



East Midlands  
**Councils**

# MISSIONS: IMPOSSIBLE?



**Levelling Up the East Midlands**

23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024

Author: Andrew Pritchard  
Director of Policy & Infrastructure

# Contents

1. Foreword
2. A Potted History of UK Regional Policy (aka ‘Levelling Up’)
3. Levelling Up White Paper 2022
4. The 12 Levelling Up Missions & the East Midlands
5. Government’s Statutory Reporting Duties
6. Some Concluding Thoughts

## **Foreword**

**One of the common criticisms of ‘Levelling Up’ is that no-one understands what it means or how it can be measured.**

**The Government’s 2022 White Paper set out to address this issue head-on by defining 12 long-term ‘Levelling Up Missions’:**

**Mission 1: Living Standards**

**Mission 2: Research & Development**

**Mission 3: Transport Infrastructure**

**Mission 4: Digital Connectivity**

**Mission 5: Education**

**Mission 6: Skills**

**Mission 7: Health**

**Mission 8: Wellbeing**

**Mission 9: Pride in Place**

**Mission 10: Housing**

**Mission 11: Crime**

**Mission 12: Local Leadership**

**This paper describes the detail of each Mission and then makes an initial assessment of the likelihood of successful delivery in the East Midlands. The results are a mixed picture.**

**This is not just an academic exercise. Part 1 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 introduces a statutory duty on Government to report progress against its Levelling Up Missions on an annual basis.**

**The statutory reporting duty will help ensure future Government’s are held to account for their performance in ‘levelling up’ and should also help councils and combined authorities make the case for locally significant investments.**

**Whatever the outcome of the 2024 General Election, Levelling Up looks set to remain a high political priority.**

## 2. A Potted History of UK Regional Policy (aka ‘Levelling Up’)

- 2.1 Regional policy in the UK dates back to the Barlow Commission and the Special Areas Act 1934, which was established to address the impacts of the Great Depression on industrial areas.
- 2.2 Harold Wilson’s Labour Government in the 1960s introduced a National Economic Plan & Regional Economic Planning Councils and Boards to boost regional growth. These arrangements were scaled down in the 1970’s and the finally swept away by the Thatcher Government elected in 1979. In their place, the Conservatives introduced the competitive Single Regeneration Budget, Urban Development Corporations (UDCs) and local Training & Enterprise Councils (TECs).
- 2.3 New Labour established Regional Development Agencies in 1998 underpinned by a framework of cross-governmental Public Service Agreements. The Coalition Government which took office in 2010 abolished regional structures, established Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and a new generation of funding competitions, most recently the Levelling Up Fund (LUF).
- 2.4 Despite all this activity and organisational changes (or perhaps because of them) regional inequalities have continued to widen. To the extent that when the independent UK 2070 Commission<sup>1</sup> was launched the October 2018 the Commission Chair, the late Lord Kerlake, said:
- “There are deep-rooted inequalities across the UK. These are not inevitable. However, we lack the long-term thinking and spatial economic plan needed to tackle them...”*
- 2.5 Like others, the UK 2070 Commission has drawn comparisons between the current UK situation with that of post-unification Germany.
- 2.6 Research by Centre for Cities<sup>2</sup> noted that directly after reunification, productivity in former East Germany (including Berlin) was at around 60 per cent of former West Germany but is now at around 85 per cent. Although the former East Germany has still not fully closed the gap between itself and the West, it now has a GDP per capita higher than many parts of Northern England and Wales and has made great progress on employment and wage growth.

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://uk2070.org.uk/>

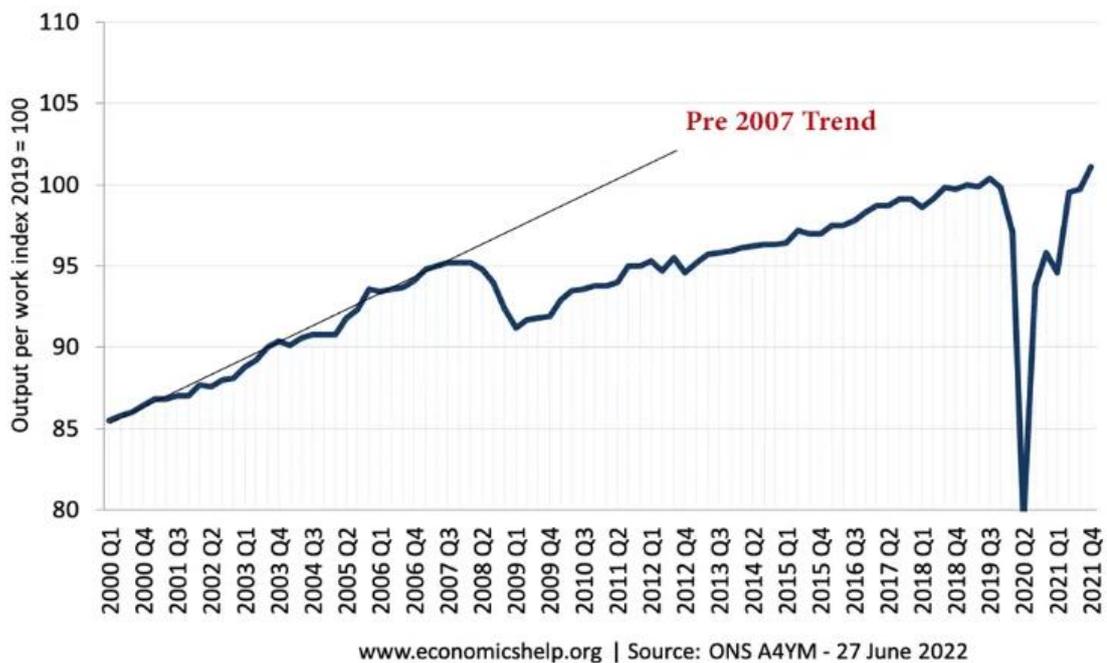
<sup>2</sup> [What can German reunification teach the UK about levelling up? | Centre for Cities](#)

### 3. Levelling Up White Paper 2022

3.1 The publication of the Levelling Up White Paper in 2022 is the latest of many attempts by Government to ‘turn the tide’ and reduce regional inequalities.

3.2 However, it is also an unusual White Paper, not least because it is 332 pages long! The first 240 pages comprise an academic essay on regional inequality written by Andy Haldane. Haldane is a former Chief Economist for the Bank of England and now Chief Executive of the Royal Society of Arts (RSA). As an economist he has come to believe that improving UK productivity is dependent on reducing regional inequalities. Haldane was seconded into Government from the RSA for six months to help develop the White Paper.

3.3 Like many developed nations the UK has a ‘productivity problem’ - although the size of the challenge post the 2008 Banking Crisis has become particularly acute in Britain:



**Figure 1: UK Labour Productivity.** Source: [UK Labour Productivity - Economics Help](#)

3.4 Improving labour productivity (the level of output per worker) is of key concern to all Governments.

*"Productivity isn't everything, but in the long run it is almost everything. A country's ability to improve its standard of living over time depends almost entirely on its ability to raise its output per worker".*

*Prof Paul Krugman, Nobel Prize winning economist.*

3.5 In the White Paper Haldane argues that 'Levelling up' requires a focused, long-term plan of action and a clear framework to identify and act upon the drivers of spatial disparity. These he describes as the 'six capitals':

- **Physical capital** – infrastructure, machines and housing.
- **Human capital** – the skills, health and experience of the workforce.
- **Intangible capital** – innovation, ideas and patents.
- **Financial capital** – resources supporting the financing of companies.
- **Social capital** – the strength of communities, relationships and trust
- **Institutional capital** – local leadership, capacity and capability

3.6 The White Paper introduces 12 long-term 'missions' that are meant drive policy by successive Governments to improve the six capitals and deliver real change:

*"Missions are targeted, measurable and time-bound declarations of the progress needed to address social, economic and environmental challenges. Perhaps the best known examples of mission oriented approaches are the NASA space missions and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). A more recent example is the COVID-19 vaccination programme.*

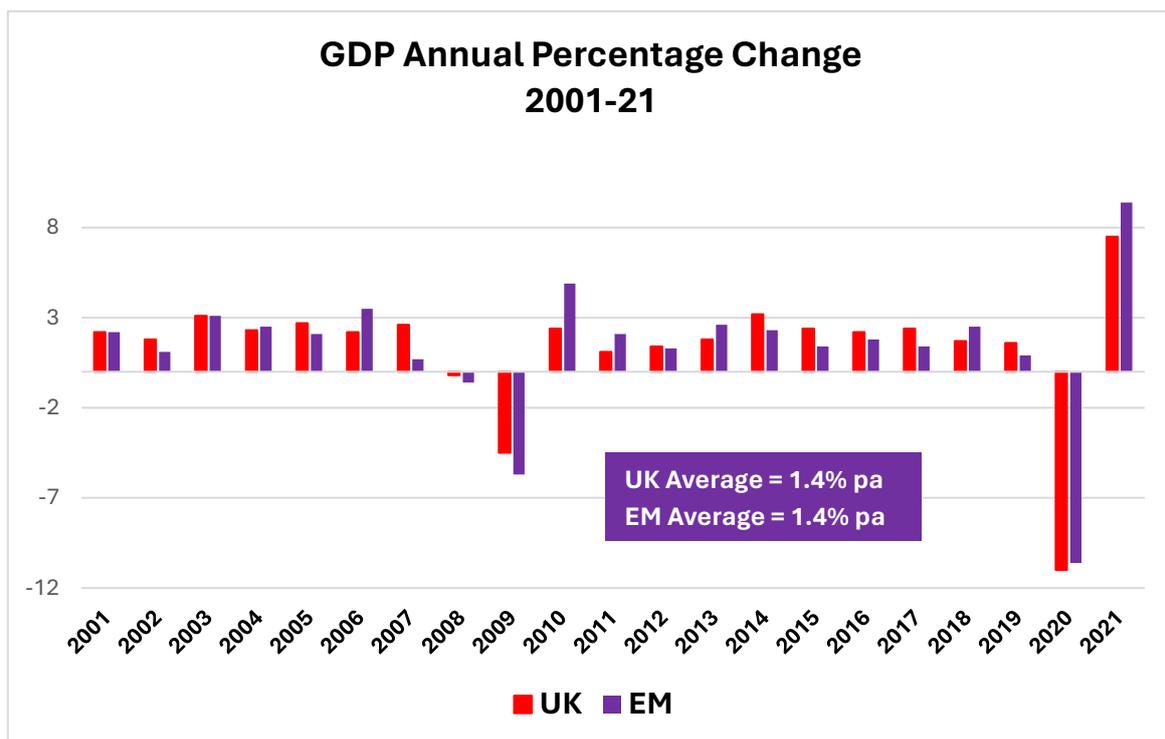
3.7 The next section of this paper looks in detail at the 12 Missions set out in the White Paper and assesses how well the East Midlands is likely to perform against each. The results present a mixed picture - and some Missions appear more critical to success than others.

#### 4. The 12 Levelling Up Missions & the East Midlands

##### Mission 1: Living Standards

*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.*

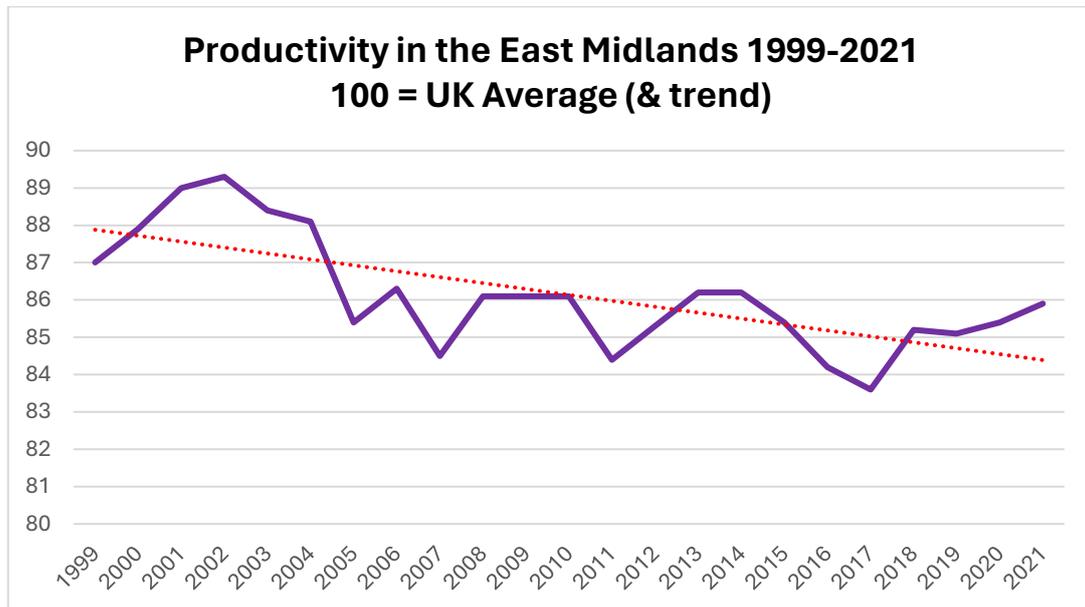
4.1 GDP growth in the East Midlands has been broadly in line with the UK over the last 20 years. However, an average of 1.4% per annum is low by historical standards and below what Governments over that period would consider necessary to maintain living standards.



**Figure 2: GDP Change.** Source: [Regional economic activity by gross domestic product, UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/gross-domestic-product/gdp-by-region)

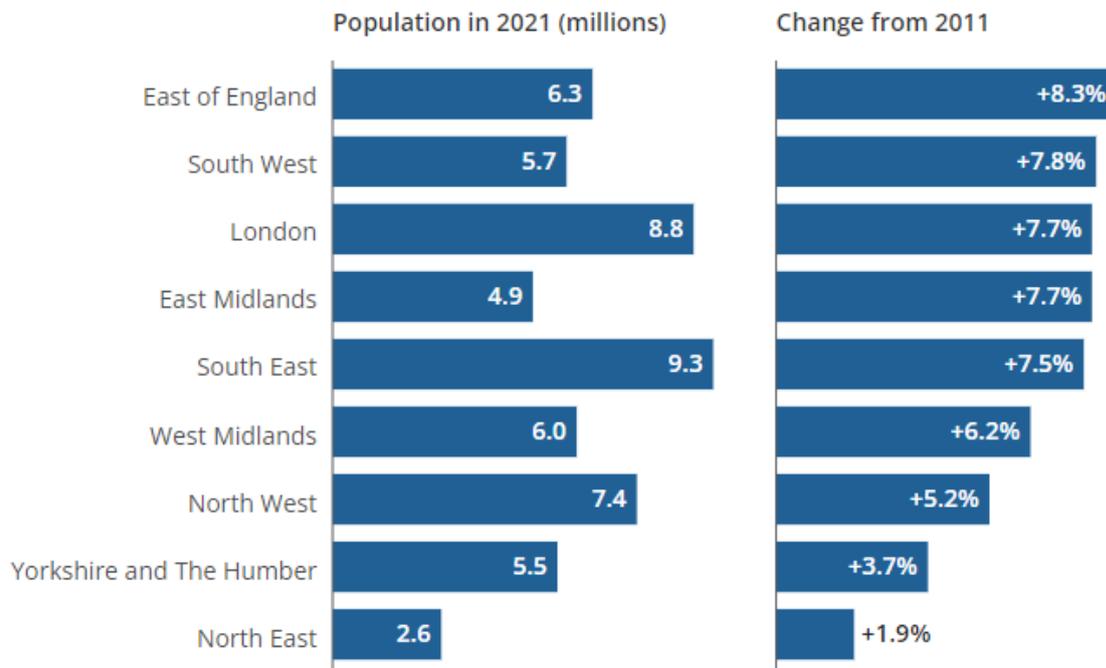
4.2 The East Midlands employment rate (May 2023) is close to the UK average at 76.2% (UK=76%). However, median weekly earnings are below the UK average: £604 per week compared to £640.

4.3 Productivity in the East Midlands has also remained below the UK average over the last 20 years and has been declining relative to the UK to 85.9% in 2021.



**Figure 3: Productivity.** Source: [Annual regional labour productivity - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

4.4 The East Midlands has therefore been growing its economy by growing its population.



**Figure 4: Population Growth.** Source: [Population and household estimates, England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

- 4.5 The definition of what constitutes a ‘globally competitive city’ is not exact. Almost all international studies suggest that London is second only to New York across a combination of competitive measures<sup>3</sup>. However, no other British city tends to be recognised as ‘globally competitive’ on this basis.
- 4.6 Nottingham Trent University and Cardiff University published a UK Competitive Index in 2023<sup>4</sup>. The study included assessment of the relative competitiveness of UK Cities with each other (excluding London). Key cities in the East Midlands were ranked as follows:
- Derby: 19<sup>th</sup> place
  - Nottingham 25<sup>th</sup> place
  - Leicester: 29<sup>th</sup> place
  - Lincoln: 35<sup>th</sup> place

#### **Assessment**

- 4.7 Whilst it seems plausible that the East Midlands could keep pace with national GDP growth as a result of a rapidly growing population, this is unlikely close the gap in living standards for individuals without the economy generating a greater proportion of better paid jobs.
- 4.8 In relation to cities, the immediate challenge for the East Midlands is to ensure that it can compete at a UK level. Global competitiveness for any East Midlands City by 2030 does not appear achievable in any meaningful way.

---

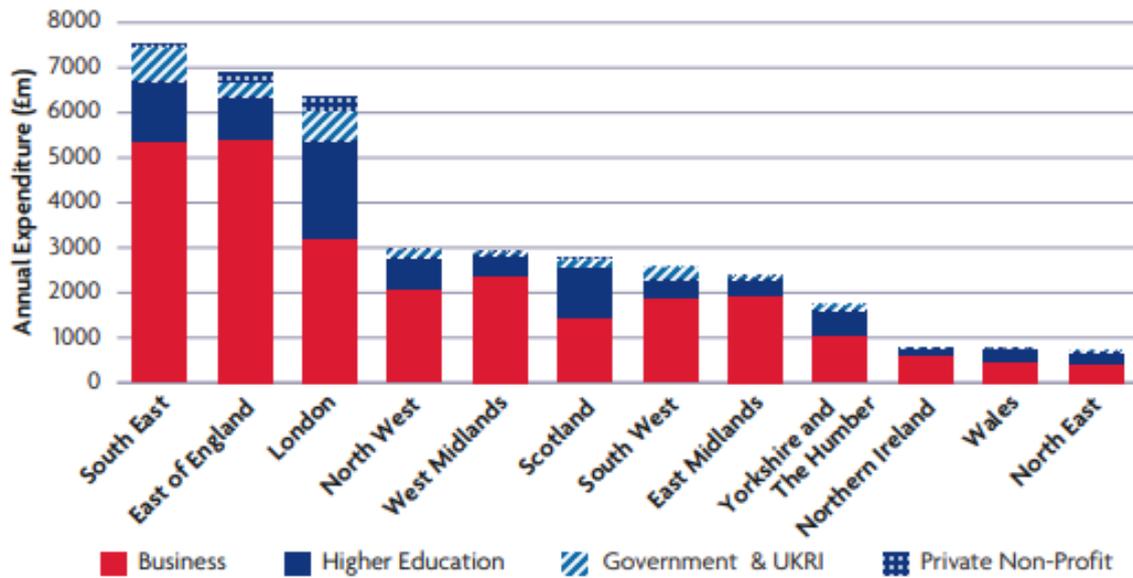
<sup>3</sup> See for example: [The distributed geography of opportunity: the 2023 Global Cities Report - Kearney](#)

<sup>4</sup> Is the UK Economy Levelling Up? [Report \(cforic.org\)](#)

## Mission 2: Research & Development

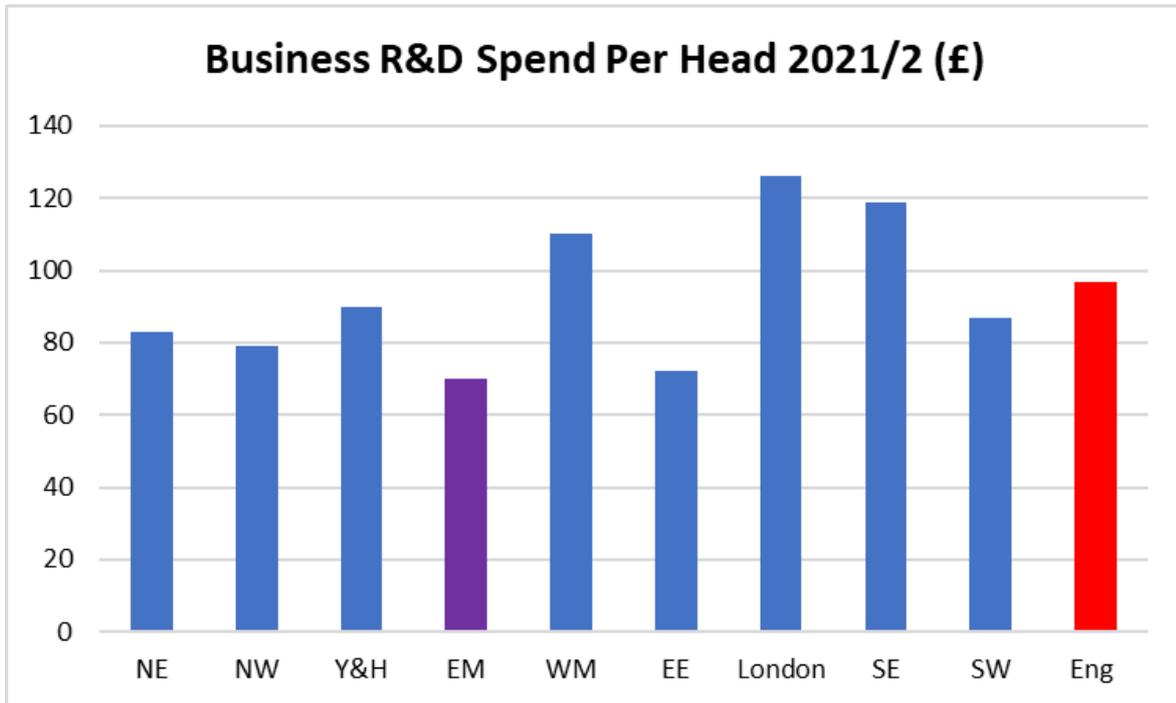
*By 2030, domestic public investment in R&D outside the Greater South East will increase by at least 40%, and over the Spending Review period by at least one third. This additional government funding will seek to leverage at least twice as much private sector investment over the long term to stimulate innovation and productivity growth.*

4.8 The White Paper includes a breakdown of R&D investment by region as of 2019.



**Figure 5: Total R&D Investment by Region.** Source: Levelling Up White Paper

4.9 Looking specifically at business R&D (the largest component) in 2021/2, the East Midlands had the lowest level of spend per head of any UK Region or Nation.



**Figure 6: Business R&D investment per head.** Source: [Public Expenditure Statistical Analyses 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

### Assessment

- 4.10 Increasing investment by 40% outside London and the wider South East does not seem implausible given the relatively low levels involved. However, it would require concerted action by Government as the existing pattern of distribution appears entrenched.
- 4.11 Leveraging a much greater level of private investment from Government spend is clearly a desirable objective, but it is unclear to what extent this can be achieved.

### Mission 3: Transport Infrastructure

*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.*

- 4.12 The East Midlands is a very car-dependant region: 80% of journeys to work are made by car, the highest in England.

Region	% of Journeys to Work by Car
North East	76%
North West	73%
Yorkshire & Humber	75%
<b>East Midlands</b>	<b>80%</b>
West Midlands	79%
East of England	76%
London	27%
South East	75%
South West	75%
UK	68%

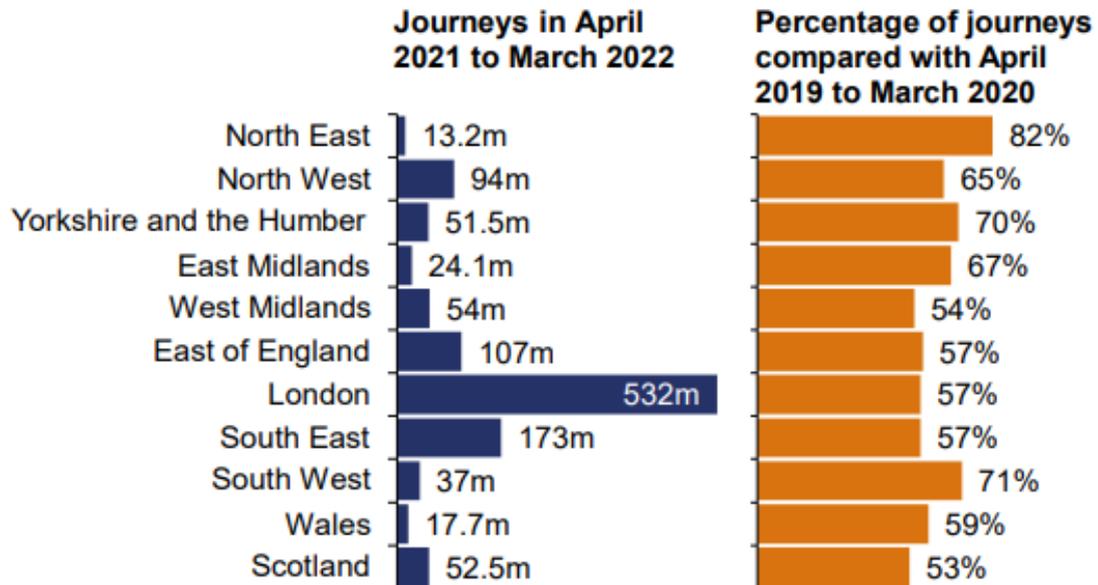
**Figure 7: Percentage of journeys to work made by car 2022.** Source: [Transport Statistics Great Britain: 2022 Domestic Travel - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/transport-statistics-great-britain-2022-domestic-travel)

- 4.13 Bus usage is very low in the East Midlands and inflated by the exceptionally high levels in Nottingham City, which is second in bus usage only to Brighton (and London).

Region	Bus Journeys (millions)	Population (millions)	Journeys per head by bus
North East	128	2.6	49
North West	302	7.4	40
Yorkshire & Humber	222	5.5	40
<b>East Midlands</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>29</b>
West Midlands	253	6.0	42
East of England	140	6.3	22
London	1,766	8.8	200
South East	272	9.3	28
South West	158	5.7	28

**Figure 8: Bus Usage by Region 2022-23.** Source: [bus01.ods \(live.com\)](https://bus01.ods.live.com)

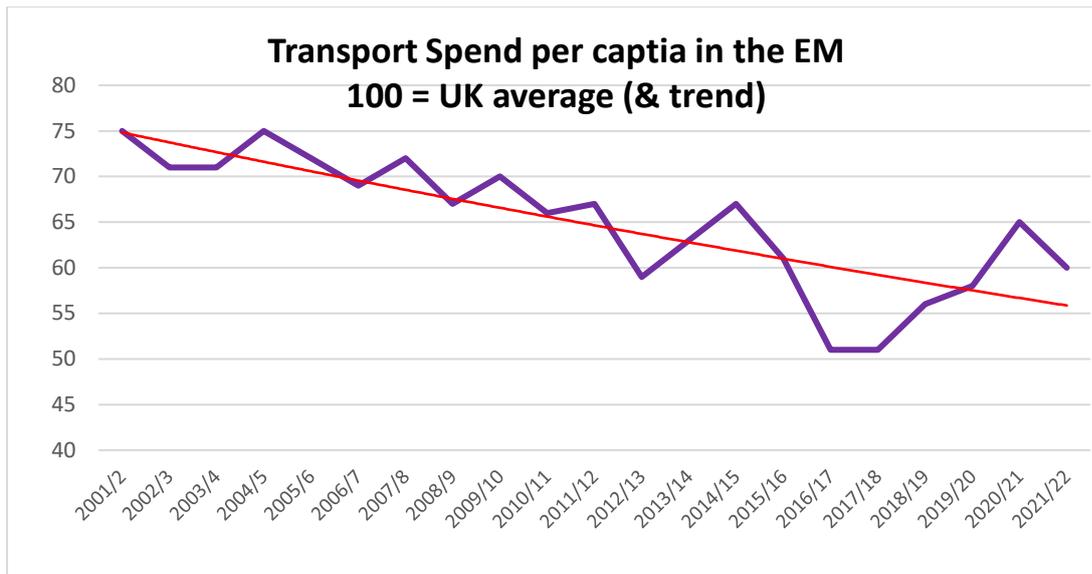
4.14 Similarly rail travel is low in the East Midlands, reflecting the limited infrastructure and services as well as relatively high travel costs, particularly for journeys made on the Midland Main Line. However, rail usage has been growing robustly since the pandemic, perhaps indicating a high level of latent demand.



**Figure 9: Rail Travel by Region 2021-22.** Source: [Regional rail usage \(orr.gov.uk\)](https://www.orr.gov.uk/regional-rail-usage)

4.15 In common with all English regions outside of London, there is no system of multi-modal ‘tap and cap’ smart ticketing in the East Midlands, and public transport fares generally are much less competitive with the car.

4.16 The East Midlands has consistently received the lowest level of public spending on Transport of any UK region and nation – just 60% of the UK average in 2021-22. If the region was funded at a level equivalent to the UK average, the East Midlands would have an extra £1.28bn a year to spend on transport investment and services.



**Figure 10: Transport spend per head.**

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/public-expenditure-statistical-analyses-2023> and previous releases.

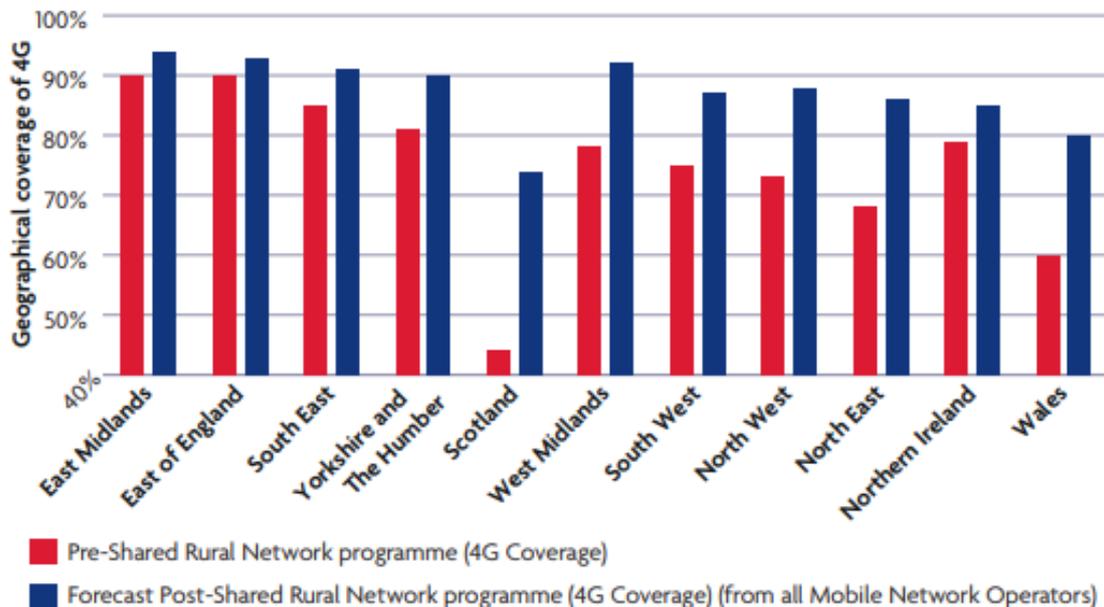
### Assessment

- 4.16 Local public transport connectivity in the East Midlands is very poor compared to most other parts of the UK – and in particular London. Given the persistently low levels of public investment in the region the chances of closing the gap with London in any meaningful way by 2030 appear remote.
- 4.17 The smart ticketing initiative led by Midlands Connect offers some hope of rolling out a limited version of ‘tap and cap’ smart ticketing across the Midlands if funded by Government, but this will not include rail travel for the foreseeable future.
- 4.18 Recently announced additional funding for Bus Service Improvement Plans is positive but will require long term sustainability to deliver real change.

## Mission 4: Digital Connectivity

*By 2030, the UK will have nationwide gigabit-capable broadband and 4G coverage, with 5G coverage for the majority of the population.*

4.19 The Levelling Up White Paper set out the current level of 4G coverage by region, with the East Midlands benefiting from the most coverage at over 90%



**Figure 11: 4G Coverage.** Source: Levelling Up White Paper

4.20 In terms of the availability of gigabit-capable broadband, the East Midlands currently sits mid-table at just over 60% and is predicted to rise to between 70% and 80% coverage by 2025. (see Figure 12 below)

4.21 5G coverage is currently limited 120 UK towns and cities<sup>5</sup>, including from the East Midlands:

- Derby
- Leicester
- Lincoln
- Northampton
- Nottingham

<sup>5</sup> [5G Coverage Checker – Compare coverage on all UK networks.](#)

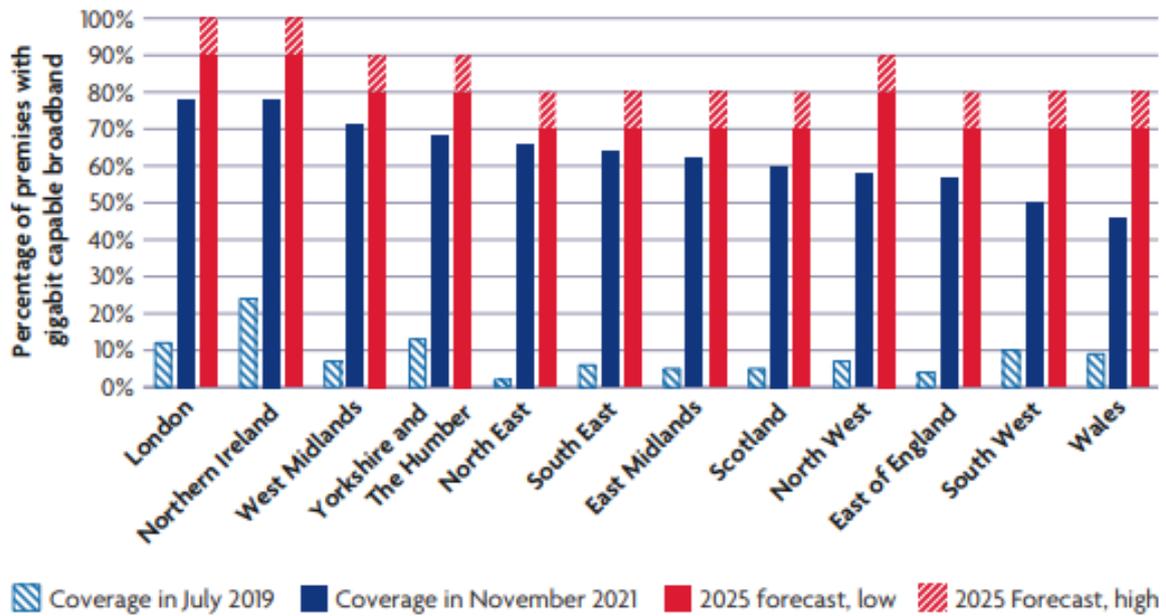


Figure 12: Gigabit-capable Broadband. Source: Levelling Up White Paper

### Assessment

- 4.22 Compared to transport, achieving the Digital Connectivity mission by 2030 appears to be feasible, perhaps because it is limited and specific objective that will be delivered primarily by the private sector.

### Mission 5: Education

*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.*

4.23 There is a wealth of data on pupil achievement and the latest position by region is set out below.

**Percentage of pupils reaching the expected standard in reading, writing and maths by region, 2016-2023 (England, state-funded schools)**

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
<b>London</b>	59%	67%	70%	71%	x	x	66%	65%
<b>North East</b>	57%	65%	68%	67%	x	x	60%	60%
<b>South East</b>	55%	63%	66%	66%	x	x	59%	59%
<b>East Midlands</b>	52%	59%	63%	63%	x	x	58%	58%
<b>North West</b>	53%	61%	65%	65%	x	x	58%	58%
<b>West Midlands</b>	51%	59%	63%	63%	x	x	57%	58%
<b>Yorkshire and The Humber</b>	50%	58%	62%	64%	x	x	57%	58%
<b>South West</b>	52%	60%	63%	64%	x	x	57%	57%
<b>East of England</b>	53%	60%	63%	64%	x	x	57%	57%

**Figure 13: Key Stage 2 Pupil Achievement.** Source: [Key stage 2 attainment, Academic year 2022/23 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk)

4.24 Achievement in all regions has been negatively impacted by the pandemic. The East Midlands is on a par with most regions although London has opened up a consistent gap at the top.

#### **Assessment**

4.25 Past performance suggests significant scope for improvement, but the 90% target by 2030 looks stretching for all regions without major investment.

### Mission 6: Skills

*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 annually, driven by 80,000 more people completing courses in the lowest skilled areas.*

4.26 The White Paper sets out the latest position on the levels of qualifications by region.

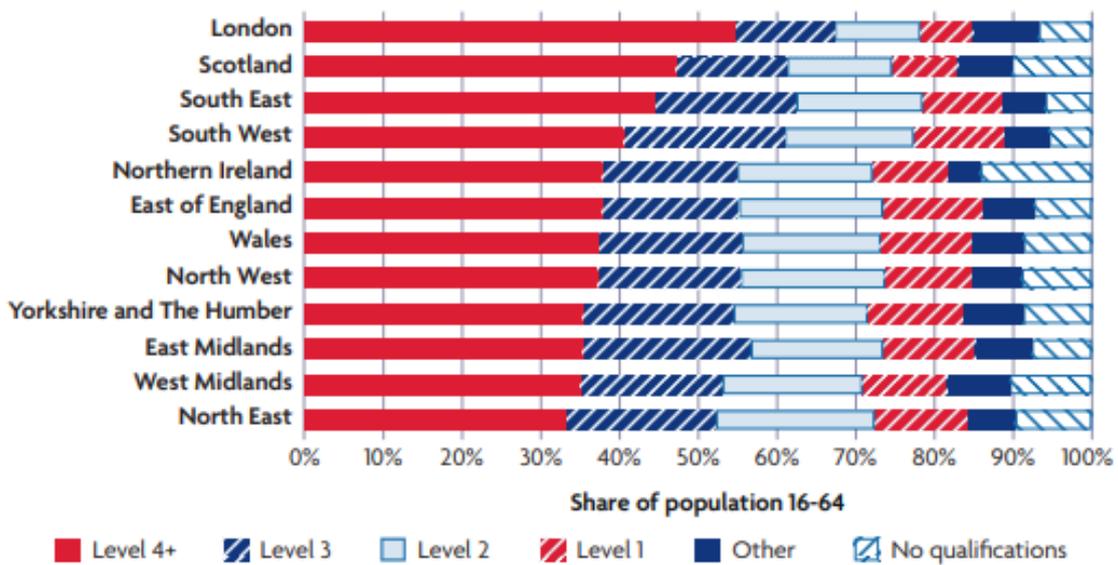


Figure 13: Skill Levels by Region 2019. Source: Levelling Up White Paper

4.27 The East Midlands has a lower percentage of the workforce with Level 4+ qualifications than most of the UK, but a lower proportion of unqualified workers than many English regions and Scotland. This reflects the structure of the regional economy and its reliance on middle to low productivity jobs.

#### Assessment

4.28 Unusually, the target for this mission is set out at a national (England) level only and in numerical form rather than as a percentage. This may make the target easier to achieve by 2030 due to workforce growth. However, it would also be possible to meet the target without altering the regional distribution of skills from the current position.

### Mission 7: Health

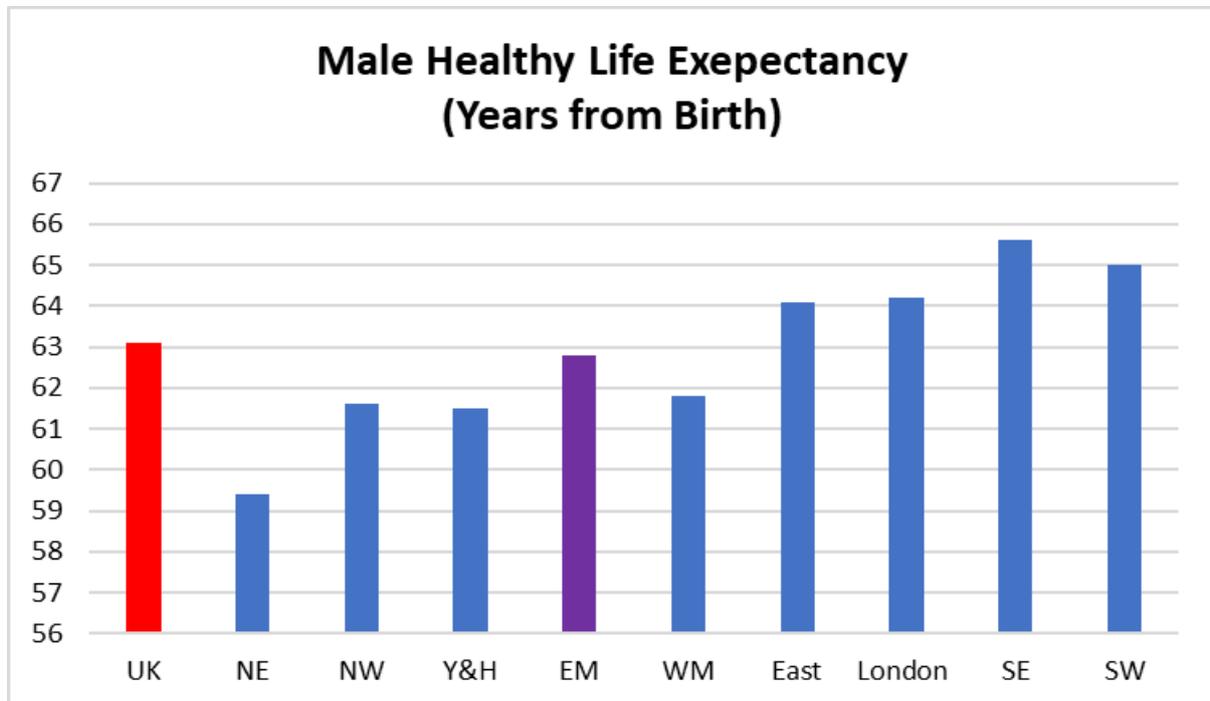
*By 2030, the gap in Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) between local areas where it is highest and lowest will have narrowed, and by 2035 HLE will rise by five years.*

4.29 Overall life expectancy for men (79.2 years) and women (82.7 years) is just below the UK average<sup>6</sup>. However, this hides significant variations within and between council areas.

	Highest	Lowest
<b>Men</b>	83.2 years (Rutland)	76.0 years (Lincoln)
<b>Woman</b>	85.1 (Blaby)	80.9 years (Lincoln)

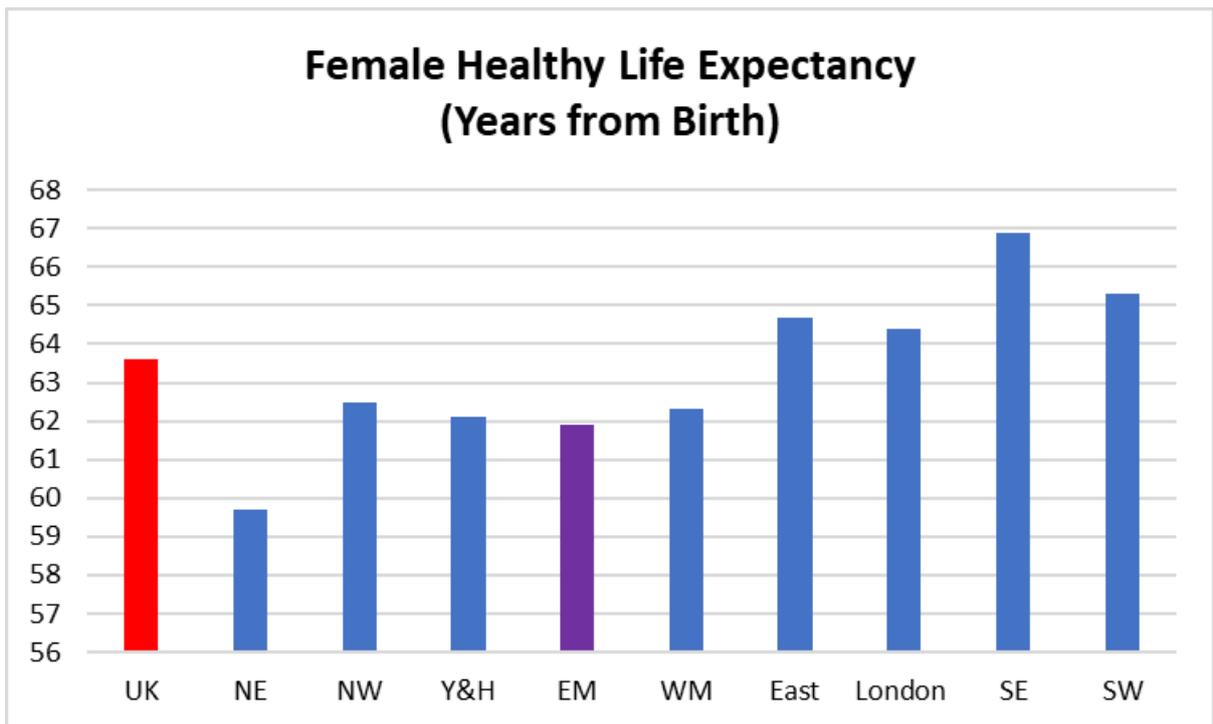
**Figure 14: Highest & Lowest Life Expectancy in the East Midlands by Council Area.** Source: [Life expectancy for local areas of the UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/life-expectancy-for-local-areas-of-the-uk)

4.30 The mission target is focussed on a slightly different measure: Healthy Life Expectancy - the length of life spent in good health. The regional position for both men and women for this measure is set out below.



**Figure 14:** Source: [Health state life expectancy at birth and at age 65 years by local areas, UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/health-state-life-expectancy-at-birth-and-at-age-65-years-by-local-areas-uk)

<sup>6</sup> [Life expectancy for local areas of the UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/life-expectancy-for-local-areas-of-the-uk)



**Figure 16:** Source: [Health state life expectancy at birth and at age 65 years by local areas, UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/health/lifeexpectancyandmortality/articles/healthstatelifeexpectancyatbirthandatage65yearsbylocalareas/uk)

4.31 For both measures the East Midlands falls below the UK average. However, the position for women is relatively worse than for men. Indeed, the East Midlands appears to be the only region where average Healthy Life Expectancy for women (61.9 years) is actually lower than that for men (62.8 years) - despite women living 3.5 years longer. Again, these regional figures hide significant local variations.

	Highest	Lowest
<b>Men</b>	69.6 years (Rutland)	57.7 years (Nottingham)
<b>Woman</b>	66.4 (Rutland)	54.2 years (Nottingham)

**Figure 17: Highest & Lowest Healthy Life Expectancy in the East Midlands by council area.**  
Source: [Health state life expectancy at birth and at age 65 years by local areas, UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/health/lifeexpectancyandmortality/articles/healthstatelifeexpectancyatbirthandatage65yearsbylocalareas/uk)

### Assessment

4.32 It can be plausibly argued that Healthy Life Expectancy should be the ultimate measure of ‘levelling up’. If people are living longer in good health, they are likely to be more productive, happier and have less need to use expensive public

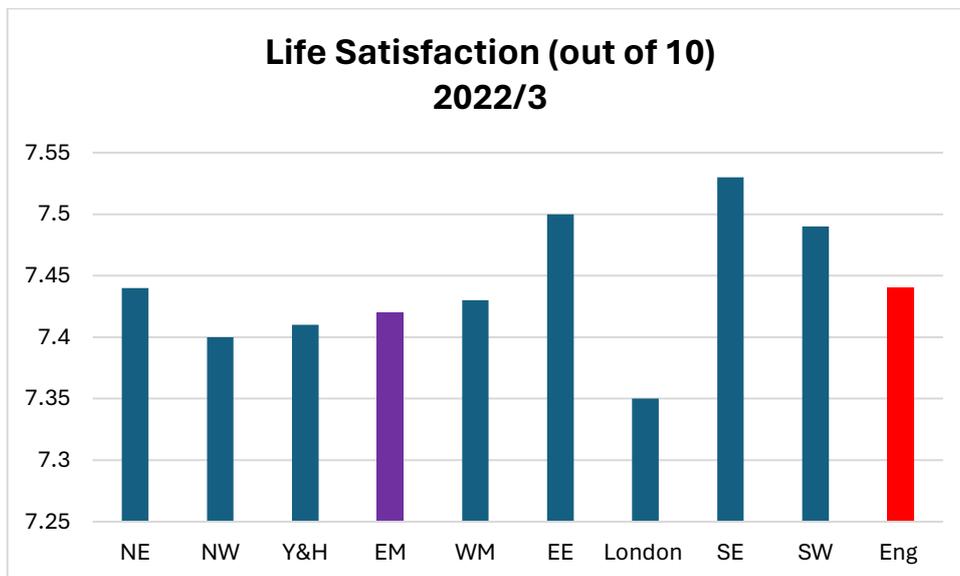
services. It would also mean that the social determinates of poor health such as bad housing, poverty and worklessness are being successfully addressed.

- 4.33 Whilst the East Midlands is generally mid-table compared to the rest of the UK, the level of local variation is significant. It is also not clear why the East Midlands is the only region where Healthy Life Expectancy for women is less than for men – which is concerning and worthy of further investigation.

## Mission 8: Wellbeing

*By 2030, well-being will have improved in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.*

4.34 Since 2011 the ONS has collected data annually on estimates of ‘personal wellbeing’<sup>7</sup>. This includes data on ‘life satisfaction’ by local council area. Essentially people are asked to estimate how satisfied they are with their lives on a scale of 1 to 10, from which an average is then calculated. Data for 2022-23 has just been published, and the regional position is set out below.



**Figure 18: Life Satisfaction by Region.** Source: [Annual personal well-being estimates - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/people-and-work/well-being/articles/annual-personal-well-being-estimates)

4.35 At a national level the data shows little variation. The lowest average life satisfaction score is London (7.35) and the highest is the South East (7.53). The East Midlands is mid-table and just below the English average at 7.42. There is more variation locally: the highest in the East Midlands being South Derbyshire (7.9) and lowest Lincoln (6.7).

4.36 However, the local figures show a significant degree of change from year to year. For example, life satisfaction rose in Newark & Sherwood from 7.14 in 2021-22 to 7.62 in 2022-23, and fell in North West Leicestershire from 8.02 to 7.10 over the same period. It is not clear from the data what local factors are causing these changes – or indeed whether they are significant.

<sup>7</sup>[Annual personal well-being estimates - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk/people-and-work/well-being/articles/annual-personal-well-being-estimates)

### **Assessment**

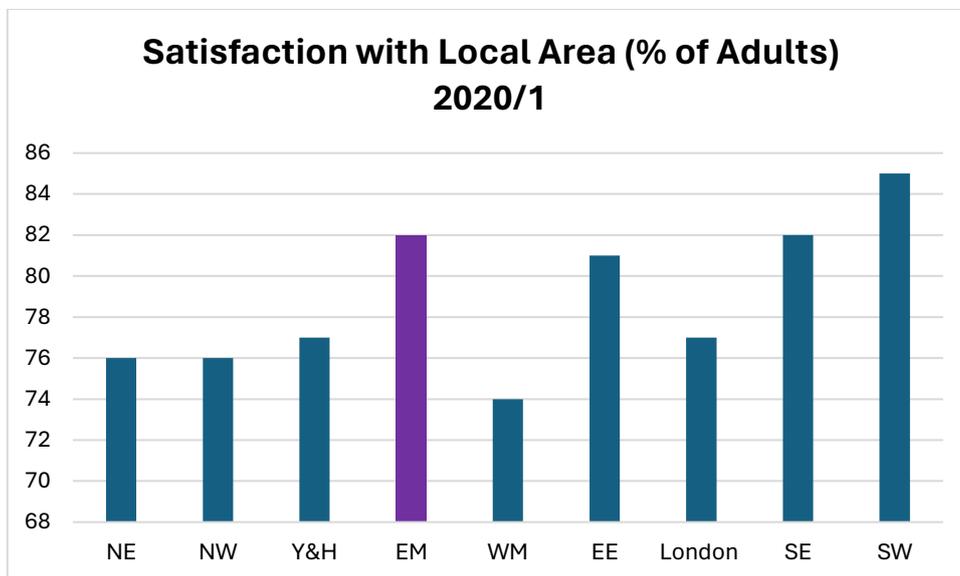
- 4.37 Whilst there is a place for more qualitative measures it is not clear that the available data on 'personal wellbeing' is adding much value to the understanding of 'levelling up' when compared to harder metrics like Healthy Life Expectancy.

### Mission 9: Pride in Place

*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.*

4.38 ‘Pride of Place’ is another qualitative measure. The Department of Culture, Media and Sport undertake an annual Community Life Survey. The last available regional breakdown of the data was for 2020/1<sup>8</sup>. There is no comparable local authority level data.

4.39 The East Midlands appears to score well on ‘satisfaction with local area’ - second only the South West and significantly above the West Midlands.



**Figure 19: Satisfaction with Local Area.** Source: [Community Life Survey 2020/21 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

4.40 However, civic participation appears low in the East Midlands relative to some other regions.

<sup>8</sup> [Community Life Survey 20 21 Data Tables.xlsx \(live.com\)](https://www.gov.uk)



**Figure 20: Civic Participation.** Source: [Community Life Survey 2020/21 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

**Assessment**

4.41 As with the ‘life satisfaction’ metrics it is unclear how much reliance can be placed on the data and to what extent policy choices made by Government can affect a change in outcome.

### Mission 10: Housing

*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.*

4.42 Housing affordability is a major concern for the Government and communities, particularly younger people. Although the average house price to income ratio in the East Midlands is below the national average, it is still very high by historical standards with large local variations.

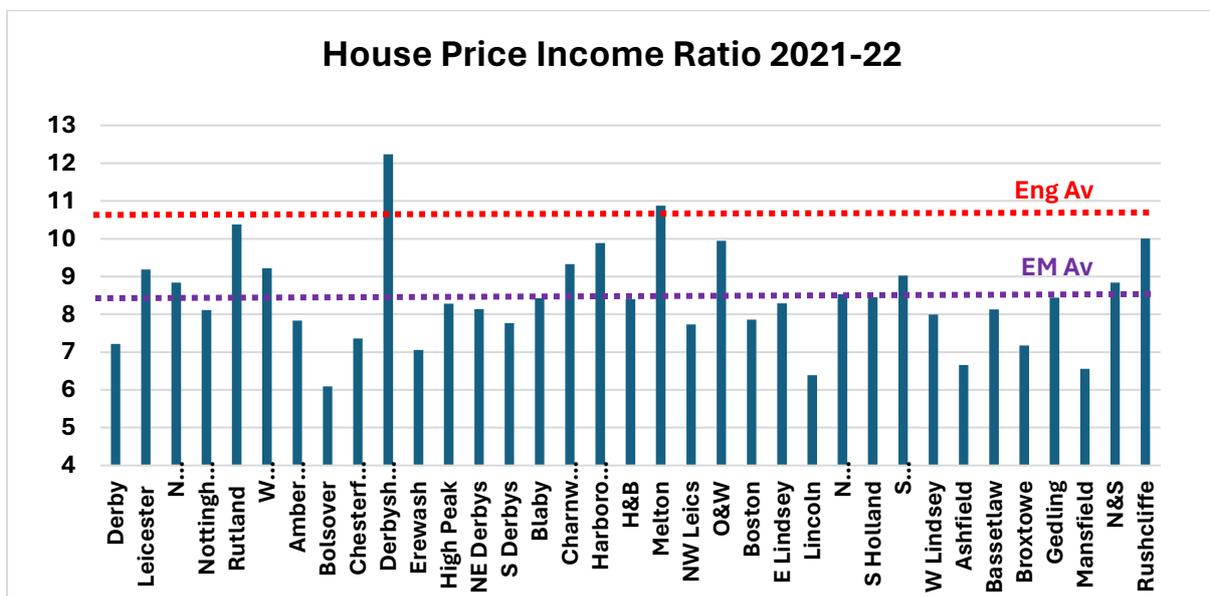
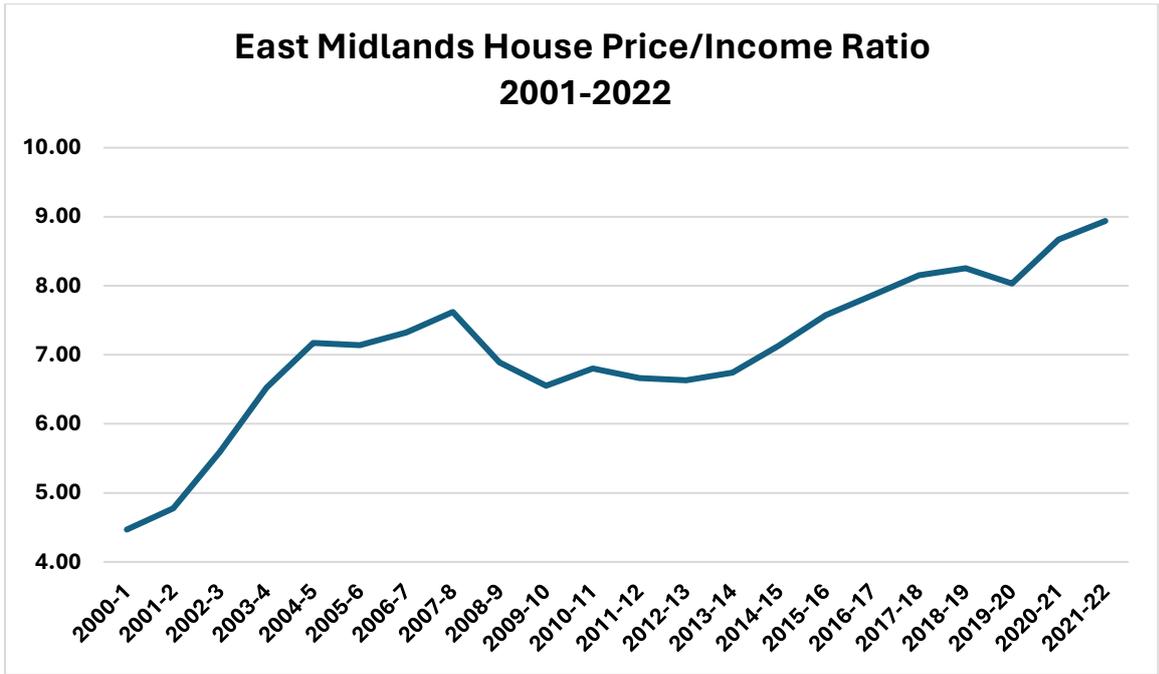


Figure 21: House Price to Income Ratio 2021-22. Source: [National Housing Federation - Home Truths](#)

4.43 In fact affordability has worsened significantly in the East Midlands over the last 20 years.

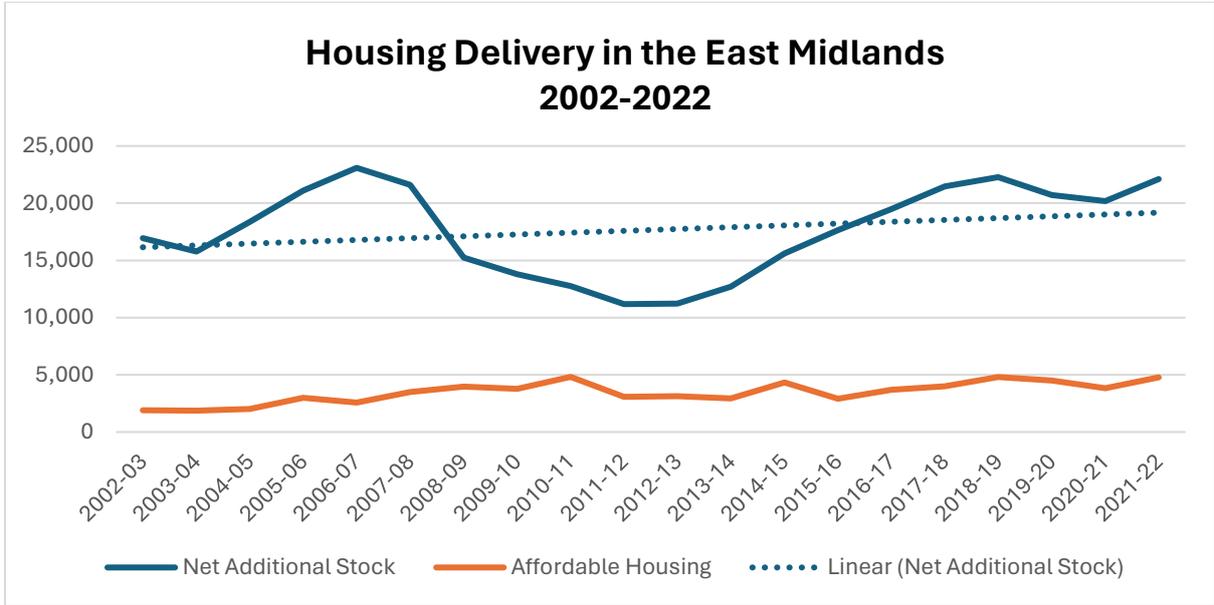


**Figure 22: House Price Affordability in the East Midlands**

Source House Prices: [Mean house prices for administrative geographies: HPSSA dataset 12 - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

Source Income: [Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings time series of selected estimates - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

4.44 Housing delivery in the East Midlands is generally buoyant but strongly influenced by national economic trends.



**Figure 23: Housing Delivery in the East Midlands**

Source Net Additional Stock: [Live tables on dwelling stock \(including vacants\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Source Affordable Housing: [Live tables on affordable housing supply - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

4.45 There is no evidence that increasing housing supply improves affordability. In fact, it appears the more houses we build in the East Midlands, the worse affordability becomes!

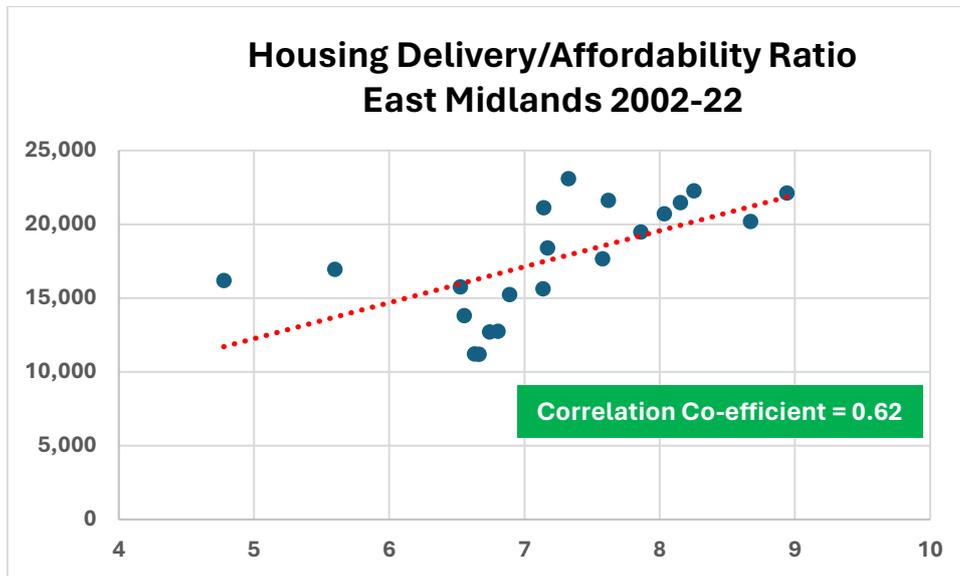


Figure 24: Correlation between Housing Delivery & Affordability in the East Midlands

4.46 The worsening affordability crises and the continued decline in council housing due to 'right to buy' has resulted in more people renting in the private sector, rising from 8.6% in 2002 to 17.3% in 2022.

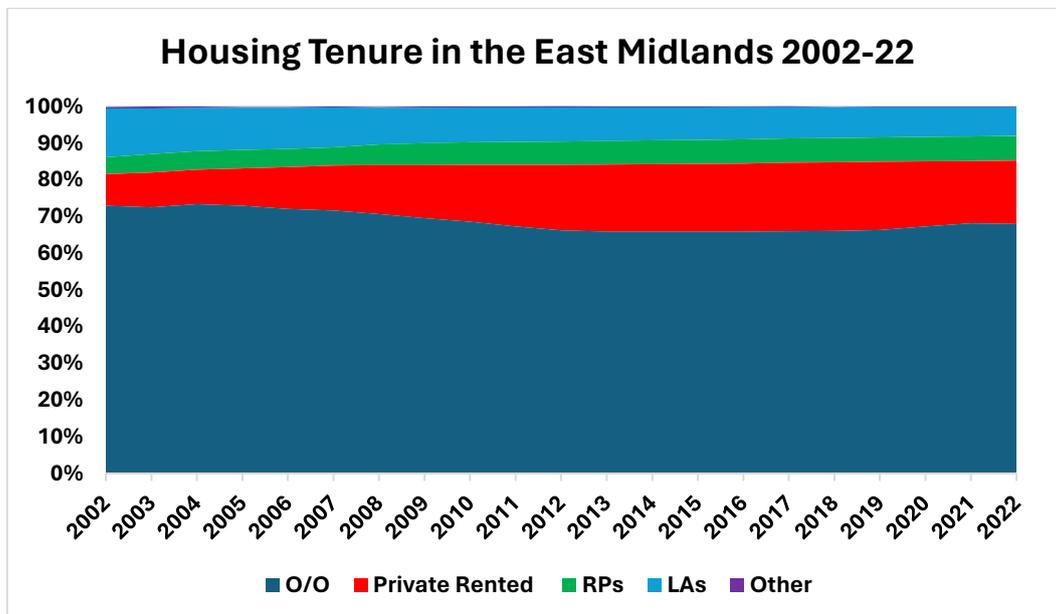
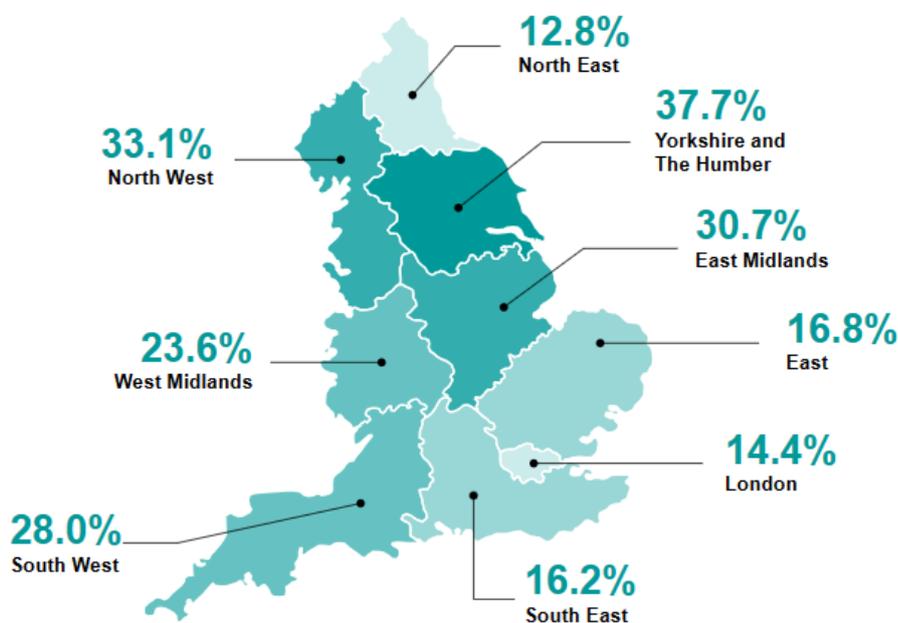


Figure 25: Housing Tenure in the East Midlands. Source: [LT\\_109.ods \(live.com\)](https://live.com/LT_109.ods)

4.47 However just over 30% of private sector homes in the East Midlands do not meet the Government’s ‘Decent Homes Standard’.



**Figure 26: Percentage of Private Sector Rented Homes that fail the Decent Homes Standard.** Source: [English Housing Survey 2021 to 2022: private rented sector - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-housing-survey-2021-to-2022-private-rented-sector) ([www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk))

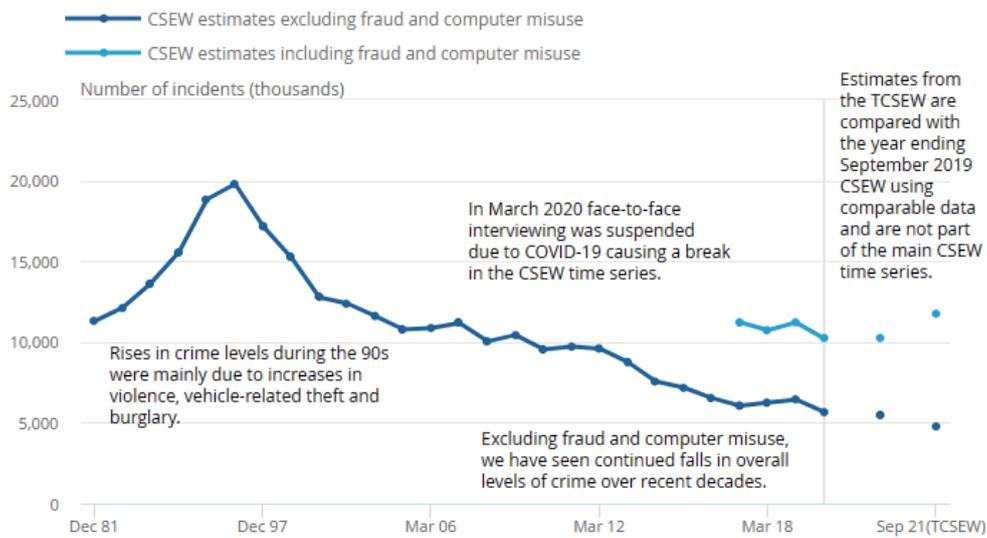
### Assessment

- 4.48 As with transport, it will take a monumental effort from Government to affect meaningful change to the housing market by 2030. Sustained deregulation of the planning system has made no impact over the last 30 years and yet remains Government’s preferred policy intervention.
- 4.49 Instead, tackling the affordability crisis will require a major expansion of the social rented (council) housing to reduce reliance on private housebuilders. Improving the condition of private rented stock will also require major Government investment but could also help to deliver net zero objectives by improving household energy efficiency.

## Mission 11: Crime

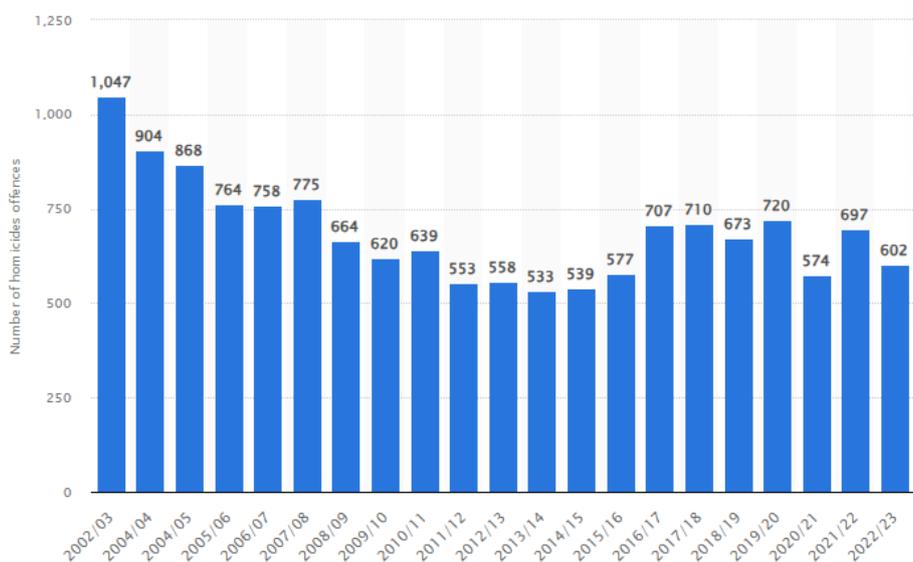
*By 2030, homicide, serious violence and neighbourhood crime will have fallen, focused on the worst affected areas.*

4.50 Crime has generally been falling over the last 25 years according to the Annual Crime Survey for England & Wales.



**Figure 27: Crime in England and Wales Annual Estimates.** Source: [Crime in England and Wales - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/crime-in-england-and-wales)

4.51 However recorded homicides have not followed the same trend since 2015.

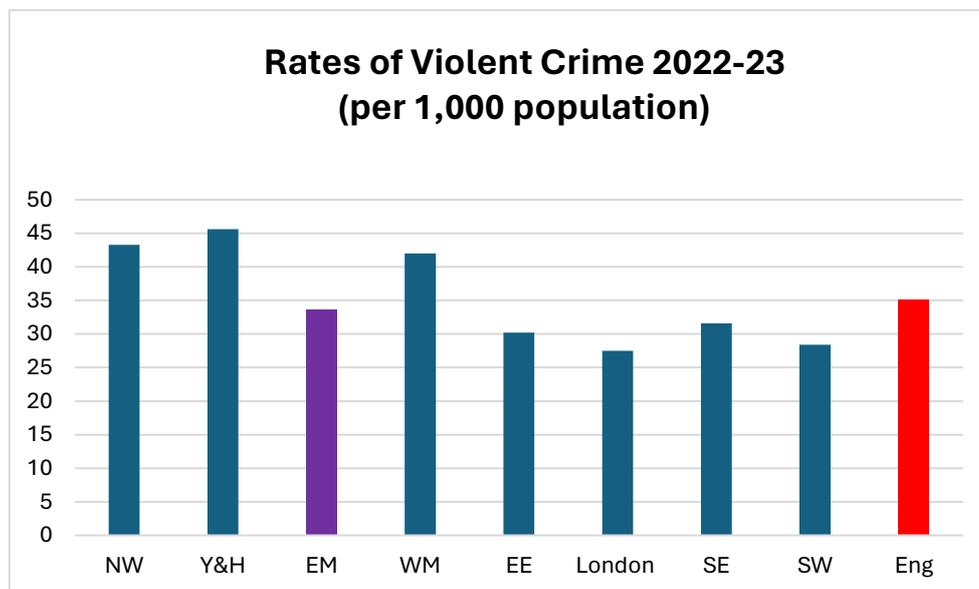


**Figure 28: Police Recorded homicides in England & Wales.** Source: [Homicides in England and Wales 2023 | Statista](https://www.statista.com/statistics/1111111/homicides-in-england-and-wales-2023/)

4.52 There are regional and local figures of police recorded crime rates published on an annual basis<sup>9</sup>.



**Figure 29: Crime Rates per 1,000 Population Excluding Fraud.** Source: [Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area data tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/crime-in-england-and-wales)



**Figure 30: Rates of Violent Crime per 1,000 population.** Source: [Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area data tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/crime-in-england-and-wales)

4.53 On both measures the crime rate for the East Midlands is below the average for England, although the figures for Leicestershire appear to be slightly above.

<sup>9</sup> [Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area data tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/crime-in-england-and-wales)

Area	All Crime (excl Fraud)	Violent Crime
Derbyshire	81.1	34.0
Leicestershire	94.7	36.4
Lincolnshire	76.5	30.9
Northamptonshire	81.0	35.0
Nottinghamshire	91.7	31.2

**Crime Rate per 1,000 population by county 2022-23.** Source: [Crime in England and Wales: Police Force Area data tables - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

### **Assessment**

- 4.54 Accurately measuring crime is a technically challenging and politically contested issue. Often the public fear of crime does not accord with the reality. Based on past trends meeting the mission target of reducing crime appears deliverable, although a sustained reduction in homicides is likely to require concerted action.

## **Mission 12: Local Leadership**

*By 2030, every part of England that wants one will have a devolution deal with powers at or approaching the highest level of devolution and a simplified, long-term funding settlement.*

4.55 This should be the most straightforward mission target for Government to achieve.

4.56 In the East Midlands, two Mayoral County Combined Authorities (MCCA) are in the process of being established:

- **East Midlands MCCA** (Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire) which is due to be fully established in May 2024,
- **Greater Lincolnshire MCCA** (Lincolnshire, North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire) which is due to be fully established in May 2025.

### **Assessment**

4.57 Whilst establishing a new generation of Mayoral Combined Authorities is certainly achievable, the extent to which these new structures will deliver improved outcomes and sustain popular support is less certain – although the decision to award the EMCCA £1.5b of funding from City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement is a positive sign.

4.58 It is also unclear how the changes will ultimately impact on the existing local government, which has carried a largest share of Government austerity since 2010 but about which the Levelling Up White Paper is largely silent.

## **5 Government's Statutory Reporting Duties**

5.1 Part 1 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 sets out a duty for the Secretary of State to report progress against the delivery of Levelling Up Missions.

5.2 In summary, the duty requires the Secretary of State to:

- Issue a 'Statement of Levelling Up Missions'.
- Prepare an Annual Report on progress.
- Submit the Annual Report to Parliamentary Scrutiny.
- Consult on any changes to Missions or metrics by which they are measured.
- Review Statement of Levelling Up Missions within 5 years.

5.3 It is assumed that the first 'Statement of Levelling Up Missions' will be based on those set out in the 2022 White Paper – but it is yet to be published.

5.4 It is also assumed that the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities will have responsibility for discharging the duty, although many of the actual missions are the responsibility of other Government Departments.

## **6 Concluding Thoughts**

- 6.1 As the UK 2070 Commission and others have observed, spatial inequalities have been widening across the UK for the last 50 years, so ‘turning the tide’ and then ‘levelling up’ will be very challenging.
- 6.2 The post-unification German experience demonstrates that real progress can be made in the most difficult of circumstances. However, the scale of resources deployed by successive German Governments far outweighs anything so far contemplated by Westminster and Whitehall, and most of the ‘heavy lifting’ has been done regionally and locally.
- 6.3 That said, ‘Levelling Up’ looks likely to remain a political priority whatever the outcome of the 2024 General Election.
- 6.4 The Reporting Duty set out in Part 1 of the LURA 2023 will mean that future Governments will have to account for their actions. It can also be used by councils and combined authorities to make the case for local investments that would help to deliver against one or more of the Levelling Up Missions.