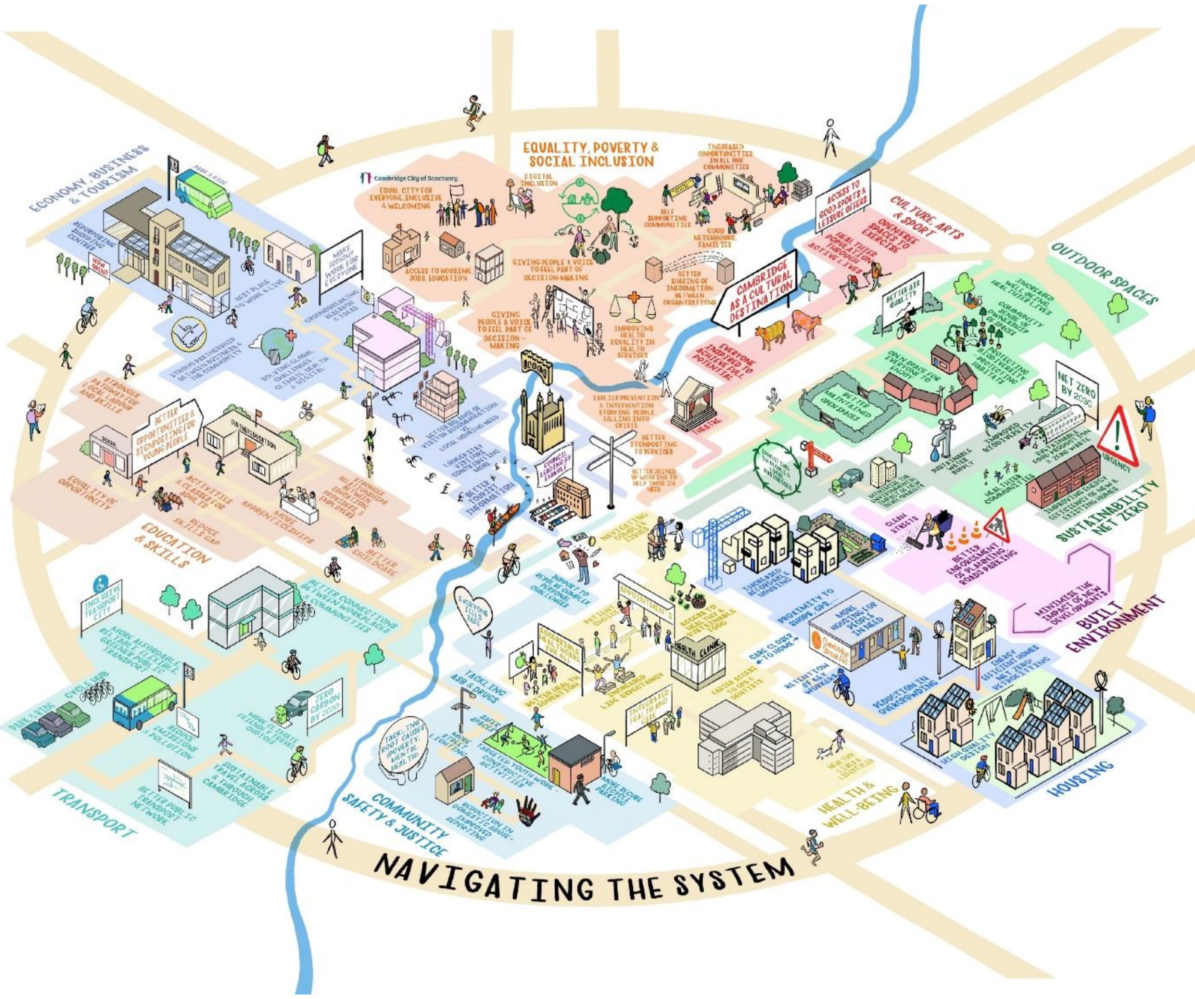
State of the City

2024 Update



Cambridge City Portrait

Contents

1. Executive summary

Cambridge City Council developed the first State of the City in 2023 with Cambridge Econometrics. It provides a robust, rounded, and data-led overview of Cambridge as a place, according to the latest and most meaningful data available.

State of the City takes a data led view of our city through six lenses reflecting economic, social and environmental themes. We hope provides the council, local communities, partners and other stakeholders with a rich, data-informed evidence base to have honest discussions about key trends affecting the future of Cambridge.

This report presents the first annual update to the State of the City Report, so that we can track the trends identified and begin to observe change over time. Unless otherwise stated, the data in this update relates to 2023, as there is a time lag in the data for many of the metrics.

Business, Enterprise, Workforce and Jobs

- Cambridge's population was one of the fastest growing in the country between the 2011 and 2021 Censuses. The population has increased further from 145,700 in 2021 to around 150,000 in 2023.

- Cambridge continues to be at the heart of a vibrant and rapidly growing knowledge-intensive economic cluster, punching above its weight on a global stage. 30% the city's employees continue to be employed in research and development (R&D) intensive industries, and Cambridge remains at the top of the latest global intensity rankings of scientific and technology clusters.

- The city's economy as a whole has bounced back since the Covid pandemic, with Gross Value Added (GVA) recovering, productivity rising to its highest recorded level, and survival rates for business start-ups increasing.

- City centre footfall has increased and the numbers of tourists visiting the city has recovered over the past two years, after falling significantly during the pandemic. Digital connectivity increased and is significantly above the national average for England.

- The unemployment rate increased significantly, but so did the economic activity rate, with more people who are not in work now actively seeking work following the pandemic.

- Some groups continue to experience barriers to employment and income. The employment rate for people from ethnic minority groups increased and the gender pay gap decreased, but the proportion of people with disabilities in employment reduced significantly.

Wellbeing, prosperity and social equity

- Many people in Cambridge continue to benefit from the continued economic growth in the city. The State of the City report found that average pay rates for full-time workers were the sixth highest of all cities in England and Wales in 2022 and the latest data shows that they increased significantly in 2023. Educational attainment for children and young people is high overall and the population as a whole continues to be highly skilled compared to national comparators.

- Cambridge's global ranking for quality of life increased from 36 in 2022 to 28 in 2023. Overall residents continue to report high levels of wellbeing and health outcomes are better than in comparable cities. However, the latest figures show a small reduction in life expectancy at birth, an increase in the avoidable mortality rate, and a significant reduction in adult physical activity rates.

- There is a complex picture of inequalities, with not everyone in the city engaged in the economic phenomenon or is experiencing the benefits. There continues to be an educational attainment gap at GCSE and Level 3 qualifications between pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and those who are not, but the latest figures show this gap has narrowed significantly.

- Pay inequality increased slightly, with those at the 80th percentile being paid 2.1 times the amount paid to those at the 20th percentile in 2022. The latest figures show that the proportion of employees earning less than the real Living Wage has increased to 7.4% (although it remains significantly below the national average of 13.0%).

- Although Cambridge is the 3rd least deprived city in the country in relative terms, the steep rise in the cost of living in recent years has resulted in a continuing increase in the use of food banks across the city and Citizens Advice crisis support. However, the latest figures show that child poverty rates in Cambridge have fallen slightly and are just over half the UK average rate. Fuel poverty rates in the city have fallen since the peak during the pandemic and are also significantly below the national average.

- Cambridge has significant housing affordability issues, with only London having less affordable house prices relative to local pay rates. However, the update report shows that from 2022 to 2023 average house prices fell and the affordability of private rents improved as incomes increased.

- The delivery of new homes in Cambridge has continued to outpace benchmarks with one of the highest housebuilding rates in the country. In the 2 years from 2021 to 2023 a total of 1,452 new homes were built, increasing the total number of homes in Cambridge to 57,863.

- The Council built 330 new council homes directly in 2022/23, which was the second highest number of directly delivered homes by any local authority in England, Wales and Scotland after Birmingham City Council[1]. When Council-owned housing companies were included in this analysis, Cambridge ranked 6th out of all local authorities.

- After declining sharply in 2020 and 2021, the overall crime rate in Cambridge rose between 2022 and 2023. The rate for theft offences increased significantly, but the rates for serious crimes (such as violence against the person, sexual offences and drug, weapon, public order and other offences) have all continued to decline.

Environment, Sustainability, Wildlife and Nature

- Despite the economic recovery and economic growth in Cambridge, the city is making faster progress to net zero than the national average. The latest figures show a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions per resident from 4.0 tCO_2e in 2021 to 3.7 tCO_2e in 2022, which is significantly lower than the UK average of 6.0 tCO_2e in 2022.

- The city is responding to climate change through an ongoing transition to low carbon energy. The latest figures show that walking and cycling rates increased in Cambridge and the proportion of vehicles that are electric continued to grow. Businesses are improving the energy efficiency of their buildings and renewable energy generation is rising, particularly from new solar PV installations.

- However, we are continuing to see the signs of environmental stress in the city, including relatively low levels of water quality and air quality. The number of poor-quality air days reduced, but air pollution mortality rates increased. Average water levels in the Cam increased slightly, but storm overflows from water treatment centres into the Cam Valley chalk streams increased significantly.

Summary

Overall, the key trends identified in the 2024 update to the State of the City are consistent with the analysis in the original 2023 report. Cambridge's economy has bounced back from the Covid pandemic and continues to grow rapidly, driven by its globally significant, knowledge-intensive cluster. Many people in the city continue to benefit from this growth through a high quality of life and high incomes and education and health outcomes

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[1] Inside Housing, 29 September 2023, Insight – Biggest council house builders 2023

(although some health measures have declined slightly, and overall crime rates have risen from 2022 to 2023).

However, not everyone in the city is experiencing the benefits of this economic phenomenon. The report shows a complex picture of inequalities in the city. As a result of the high cost of living, demand for support from foodbanks and CAB crisis support services continues to increase year on year. Inequalities in pay and educational outcomes remain significant, but have reduced from 2022 to 2023, while fuel poverty rates in the city have reduced significantly since the peak in energy costs in 2021.

Cambridge continues to have housing affordability issues, although house prices reduced, and private rents became more affordable from 2022 to 2023. The city has one of the highest housebuilding rates in the country and Cambridge City Council was amongst the local authorities building the most Council homes. The city is making faster progress towards net zero than the national average, but there continue to be other signs of environmental stress in the city relating to air quality and water quality.

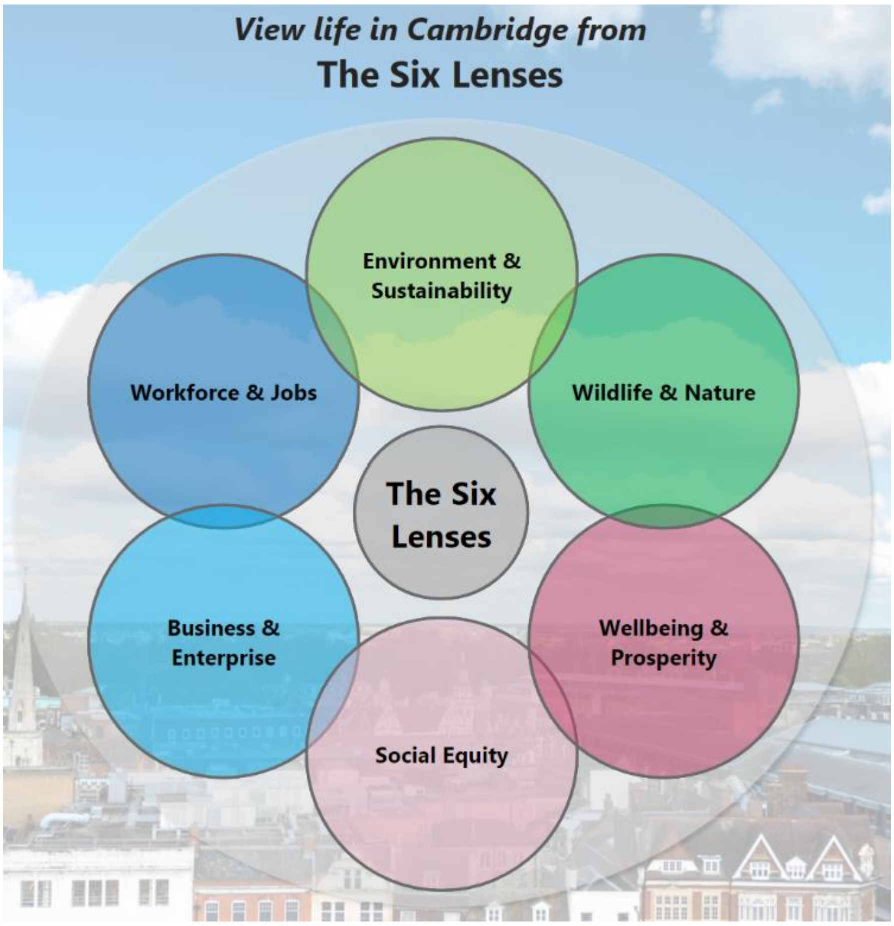
1. Introduction

The first State of the City report, published in July 2023, illustrated key trends in social, environmental and economic data about Cambridge using the most meaningful, nationally comparable data available at the time. This was inserted into a tailored framework called the "Six Lenses" model, shown below.

The report sought to capture a wide range of metrics to help identify the characteristics of Cambridge as a place and was intended to provide a shared evidence base for data-informed discussions about key trends in the city.

This updated provides figures as available in autumn 2024 for each of the metrics in the State of the City report and its accompanying Dashboard. It is intended as a companion to the original report, rather than a standalone document, and should be read in conjunction with it.

This update report was produced in November 2024, but most of the latest data presented in it relates to 2023, as there is a time lag in the publication of national data used for many of the State of the City metrics. The update provides a brief narrative commentary on the data sets that have seen the most noticeable change.



Updated data – methodological note

Updated figures are provided in the tables below for the most recent year available (which is often 2023). For purposes of comparison, the tables also include the figures for the previous year, as shown in the State of the City report and dashboard.

The report provides figures for the local authority district of Cambridge. We have not included updated data for the City and Fringe area this year, or national average data or national city average data for many of the metrics. These will be included in the next full update of the State of the City planned in 2025.

It should be noted that for some of the metrics, the updated data will not be directly comparable with the data provided in the State of the City 2023 report and dashboard. This is because the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and other data providers regularly refine, improve and update on a retrospective basis. For example, some data for some of the State of the City metrics have been 'rebased' by ONS, which means that the denominators have been changed to reflect updated population data from the 2021 Census or adjusted economic data. This means that the data presented for some of the metrics in the State of the City was correct at the time the report was published in 2023, but it has subsequently been refreshed by ONS.

While some of the specific figures may change as a result of these updates, the overall trends highlighted in the original report should remain similar, especially where changes are applied by ONS and other data providers retrospectively over a long period.

For some metrics, the original source data used in the State of the City report has not been updated since the report was produced. Where this is the case the tables state 'not updated' yet. In some cases (e.g. waste and recycling indicators) we have been able to use comparable data held by the Council to provide an update.

Data sources

Data sources for each metric are shown in the State of the City Dashboard against each indicator under the tab, "Link to data source". In this report, we have also included links to the source data in the first column of each table. For some of the metrics, it is possible to access the figures directly via these links. However, accessing the data for many of the metrics is more complex because:

- it is necessary to use the query tools provided on the source websites to 'drill down' and access the specific data from within larger datasets and libraries (e.g. NOMIS, DfE data table, Stat Explore benefits data).
- additional calculations are required to produce the figures provided in this report and the original State of the City report (e.g. calculating averages, totalling multiple data

lines, calculating per capita figures based on latest population figures, using CPIH deflators to remove the impact of inflation and present “real terms” figures, bringing together data from two or more different datasets etc).

2. Environment and Sustainability

Emissions

Cambridge is making faster progress towards ‘net zero’ than national and city benchmarks, even though economic activity picked up as the country emerged from the Covid pandemic. Greenhouse gas emissions per resident reduced from 4.0 tCO_2e in 2021 to 3.7 tCO_2e in 2022, which was significantly lower than the UK average of 6.0 tCO_2e in 2022.

The domestic, commercial, public and transport sectors accounted for the majority of per capita emissions in Cambridge in 2021 and 2022. Per capita emissions from three of these sectors (domestic, public and transport) reduced from 2021 to 2022.

Table 1: Emissions

Indicator	*Year*	*Value*	*Year*	*Updated Value*
tCO2e emissions per capita	2021	4.0	2022	3.7
Air pollution mortality (%)	2021	5.5	2022	6.3

Table 2: Greenhouse gas emissions per capita by source

Indicator	*Year*	*Value*	*Year*	*Updated Value*
Emissions by Industry sector	2021	0.2	2022	0.1
Emissions by Commercial sector	2021	0.9	2022	0.9
Emissions by Public Sector	2021	0.7	2022	0.6
Emissions by Domestic sector	2021	1.1	2022	1.0
Emissions by Transport sector	2021	0.7	2022	0.6
Emissions by Agriculture sector	2021	0.0	2022	0.0
Emissions by Waste management sector	2021	0.3	2022	0.3

Climate change

Climate change continues to present a growing risk globally and to Cambridge, with more extreme weather events occurring in the city. Annual average water levels in the River Cam increased slightly from 2022 to 2023 but were still below those recorded in 2021. However, the number of poor air quality days reduced between 2022 and 2023.

Table 3: Climate change

Indicator	*Year*	*Value*	*Year*	*Updated Value*
Extreme weather days (hot)	2022	11	2023	Not updated yet

Extreme weather days (heavy rainfall)	2022	9	2023	Not updated yet
Annual average water level (metres)	2022	0.69	2023	0.71
Poor air quality days	2022	28	2023	18

Sustainable Transport

The electric vehicle rollout is continuing to accelerate, with the proportion of electric vehicles increasing from 2.8% of all licensed vehicles in Cambridge in 2022 to 4.2% in 2023. The use of active travel remains high, with the percentage of adults walking or cycling at least 3 times per week increasing between 2022 and 2023.

The number of people killed or seriously injured on Cambridge roads per 10,000 residents remained constant from 2021 to 2023.

Table 4: Sustainable Transport

Indicator	*Year*	*Value*	*Year*	*Updated Value*
Percentage of all licensed vehicles that are EVs	2022	2.8	2023	4.2
No. of EV charging points for every 100 DVLA-licensed EV vehicles	2022	5.3	2023	6.5
No. of people killed or seriously injured on roads per 10,000 residents	2022	4.3	2023	4.3
% of adults walking or cycling at least 3 times a week for any purpose	2022	65.6	2023	70.0
Average minimum travel time to essential public services by walking or public transport	2021	Not updated yet	2023	Not updated yet
No.of daily trips through Cambridge radial cordon by buses, pedestrians and pedal cycles	2022	Not updated yet	2023	Not updated yet
No.of daily trips through Cambridge radial cordon by cars and motorcycles	2022	Not updated yet	2023	Not updated yet
No.of daily trips through Cambridge radial cordon by HGVs and LGVs	2022	Not updated yet	2023	Not updated yet

Energy efficiency

Businesses are continuing to become more energy efficient in Cambridge, with the proportion of all non-domestic properties that have EPC ratings of C or higher in 2023 than in 2022, although the proportion of domestic EPC registrations of C or higher fell.

Renewable energy generation continued to increase, reaching 37.8 MW per 100 sq km. As in previous years, the majority of this came from solar PV installations.

The proportion of Cambridge households affected by fuel poverty fell from 14.6% in 2020 to 8.9% in 2022. This was significantly below the 13.1% average rate for England in 2022. The reduction potentially reflects changes in global and national energy prices and Covid restrictions during this period.

Table 5: Energy efficiency

Indicator	***Year***	***Value***	***Year***	***Updated Value***
Proportion of domestic EPC registrations that are C+	2022	69.8	2023	68.3
Proportion of non-domestic EPC registrations that are C+	2022	71.4	2023	79.7
Proportion of all EPC registrations that are C+	2022	69.9	2023	69.4
Installed renewables capacity MW per 100 sq km	2021	33.2	2022	37.8
Energy consumption per 1000 residents (ktoe)	2021	Not updated yet	2022	Not updated yet
Fuel poverty as a proportion of all households (%)	2021	11.5	2022	8.9

3. Wildlife and Nature

Ecosystems and Biodiversity

The ecological, chemical and qualitative status of the lower River Cam catchment improved between 2019 and 2020, with 100% of tests in 2020 being classed as moderate. However, no tests were classed as good, so water quality continues to be worse than pre-2016 levels.

Storm overflows continue to be discharged into Cam Valley Chalk Streams in the past year. The number of storm overflows increased significantly from 114 instances (lasting a combined duration of 570 hours) in 2022 to 270 instances (lasting a combined duration of 4,456 hours) in 2023.

Table 6: Ecosystems and Biodiversity

Indicator	***Year***	***Value***	***Year***	***Updated Value***
Water body status – lower River Cam catchment (Good/Moderate/Poor)	2019	0/50/50	2020	0/100/0
Storm overflows (duration in hours)	2022	570	2023	4,456
% of City Council owned and managed parks and open spaces actively designated and/or managed for biodiversity	2020/21	51.0	2021/22	51.6
Number of noise complaints per 1,000 residents	2020/21	11.7	2021/22	Not updated yet
Green space as a percentage of total non-agricultural land	2022	49.1	2023	Not update yet

Waste and recycling

Greater Cambridge's waste footprint continues to be smaller than benchmarks. The total waste collected annually per 1,000 households was lower in 2022 and 2023 than in any of the previous years from 2015-2021. There was a slight dip in the proportion of Greater Cambridge waste that was recycled in 2022, but this figure returned to 50% in 2023.

Table 7: Waste footprint in Greater Cambridge area

Indicator	***Year***	***Value***	***Year***	***Updated Value***
Collected waste and recycling in tonnes per 1,000 residents	2022	328.9	2023	341.3
Proportion of local authority collected waste recycled	2022	48.92	2023	50.00

4. Wellbeing and Prosperity

Cost of living and financial security

The impact of the steep rise in the cost of living in recent years has resulted in a continuing increase in the use of food banks, CAB support services and other crisis support. The number of food parcels distributed by foodbanks in Cambridge increased again to 14,725 in 2023/24, with an average of 2,103 parcels being distributed by each of the 7 foodbanks in the city.

Although data on the local inflation rate has not been updated by the Centre for Cities since the State of the City report was produced, the national inflation rate has fallen significantly over the past year. This is likely to cause the rate of increase in the cost of living to slow down, in terms of the cost of food and other essential goods.

On average Cambridge residents continue to enjoy relatively high disposable household incomes, albeit falling from 2020 to 2021 and lower in Cambridge's more deprived neighbourhoods.

Table 8: Cost of living and financial security

Indicator	***Year***	***Value***	***Year***	***Updated Value***
Local inflation rate	2023	9.4	2024	Not updated yet
Total foodbank parcels distributed in Cambridge	2022/23	13,125	2023/24	14,725
Food parcels distributed per foodbank	2022/23	1,875	2023/24	2,103
CCAB crisis support provided per 1,000 population	2022	4.9	2023	6.0
Gross disposable household income (GHI) at 2020 prices (£)	2020	24,438	2021	22,157

Workforce participation

Economic activity rates (the proportion of the population aged 16-64 that were in work or actively looking for work) increased slightly between 2022 and 2023, continuing the upward trend identified in the State of the City report.

The proportion of people who were economically inactive who did not want a job rose significantly in 2022 to 93.9% before reducing to 72.2% in 2023. This suggests that the proportion of economically inactive people who do want a job increased in the period.

The employment rate reduced and the unemployment rate increased significantly between 2022 and 2023. This may be explained by the increase in economic activity (with more people actively looking for work).

Indicator	***Year***	***Value***	***Year***	***Updated Value***
Economic activity (% of working age population)	2022	80.6	2023	81.5
Economic inactivity (% of economically inactive working age population who do not want a job)	2022	93.9	2023	72.2
Employment rate (% of working age population)	2022	78.2	2023	76.6
Unemployment rate (% of working age economically active population)	2022	3.0	2023	6.4

Community wellbeing and quality of life

Cambridge's global ranking for quality of life increased from 36 in 2022 to 28 in 2023.

Community and voluntary sector organisations continue to have a strong presence in the Cambridge (City and Fringe) area. Despite the recent difficult economic climate for the sector, there continue to be an estimated 845 community and voluntary organisations in the area. In 2023, 62% of these organisations were micro sized organisations with 9 employees or less.

Table 9: Indicators for community wellbeing and quality of life issue

Indicator	***Year***	***Value***	***Year***	***Updated Value***
Self-reported wellbeing	2022	75.4	2023	Not updated yet
Quality of life relative to other cities globally	2022	36	2023	28
Total non-profit and mutual association businesses	2022	845	2023	845
Micro non-profit and mutual association businesses	2022	500	2023	525
Small non-profit and mutual association businesses	2022	195	2023	205
Medium non-profit and mutual association businesses	2022	95	2023	95
Large non-profit and mutual association businesses	2022	25	2023	25

Deprivation and poverty

Cambridge has relatively low levels of deprivation overall but there are significant inequalities present in difference of income and deprivation between neighbourhoods (Lower Super Output Areas or LSOAs). Child poverty reduced slightly from 11.0% in 2022 to 10.7% in 2023. This was significantly below the UK average of 20.1% in both 2022 and 2023, but it still means that more than child in ten in the city lives in poverty.

Table 10: Indicators for deprivation and poverty issue

Indicator	*Year*	*Value*	*Year*	*Updated Value*
% of residents living in areas ranked as the most deprived 10% national in the Indices of Deprivation	2019	4.6	n/a	Not updated yet
Child poverty rate (% of all children that are living in in low income families)	2022	11.0	2023	10.7

Housing and homelessness

The delivery of new homes in Cambridge has continued to outpace benchmarks with one of the highest housebuilding rates in the country. In the 2 years from 2021 to 2023 a total of 1,452 new homes were built, increasing the total number of homes in Cambridge to 57,863. The rate of delivery of new homes increased from 7.8 per 1,000 dwellings in 2021 to 14.7 in 2023.

The number of new affordable homes completed in Cambridge increased from 164 in 2021/22 to 220 in 2022/23.

Analysis by Inside Housing magazine shows that the Council built 330 new council homes directly in 2022/23, which was the second highest number of directly delivered homes by any local authority in England, Wales and Scotland after Birmingham City Council[2]. When Council-owned housing companies were included in this analysis, Cambridge ranked 6th out of all local authorities.

Table 11: Housing and homelessness

Indicator	*Year*	*Value*	*Year*	*Updated Value*
Delivery of new homes per 1,000 dwellings	2022	10.9	2023	14.1
No. of affordable homes completed	2021/22	164	2022/23	220
Homeless or threatened with homelessness per 1,000 households	2021/22	14.1	2022/23	Not updated yet
Housing by tenure a) Owned outright b) Owned with mortgage or loan c) Private rent	2022	Not updated yet	2023	Not updated yet

[2] Inside Housing, 29 September 2023, Insight – Biggest council house builders 2023

d) Social rent				

Housing costs and affordability

Relative to local pay Cambridge has remained, outside of London, one of the least affordable places for buying a home in the country. The median house price reduced from 2022 to 2023, but this could be due to reduced demand in the housing market in this period due to high interest rates. As interest rates fall, house prices may start to increase again and the housing affordability ratio may widen once again.

Private rent affordability, expressed as monthly median rental price as a proportion of median pay (%), decreased slightly from 2022 to 2023. While median monthly rental prices increased in this period, this was offset by an increase in monthly median pay.

Table 12: Housing costs and affordability

Indicator	*Year*	*Value*	*Year*	*Updated Value*
Annual median house price ratio	2022	13.01	2023	12.52
Lower quartile house price ratio	2022	13.2	2023	Not updated yet
Monthly median rental price as a proportion of median pay (%)	2022	41.8	2023	39.1

Crime and public safety

Police-recorded crime rates in Cambridge have started to rise again and are returning to pre-pandemic levels. After declining sharply in 2020 and 2021, the total recorded crime rate rose from 97.5 crimes per 1,000 residents in 2021 to 103.2 crimes per 1,000 residents in 2023.

The rate for theft offences increased from 41.3 per 1,000 residents to 48.4 between 2022 and 2023, but the rates for serious crimes (such as violence against the person, sexual offences and drug, weapon, public order and other offences) have all declined in this period.

Reoffending rates increased from 2020 (30.0%) to 2021 (33.2%) but were still lower than the 2019 figure (34.6%) presented in the original State of the City report.

Table 13: Indicators for crime and public safety issue

Indicator	*Year*	*Value*	*Year*	*Updated Value*
Police recorded offences per 1,000 residents	2022/23	97.5	2023/24	103.2
Crime rates per offence group per 1000 residents: a) Criminal damage and arson b) Robbery	2022/23	a) 8.1 b) 1.2 c) 41.3	2023/24	a) 8.3 b) 1.4 c) 48.4

c) Theft offences d) Drug, weapon, public order and other e) Sexual offences f) Violence against the person		d) 15.9 e) 2.9 f) 27.9		d) 14.7 e) 2.6 f) 27.8
Re-offending rates as a proportion of offenders	2020/21	30.0%	2021/22	33.2%

5. Social Equity

Population and characteristics

Cambridge's population was one of the fastest growing in the country between the 2011 and 2021 Censuses, and the ONS Mid-Year Estimate for Cambridge 2023 shows this trend continuing. This suggests that the Cambridge population has increased further from 145,700 in the 2021 Census to 149,963 in 2023.

The proportion of the total population that is of a working age in Cambridge (74.3% in 2023) continues to be one of the highest proportions for any city in England. A large part of this working age continues to be attributable to Cambridge's large student population, although other working age groups are still overrepresented.

Table 14: Population and characteristics (Social Equity lens)

Indicator	*Year*	*Value*	*Year*	*Updated Value*
Total population (ONS Mid-year estimate)	2022	147,813	2023	149,963
Non-UK born residents (Census)	2021	38	2031	Not updated yet
Non-white ethnic residents (Census)	2021	25.5	2031	Not updated yet
Working age residents as a proportion of all residents (ONS Mid-year estimate)	2022	74.1	2023	74.3
Proportion of residents with a long-term disability (Census)	2021	14.7	2031	Not updated yet

Social gaps and barriers to equality

Barriers to income and employment for disadvantaged groups with protected characteristics in the city exist but they tend to be lower in Cambridge than elsewhere. The proportion of people from minority ethnic groups who were in employment increased from 76.1% in 2022 to 79% in 2023, while the gender pay gap fell from 11.7% in 2022/23 to 5.5% in 2023/24. However, the proportion of people in employment with a core or work limiting disability reduced from 63.3% in 2022 to 52.1% in 2023.

Table 15: Social gaps and barriers to equality

Indicator	*Year*	*Value*	*Year*	*Updated Value*
Difference in full time pay between females and males (%)	2022/23	11.7	2023/24	5.5
Proportion of ethnic groups in employment	2022	76.1	2023	79.0

Proportion of people with an EA core or work-limiting disability in employment	2022	63.3	2023	52.1
Low and unskilled employment rate	2021	74.5%	2022	Not updated yet
Income inequality (ratio between 20th percentile and 80th percentile of individual income)	2018	4.2	2019	Not updated yet

Educational attainment, inequalities and mobility

Overall, educational attainment and progression in the city continue to be high. During the 2022/23 academic year, 76.4% of pupils aged 16 achieved grades 4 or above in English and mathematics GCSEs.

There continues to be significant inequality in attainment between pupils who are eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and those who are not. However, at GCSE level the attainment gap between these groups narrowed from 41% in 2021/22 to 27.2%. Amongst 19-year-olds achieving Level 3 qualifications, the gap also narrowed from 38.1% in 2021/22 to 27.3% in 2022/23.

Post 18 participation rates remain high, with the proportion of pupils aged 18 entering a sustained education, apprenticeship or employment destination increasing from 2020/21 to 2021/22. Strong educational attainment continues to contribute to a highly skilled workforce in Cambridge, with 83.4% of the working age population holding NVQ 3 or higher qualifications in 2022.

Table 16: Educational attainment, inequalities and mobility (Social Equity lens)

Indicator	***Year***	***Value***	***Year***	***Updated Value***
% FSM eligible pupils at 16 achieving grades 4 or above in English and mathematics GCSEs	2022	40.9	2023	54.9
% Not FSM eligible pupils at achieving grades 4 or above in English and mathematics GCSEs	2022	84.2	2023	82.1
% FSM eligible students at 19 achieving Level 3 qualifications	2022	34.5	2023	42.6
% Not FSM eligible students at 19 achieving Level 3 qualifications	2022	72.6	2023	69.9
% of pupils aged 18 entering a sustained education, apprenticeship or employment destination	2021	84.2	2022	89.6
% of working age population (aged 16-64) educated to NVQ 3+ -	2021	81.8	2023	83.4

Healthy outcomes and inequalities

Residents in the city are generally healthier than in other places, with higher-than-average life expectancy, lower avoidable mortality rates and higher than average physical activity rates. However, the latest figures show a small reduction in life expectancy at birth, an increase in the avoidable mortality rate, and a reduction in physical activity rates amongst adults.

Table 17: Healthy outcomes and inequalities (Social Equity lens)

Indicator	*Year*	*Value*	*Year*	*Updated Value*
Life expectancy at birth male (3-year range)	2019-21	81.0	2020-22	80.8
Life expectancy at birth female (3-year range)	2019-21	84.9	2020-22	84.2
Avoidable mortality rate per 100,000 (3-year range)	2019-21	189.2	2020-22	201.4
Percentage of physically active adults (19+yrs)	2021/22	81.1	2022/23	76.6
Inequality of life expectancy at birth (males)	2018-20	12.0	2019-21	Not updated yet
Inequality of life expectancy at birth (females)	2018-20	11.8	2019-21	Not updated yet

6. Business and Enterprise

Business competitiveness and productivity

The Cambridge economy bounced back strongly following the contraction in 2020 due to the pandemic. After dropping by 9% in 2020, GVA (Gross Value Added – which is broadly equivalent to gross profit) increased by 8% or more in both 2021 and 2022.

This growth was driven by the city's resilient knowledge intensive industries, which experienced similar levels of GVA growth in 2021 and 2022. After reducing significantly during the pandemic when universities and many public services were closed, the public health, education and administration sectors also recovered strongly in 2021 and 2022.

Productivity (measured as GVA per employee in real terms) recovered from its low point during the pandemic in 2020 and reached its highest levels in 2021 and 2022.

Table 18: Business competitiveness and productivity

Indicator	***Year***	***Value***	***Year***	***Updated Value***
Annual % change in GVA (2019 prices)	2021	8.6	2022	8.0
Contributions to GVA Growth: Knowledge industries (£ millions 2019 prices)	2021	348	2022	322
Contributions to GVA Growth: Public health, education and public administration (£ millions 2019 prices)	2021	270	2022	149
Contributions to GVA Growth: Other industries (£ millions 2019 prices)	2021	22	2022	27
GVA per employee (£ 2019 prices)	2021	61,575	2022	67,096
High growth business in Cambridge as a % of all businesses with 10+ employees	2021	5.8	2022	4.8
High turnover business in Cambridge as a % of all businesses	2022	10.0	2023	Not updated yet

Business enterprise

Start-ups continue to be underrepresented in Cambridge relative to benchmarks. The proportion of businesses that were start-ups declined slightly from 2021 to 2022. However, Cambridge start-ups continue to be more resilient and more likely to survive than benchmark areas. While the proportion of all businesses that closed increased from 2021 to 2022, the 3-year survival rate for business start-ups increased over the same period.

Most businesses in Cambridge continue to be micro businesses (77% in 2022) or small businesses (17% in 2023), and almost three-quarters are independent businesses (74.4% in 2022).

Table 19: Business enterprise

Indicator	*Year*	*Value*	*Year*	*Updated Value*
Business start-up rate as a proportion of all businesses (%)	2022	10.5	2023	10.3
Business closure rate as a proportion of all businesses (%)	2022	8.8	2023	10.2
Survival rate of start-ups after 3 years as a proportion of all start-ups (%)	2021	60.6	2022	64.2
Independent businesses as a % of all businesses	2022	74.4	2023	Not updated yet
Micro businesses (0-9 employees) as a % of all businesses	2022	78	2023	77
Small businesses (10-49 employees) as a % of all businesses	2022	17	2023	17

Tourism and visitor spending

The number of visitors to Cambridge has continued to recover from the low point of the pandemic faster than benchmarks, particularly for international visitors. Annual city centre footfall increased from 52 million in 2022 to 55 million in 2023. The number of international and domestic overnight visitors to Cambridge remained constant over this period.

While the proportion of employees in the city directly employed in tourism reduced from 10.9% in 2022 to 10.3% in 2023, it still represents a significant proportion of the city's workforce. Figures for the night-time economy have not been published for this year, it seems likely that it will still account for nearly 3 in 10 jobs in the city.

Table 20: Tourism and visitor spending

Indicator	*Year*	*Value*	*Year*	*Updated Value*
Annual City Centre footfall (000s)	2022	51,897	2023	55,048
Tourism employees as % of all employees	2021	10.9	2022	10.3
Proportion of employees employed in the nighttime economy	2022	28.3	2023	Not updated yet
International overnight visitors to city (000s)	2021	440.5	2022	440.0
Domestic overnight visitors to city (000s)	2022	343.6	2023	343.6

Business infrastructure and property

The delivery of new commercial floorspace continues to fluctuate from year to year. After reducing in 2021, the rate of new commercial floorspace delivered in Cambridge increased to 35.4 m2 per 100m2 of existing floorspace in 2023. Commercial property costs remain significantly higher than the national average.

Digital connectivity in Cambridge continues to improve. Following a huge increase from 2021 (41%) to 2022 (91%), the proportion of premises covered by gigabit broadband increased slightly to 93% in Cambridge in 2023. This was significantly above the national average for England (77%).

Table 21: Business infrastructure and property

Indicator	*Year*	*Value*	*Year*	*Updated Value*
New commercial floorspace delivery per 100m2 of existing floorspace	2022	-20	2023	36.7
Proportion of premises covered by gigabyte broadband (%)	2022	91	2023	93
Relative commercial property costs relative to the national average (%)	2022	121.1	2023	121.6

Research and innovation

The WIPO's latest ranking of scientific and technology clusters saw Cambridge remain at the top of the global intensity rankings in 2023 (based on the number of patent applications and scientific publications per capita). The generation of patents and scientific publications by the city's scientific and technology cluster increased slightly from 2022 to 2023. A high proportion of the city's employees continue to be employed in industries that are research and development (R&D) intensive (12.5% in 2022).

Table 22: Research and innovation

Indicator	*Year*	*Value*	*Year*	*Updated Value*
Patent filings from Cambridge City (5 year range)	2022	3,052	2023	3,146
Scientific publications from Cambridge (5 year range)	2022	17,711	2023	17,751
Employees in R&D intensive industries as a % of total employees	2021	12.8	2022	12.5
Available Lab Space (sq ft)	2022	15,000	2023	Not yet updated

7. Workforce and Jobs

Job opportunities

After growing significantly since 2008, when there were a total of 86,000 employees in Cambridge, the total number of employees in the city reduced slightly from 110,835 in 2021 to 108,980 in 2022.

In recent years the knowledge economy has driven jobs growth in Cambridge. Employment in these industries reduced by 200 employees from 2021 to 2022, but they still accounted for 30% of jobs in Cambridge (30, 775 jobs). The number of employees in education, health and public administration fell by 750 employees from 2021 to 2022, but this sector still accounted for 41.8% of jobs in Cambridge (45,500 employees).

Table 23: Job opportunities

Indicator	*Year*	*Value*	*Year*	*Updated Value*
Job vacancies per 1,000 working-age residents (October 2023)	2022	289	2023	Not updated yet
Total number of employees	2021	110,835	2022	108,980
Annual change in number of employees – knowledge industries	2021	1,820	2022	-220
Annual change in number of employees – education, health and public administration	2021	500	2022	-750
Annual change in number of employees – other industries	2021	-1,665	2022	-885

Earnings and pay

The buoyant jobs market and high-skilled employment offer contributes to above average pay in Cambridge. Full-time median gross weekly pay increased significantly from £701.60 to £785.00.

The proportion of employees in low-pay (earning less than the real Living Wage hourly rate) increased from 5.2% in 2022 to 7.4% in 2023. However, this was significantly below the national (England and Wales) average of 13.0% of employees. Pay inequality increased slightly, with those at the 80th percentile being paid 2.1 times the amount paid to those at the 20th percentile in 2022.

Table 24: Earnings and pay

Indicator	*Year*	*Value*	*Year*	*Updated Value*
Full-time median gross weekly pay (£) 2022 prices	2022	701.6	2023	785.0

Part-time median gross weekly pay (£) 2022 prices	2022	281.1	2023	299.1
Workers in low pay as a % of all employees	2022	5.2	2023	7.4
20th-80th percentile pay ratio	2022	2.0	2023	2.1

Workforce skills and training

Cambridge's workforce is the second most highly skilled in the country, reflecting the skills needs of Cambridge's knowledge industries. However, the proportion of people employed in highly skilled occupations reduced slightly from 2022 to 2023. The proportion of the Cambridge workforce receiving training in the past 3 months increased significantly from 2021/22 (17.4%) to 2022/23 (30.4%), but the number of apprenticeships starts per 100,000 population reduced from 2022 to 2023.

Table 25: Workforce skills and training

Indicator	***Year***	***Value***	***Year***	***Updated Value***
Indicative apprenticeship starts per 100,000 of population	2022	336.4	2023	315.7
Proportion of workforce receiving related training in last 13 weeks	2021/22	17.4	2022/23	30.4
Proportion of workforce in SOC occupations 1 to 3 (%)	2022	73.3	2023	71.7

Job quality and security

The proportion of people working more than 45 hours per week increased from 2022 (17.9%) to 2023 (23.7%), perhaps reflecting a return to normal working patterns following the pandemic. The proportion of the workforce in insecure employment reduced slightly from 10.6% in 2022 to 9.4% in 2023.

Table 26: Job quality and security

Indicator	***Year***	***Value***	***Year***	***Updated Value***
Proportion of workforce working 45 hours or more per week (%)	2022	17.9	2023	23.7
Proportion of workforce in insecure employment (%)	2022	10.6	2023	9.4
Proportion of economically active population receiving in-work UC	2022	4.87	2023	4.91