15%	18%	20%	18%
Thurrock	5%	2%	8%	4%
Uttlesford	0%	0%	0%	0%

Source: Indices of multiple deprivation, MHCLG 2019.

Qualifications

If we look at the difference in qualifications across SELEP and Essex, we can see that there is a large portion of Essex residents that do not hold any qualifications (16% of the population). This contrasts with the SELEP average of 6%.

However, Essex does have a higher proportion of residents who hold an apprenticeship with 5.9% compared to SELEP's 2.9%.

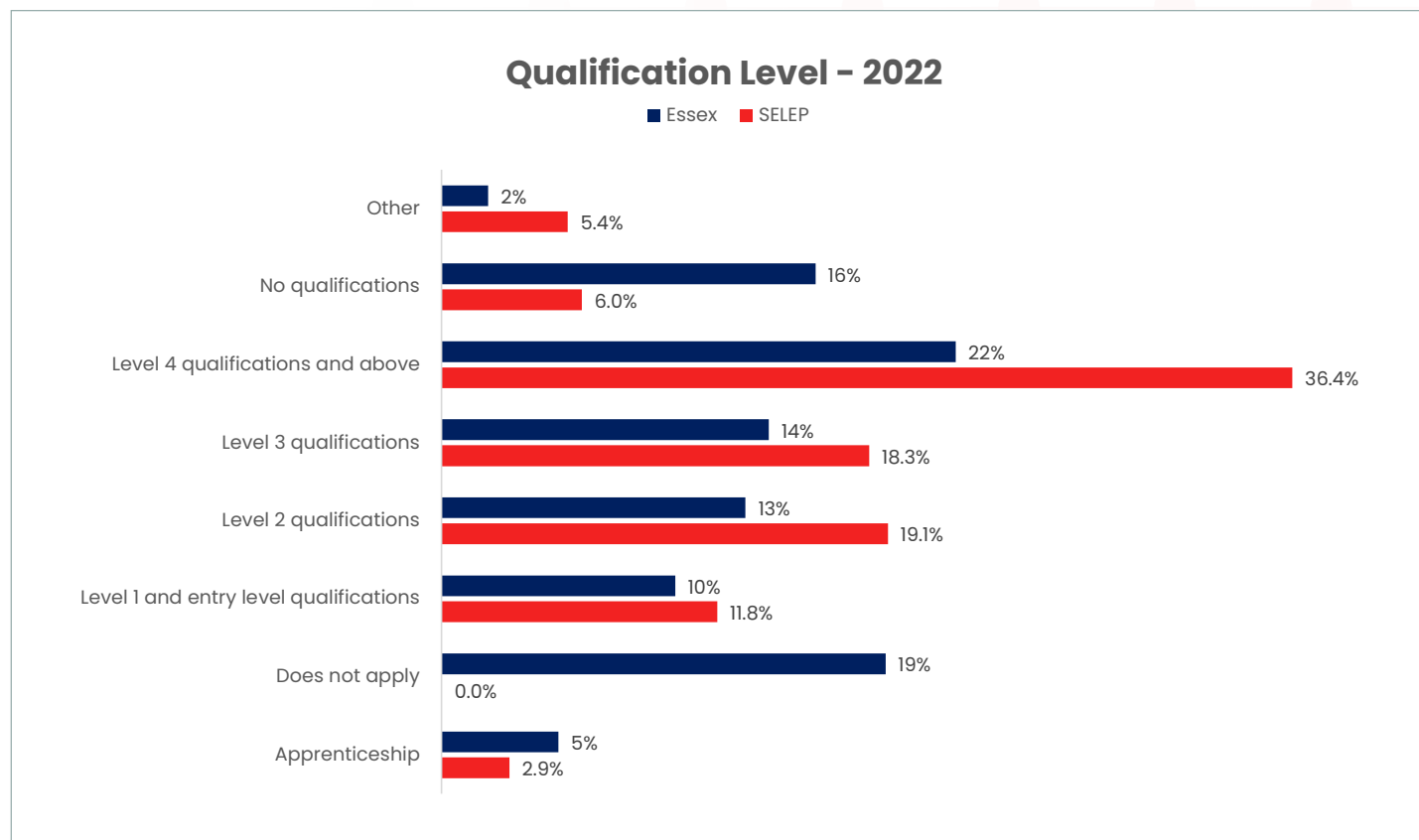


Fig 18: Qualification Level - 2022. Essex & SELEP *Data for 'Does not apply' does not exist for SELEP. Source: Adult Qualifications, Annual Population Survey ONS Jan 23.



Qualifications (continued)

When looking closer at each local authority, we can see that there are some areas where the level of qualifications is drastically lower than others. For example, the number of residents in Tendring and Castle Point that hold no qualifications is 10% higher, this is a vast difference and can be attributed to other issues such as deprivation within these areas.

On the other end of the qualifications level, the number of residents that hold a Level 4 qualification is higher in those areas with a university such as Colchester and Chelmsford, and those with close proximity to London such as Uttlesford.

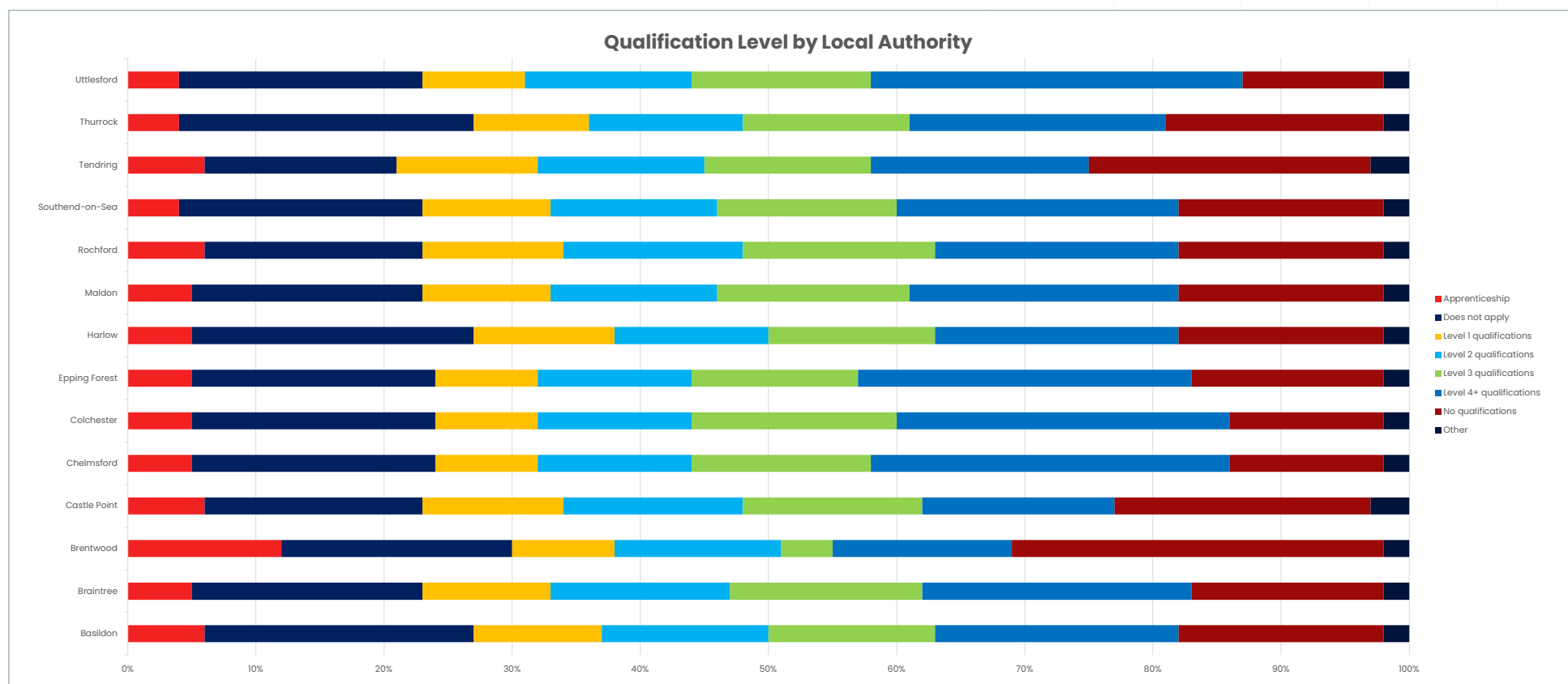


Fig 19: Qualification Level by Local Authority. Source: Adult Qualifications, Annual Population Survey ONS Jan 23.



Qualifications (continued)

It is important to clarify that the data presented by the ONS is not limited to individuals over the age of 16. Instead, it encompasses the entire population of the local authority. Consequently, the percentage of individuals without qualifications should be interpreted with caution.

It is important to consider that a portion of the population is currently too young to possess any qualifications.

	Basildon	Braintree	Brentwood	Castle Point	Chelmsford	Colchester	Epping Forest	Harlow	Maldon	Rochford	Southend-on-Sea	Tendring	Thurrock	Uttlesford
Apprenticeship	4%	5%	4%	6%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%	4%	6%	4%	4%
Does not apply	21%	18%	18%	17%	19%	19%	19%	22%	16%	17%	19%	16%	23%	20%
Level 1 qualifications	10%	10%	8%	11%	8%	8%	8%	11%	10%	11%	10%	11%	9%	8%
Level 2 qualifications	13%	14%	13%	14%	12%	12%	12%	12%	13%	14%	13%	13%	12%	13%
Level 3 qualifications	13%	15%	14%	14%	14%	16%	13%	13%	15%	15%	14%	13%	13%	14%
Level 4+ qualifications	19%	21%	29%	15%	28%	26%	26%	19%	21%	19%	22%	17%	20%	29%
No qualifications	16%	15%	12%	20%	12%	12%	15%	16%	16%	16%	16%	22%	17%	11%
Other	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%

Source: Adult Qualifications, Annual Population Survey ONS Jan 23.

Qualifications (continued)

Analysis of local authorities reveals that the highest levels of adult education achievement have been attained in the fields of health and social care, retail and commercial enterprise, and business, administration and law.

There is a clear correlation between these qualification achievements and the vacancies being advertised across the region.

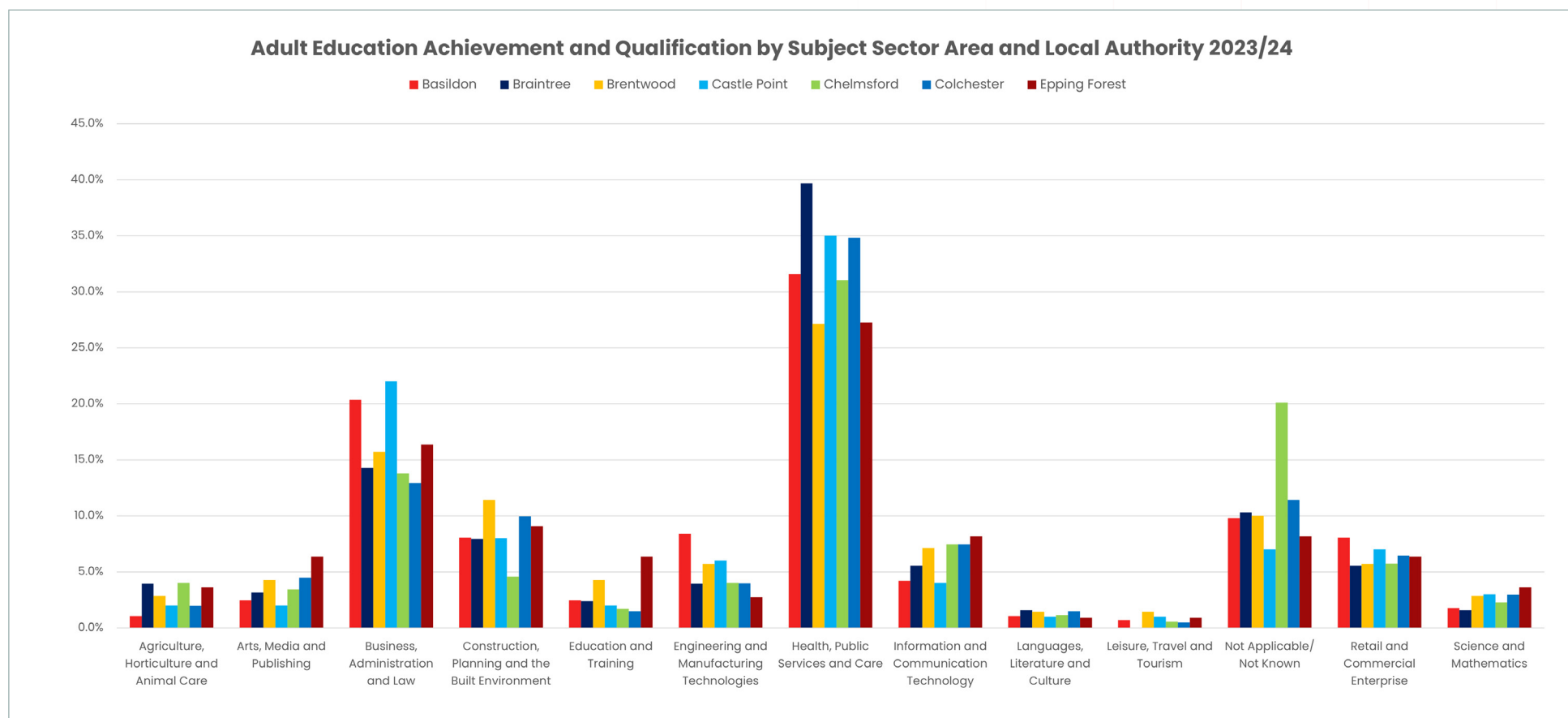


Fig 20: Adult Education Achievement and Qualification by Subject Sector Area and Local Authority 2023/24. Basildon, Braintree, Brentwood, Castle Point, Chelmsford, Colchester & Epping Forest. Source: Further Education & Skills 2023/24 DfE.

Qualifications (continued)

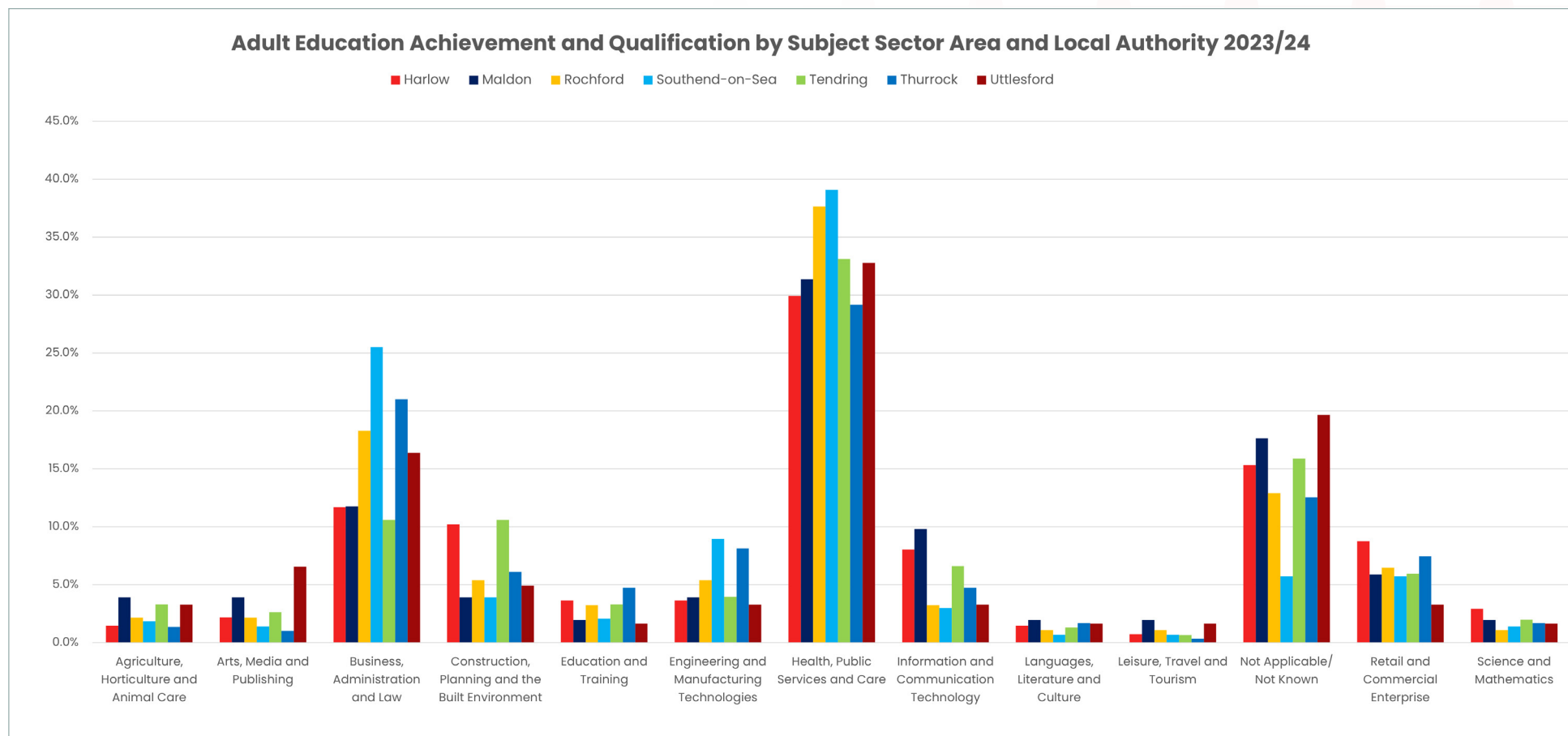


Fig 21: Adult Education Achievement and Qualification by Subject Sector Area and Local Authority 2023/24. Harlow, Maldon, Rochford, Southend-on-Sea, Tendring, Thurrock and Uttlesford. Source: Further Education & Skills 2023/24 DfE.



Qualifications (continued)

When we look at apprenticeship achievements over the county, we can see the figures in the last twelve months have shown an increase in business administration and law. Whilst demand for health, public services and care has decreased the demand is still high. These two areas are over half of the apprenticeship achievements within the county.

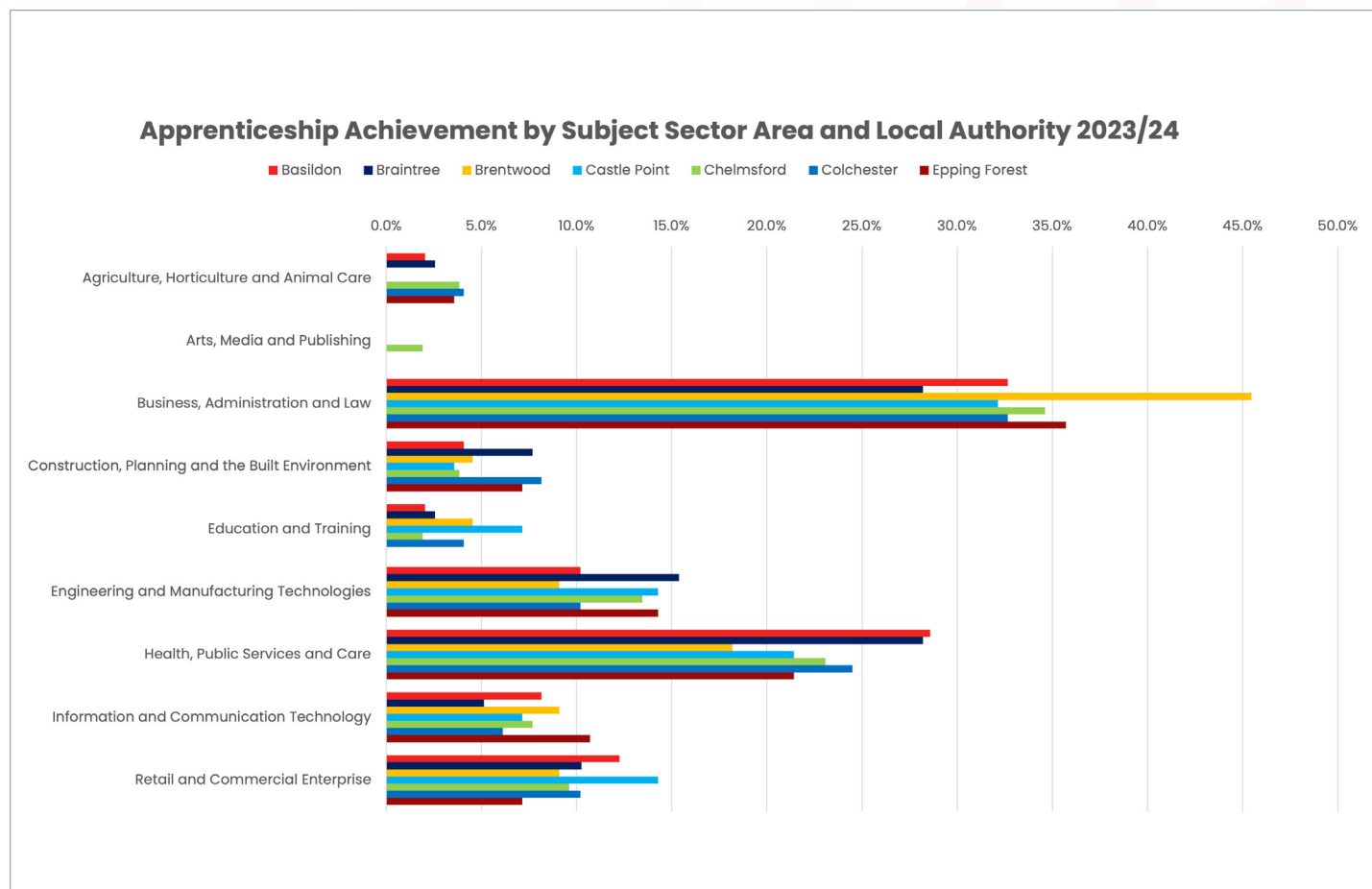


Fig 22: Apprenticeship Achievement by Subject Sector Area and Local Authority 2023/24. Basildon, Braintree, Brentwood, Castle Point, Chelmsford, Colchester, and Epping Forest. Source: Apprenticeship Achievements 2023/24 DfE.

Qualifications (continued)

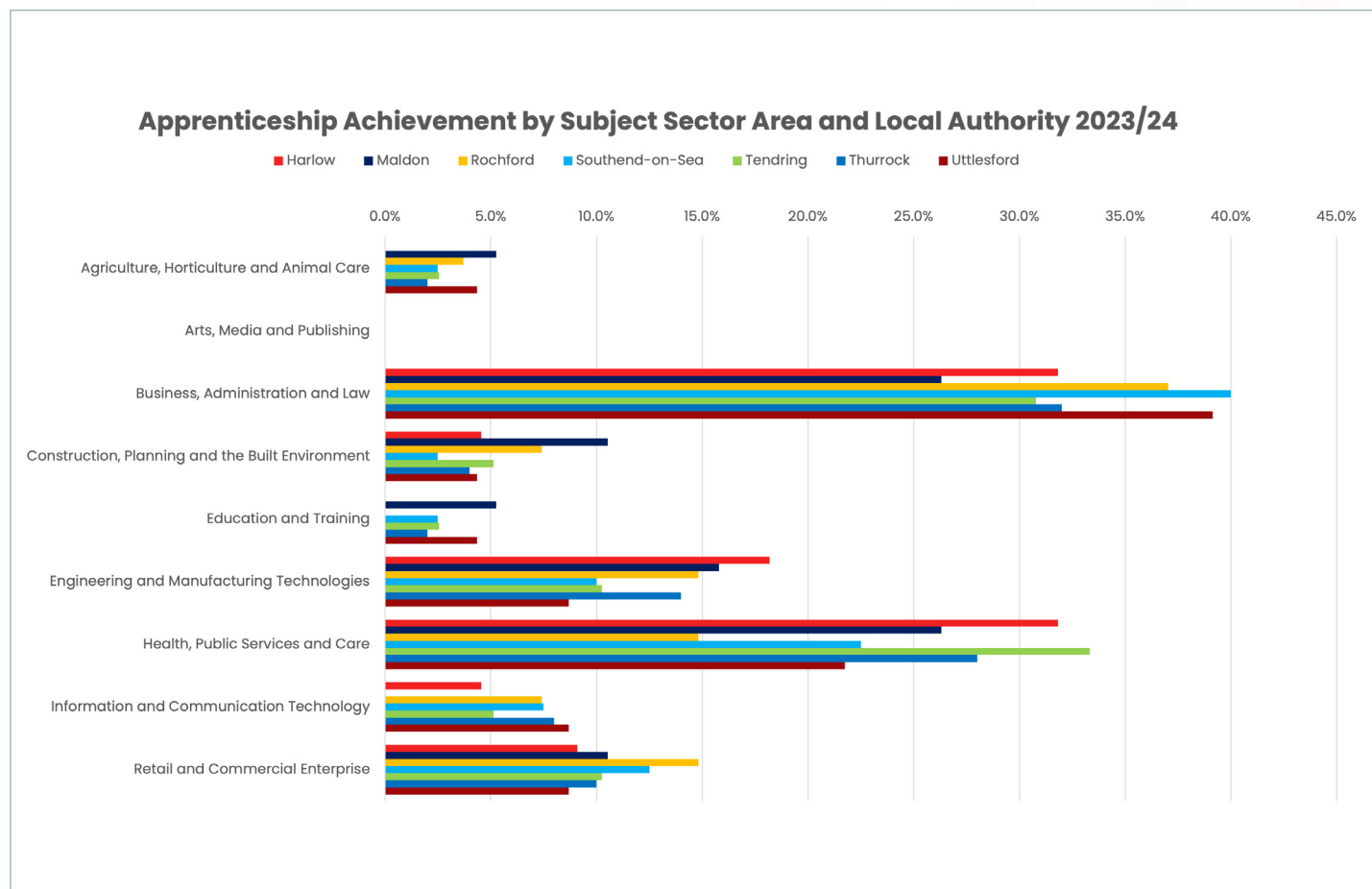


Fig 23: Apprenticeship Achievement by Subject Sector Area and Local Authority 2023/24. Harlow, Maldon, Rochford, Southend-on-Sea, Tendring, Thurrock, and Uttlesford. Source: Apprenticeship Achievements 2023/24 DfE.

Qualifications (continued)

When examining higher education qualifiers locally, we focus on the three universities in the Essex area: Anglia Ruskin University, Writtle University College, and the University of Essex.

The primary fields of study include business and management, subjects allied to medicine, and social sciences. Both Anglia Ruskin University and the University of Essex boast leading business schools.

There is a strong emphasis on nursing within the region, with both universities maintaining robust links with the NHS, supplying all student nurses for the Trust.

Additionally, Writtle University College places significant emphasis on sports science and sports wellness.

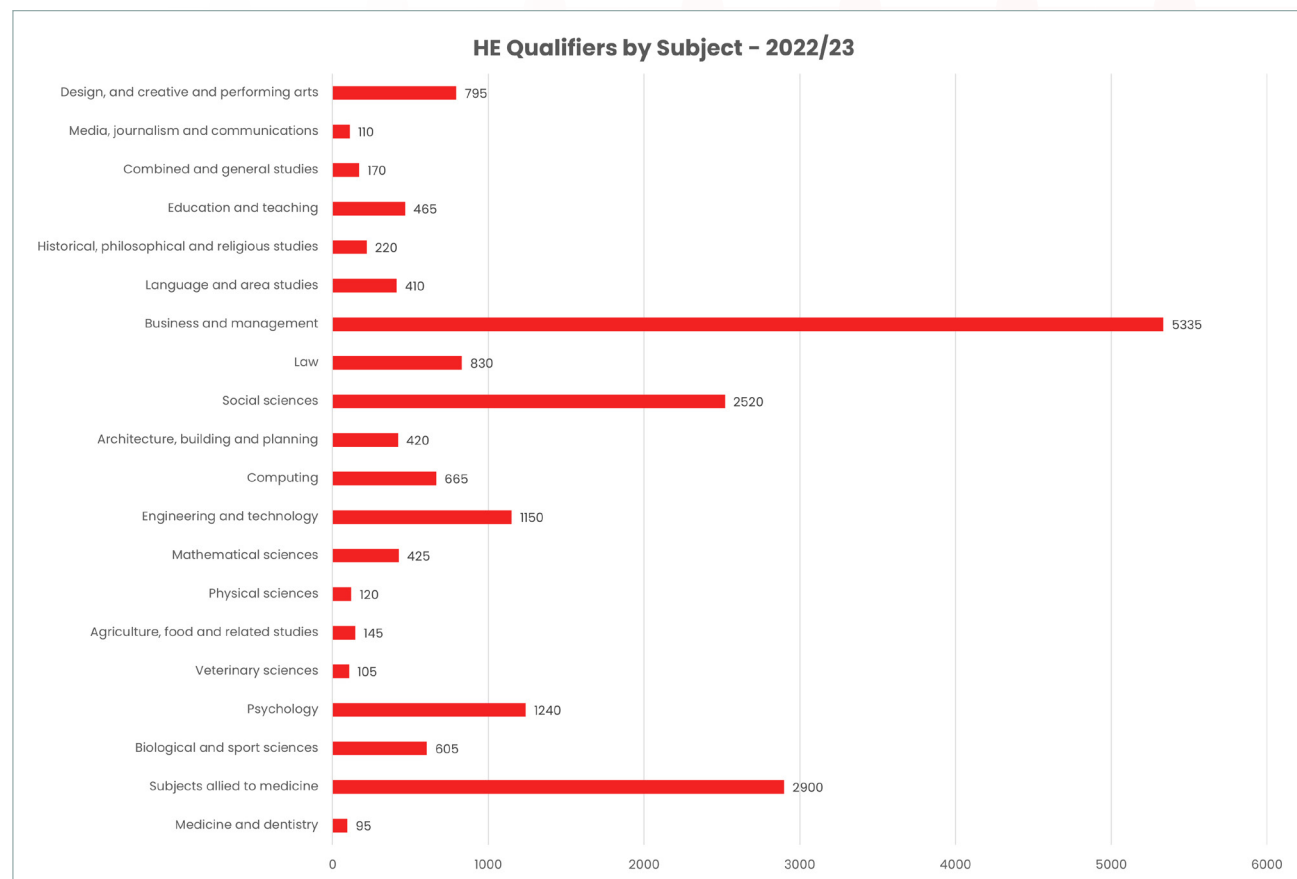


Fig 24: HE Qualifiers by Subject – 2022/23. Source: HESA.

Qualifications (continued)

In Essex, Southend and Thurrock there were 19,451 KS4 students in 2022/23. As we can see from the graph below, over 86% of these students stayed on in education.

This is an increase of 8% from 2010/11. It is likely that the change in education system and the different opportunities available to young people and also the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has made staying in education more attractive. The number of apprenticeships has fallen by 2%, with now just over 500 students choosing to follow the apprenticeship route. It could be inferred that the provision of lower-level apprenticeships is not as widely available as the 10 years prior, and that lots of businesses are choosing to use their apprenticeship levy as an in-house tool for training rather than recruiting new staff to the workforce.

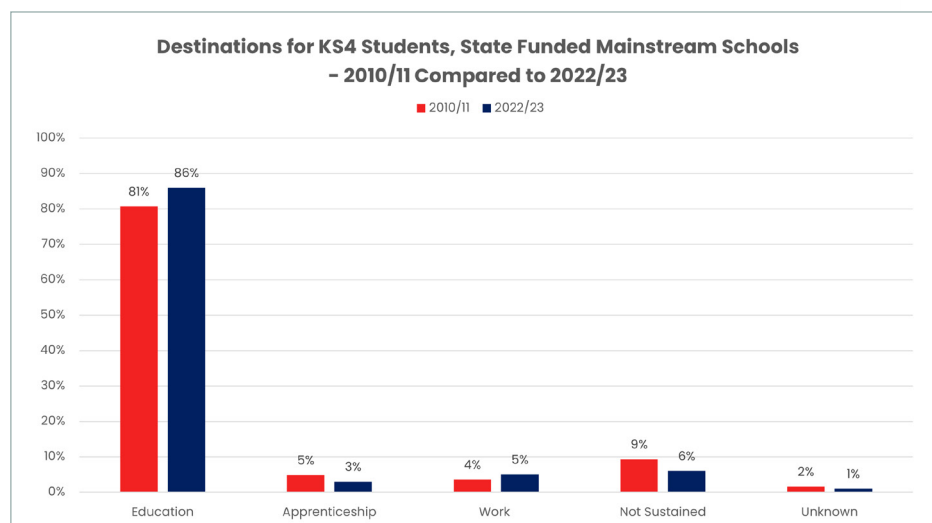


Fig 25: Destinations for KS4 Students, State Funded Mainstream Schools – 2010/11 Compared to 2022/23. Source DfE.

There were 14,468 learners leaving KS5.

Most learners continued onto further education, with 53% of Level 3 learners continuing on. In all areas, over 13% of the learners went into work and with Level 2 learners over 14% went into apprenticeships.

When looking at learner destinations between 2022 and 2023 we can see that for all levels there has been a dramatic decrease in learners continuing in education, the decrease is 19% for below Level 2, 24% for Level 2 and 22% for Level 3 and we can see that conversely there is a large increase of over 10% in all levels who are now working.

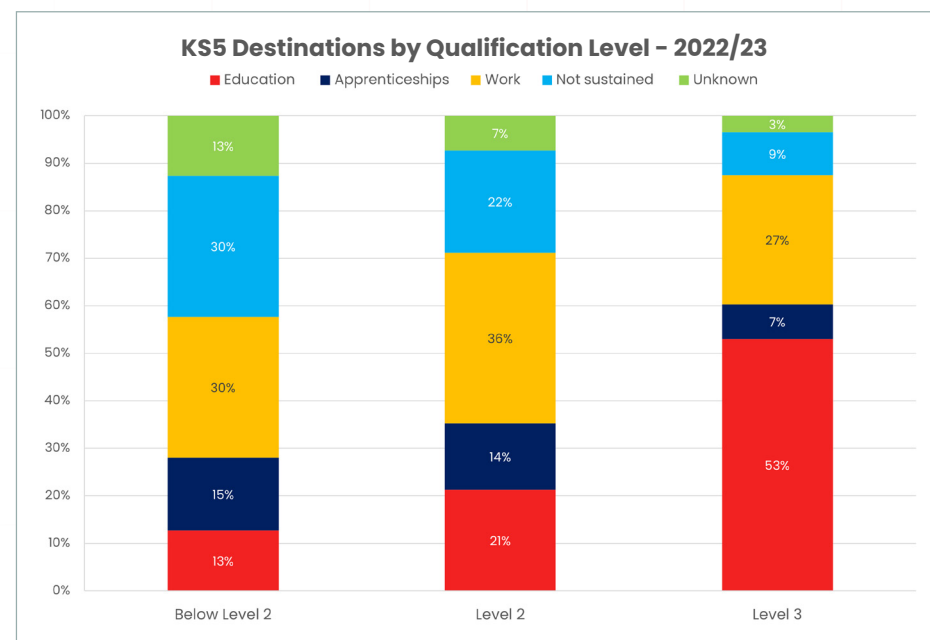


Fig 26: KS5 Destinations by Qualification Level 2022/23. Source: DfE.

Qualifications (continued)

In 2020/21 there were 6860 students that left higher education.

The split between undergraduate and postgraduate is roughly 75% to 25%. There were 4730 undergraduate students and 2130 post graduate students. For undergraduate students we can see that the majority of students either went on to employment (3055) or education (1300). With post graduate students we can see that this pattern is the same with the majority moving into employment (1565) or staying in education (335). The unemployment figures for both undergraduate and postgraduate are low sitting at 6% and 5% respectively.

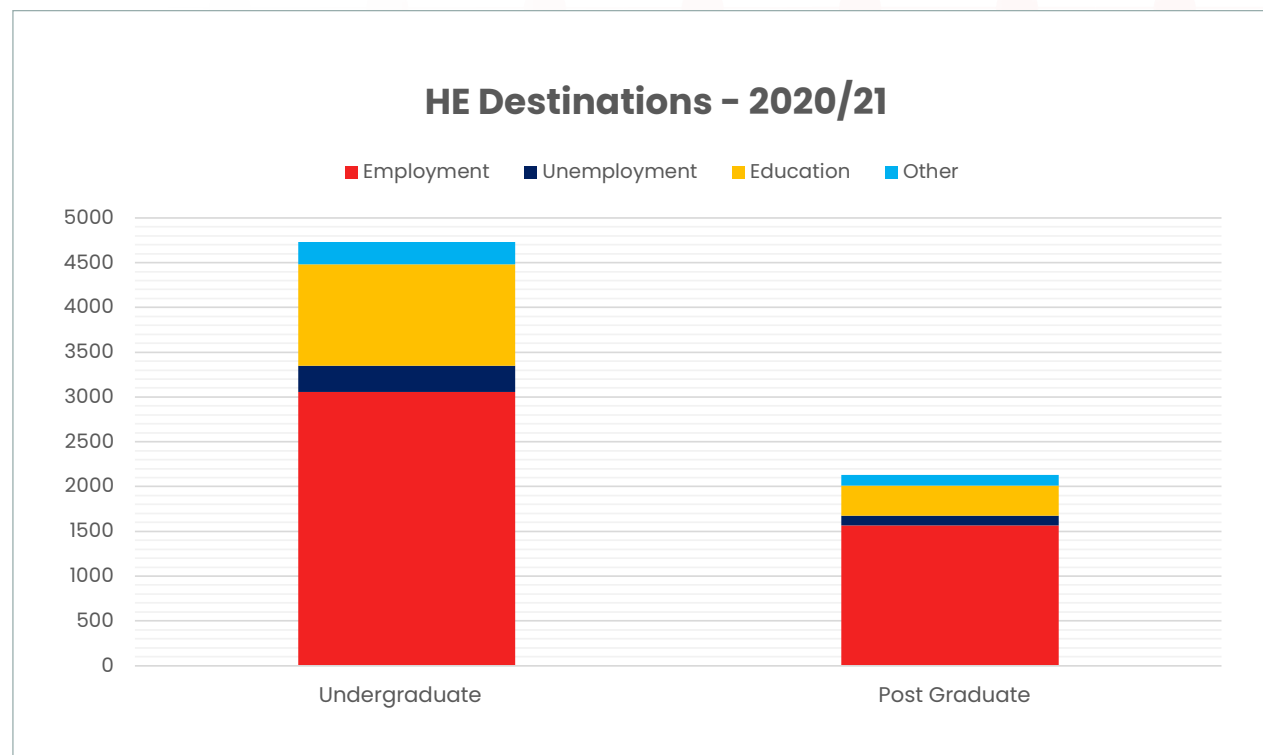


Fig 27: HE Destinations - 2020/21. Source HESA.

Employer Provided Training

If we look at the chart to the right, we can see the comparison between training provision by employers in Essex and nationally. Essex seems very close to what is seen with training across the country. 37% of businesses do not train at all, this is lower than the national average of 39%. Essex is home to a huge number of micro businesses that have less than 10 employees, this can often mean that there is less emphasis on training. This can be due to funding constraints, resource constraints or other external factors.

The general training needs identified by employers for the future were things such as soft skills, mental health training and management skills, which mirrors the employer feedback we have received as part of the LSIP engagement – the employers had said that the priorities for them in regard to training are soft skills and behaviours, Basic English, Maths and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages), Digital skills and 'Digitech, Leadership and Management skills & Green Skills.

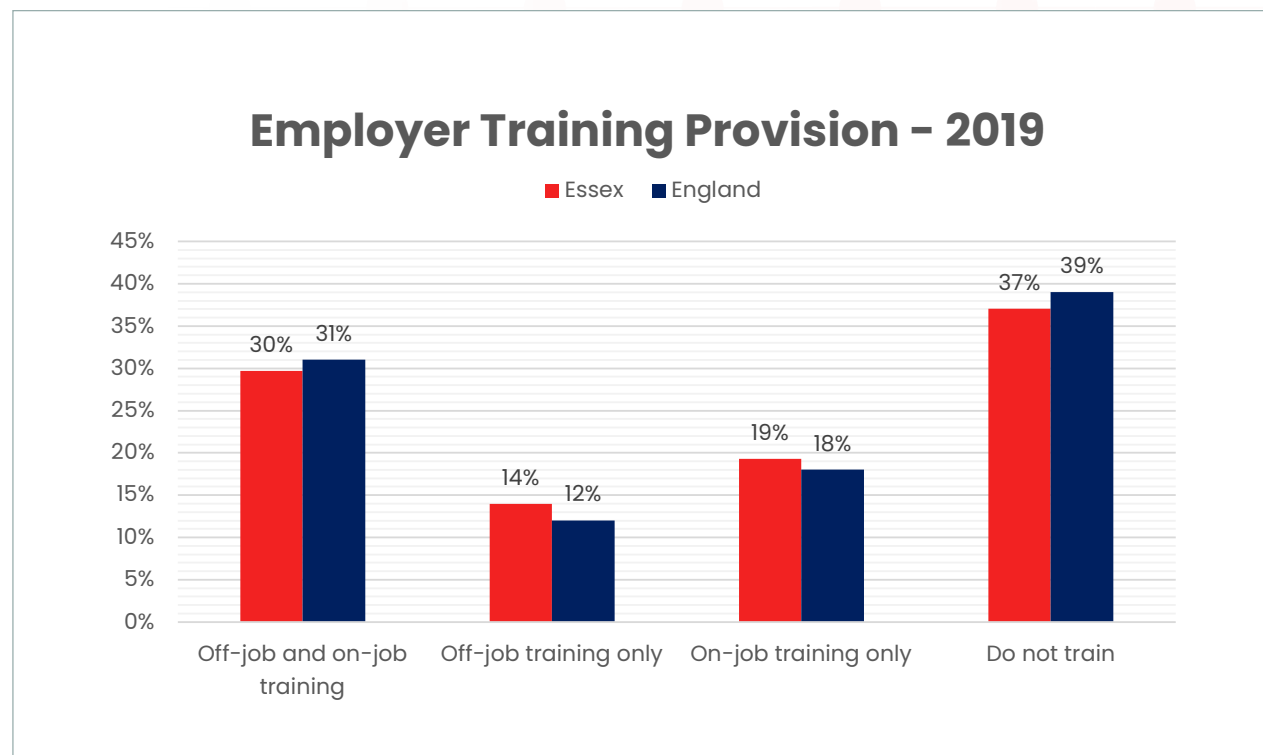


Fig 28: Employer Training Provision – 2019 Essex & England. Source: DfE Employer Skills Survey.

Skills Provision

The graph illustrates the fluctuation in job vacancies within Greater Essex over the past few years. Key observations include:

1. A significant drop in vacancies during 2020, likely attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent economic challenges.
2. A gradual upward trend since then, indicating a recovery in the job market.
3. In the last twelve months, vacancy numbers have started to decline and have recently stabilised. This decline may be influenced by the overall economic situation and a slowdown in recruitment following the post-pandemic boom.

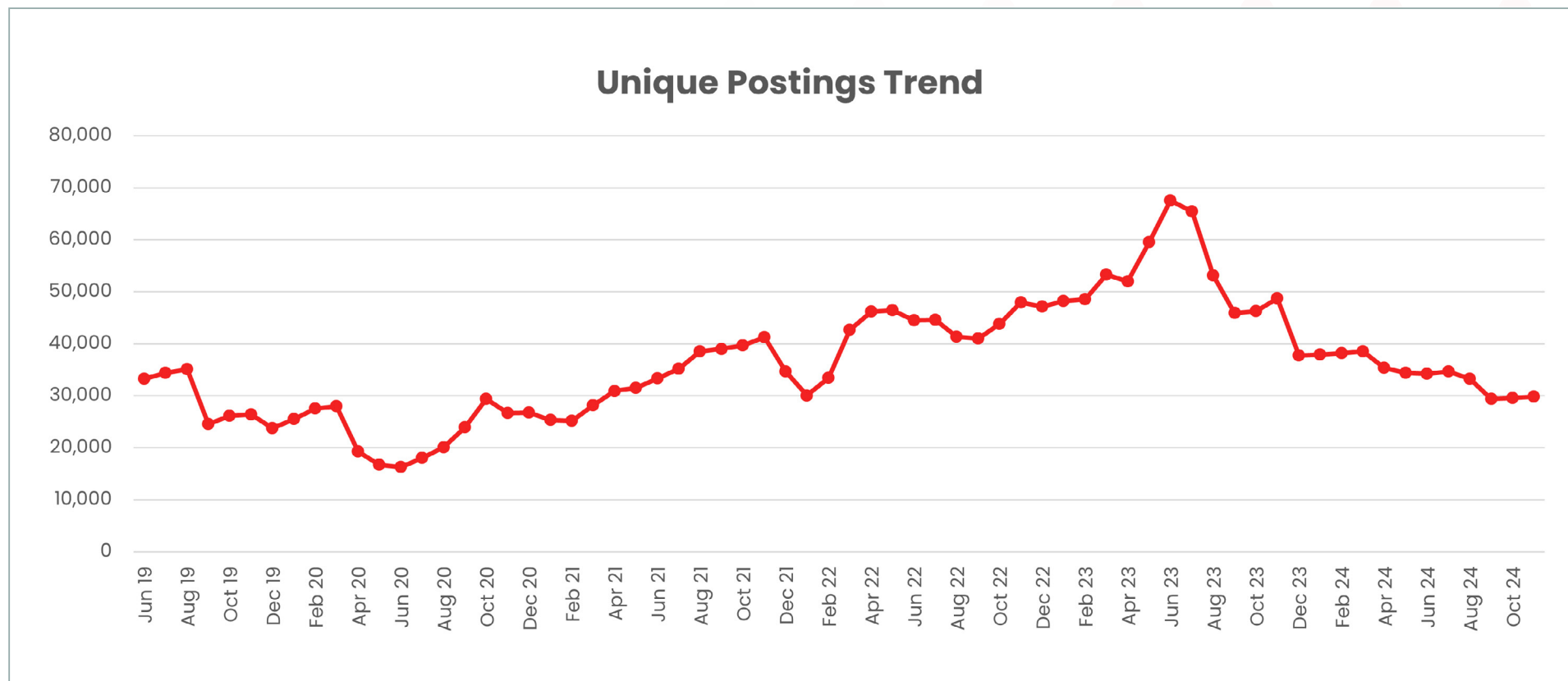


Fig 29: Unique Postings Trend, Jun 19 – Nov 24. Source: Lightcast KK Dec 24.

Skills Provision (continued)

Essex experienced a significant proportion of vacancies during the period from Nov 2023 to Nov 2024.

Notably, the highest concentration of vacancies was observed in the hospitality and retail and health and social care sector. These two areas consistently displayed substantial numbers of job openings, collectively accounting for nearly half of all vacancies across Essex.

	New Job Postings Nov 23 – Nov 24	Share of Job Postings		New Job Postings Nov 23 – Nov 24	Share of Job Postings
Health & Social Care & Med-Tech			Transport & Logistics		
Care workers & home carers	8,589	11%	Large goods vehicles drivers	3,600	5%
Other registered nursing professionals	4,157	5%	Vehicle technicians, mechanics and electricians	3,226	4%
Social workers	3,010	4%	Warehouse operatives	3,223	4%
Education			Retail & Hospitality		
Secondary education teaching professionals	5,015	6%	Sales related occupations	7,828	10%
Teaching professionals n.e.c.	3,898	5%	Cleaners and domestics	6,000	8%
Special and additional needs education teaching professionals	3,181	4%	Managers and directors in retail and wholesale	4,009	5%
Teaching assistants	3,171	4%	Kitchen and catering assistants	3,401	4%
Professional Services			Customer service occupations n.e.c.	3,372	4%
Book keepers, payroll managers and wages clerk	3,366	4%	Sales and retail assistants	2,941	4%
Other administration occupations n.e.c.	3,054	4%	Chefs	2,745	4%

Fig 30: Vacancies for Greater Essex, Nov 23 – Nov 24. Source: Lightcast KK Dec 24.



Sector Growth Forecasts

The DfE sponsored Working Futures labour market and skills projections for the period 2017 to 2027 provide one view on how employment by sector and skills requirements may change in the future. The projections are based on past trends and the impact the Covid-19 pandemic may have had (significantly altering some trajectories). The table to the right shows Essex projections for employment (in thousands) and employment change by sector from the Working Futures report.

As we can see from the table to the right, the key areas of growth expected within Essex are construction, travel, accommodation & transport, business & other services and non-marketed services. All of these align with the priority areas we have identified within the LSIP.

*Fig 31: Sector growth forecasts.
Source: Working Futures Labour Market and Skills Projections.*

	2017	2022	2027	2017-2022	2022-2027	2017-2027
Primary sector and utilities	59	57	56	-2	-2	-3
Agriculture	29	27	25	-2	-2	-4
Mining and quarrying	3	3	2	0	0	-1
Electricity and gas	8	8	8	0	0	0
Water and sewerage	19	20	21	1	1	2
Manufacturing	235	223	212	-12	-11	-23
Food drink and tobacco	33	32	31	-1	-1	-2
Engineering	48	47	44	0	-3	-3
Rest of manufacturing	154	144	136	-10	-8	-18
Construction	254	259	265	5	6	11
Trade, accomod. and transport	860	861	883	2	22	24
Wholesale and retail trade	494	500	511	7	10	17
Transport and storage	178	176	176	-2	0	-2
Accommodation and food	187	184	196	-3	12	9
Business and other services	1,012	1,050	1,070	38	20	58
Media	36	35	34	-1	0	-1
Information technology	94	94	95	0	1	1
Finance and insurance	64	63	60	-1	-3	-4
Real estate	49	51	53	2	2	5
Professional services	278	294	300	16	6	22
Support services	311	324	332	13	8	21
Arts and entertainment	93	99	102	6	3	9
Other services	87	90	92	4	2	5
Non-marketed services	703	724	756	20	32	53
Public admin. and defence	91	89	93	-2	4	2
Education	257	258	263	1	5	6
Health and social work	356	377	400	21	23	44
All industries	3,124	3,175	3,242	51	67	119



Annual Job Replacement

The Working Futures labour market and skills projections suggests that on average as the population and economy grows, the job market will see an increase of 6000 jobs a year. However, this is just a projection and other external factors can increase or decrease this projection.

Regardless of the projections, it is likely that those sectors currently that have the highest employment levels will continue to have the most jobs in the future. We can see that in Essex this is likely to be professional occupations, caring, leisure & other services and managers, directors & senior officials.

Sector	Expected annual job replacement demand 2022 -2027 (Thousands)
Managers, directors and senior officials	24
Professional occupations	38
Associate professional and technical	19
Administrative and secretarial	-27
Skilled trades occupations	-13
Caring, leisure and other service	28
Sales and customer service	0
Process, plant and machine operatives	-5
Elementary occupations	2
All occupations	66

Fig 32: Annual Job Replacement. Source: Working Futures Labour Market and Skills Projections.



Occupational Growth Forecasts

When looking at the Working Futures projections at an occupational group level, we have a much clearer picture of what areas of growth we can expect to see within Essex.

These are corporate managers & directors, caring personal service occupations and business & public service associate professionals.

We can also see a drop in secretarial & related occupations and process, plant & machine operatives. This is potentially as a result of more automation for manufacturing occupations and the change in culture of professional occupations working from home more.

Source: Working Futures Projections.

	2022	2027	Change
Managers, Directos and Senior officials			
11 Corporate managers and directors	272	291	19
12 Other managers and proprietors	105	111	6
Professional Occupations			
21 Science, research, engineering and technology professionals	189	196	7
22 Health professionals	122	133	10
23 Teaching and educational professionals	140	152	12
24 Business, media and public service professionals	161	169	8
Associate Professional and Techncial			
31 Science, engineering and technology associate professionals	64	65	1
32 Health and social care associate professionals	40	44	3
33 Protective service occupations	31	31	1
34 Culture, media and sports occupations	80	81	1
35 Business and public service associate professionals	235	249	14
Adminstratvie and Secreterial			
41 Administrative occupations	240	231	-9
42 Secretarial and related occupations	54	36	-18
Skilled trades Occupations			
51 Skilled agricultural and related trades	27	28	1
52 Skilled metal, electrical and electronic trades	109	102	-7
53 Skilled construction and building trades	95	92	-3
54 Textiles, printing and other skilled trades	68	63	-4
Caring, Leisure and other services			
61 Caring personal service occupations	253	282	29
62 Leisure, travel and related personal service occupations	70	69	-1
Sales and Customer Services			
71 Sales occupations	193	189	-4
72 Customer service occupations	62	67	5
Process,Plant and Machine Operatives			
81 Process, plant and machine operatives	68	62	-7
82 Transport and mobile machine drivers and operatives	123	125	2
Elementary Occupations			
91 Elementary trades and related occupations	51	49	-1
92 Elementary administration and service occupations	322	325	4
All occupations	3,175	3,242	67

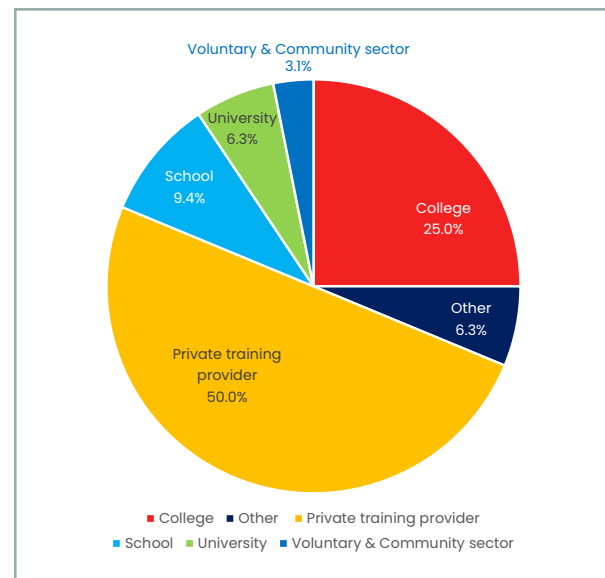
Local Skills Improvement Plan – Provider & Employer Survey Results

The employer and provider surveys were hosted on the Chamber of Commerce website.

Where we have received other additional comments, we have removed these to protect the identity of individuals and businesses. We will look at these comments locally.

The feedback from the provider survey can be found here:

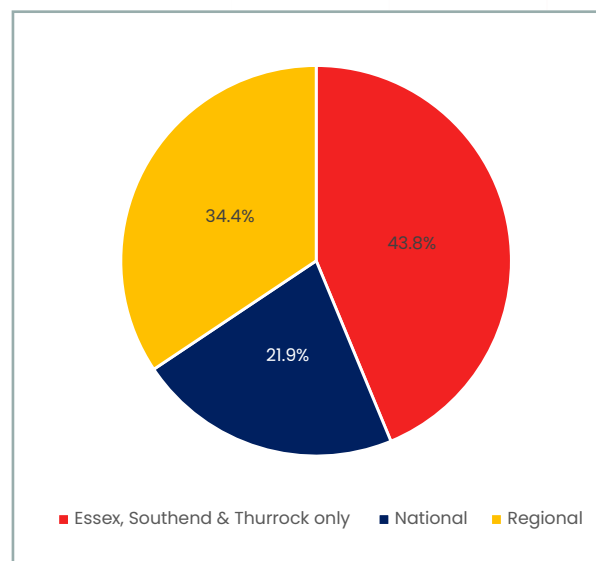
Type of organisation:



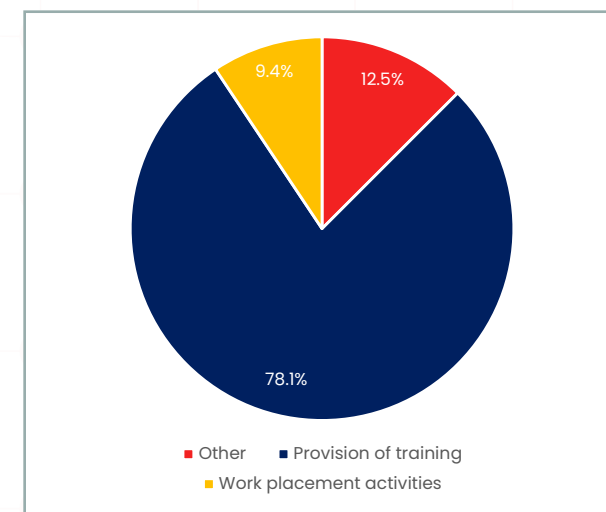
Other:

- Local Authority.
- App developer (Technology Services).

Are you a local provider, or do you have a regional or national coverage?



Do you engage with employers, and if so what is the nature of that engagement?

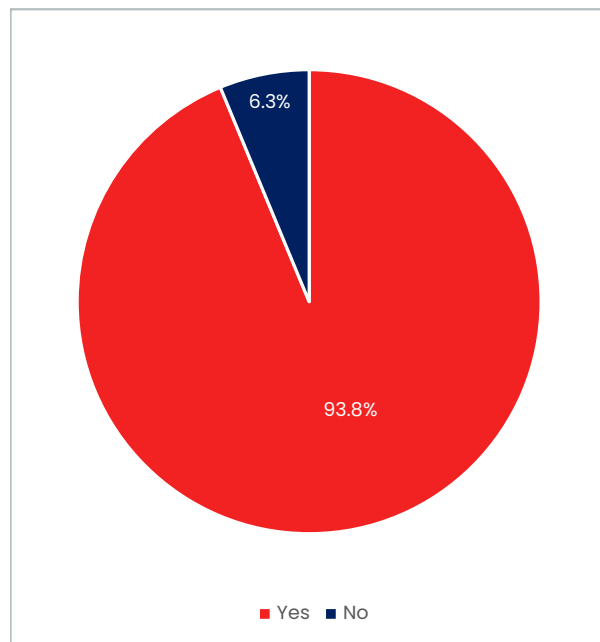


Other:

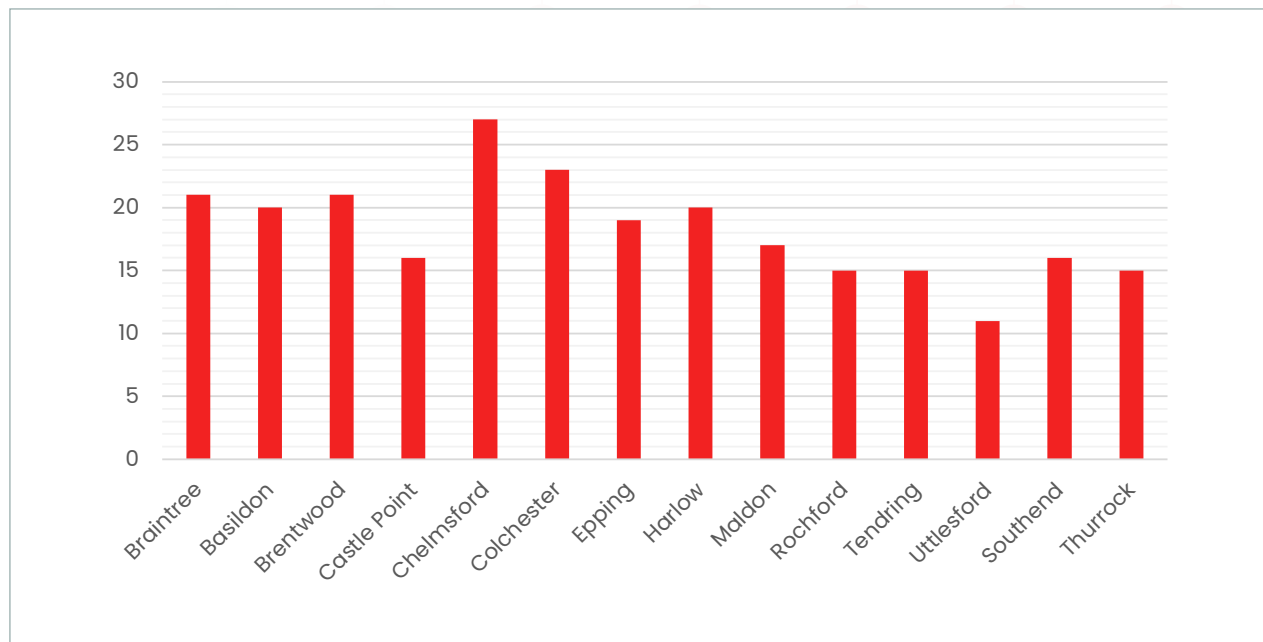
- 1:1 interviews with students, careers fairs, career talks to students.
- Encounters with employers/workplaces/employees.
- Work experience, completion of live projects, employer led masterclasses.
- Apprenticeships.
- Work placements, training needs analysis.
- Employment opportunities.
- We also engage in research and knowledge transfer activity. We also meet with many colleagues at various local committees, groups and organisations.
- Business support delivery (including workforce development).

Local Skills Improvement Plan – Provider & Employer Survey Results (continued)

Do you engage with employers in different locations in Essex?



If so, where?



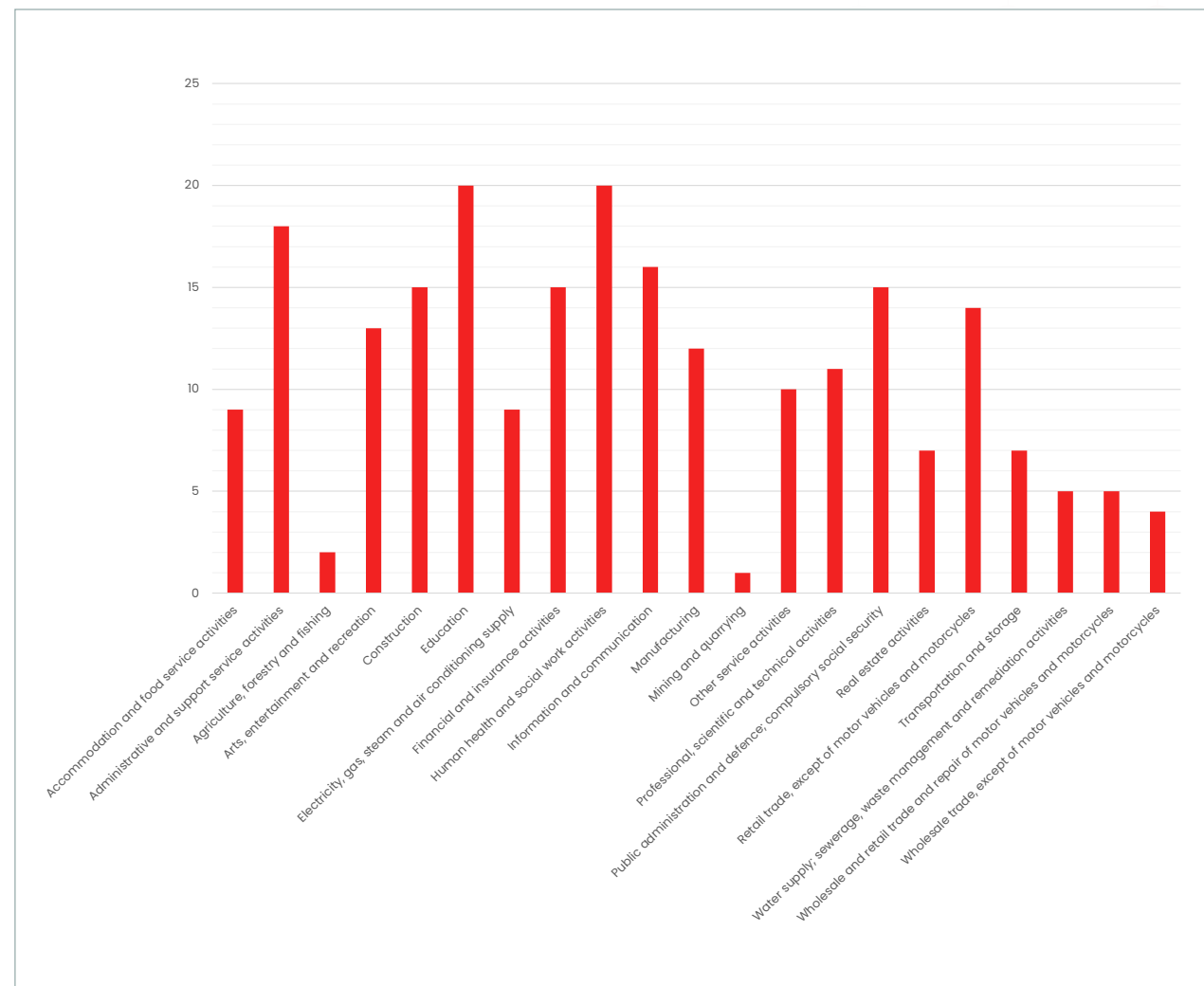
If you provide training for employers, what type of training / qualifications do you offer?

Other:

- We tend to deliver at Levels 4 to 7.
- Bespoke training solutions.

Local Skills Improvement Plan – Provider & Employer Survey Results (continued)

If you engage with employers, from what industry sectors do they come from?

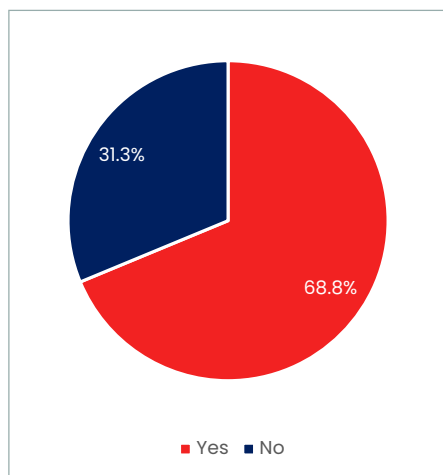


Other includes:

- Crown Prosecution Service, Job Recruitment Agency.
- Equine, Land-based and Animals.
- Health & Social Care.
- Beauty, Nails and Hair.
- Hairdressing.
- Childcare, Adult Social Care.

Local Skills Improvement Plan – Provider & Employer Survey Results (continued)

Do you find it easy to engage with employers?



Would you like to do more with employers?



From your engagement with employers, what do you feel are key sectors Essex should be focussing on?

- Healthcare
- Education
- Construction & Engineering
- Professional Services
- Digital
- Green
- Hospitality & Retail

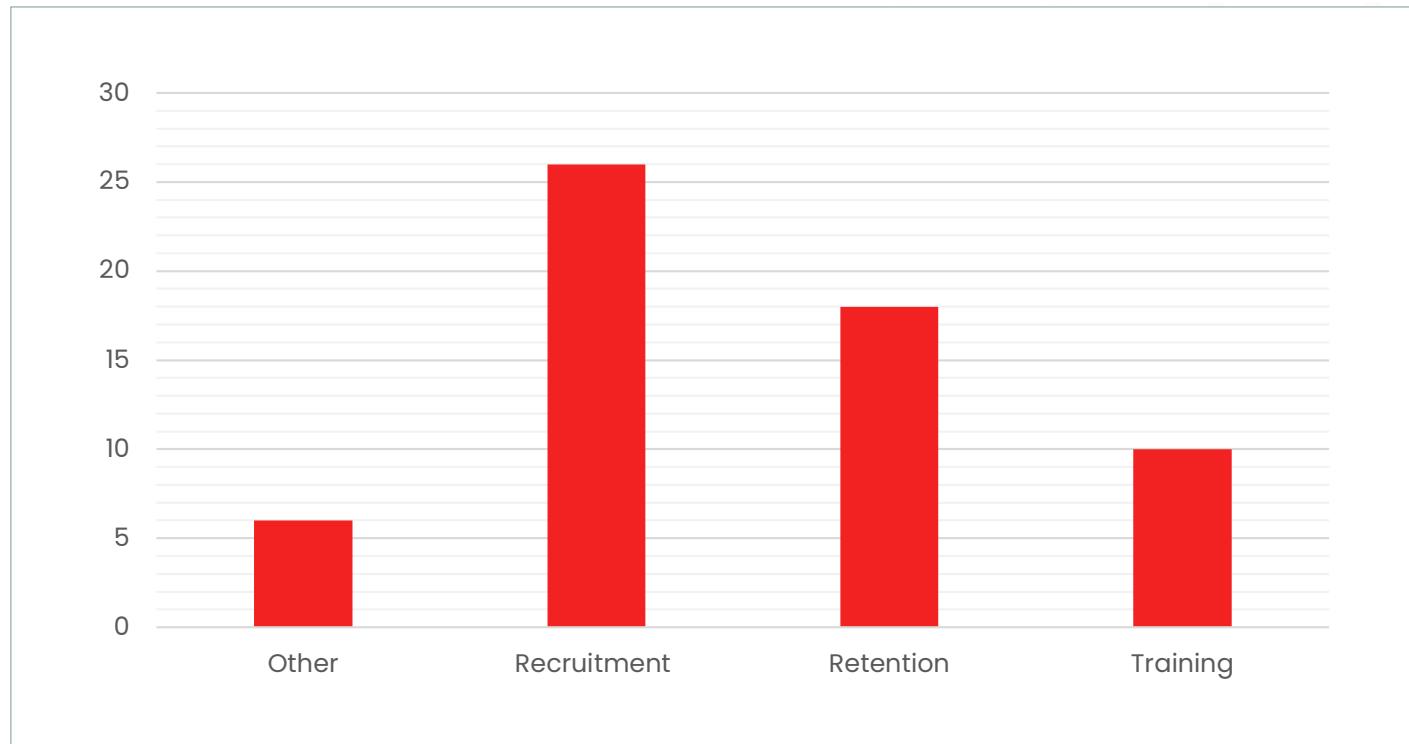
From your engagement with employers, what skills are they asking you to focus on?

- Leadership
- Resilience/tenacity
- Soft skills
- Mental Health
- IT Skills
- English and Maths



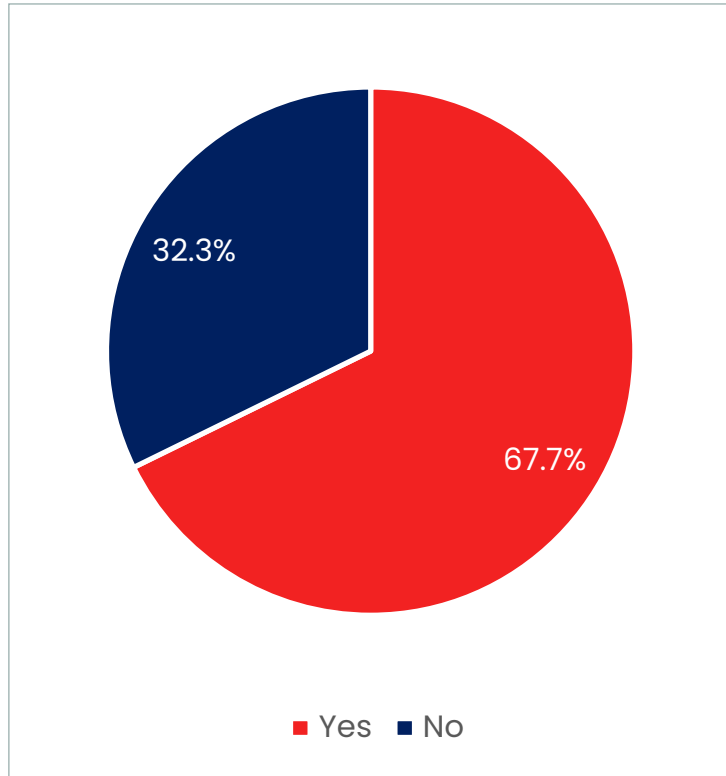
Local Skills Improvement Plan – Provider & Employer Survey Results (continued)

From your engagement with employers, what barriers are they facing?



Local Skills Improvement Plan – Provider & Employer Survey Results (continued)

Does your organisation have recruitment and retention challenges?

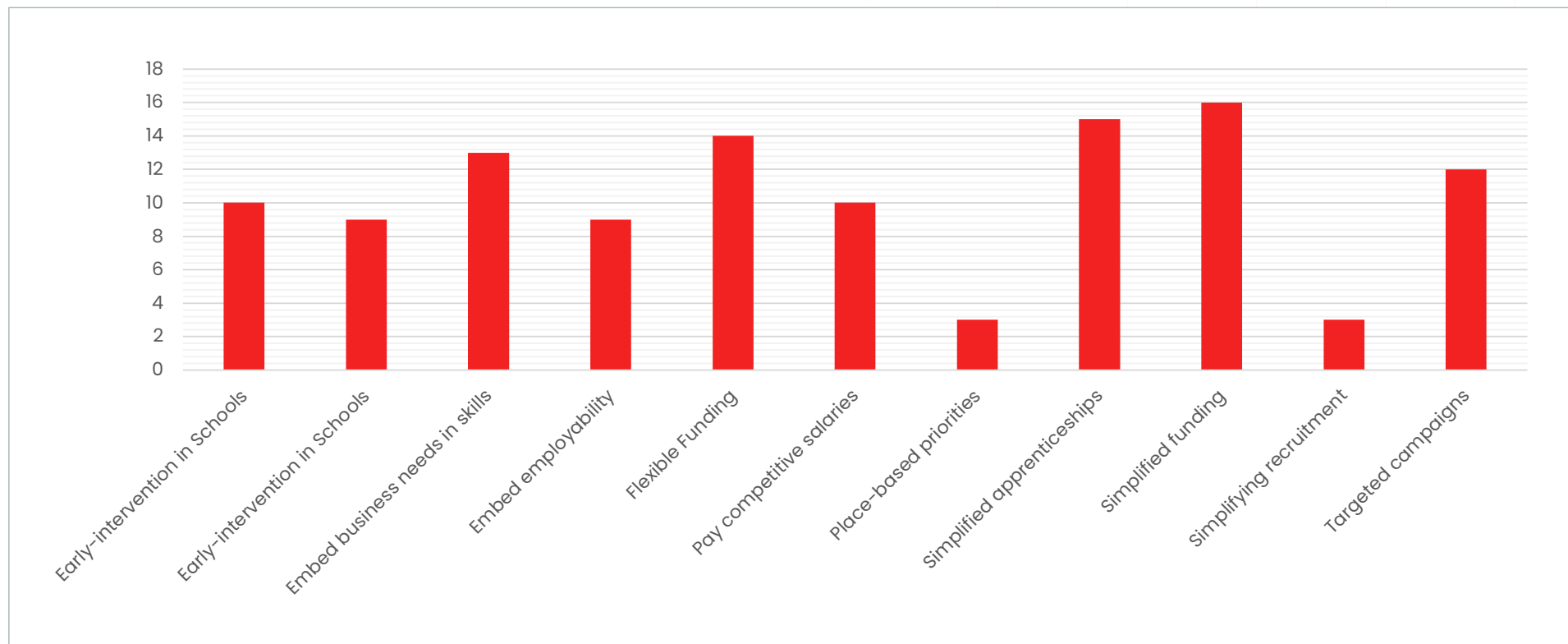


If yes, please specify:

- Teachers across the range of subjects, but also admin roles, security, IT, HR and Finance where better pay can be found in particular in the private sector but also in our local university
- Recruiting highly skilled subject area experts in construction, engineering, business, with limitations on what salaries can be paid in comparison to what they can earn actually doing the job
- Hard to fill vacancies in many areas often taking more than 12 months to fill and inadequate funding means wages not competitive.
- There are a shortage of applicants for all delivery posts including teaching. FE Colleges struggle to compete with both schools and industry where teachers can earn more money. This makes recruitment of new staff and retention of existing staff very difficult.

Local Skills Improvement Plan – Provider & Employer Survey Results (continued)

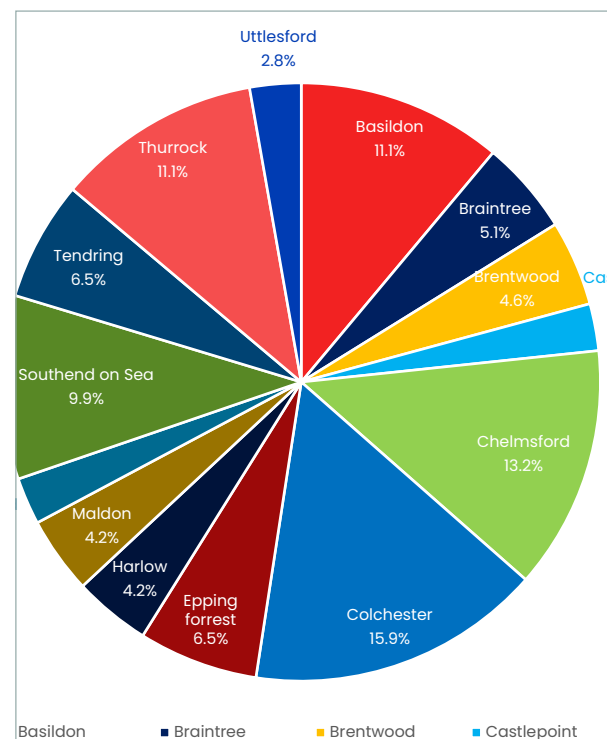
In your opinion, what are the top 3 priorities for the Essex Local Skills Improvement Plan?



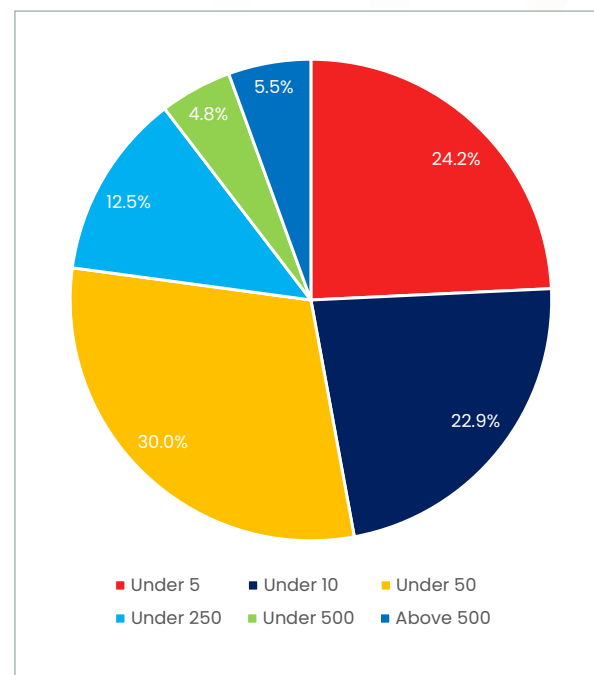
Local Skills Improvement Plan – Provider & Employer Survey Results (continued)

The feedback from the employer survey can be found here:

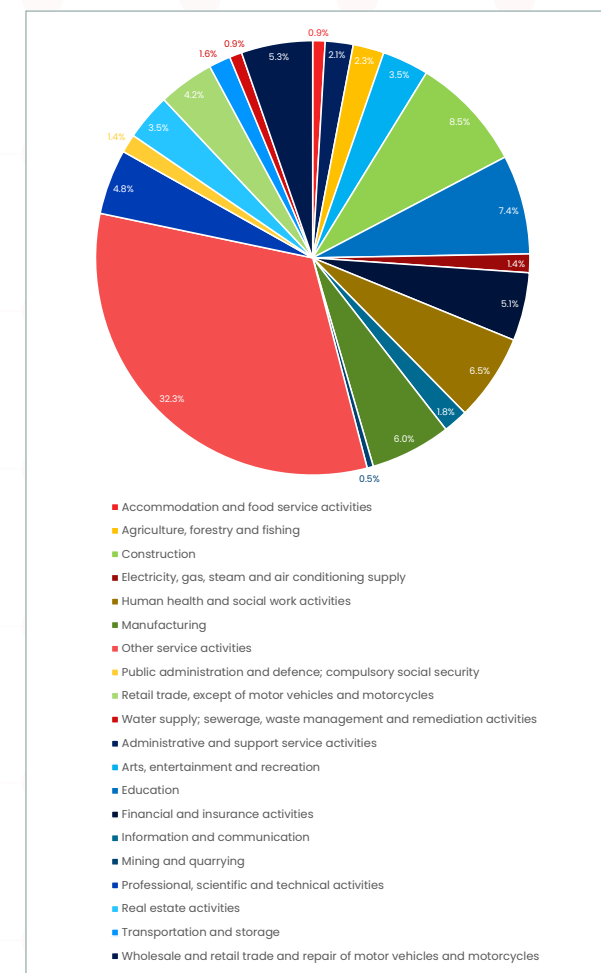
COMPANY LOCATION



COMPANY SIZE

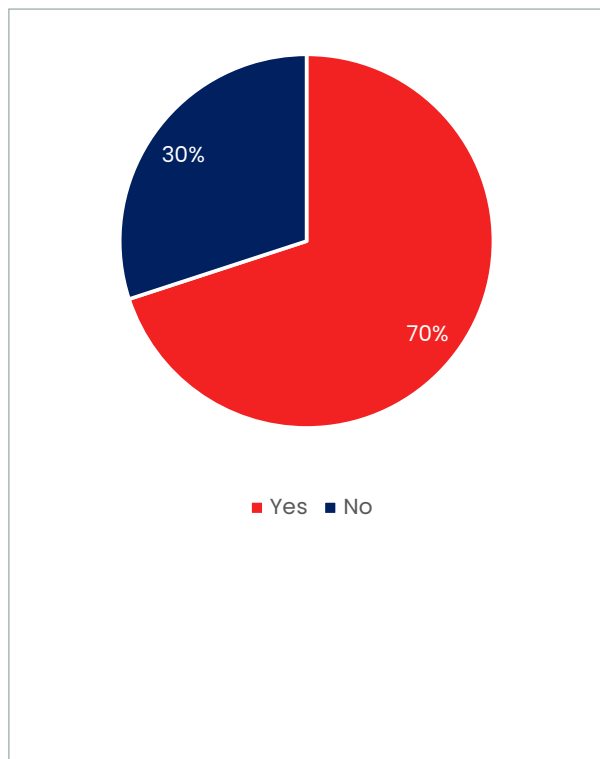


INDUSTRY SECTOR

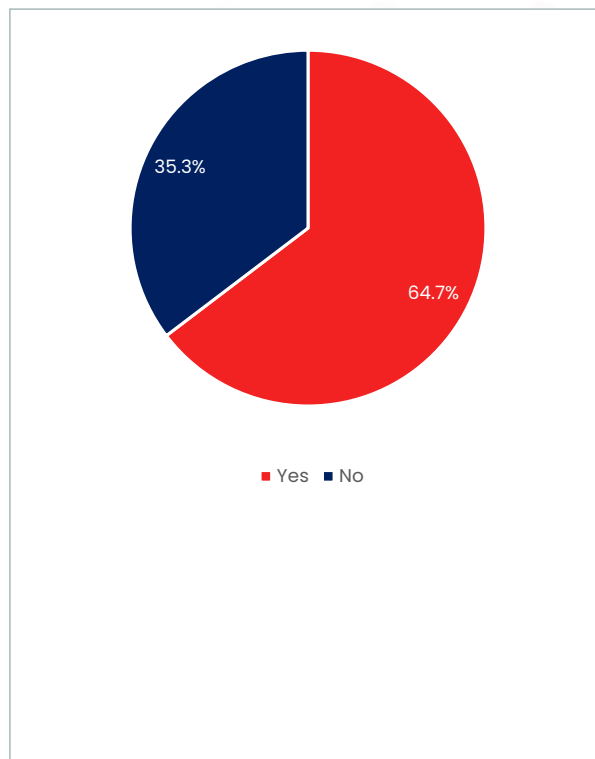


Local Skills Improvement Plan – Provider & Employer Survey Results (continued)

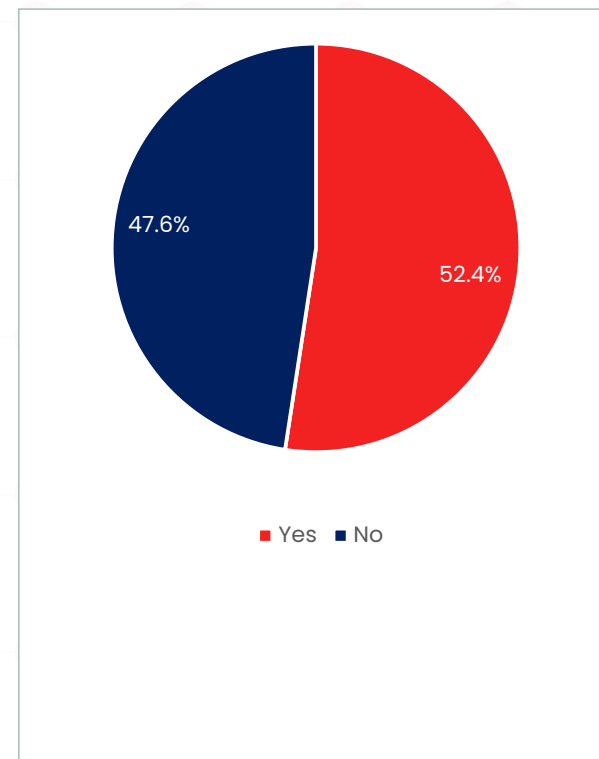
Have you recruited within the last 12 months?



Do you plan to recruit within the next 12 months?

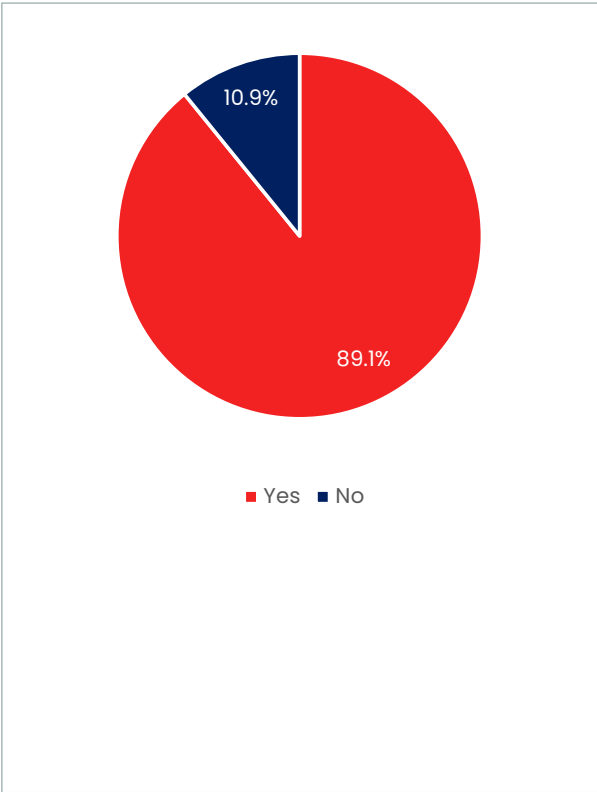


Do you generally find it easy to recruit?

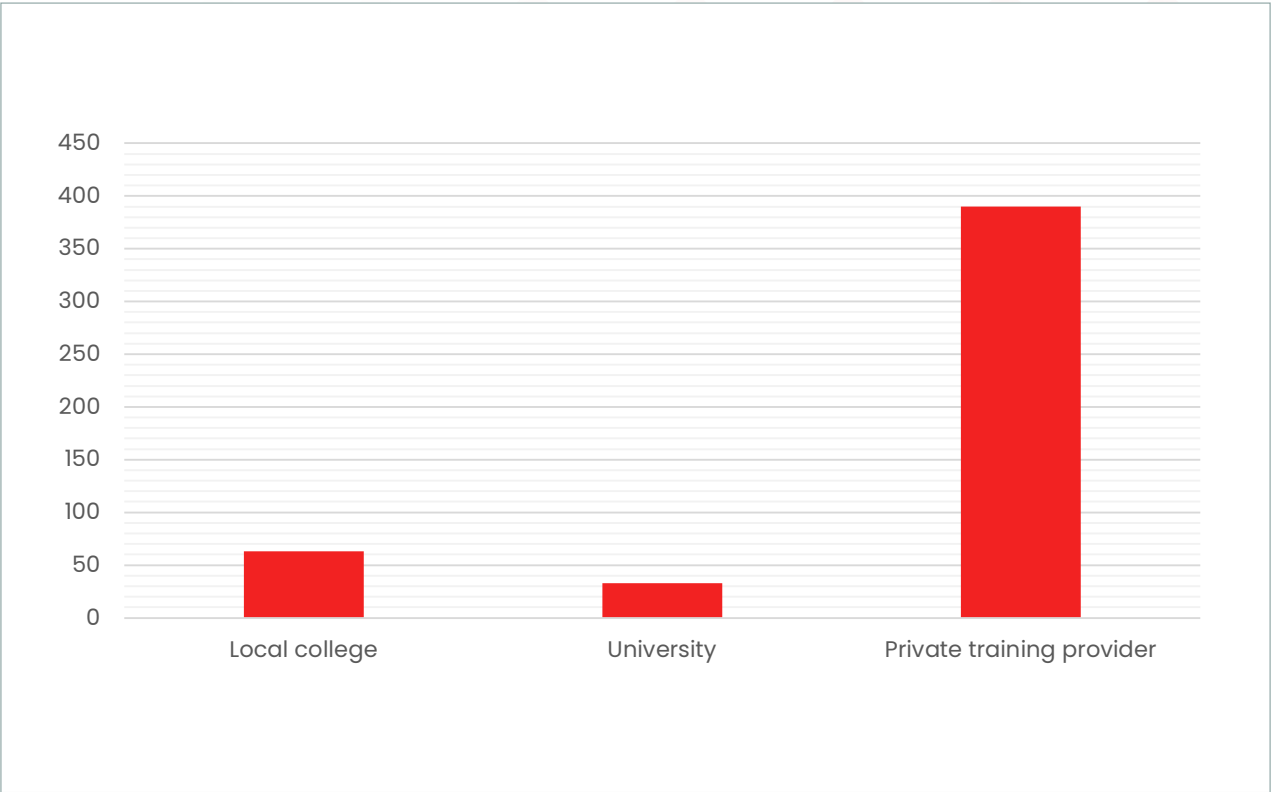


Local Skills Improvement Plan – Provider & Employer Survey Results (continued)

Do you currently offer training for your staff?

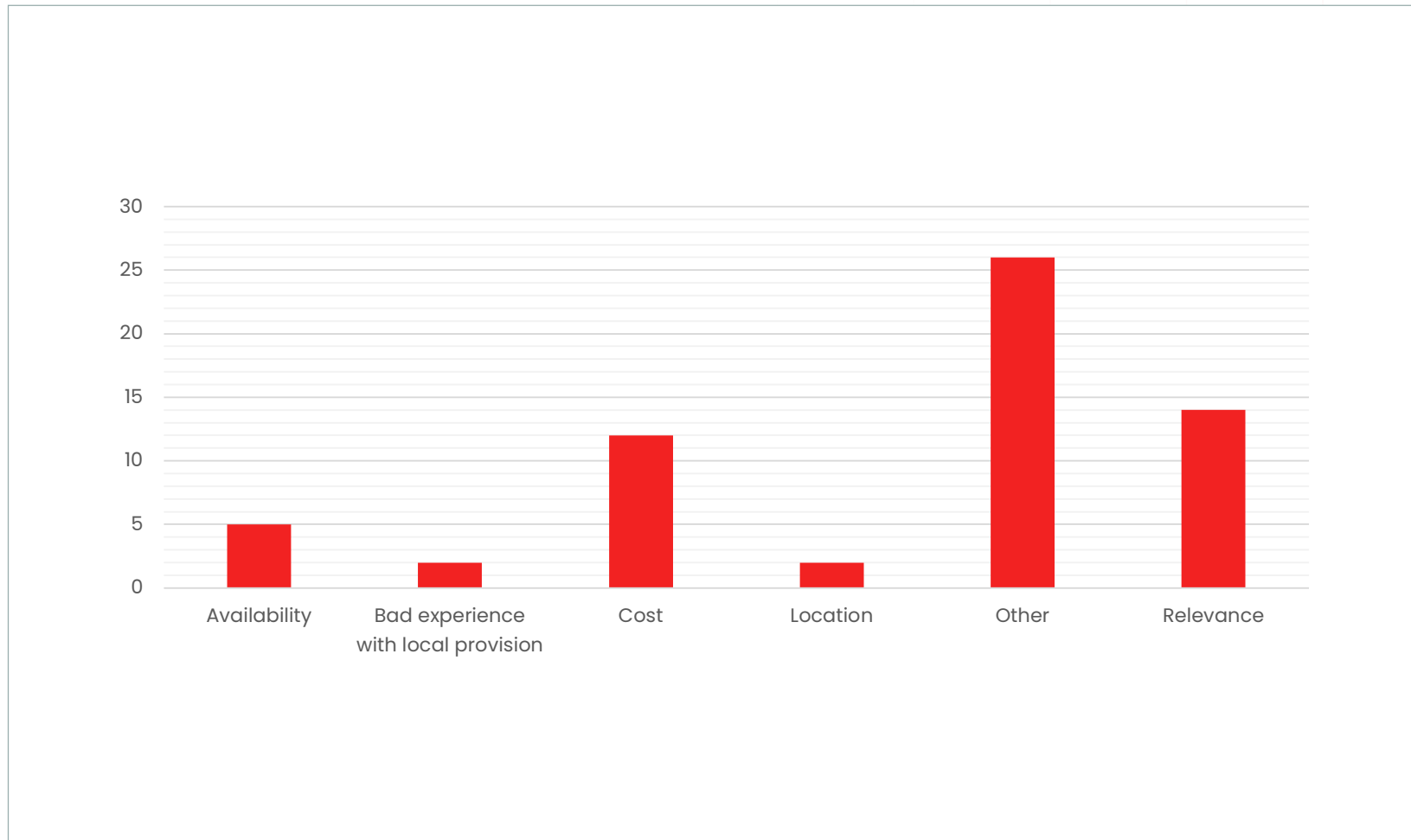


If yes, is this via a local college, university or private training provider



Local Skills Improvement Plan – Provider & Employer Survey Results (continued)

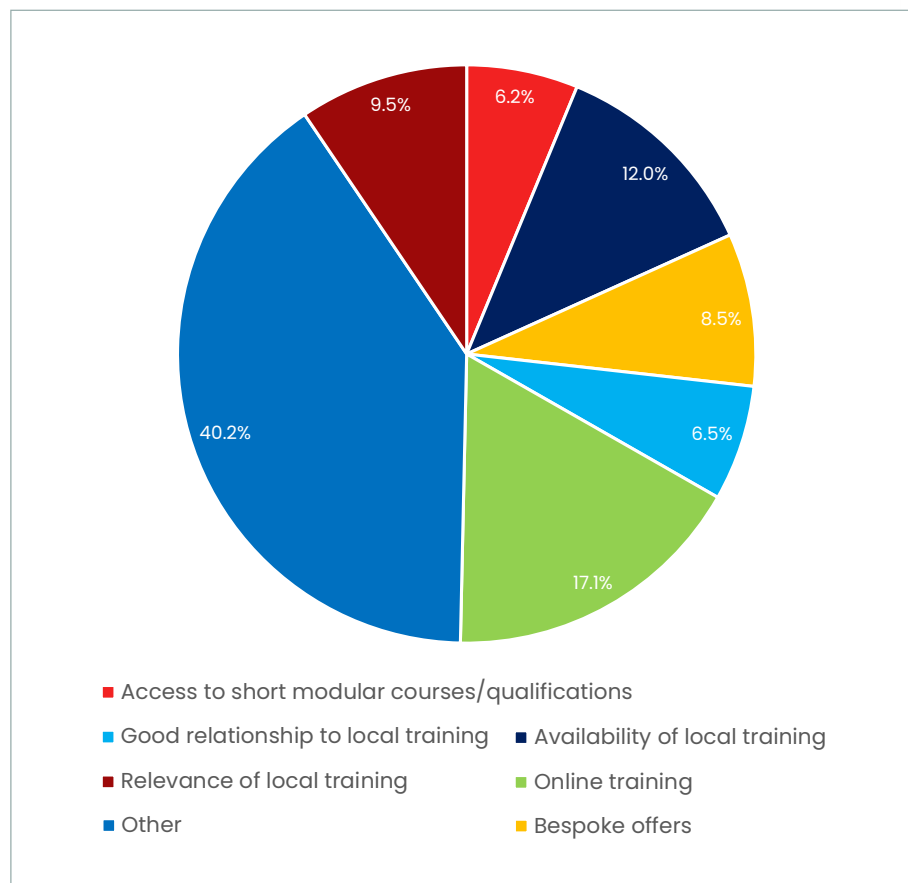
If no, what are the barriers?





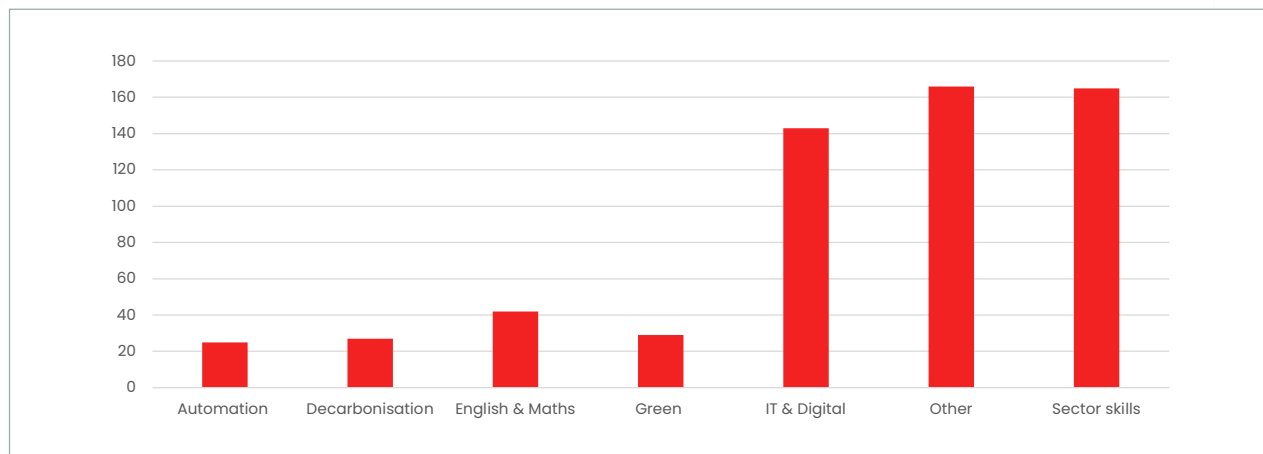
Local Skills Improvement Plan – Provider & Employer Survey Results (continued)

What would improve the skills supply for your business?



Local Skills Improvement Plan – Provider & Employer Survey Results (continued)

What skills is your business likely to need in the next 3–5 years?



Other includes:

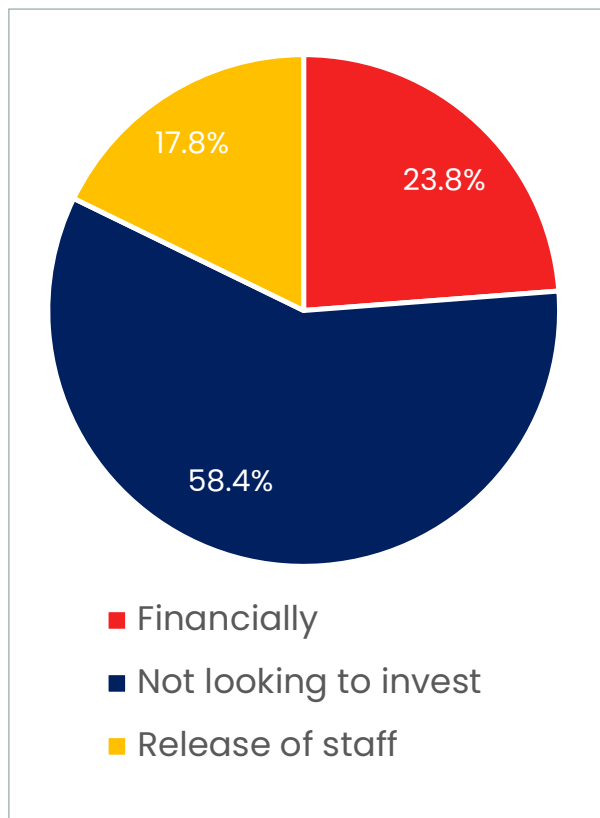
- Communication skills
- Specific health and safety skills needed and people with first aid training
- Retrofit skills which are not currently that available and cost of staff due to market conditions
- Company offers lone worker training and break away training, specialised skills required for this form of training
- Sales and organisational skills
- Their carpentry requires an artisan element - so requires specialist carpentry skills
- Need people with knowledge of carpentry, security, locksmith etc.
- Welders, engineers, gas engineers
- Veterinary
- Mechanics need experience to fully know what to do - hands on experience is required to know what to do

- Refrigeration and Gas safety engineers and stainless steel fabricators
- Creative thinking, confidence, imagination
- Dependant on how licencing regulations change - these will need to be adhered to but cannot be predicted
- Repair and maintenance skills and general building skills – heights
- Needs more training for working at heights
- Needs more courses in behaviour training, autism, speech etc.
- Tractor driving
- Hospitality skills
- Sales training, people management, leadership
- More qualified dentists
- Skill set required for new regulated body coming in near future and social media marketing skills are becoming more needed
- Hands on skills in the workshop
- Upgrade key staff electrical certification

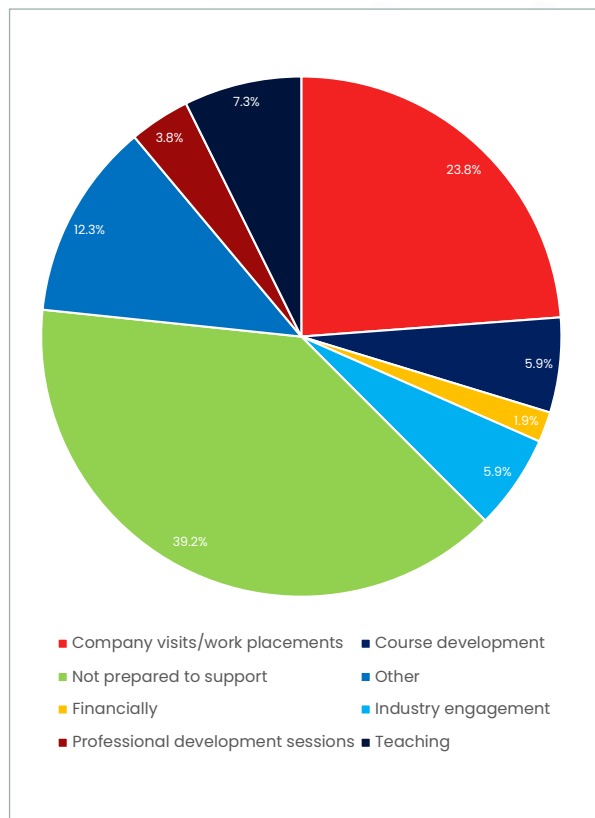
- Maths and English – although not a high scoring skill required for us, to get our applicants on NVQ 2 trade apprenticeships generally school leavers and career changers need to have improved levels
- Scaffold courses
- Accounting and administration are most needed
- Ground workers, site managers, site supervisors
- Sales HTML
- Customer service and marketing skills
- RICS qualified staff
- Leisure skills such as swim teacher, lifeguards, coaches etc
- Recognised accredited qualifications
- Marketing support, leadership & management
- Building and quantity surveying skills
- Sports coaching aligned with National Curriculum needs
- Networking
- Sales and organisational skills
- Export related things, marketing
- Customer service and marketing skills
- Supporting people with autism
- Experience and resilience
- Neurodiversity, inclusion, mental health, mild learning difficulties etc.
- Health and Safety
- System engineering
- Engineering training courses to HNC Level 5
- Marketing, financial, design
- Availability of apprentices
- CIPD AND NEBOSH
- Director level
- Refrigeration, relevant gas and electrical appliance(s) training
- Skilled trades men / women

Local Skills Improvement Plan – Provider & Employer Survey Results (continued)

Would your company be prepared to invest in skills, and if so how?



Would your company be prepared to support colleges and providers?





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