
















Monthly bulletin: 25 March 2026

| Latest data: Cost of living | | | Snapshot trend analysis | | Next data update |
|-----------------------------|--|---------|---|---|------------------|
| Inflation | <i>CPI inflation</i> | 3.0% |  | UK CPI Inflation was 3.0% in February 2026 remaining the same as January 2026. Clothing made the largest upward contribution to the monthly change and motor fuels made the largest, downward contribution. | 22/04/2026 |
| | <i>Food inflation</i> | 3.3% |  | Food inflation was 3.3% in Feb 2026, down from 3.6% the previous month. | 22/04/2026 |
| | <i>Bank Rate</i> | 3.75% |  | Bank rate was 3.75% in Mar 2026, remaining the same as Dec 2025. | 30/04/2026 |
| Fuel | <i>Petrol (ppl)</i> | 144p |  | Average price of petrol was down by 48p in the week commencing 23 rd March from its peak in Jul 2022. | Weekly |
| | <i>Diesel (ppl)</i> | 167p |  | Average price of diesel was down by 32p in the week commencing 23 rd March from its peak in Jul 2022. | Weekly |
| | <i>Energy price cap</i> | £1,641 |  | From 1 April to 30 June 2026 energy prices will go down by £117 or 7% for a typical household who use electricity and gas and pay by Direct Debit. Compared to the level between April and June 2025, it is 11% or £208 lower. | 27/05/2026 |
| Poverty & Income | <i>Employment (16-64 working age group)</i> | 71.6% |  | In the year to Sept 2025, 372,900 people were estimated to be employed in Leeds, at a rate of 71.6% of the working age population. This was up from 70.9% in the previous quarter (Jun 2025) and below the national rate of 75.5%. Employment levels in Leeds have fallen since Apr-Mar 2023 when the rate was 76.4%. | Apr 2026 |
| | <i>Modelled Unemployment (16+ age group)</i> | 4.4% |  | In the year to Sept 2025, 17,800 people were estimated to be unemployed in Leeds, at a rate of 4.%. This was above the national rate of 4.3%. This is just above the pre-pandemic rate of 4.3% in Dec 2019. | Apr 2026 |
| | <i>UC claimants</i> | 110,849 |  | 110,849 people claimed UC in Leeds in Jan 2026. The number of UC claimants has increased by 14% since Jan 2025. | 14/04/2026 |
| | <i>UC Claimants in work</i> | 30% | N/A | 70% of claimants to UC were not in work, and 30% - 33,681 Leeds claimants were in-work in Jan 2025. | 14/04/2026 |
| | <i>Real Living Wage</i> | £13.45 |  | The 2026 Real Living Wage for outside of London has been announced as £13.45 per hour (it is currently £12.60). The National Living Wage for people over 21 is currently £12.21 per hour. In Leeds in 2025, the median average wage was £17.26. 47,434 Leeds residents earned below the RLW (£12.60) in 2025. | Nov 2026 |
| Housing | <i>Housing Affordability Ratio</i> | 6.46 |  | With data to Sept 2024, Leeds house prices averaged £234,500 and wages averaged £36k, it cost the average full-time Leeds resident almost 6.5 times their income to afford a house. This is the lowest ratio recorded in the last 3 years. | TBC |
| | <i>Evictions</i> | 334 |  | In Q4 2025, there were 61 evictions in Leeds. This is down from Q4 2024, when there were 66 evictions. YTD there have been 334 evictions, up from 288 the same time last year. | Jun 2026 |
| Advice & Support | <i>Welfare Rights Unit</i> | 234 |  | In Feb 2026, 234 benefit checks were made by the WRU, slightly down from 280 in Feb 2025. | Apr 2026 |
| | <i>CAB enquiries</i> | 23,274 |  | In Q2 2025/26, there were 23,274 total enquiries. Enquiries on Benefits & tax credits, Universal Credit, Housing, Debt, Consumer, Utilities and Legal were the most sought areas of advice. | Apr 2026 |
| | <i>Food aid</i> | 180,994 |  | In 2024/25, 180,994 meals were given out via drop-ins or street outreach. This is up 27% on the previous year. | Jun 2026 |
| | <i>Household Support Fund</i> | | N/A | This indicator will be updated in the HSF dashboard which is available here: Leeds Observatory – Financial Inclusion | |

The next bulletin is due on 30th April to coincide with the next bank rate release.

To access the live data, visit our dashboard: <https://observatory.leeds.gov.uk/home/cost-of-living/>

Key:

Red arrow – negative trend

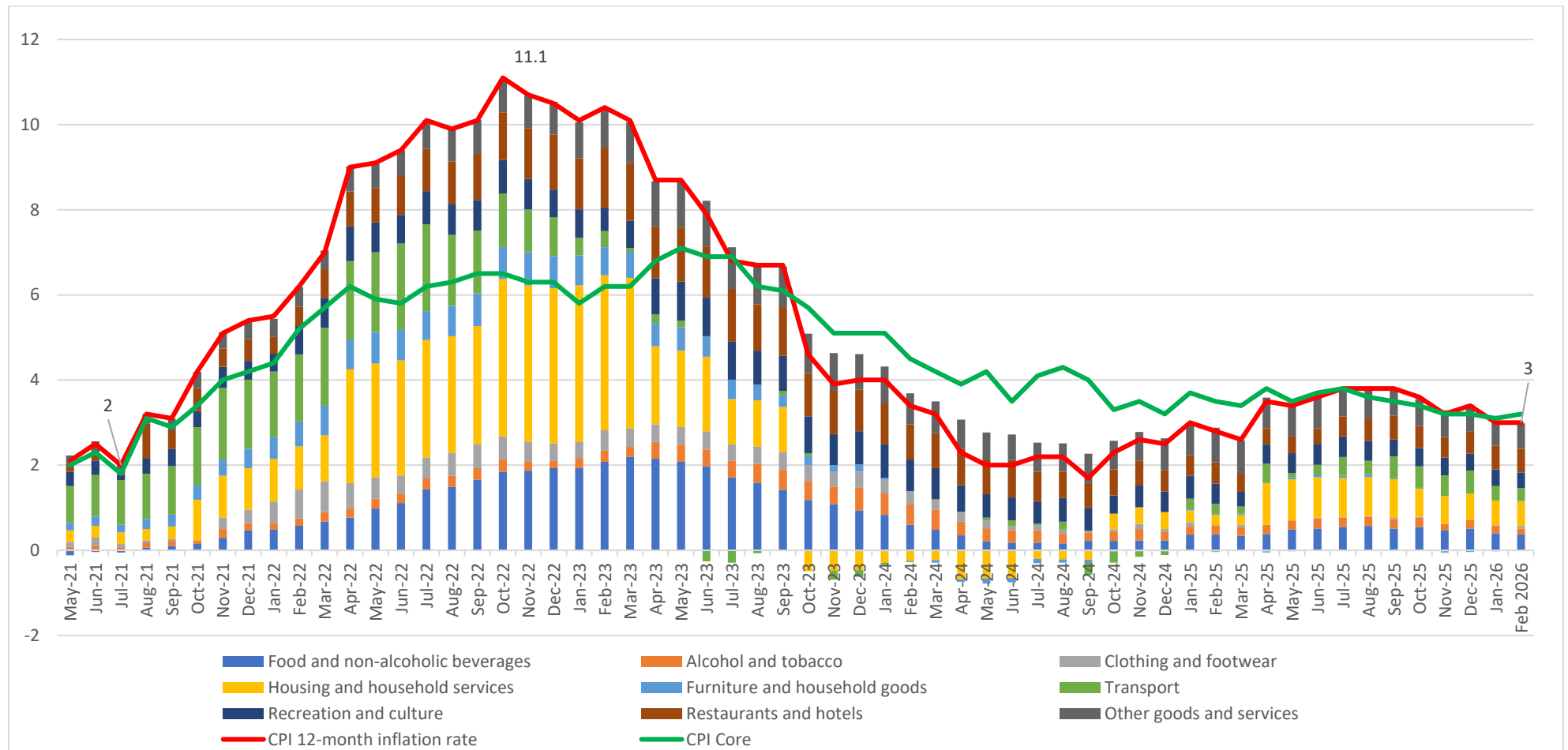
Amber arrow – trend remains the same

Green arrow – positive trend

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Timeline of the Cost-of-Living Crisis

The Government target is to maintain inflation at 2%. This timeline graph displays key impacts on prices during the cost-of-living crisis. July 2021 coincides with Covid Lockdown rules easing and more spaces starting to reopen. From that point, supply and demand issues in the global economy, affecting fuel prices and food supplies started to push up prices and the cost-of-living crisis began to take effect, with inflation exceeding 2% and peaking at 11.1% in October 2022.



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| Trend analysis <i>The arrow direction reflects whether an indicator has gone up, down or remained the same. The RAG rating provides a visual analysis of whether a trend is positive, negative or remains unchanged.</i> | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| RAG | Green arrow | Amber arrow | Red arrow | Further information |
| <i>CPI inflation</i> | Below 4% | Remains the same | Above 4% | Government target is 2%, however this bulletin is measuring performance since its peak in October 2022 |
| <i>Food inflation</i> | Below 4% | Remains the same | Above 4% | Government target is 2%, however this bulletin is measuring performance since its peak in October 2022 |
| <i>Bank Rate</i> | Below 5.25% | Remains the same | Above 5.25% | 5.25% was the most recent peak for Bank Rate |
| <i>Petrol (ppl)</i> | Below 191.55 | Remains the same | Above 191.55 | 191.55p is the peak price seen in July 2022 |
| <i>Diesel (ppl)</i> | Below 199.22 | Remains the same | Above 199.22 | 199.22p is the peak price seen in July 2022 |
| <i>Energy price cap</i> | Below previous quarter | Remains the same | Up from previous quarter | This indicator is rated on a quarterly basis |
| <i>Employment (16-64 working age group)</i> | Up from previous quarter | Remains the same | Below previous quarter | This indicator is rated on a quarterly basis |
| <i>Modelled Unemployment (16+ age group)</i> | Below 4.3% | Remains the same | Above 4.3% | 4.3% is the pre pandemic rate reached in Dec 2019 |
| <i>UC Claimants</i> | - | - | - | This indicator is not RAG rated as UC claimants will continue to increase as more legacy benefits move to UC |
| <i>Real Living Wage</i> | - | - | - | This indicator is not RAG rated as RLW will continue to increase in line with the Cost of Living |
| <i>Housing Affordability Ratio</i> | Below previous year | Remains the same | Up from previous year | If this indicator increases, it shows that house prices are not affordable on current income levels |
| <i>Evictions</i> | Below previous year | Remains the same | Above previous year | RAG rating compares year to date evictions in Leeds to the same period the previous year as its baseline |
| <i>Welfare Rights Unit</i> | Below previous year | Remains the same/minimal change | Up from previous year | This RAG rating and arrow is based on the annual/YTD figures, as monthly/quarterly changes can be due to lack of resource rather than demand |
| <i>CAB enquiries</i> | Below previous year | Remains the same/minimal change | Up from previous year | This RAG rating and arrow is based on the annual/YTD figures, as monthly/quarterly changes can be due to lack of resource rather than demand |
| <i>Food parcels</i> | Below previous year | Remains the same | Up from previous year | This indicator is rated annually |
| <i>Household Support Fund</i> | - | - | - | This indicator is not RAG rated as the data details the breakdown of how funding has been allocated |

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