

Briefing Note on New Wages Data in the Leeds Poverty Fact Book, November 2025

Following a recent data release from the ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) and Real Living Wage announcements, this Briefing Note contains a summary of the latest updates to **Section 3 of the Leeds Poverty Fact Book**:

<https://observatory.leeds.gov.uk/leeds-poverty-fact-book/>

Section 3 focusses on Income Levels and Low-Income in Leeds, the following Pages have been updated in full

- Wages in Leeds – charts displaying ONS ASHE official estimates of employee earnings for Leeds and the UK
- Numbers in Leeds earning below the Real Living Wage – LCC estimates on the number of people in Leeds earning below the Real Living Wage in 2025, using ONS's latest ASHE data for April 2025.
- Inflationary Impacts on Leeds Weekly Wages – LCC estimates for Leeds resident earnings impacted by inflation
- Living Wage and Minimum Wage has been refreshed with data on the Real Living Wage and Statutory Minimum Wage levels for 2026.

The page on Working Hours and Poverty will be updated in line with 2025 ASHE data once DWP release poverty thresholds data for 2025.

Wages in Leeds

The latest ASHE data released 23 Oct 2025 is a summary of average wage levels across the UK as surveyed between April-May 2025. According to the latest ONS ASHE survey:

- UK combined full-time and part-time employees earned £17.96/hour at the median level, the lower 10% of earners had wages of £12.44/hour and the top 10% of earners had wages of £37.16/hour
- Leeds workers earned £17.94/hour; the lower 10% of earners had wages of £12.50/hour and the top 10% of earners had wages of £36.84/hour
- Leeds residents earned £17.26/hour; the lower 10% of earners had wages of £12.42/hour and the top 10% of earners had wages of £34.84/hour

Numbers in Leeds earning below the Real Living Wage (Living Wage Foundation)

The Real Living Wage (RLW) for the UK for 2026 has been announced by the Living Wage Foundation at £13.45/hour. Employers are recommended to implement this wage from April/May 2026.

The RLW in 2025 was £12.60/hour. For this reason, LCC use the 2025 RLW and ASHE 2025 data when estimating the number of people in Leeds earning below the RLW.

Using the RLW rate of £12.60/hour, LCC estimate:

- 13.1% of all Leeds working residents earned less than the Real Living Wage in 2025, affecting 47,434 FTE residents.
- When this figure is broken down, 9.9% of full-time working residents (25,417) and 27% of part-time working residents (28,080) are earning below the RLW in Leeds.
- With regards workers in Leeds, 11.5% earn below the RLW, impacting 52,739 FTE workers.
- This affects 9.7% (33,204) full-time workers and 27% (31,590) part-time workers.

Inflationary Impact on Leeds Weekly Wages

National ONS analysis from ASHE report that for full-time employees in the UK, median weekly earnings in April 2025 increased to £767 by 5.3% (£38) from a year earlier on a nominal basis, and when adjusted for CPIH inflation (4.1%), the real term increase was only £8 (a 1.1% increase).

In Leeds, analysis of the local data by Leeds City Council estimates middle income and low-income earners in Leeds have seen a weekly cut in their income once inflation has been taken into account.

Full-time resident employees, median weekly earnings increased to £723 in Leeds, this is up by 3% (up £22) from a year earlier on a nominal basis, but when adjusted for CPIH inflation at 4.1%, it fell by 0.7% (down £7 per week for middle income earners working full time). For Leeds residents working Part-time, median earnings have seen a drop of £9 per week. But part-time workers in the lowest 10% of earners in Leeds are losing an estimated £10 per week on a nominal basis, and this moves up to £13 per week in real terms.

The tables below provide the inflationary impact on weekly earnings for Leeds residents and the UK.

- Real term estimates have been provided for the lowest 10% earners, median earners and top 10% earners.
- In addition to full-time employees, further breakdowns are also available for part-time employees and full and part time employees combined as FTE employees.
- Leeds data for Top 10% earners working part time was not published by the ONS due to being statistically unreliable and is therefore blank in the table below.
- National CPIH¹ inflation rates were used to estimate real term impacts for Leeds and the UK. In April 2025, CPIH was 4.1% and CPI inflation was 3.5%.

Leeds

Full-time	Lower 10%	Median	Top 10%
2024 Weekly Earnings	£458.90	£700.80	£1,262.50
2025 Weekly Earnings	£483.90	£723.00	£1,360.80
Nominal Change	£25.00	£22.20	£98.30
Nominal % Change	5.4%	3.2%	7.8%
Real Change	£6.02	-£6.78	£46.09
Real % Change	1.3%	-0.9%	3.5%
Real Term Earnings 2024	£464.92	£694.02	£1,308.59

UK

Full-time	Lower 10%	Median	Top 10%
2024 Weekly Earnings	£468.40	£728.30	£1,378.50
2025 Weekly Earnings	£493.70	£766.60	£1,473.50
Nominal Change	£25.30	£38.30	£95.00
Nominal % Change	5.4%	5.3%	6.9%
Real Change	£5.93	£8.18	£37.99
Real % Change	1.2%	1.1%	2.6%
Real Term Earnings 2024	£474.33	£736.48	£1,416.49

Leeds

Part-time	Lower 10%	Median	Top 10%
2024 Weekly Earnings	£92.60	£275.20	-
2025 Weekly Earnings	£83.00	£277.20	-
Nominal Change	-£9.60	£2.00	-
Nominal % Change	-10.4%	0.7%	-

UK

Part-time	Lower 10%	Median	Top 10%
2024 Weekly Earnings	£85.10	£263.30	£564.70
2025 Weekly Earnings	£88.40	£280.00	£608.10
Nominal Change	£3.30	£16.70	£43.40
Nominal % Change	3.9%	6.3%	7.7%

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- ¹ CPIH includes owner occupiers' housing costs and Council Tax, while the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) does not. CPIH is considered the UK's most comprehensive measure of inflation because it is the same as CPI but adds these significant housing-related costs, and is the official measure used by ONS when estimating impacts on wages.

Real Change	-£13.43	-£9.38	-
Real % Change	-13.9%	-3.3%	-
Real Term Earnings 2024	£79.17	£265.82	-

Real Change	-£0.22	£5.81	£20.05
Real % Change	-0.2%	2.1%	3.4%
Real Term Earnings 2024	£84.88	£269.11	£584.75

Leeds

FTE	Lower 10%	Median	Top 10%
2024 Weekly Earnings	£228.80	£604.60	£1,161.60
2025 Weekly Earnings	£215.00	£610.70	£1,245.70
Nominal Change	-£13.80	£6.10	£84.10
Nominal % Change	-6.0%	1.0%	7.2%
Real Change	-£23.26	-£18.90	£36.06
Real % Change	-9.8%	-3.0%	3.0%
Real Term Earnings 2024	£205.54	£585.70	£1,197.66

UK

FTE	Lower 10%	Median	Top 10%
2024 Weekly Earnings	£214.70	£613.50	£1,249.90
2025 Weekly Earnings	£227.40	£642.50	£1,335.90
Nominal Change	£12.70	£29.00	£86.00
Nominal % Change	5.9%	4.7%	6.9%
Real Change	£3.82	£3.63	£34.31
Real % Change	1.7%	0.6%	2.6%
Real Term Earnings 2024	£218.52	£617.13	£1,284.21

Working Hours Needed to be out of Poverty

The Fact Book also contains analysis of ASHE data and RLW data linked to DWP's Household Below Average Incomes (HBAI) Poverty Thresholds, however this page will be updated when the 2025 Poverty thresholds are announced in April 2026.

Latest Poverty thresholds for 2024 was £390, meaning households needed to have an income of £390/week or more to be above the poverty line.

- To be lifted out of poverty, using data available for the latest poverty line in 2024, a household with one adult in work on the Real Living Wage would need to be in full-time work that offers 32 hours a week or more.
- A household with one adult on the National Living Wage would need to be working 34 hours a week or more to be out of the poverty threshold.
- In 2025 and 2026 the minimum and real living wage levels have increased, but the 2025 and 2026 poverty threshold has not yet been published by the DWP HBAI. An estimate for 2025 will be made and updated in April 2026.