



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

# Levelling-up Missions Annual Report 2024-2025

Presented to Parliament pursuant to section 4 of the  
Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023

May 2025



© Crown copyright, 2025

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/ version/3](https://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3)

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/official-documents](https://www.gov.uk/official-documents).

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to us at

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government  
Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF  
Tel: 030 3444 0000

## Transitioning to a new framework to address regional inequality

This report fulfils the statutory requirement set out in section 3 of Part 1 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 ("the Act") to report on the delivery of the 12 levelling up missions established by the previous administration. While we are legally obliged to produce this report for the period from 25 January 2024 to 24 January 2025, this Government has moved away from the levelling up programme, which failed to deliver meaningful change for our regions and devolved nations.

After 14 years, the data presented in this report demonstrates the significant challenges this government inherited in addressing spatial inequalities across areas including health, education, living standards, and wellbeing. The Government is determined to tackle these deep-rooted regional inequalities through our five central missions focusing on growth, clean energy, NHS and population health improvement, safer streets, and breaking down barriers to opportunity. In our Plan for Change, we pledged to deliver higher living standards in every part of the United Kingdom by the end of this Parliament, with a focus on putting power back in the hands of local areas through meaningful devolution.

We have already made significant progress. Through our Devolution Priority Programme, nearly 80% of England's population will benefit from devolution, giving local leaders the power they need to tackle local priorities and improve public services. And rather than the fragmented funding streams and competitive bidding processes that characterised the previous government's approach, we are providing long-term, flexible funding settlements to local government and integrated settlements for Strategic Authorities, allowing resources to be directed where they are most needed.

As required by the legislation, this report provides data and an assessment of progress on each mission, by reference to the methodology and metrics established by the previous administration, and outlines action taken and planned. However, the Government intends to bring forward legislation to repeal Part 1 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 at the earliest opportunity, in line with this Government's new direction.

In the course of preparing this report, Ministers have had regard to the needs of rural areas as required by section 3(2) of the Act, recognising the distinct challenges rural communities face such as low productivity rates, poor service accessibility, and digital connectivity gaps. The Taskforce on Delivering the Government Missions for Rural Areas is engaging with stakeholders and across government to ensure rural needs are embedded across all five central missions.

In addition to this focus on rural needs, and in accordance with section 3(7) of the Act, Ministers have consulted with the devolved authorities (as defined in section 8) in the course of preparing this report, recognising the crucial role they play in addressing spatial inequalities through their own legislative frameworks and policy approaches. Going forward, while respecting devolved competencies, we remain committed to working constructively with the Devolved Governments to address our shared challenges and deliver better outcomes for all communities across the United Kingdom.

## Summary of Levelling Up Missions progress (January 2024 - January 2025)

The following table provides an assessment of progress on each mission, by reference to the methodology and metrics in the Statement of Levelling Up Missions published by the previous government, and outlines action taken and planned.

The following notation has been used throughout the report to indicate the geographic coverage of metrics:

\* Metric is reported UK-wide.

† Metric is reported for England and Wales only.

‡ Metric is reported for England only.

Mission	Progress assessment	Action being taken/planned
<b>1. Living Standards</b>  <i>By 2030, pay, employment and productivity will have risen in every area of the UK, with each containing a globally competitive city, and the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GVA per hour* increased in 7 out of 12 regions, decreased in 5 out of 12 in 2022 compared to 2021<sup>ia</sup></li> <li>Gross median weekly pay* has grown in every region over the year to April 2024<sup>ii</sup></li> <li>16-64 employment rate* has increased in 7 regions and decreased in 5<sup>iii</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Established six new devolution deals across England, with integrated funding settlements for Combined Authorities</li> <li>National Living Wage increase and Universal Credit reforms</li> <li>Delivering 25 Freeports and Investment Zones across the UK</li> <li>Developing local growth plans alongside local leaders</li> </ul>
<b>2. Research &amp; Development</b>  <i>By 2030, domestic public investment in R&amp;D outside the Greater South East will increase by at least 40%, and over the Spending Review period by at least one third. This additional government funding will seek to leverage at least twice as much private sector investment over the long term to stimulate innovation and productivity growth.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>51% of all public-funded research and development (R&amp;D)* in the 2021-2022 financial year was performed in the Greater South East (GSE)<sup>iv</sup></li> <li>UKRI funding* outside the Greater South East grew by 27% between 2021-22 and 2023-24<sup>v</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extended Innovation Accelerators pilots with £30m additional funding for high-potential clusters in Glasgow City Region, Greater Manchester and West Midlands through 2025/26</li> <li>Continued delivery of the £312m Strength in Places Fund across 12 projects, and £80m Launchpads programme to support local growth across the UK</li> <li>Strengthening UKRI connections with Mayoral Authorities to improve regional innovation partnerships</li> <li>Improved measurement of regional R&amp;D investment</li> </ul>

<sup>a</sup> While regional-level data provides a broad overview, it may mask variations within regions, particularly between urban centres and rural communities.

		<p>through ONS, DSIT and Go-Science collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OECD report commissioned to compare public R&amp;D leverage rates across UK and international regions</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Transport</b></p> <p><i>By 2030, local public transport connectivity across the country will be significantly closer to the standards of London, with improved services, simpler fares and integrated ticketing.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 27% of trips in London were by public transport<sup>‡</sup> (up 2pp from 2022)</li> <li>• 6% of trips in the rest of England were by public transport (unchanged)<sup>vi</sup></li> <li>• Model to assess connectivity between regions not yet available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Announced over £1bn for buses in England outside London for 25-26.</li> <li>• Bus Services (No. 2) Bill giving local leaders more control over the design of bus services</li> <li>• £3 national bus fare cap for 2025 (started 1 January 2025)</li> <li>• Announced £200m additional funding for the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements programmes, bringing total to over £1.3bn for 25-26</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Digital Connectivity</b></p> <p><i>By 2030, the UK will have nationwide coverage of gigabit-capable broadband and 4G mobile networks, and our ambition is that higher quality, standalone 5G will extend to all populated areas.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4G coverage*, where available from at least one operator, has increased to 95.3% (from 92.7% in 2023)<sup>vii<b>b</b></sup></li> <li>• 5G coverage* (which includes non-standalone and standalone 5G): Available across 59.8% of UK (from 55% in 2023) landmass, and outside 95.1% of premises across UK (from 92.7% in 2023)<sup>viii</sup></li> <li>• Gigabit connectivity* increased to 86.3% (from 80.5% in January 2024)<sup>ix</sup></li> </ul>	<p><i>Mobile:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared Rural Network delivering 4G coverage ahead of schedule</li> <li>• Commercial rollout of standalone 5G networks in locations across all four nations since June 2023</li> <li>• CMA-approved merger between Vodafone and Three<sup>c</sup>, helping to achieve Government's standalone 5G ambition and drive competition across sector</li> <li>• Review of mobile market underway to support investment and achieve 5G standalone ambition</li> <li>• £36m invested in 5G Innovation Regions with planned extensions for 25/26</li> </ul> <p><i>Fixed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20 Project Gigabit contracts worth £1.4bn signed,</li> </ul>

<sup>b</sup> For mobile coverage, Connected Nations only allows us to provide a comparison between the coverage as of September 2024 and September 2023.

<sup>c</sup> Subject to remedies, which include a binding commitment by Vodafone and Three to implement their joint network plan through an £11 billion investment in standalone 5G across the UK.

		<p>predominantly covering rural areas where 53% of premises have access to gigabit-capable broadband compared to 87% in urban areas, as of July 2024<sup>x</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing additional interventions for remaining premises without gigabit-capable broadband, particularly in rural areas where only 40% of premises have access compared to 80% in urban areas</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Education</b></p> <p><i>By 2030, the number of primary school children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths will have significantly increased. In England, this will mean 90% of children will achieve the expected standard, and the percentage of children meeting the expected standard in the worst performing areas will have increased by over a third.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National attainment†: 61% (up from 60% in 2022-23 and 59% in 2021-22)<sup>xi</sup></li> <li>• Education Investment Areas†: 58% (up from 57% in 2022-23 and 56% in 2021-22)<sup>xii</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connect the Classroom provided £185m for school networks</li> <li>• Retention incentives of up to £6,000 for teachers in key subjects</li> <li>• Expanded attendance mentoring programme with £15m investment</li> <li>• Bespoke support offered for literacy, numeracy and attendance through the Local Needs Fund</li> <li>• Establishing Regional Improvement for Standards and Excellence (RISE) teams for targeted school support</li> <li>• Launch of Universal Free Breakfast Clubs with first 750 schools selected for early adoption phase starting April 2025</li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Skills</b></p> <p><i>By 2030, the number of people successfully completing high-quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the UK. In England, this will lead to 200,000 more people successfully completing high-quality skills training</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National†: 973,000 achievements in 2023-24 (3% increase from 944,960 in 2022-23)<sup>xiii</sup></li> <li>• Of which in low-skilled areas: 311,000 achievements in 2023-24 (3% increase from 2022-23)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £625m skills construction package</li> <li>• Upcoming launch of foundation and short apprenticeships as part of growth and skills levy</li> <li>• Establishment of Skills England</li> <li>• Launch of Post-16 Education and Skills Strategy</li> <li>• Working with mayors and local authorities to ensure skills provision meets regional need</li> </ul>

<p><i>annually, driven by 80,000 more people completing courses in the lowest skilled areas.</i></p>		
<p><b>7. Health</b></p> <p><i>By 2030, the gap in Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) between local areas where it is highest and lowest will have narrowed, and by 2035 HLE will rise by 5 years.</i></p>	<p>Between 2017-19 and 2021-23<sup>d</sup>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Female HLE†: Fell 1.8 years (from 63.7 to 61.9)</li> <li>• Male HLE†: Fell 1.7 years (from 63.2 to 61.5)<sup>xiv</sup></li> <li>• Geographic gap widened</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion of Core20PLUS5 programme<sup>e</sup> with over 540 local coordinators</li> <li>• Introduction of the Tobacco and Vapes Bill</li> <li>• £267m for drug and alcohol treatment and recovery services</li> <li>• 130,000 workplace cardiovascular health checks delivered, and digital NHS Health Check system developed</li> <li>• Extension of Family Hubs and Start for Life programme</li> <li>• Building NHS "fit for the future" with reduced health inequality through strategic shifts from hospital to home, analogue to digital, and treatment to prevention</li> </ul>
<p><b>8. Well-being</b></p> <p><i>By 2030, well-being will have improved in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low life satisfaction*: 5.4% in 2021-23 (up from 4.4% in 2017-19)</li> <li>• Low worthwhileness*: 4.2% in 2021-23 (up from 3.7% in 2017-19)</li> <li>• Low happiness*: 8.6% in 2021-23 (up from 8.1% in 2017-19)</li> <li>• High anxiety*: 22.4% in 2021-23 (up from 20.0% in 2017-19)<sup>xv</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritising wellbeing across Culture, Arts, Heritage, Sport, Youth and Civil Society sectors through targeted funding from DCMS and Arm's -Length Bodies, such as Arts Council England and Sport England</li> <li>• Continuation of cross-government Wellbeing Analysis Board aimed at ensuring active inclusion of wellbeing valuation and metrics in funding and other policy decisions</li> <li>• Investing £7 million to continue funding 24 Early Support Hubs in England during 2025-26, providing over 12,000 children and young people with innovative</li> </ul>

<sup>d</sup> The latest available data.

<sup>e</sup> [Core20PLUS5](#) is a national NHS England approach to inform action to reduce healthcare inequalities at both national and system level by targeting the most deprived 20% of the national population.

		<p>early mental health and wellbeing support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of new CQC visiting standards ensuring care home residents' emotional wellbeing is protected through guaranteed visiting rights, even during health outbreaks</li> </ul>
<p><b>9. Pride in Place</b></p> <p><i>By 2030, pride in place, such as people's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local area pride†: 59% reported they are proud to live in their local area in 2024 (no previous data)</li> <li>• Civic participation/engagement†: 33% said they had engaged in some form of civic participation over the last 12 months (down 1pp from 2021-22)</li> <li>• Area attractiveness†: 57% rate positively (no previous data)<sup>xvi</sup></li> <li>• ASB perception†: 8.2% in 2024 (up from 7.8% previous year)<sup>xvii</sup></li> <li>• Social Fabric Index: not implemented</li> <li>• Heritage engagement†: stable at 69%</li> <li>• Arts engagement†: 90% in 2023-24 (up from 89% in 2022-23)<sup>xviii</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £160m Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan</li> <li>• Introduction of High Street Rental Auction powers</li> <li>• £7m High Street Accelerators Pilot Programme</li> <li>• £400m investment in Grassroots Multisports Facilities</li> <li>• Delivering community safety improvements, High Street Rental Auctions support, and Community Right to Buy powers</li> <li>• £1.6 billion investment to fill potholes and repair roads across England</li> </ul>
<p><b>10. Housing</b></p> <p><i>By 2030, renters will have a secure path to ownership with the number of first-time buyers increasing in all areas; and the government's ambition is for the number of non-decent rented homes to have fallen by 50%, with the biggest improvements in the lowest performing areas.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First-time buyers†: The number of first time buyers has not risen in all areas<sup>xix</sup></li> <li>• Non-decent homes†: 21% private rented, 10% social rented in 2023 (unchanged from 2022)<sup>xx</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overhauling the planning system to deliver 1.5m homes, with increased focus on social rent and expanded powers for local leaders to build affordable housing nationwide, including in rural areas where affordability ratios are particularly acute (9.5 times average earnings in predominantly rural areas)<sup>xxi</sup></li> <li>• Introducing permanent Mortgage Guarantee Scheme and raising higher Stamp Duty on additional dwellings from 3% to 5% to benefit first-time buyers</li> <li>• Renters' Rights Bill introduced with Decent Homes Standard</li> </ul>



		<p>and Awaab's Law provisions for private rented sector</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consulting on reformed Decent Homes Standard for private and social rented homes and minimum energy efficiency requirements for social homes</li> <li>• New consumer regulation regime for social housing</li> <li>• £30m Social Housing Decency Fund improving 20,000 homes</li> <li>• Phased implementation of Awaab's Law from October 2025 to address hazards in rented homes</li> <li>• Consulting on social rent settlement</li> </ul>
<p><b>11. Crime</b></p> <p><i>By 2030, homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime will have fallen, focused on the worst affected areas.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homicides†: 4% reduction overall in 2023-24, 10% reduction in worst-affected areas compared to 2022-23<sup>xxii</sup></li> <li>• Serious violence (as measured by hospital admissions for assault with a sharp object amongst U25s) ‡: 13% reduction overall in 2023-24, 2% increase in worst-affected areas compared to 2022-23<sup>xxiii</sup></li> <li>• Neighbourhood crime (vehicle crime, domestic burglary, theft from the person, personal robbery) †: 13% increase overall in 2023-24, 32% increase in worst - affected areas, compared to 2022-23<sup>xxiv</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Violence Reduction Units in 20 high-violence areas</li> <li>• Hotspot Response Fund deploying patrols in all 43 forces</li> <li>• Safer Streets Fund targeting neighbourhood crime</li> <li>• Implementing reforms to halve VAWG and knife crime while restoring confidence in policing</li> <li>• Implementing commitments to restore and strengthen neighbourhood policing through the Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee, boosting public confidence, including through delivering 13,000 additional police officers, PCSOs and special constables in dedicated neighbourhood roles</li> </ul>
<p><b>12. Local Leadership</b></p> <p><i>By 2030, every part of England that wants one will have a devolution deal with powers at or approaching the highest level of</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share of England's population covered by a devolution agreement ‡: increased from 41% (2021) to 61% (2025)<sup>xxv</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Devolution agreements signed with Hull and East Yorkshire, Greater Lincolnshire, Devon and Torbay and Lancashire, with legislation progressed</li> <li>• First Mayors elected in East Midlands, York and North Yorkshire, and North East, with elections scheduled for</li> </ul>

<p><i>devolution and a simplified, long-term funding settlement.</i></p>		<p>May 2025 in Hull and East Yorkshire and Greater Lincolnshire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater Manchester and West Midlands to receive the integrated settlement from 2025-26 with 4 further MCAs to receive an Integrated Settlement from 2026-27, while exploring how an integrated settlement could apply for Greater London Authority</li> <li>• English Devolution White Paper published December 2024, featuring expanded devolution framework and plans for the English Devolution Bill</li> <li>• White Paper also announced Devolution Priority Programme extending mayoral devolution to 6 new areas (subject to statutory tests), with Mayors to be elected May 2026, increasing England's population covered by devolution to 77%</li> <li>• Established a Defra-led Taskforce on Delivering the Government Missions for Rural Areas to ensure rural needs are embedded across all five central missions</li> </ul>
--	--	---

## Annex – Data Sources

---

- <sup>i</sup> ONS, 2024. [Regional and subregional labour productivity, UK: 2022.](#)
- <sup>ii</sup> ONS, 2024. [Employee earnings in the UK: 2024.](#)
- <sup>iii</sup> ONS, 2025. [A07: Regional labour market summary.](#)
- <sup>iv</sup> ONS, 2024. [UK public-funded gross regional capital and non-capital expenditure on research and development: financial year ending 2022.](#)
- <sup>v</sup> ONS, 2024. [Geographical distribution of UKRI funding, financial years 2022 to 2023 and 2023 to 2024.](#)
- <sup>vi</sup> Department for Transport, 2024. [National Travel Survey: 2023.](#)
- <sup>vii</sup> Ofcom, 2024. [Connected Nations 2024.](#)
- <sup>viii</sup> Ofcom, 2024. [Connected Nations 2024](#)
- <sup>ix</sup> Independent Website ThinkBroadband, 2025. [Gigabit Coverage](#)
- <sup>x</sup> Ofcom, 2024. [Connected Nations 2024](#)
- <sup>xi</sup> Department for Education, 2025. [Key stage 2 attainment: Academic year 2023/24.](#)
- <sup>xii</sup> Department for Education, 2024. [Attainment by region and local authority' from 'Key stage 2 attainment.](#)
- <sup>xiii</sup> Department for Education, 2025. [Further education and skills: Academic year 2024/25.](#)
- <sup>xiv</sup> ONS, 2024. [Healthy life expectancy in England and Wales: between 2011 to 2013 and 2021 to 2023.](#)
- <sup>xv</sup> ONS, 2025. [Threshold Estimates of Personal Well-being from the Annual Population Survey, January 2017 to December 2019.](#)
- <sup>xvi</sup> Department for Culture, Media & Sport, 2024. [Community Life Survey 2023/24.](#)
- <sup>xvii</sup> ONS, 2023. [Crime Survey for England and Wales \(CSEW\) estimates of personal and household crime, anti-social behaviour, and public perceptions, by police force area, year ending June 2023.](#)
- <sup>xviii</sup> Department for Culture, Media & Sport, 2025. [Participation Survey 2023-24.](#)
- <sup>xix</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2025. [First-time buyer mortgage sales, by local authority, UK: 2006 to 2023 - Office for National Statistics.](#)
- <sup>xx</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2023. [English Housing Survey Chapter 4: Dwelling Condition.](#)
- <sup>xxi</sup> Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, 2024. [Statistical Digest of Rural England: Housing supplementary tables, December 2024](#)
- <sup>xxii</sup> ONS, 2025. [Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area data tables.](#)
- <sup>xxiii</sup> NHS England, 2024. [Hospital admissions for assault by sharp objects May 2024 - NHS England Digital.](#)

---

<sup>xxiv</sup> ONS, 2024. [Incidents of neighbourhood crime for the 20% of Lower layer Super Output Areas \(LSOAs\) with the highest police recorded neighbourhood crime rates, England and Wales, years ending June 2019 to March 2024.](#)

<sup>xxv</sup> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2024. [English Devolution White Paper - GOV.UK.](#)