

# Work, Skills and Wellbeing in Tameside

Tameside Public Health Report  
Summary: September 2024



Produced by:

**ps** research

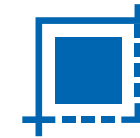
# Introduction

## How we have approached this report

This report is based on a needs assessment of work and skills from a health and wellbeing angle. It is difficult to always strike the right balance; the principle we have applied is to ensure we always bring work and skills back to the lives, opportunities and long-term outcomes of residents in Tameside. To understand work and skills needs in the borough, we need to understand the circumstances and challenges that residents face. We have reviewed a broad range of data, from deprivation and health to jobs, pay and qualifications. We have identified some developing stories informed by this data. We showcase some of the many projects, programmes and practice already supporting Tameside residents around work and skills. We also share learning and examples from other areas of the country to give a sense of what might be possible in the borough.

This all leads into the identification of some underpinning principles and core priorities emerging from the needs analysis. Finally, we have made a series of recommendations linked to these priorities for leaders in Tameside to consider.

## Population context (Census 2021)



### Population size

231,100 people live in Tameside - this has increased by over 5% in last ten years (but not as much as nationally).



### Age

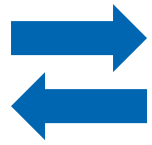
The age profile is very similar to nationally, although the number of children aged under 15 in Tameside has increased at a greater rate than nationally over the last ten years, whilst the number of residents aged 65+ has also increased but not at the same rate as nationally.



### Ethnicity

86% of residents are White, same as the North West but higher than nationally (81%).

# Analysis highlights



## To what extent is health impacting on work and work impacting on health?

On the one hand, our analysis highlights the importance of preventative healthcare to the labour market. But on the other, there is evidence that the type of work someone is in (or lack of opportunities) contributes to health inequalities.



## There are not enough jobs, and the jobs there are tend to be low quality and low skilled

The ratio of jobs to local people in Tameside has not changed in 20 years and is significantly lower than regional and national job density. At the same time, the number of low-skilled, low-quality work in the borough is increasing.



## Lack of qualifications in Tameside affects all ages

Young people are more likely to be leaving school with little or no qualifications compared to regional and national, and this rises through the age groups. Even if they have qualifications, they are unlikely to be highly qualified (e.g. degree level).



## Making sense of pay and affordability

Low pay is common in the borough, with evidence that residents earn more if they go out of Tameside for work. And whilst houses are cheaper in Tameside than other areas, they are no more affordable to local people due to low pay.



## Who faces the biggest inequalities in Tameside?

There is evidence that female residents of Tameside in particular experience significant inequalities across health, work and life circumstances. There are more disabled residents too who face inequalities around work and skills.

# Public suggestions on improving work, skills and wellbeing



## Consider the role of volunteering in work and skills

Look at how to best use the volunteer system, e.g. pop-up volunteering shops, and better integrate volunteering with work opportunities



## The importance of preventative healthcare

- Workplaces that support preventative health and keep people fitter / educating workplaces, e.g. flexible working
- Health service aftercare, e.g. how to navigate life and work once diagnosed with a condition
- 'Prevention rather than the cure' - focus on health of residents, support for specific circumstances (e.g. single parents and childcare)



## Get residents ready for work and to make opportunities easier to access

- Wider skills needed to empower residents, e.g. digital skills, basic cooking skills, budgeting and finances, communication and English language (ESOL)
- Increase support through applications and job searches and encourage people to be more ambitious than entry-level jobs
- Alternatives to traditional job applications and interviews, such as work trials which focus on the skills and abilities needed for the job, not how good you are at interviews



## The role of the council

Some comments suggested that Tameside Council could promote and share opportunities around work, skills and volunteering and lead by example in hiring local talent and inclusive recruitment.



## The role of local employers

There were comments about staff retention and morale in low-paid sectors, e.g. care workers and a suggestion that local employers could do more to support and value people with long-term conditions.

# Learning from projects in Tameside and beyond



## There is plenty already happening in Tameside

- We have a range of council strategies in place to tackle issues linked to inclusive growth, population health and inequalities
- The council provides a host of services which support residents to get into work or progress into good work
- Other public sector organisations and partners run innovative projects which are having a real impact
- And our VCFSE sector delivers a wide range of support to our communities in Tameside



## But feedback from partners makes it clear that more could be done

- There needs to be more focus on promotion and awareness as people "don't know what they don't know"
- What impact are local aspirations and the make-up of our sectors having on work and wellbeing outcomes?
- How do we ensure diversity and individual needs are valued?
- We can't ignore the funding landscape and the impact this has on supporting residents and the local economy



## What can we learn from other areas?

- How to ensure good health is seen as a valid economic goal through system leadership
- There are benefits of a participant-led approach to work and skills support
- There are examples of projects aimed specifically at groups facing more inequalities, such as women

# We have identified some priorities and cross-cutting issues

## Our six key priorities:



Supporting residents who are economically inactive (not looking for work)



Supporting working-age residents who have limited or no education/qualifications



Supporting female residents into good work



Supporting residents with long-term health conditions (including disabilities and mental health) into good work



Reducing and preventing ill health so more residents are in work



Ensuring recruitment practices are fair and open to all



## Cross-cutting issues to consider in anything we do around work and skills:

- **Aspirations** - raising aspirations and finding role models
- **Awareness** - increasing awareness and promotion of opportunities
- **Digital** - supporting residents who are digitally excluded
- **Inclusion** - ensuring opportunities in Tameside are inclusive for all
- **Inequalities** - tackling and reducing inequalities
- **Navigate** - simplify opportunities and help residents to navigate red tape
- **Resource** - resourcing and capacity building

# We set out some recommendations which sit under five themes



## System leadership in Tameside

Encourage our leaders to work together on work, skills and wellbeing and ensure population health is seen as a key economic outcome in Tameside



## Tameside Council leading by example

Embedding good practice in our organisation when it comes to recruitment and talent and continuing to develop services and strategies to improve long-term outcomes for our residents



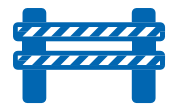
## Working with our partners

Encouraging and supporting our partners around volunteering systems, early support and the skills, training and careers advice offer in Tameside



## Developing services and support

Focusing on what we already do well in Tameside, developing offers and building more resource and capacity



## Removing barriers to work and skills

Supporting specific groups of residents facing inequalities and barriers to skills and employment

# Where can I find out more...?



Visit [Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\)](#) for more documents, data, local knowledge, community insight and other types of evidence to look at and identify health and wellbeing needs within Tameside



Visit [Be Well](#) for free health and wellbeing support and advice



Visit [Employment and Skills](#) or [Routes to Work](#) for support if you are looking for work or in work and looking for a change of career or to earn more money, including Routes



Visit [Tameside Council Education webpage](#) for support if you are looking for information on further education, including [Opportunities Post 16](#)



Visit [Tameside Council Careers Guidance webpage](#) or [Positive Steps](#) for careers guidance

# Final thoughts from James

This report has covered a lot and there are lots of priorities and recommendations we've made on this topic. I'm always keen that we produce lots of tangible recommendations to make sure action is taken to make a difference to residents and improve services and opportunities in Tameside.

Formally this report goes to Tameside's Health & Wellbeing Board where lots of stakeholders who can carry out these actions all come together. We will be pulling the right people together with an action plan to get things done to make the improvements this report suggests. Lots of the building blocks are in place, particularly with our support services like Tameside In Work, so it's partly about ensuring we continue to deliver and expand those services.

Some of the recommendations and challenges are much wider and won't be easy to fix – such as getting more large employers into the borough and increasing wages; or increasing the skills people have across all ages. To have an impact on health outcomes, many of these challenges will take years before we see that difference. We have other forums with education and business leaders like our Inclusive Growth Board, where this will be taken forward, and will form part of the approach to growth in Tameside in the years to come. We want growth, but it should be 'inclusive growth' which helps people address the barriers they face, and brings good jobs to the borough.

This work will carry on across Tameside and we will include an update on our progress in next year's Public Health Annual Report to demonstrate what we have done to make a difference. It won't be solved in a year, but there is commitment to make progress, which the borough needs, to ensure people can prosper and have happy, healthy lives.

