

# *UK Locations Guide*

For locum healthcare professionals



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# Who we are

## WHO IS ATHONA?

Set up in 2003 by Founders, Stewart and Tina London, Athona is a market-leading healthcare recruitment business, placing allied health professionals (AHPs), doctors and nurses into both temporary (locum) and permanent roles in the NHS and private sector.

As we've grown over the past 20+ years, we've built up our reputation and credibility and are proud to be one of the UK's leading healthcare recruiters. Even though we have progressively expanded, our principles and values have always remained the same. We understand the work we do affects futures every day, and the healthcare professionals we recruit affect the futures of their patients lives every day.

After two decades in the industry, in 2022, we revisited our brand positioning and defined what truly sets us apart from other similar organisations. Ultimately, we are masters in our craft and offer both our candidates and clients peace of mind knowing we always have your best interest at heart. We only put forward candidates for positions we know are the perfect match, and we only take on projects for our clients where we know we can deliver exceptional results. That's what we call: *The Art of Recruitment.*

## FRAMEWORKS & ACCREDITATIONS

Due to our renowned reputation within the healthcare sector, we're proud to be on every major NHS framework, which is testament to the quality of our services. We're fortunate enough to have a strong network of candidates due to our robust recruitment methods, allowing us to be known for impeccable success rates and compliance standards. Here are our current frameworks & accreditations we've been awarded over the last 10 years.

|   |   |   |  |  |   |  |   |
|---|---|---|--|--|---|--|---|
|   |  <p><b>NHS Workforce Alliance</b><br/>Bringing together people who care</p>  |  <p>Clinical and Healthcare Staffing Approved Supplier</p> |  <p>nqa<br/>ISO 9001<br/>QUALITY MANAGEMENT</p>                               |  <p><b>CPD MEMBER</b><br/>The CPD Certification Service</p>   |  <p><b>REC</b> Corporate Member</p>                         |  <p><b>Recruiter FAST 50</b></p>  |  <p><b>jobsaware</b></p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In 2020, we were awarded places on 3 lots with HTE - Lot 3a, 3b &amp; 3c. We've also been placed on the HTE permanent framework - covering Lot 1a &amp; 1b.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>This framework allows us to cover clinical agency staffing, staff bank, international recruitment, non-clinical staffing, IT, workforce support and improvement services in partnership with CSS &amp; NHS PiP.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>We are audited and certified with the ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System.</li></ul>                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In 2020, we introduced our Advisory Board seminars. Off the back of this, since 2021, we've been CPD accredited.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>We are an accredited corporate member of The Recruitment and Employment Confederation. This status shows our candidates &amp; clients we're committed to the highest standards of recruitment.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>We were thrilled to be named again as one of Recruiter magazine's 'Fast 50' companies for 2022.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Stay safe in your job search and flexible work by visiting JobsAware, a non-profit, joint industry and law enforcement organisation working to combat labour market abuse.</li></ul> |   |

## OUR TEAMS

Athona is built up of 3 dedicated teams, Acute, Psychiatry and Nursing, which are all lead by our experienced directors Tanya Ironmonger, Rebecca Coates and Richie Daysh. With nearly 50 years recruitment experience combined, our directors are some of the best in the industry and provide insightful information to both our candidates and clients.



Alongside our fantastic directors, our teams are made up of industry-leading experts whose primary focus is to bring you the most relevant roles, in locations that best suit your working requirements. When registered with Athona, you'll be working with one of our talented recruitment consultants and compliance officers to ensure all of your relevant documentation and information are up to date, so we can get you out to work as soon as possible.

Despite the changes in the healthcare market and our growth, we've remained a close-knit team of experts passionate about the work we do, and aware of the important role we play for both our candidates and clients.

# Get to know England

England is the most densely populated country within the United Kingdom and occupies more than half of Great Britain. With around 1150 hospitals across the whole of the UK (including NHS Trust-managed hospitals and private hospitals), around 76% of these are situated in England (704).

Known for their classic love of tea, fish and chips and home to over 40,000 pubs, England is also recognised for its lavish cultural landmarks. From popular tourist sights in London such as Buckingham Palace, Big Ben, Tower Bridge and Windsor Castle to Stonehenge in Wiltshire and Hadrian's Wall in Carlisle, there truly are many sights to see.

Alongside these incredible sights, for those who love the outdoors, there are around 22 major rivers that flow through England and 10 National Parks which cover at least 10% of the land area.

With a population of over 55 million and an extremely diverse range of cultures and religions, England is a very welcoming country to people of all nationalities and beliefs. For over 22 years, Christianity, no religion, Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism have been the top 5 most popular religions and beliefs throughout England, with plenty of places of worship throughout the whole of the country.

## THE 9 OFFICIAL REGIONS OF ENGLAND



## FUN FACT

### DID YOU KNOW THESE POPULAR FUN FACTS ABOUT ENGLAND?

- 1 Winchester was the first capital of England back in 871
- 2 English is the most spoken language across the globe
- 3 French was the official language of England for over 300 years, from 1066 till 1362
- 4 The top 5 dishes in England are: Full English Breakfast, Black Pudding, Devilled Kidneys, Eggy Bread and Kedgeree
- 5 The largest county in England is Yorkshire
- 6 The South East is mostly flat
- 7 Stonehenge is older than the pyramids
- 8 London has 40 abandoned tube stations
- 9 Wherever you stand, you are never more than 70 miles from the sea in England
- 10 Every year, Gloucestershire host the annual Cheese Rolling Competition



# Cost of living in England

In recent years, England has seen an increase in the cost of everyday items, much like all countries. From food shopping to house prices and bills, most areas in England have noticed a jump since the cost of living crisis began in late 2021.

## HOUSE PRICE INFLATION OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS

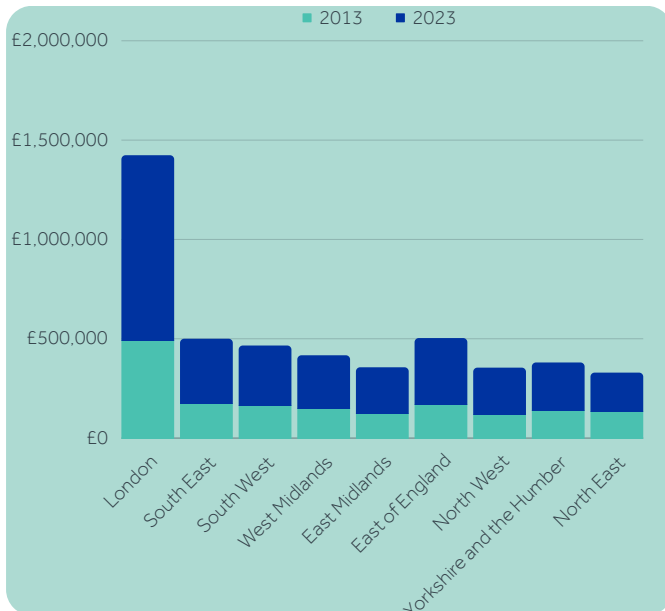


Figure A

When looking at typical, average house prices throughout each region in England, you can see a significant increase (Figure A) in house prices over the last decade (2013-2023).

As shown on the graph, the capital city, London, has seen the most dramatic increase in house prices. Alongside this, 17 areas in England have seen prices at least double, with the biggest gain in price at 119% (Waltham Forest, London).

**London: £492,810 - £931,090**      **North West: £118,110 - £236,510**  
**South East: £172,070 - £328,060**      **East of England: £166,830 - £336,690**  
**South West: £165,230 - £300,750**      **North East: £134,660 - £194,910**  
**West Midlands: £150,120 - £266,740**  
**East Midlands: £121,670 - £234,740**  
**Yorkshire & the Humber: £136,980 - £243,650**

## CONSUMER PRICE INFLATION OVER THE LAST 7 YEARS

As well as seeing changes to housing prices, England has also seen a spike in the annual change in consumer prices. From energy prices to consumer goods and food items, England has experienced a steady increase in the percentage of consumer prices, often in line with typical inflation.

However, the Bank of England expects these figures to begin to rapidly decrease throughout 2024 and 2025, to hopefully end up back to the statistics in 2017 of around 2% in cost prices.

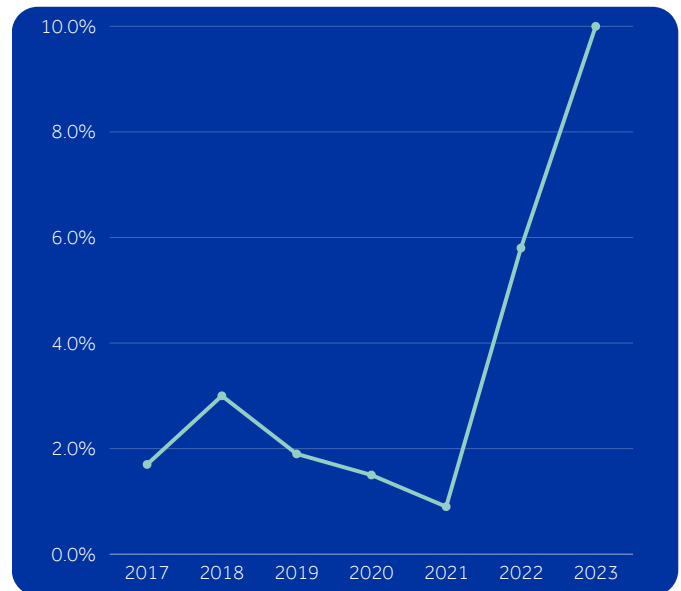


Figure B

### Average fuel prices in 2021

**Unleaded - 170.38ppl**  
**Diesel - 191.21ppl**

### Average food prices for a family of 4 in 2021

**Annual cost: £3,240**

### Average annual energy bill per 2 people in a household in 2021

**Annual bill: £1,000**

### Average annual electricity bill per 2 people in a household in 2021

**Annual bill: £769**

### Average fuel prices in 2023

**Unleaded - 151.81ppl**  
**Diesel - 159.96ppl**

### Average food prices for a family of 4 in 2023

**Annual cost: £5,168**

### Average annual energy bill per 2 people in a household in 2023

**Annual bill: £2,020**

### Average annual electricity bill per 2 people in a household in 2023

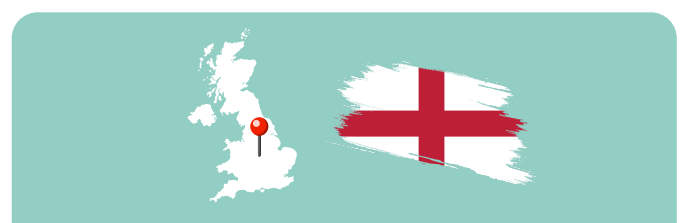
**Annual bill: £1,024**

### Average annual gas bill per 2 people in a household in 2021

**Annual bill: £564**

### Average annual gas bill per 2 people in a household in 2023

**Annual bill: £996**



# Cost of living in London

Due to London being the capital city of England, the cost of living has typically always been higher than any other region. It's lavish landmarks attract many people to live in London, however it's best to be aware of these everyday costs.

## HOUSE PRICE INFLATION OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS

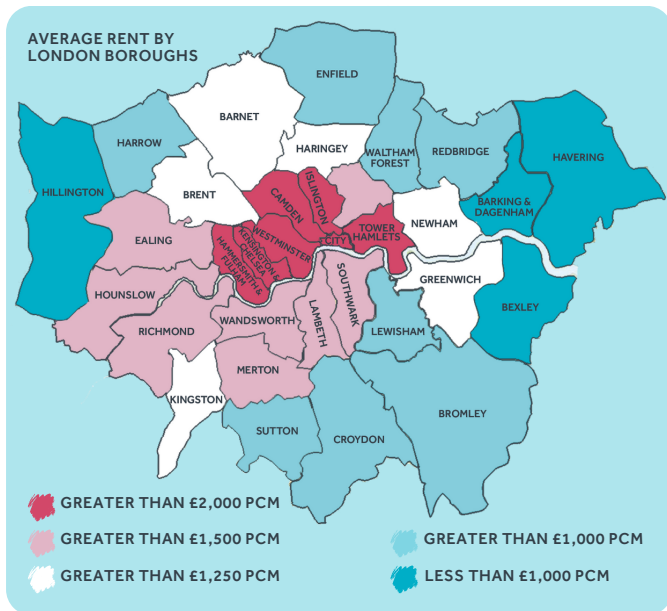


Figure C

When considering living in London, it's important to know, not every borough in London is as expensive as living in the central parts and it is possible to live comfortably in London on a salary of £65,000 or more according to MyLondon.news.

Since 2019, London has had the highest average house price increase than any other region in England. As shown on Figure D, London is a staggering 69.4% more expensive as opposed to the cheapest region.



Figure D

## CURRENT AVERAGE LIVING COSTS IN LONDON

Since 2021, the current average living costs have grown in many aspects such as groceries, leisure and public transport.

| Type                  | Average cost |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| Single ticket (train) | £6.70        |
| Hopper fare (bus)     | £1.75        |
| Travelcard (monthly)  | £156 - £407  |
| Monthly bus pass      | £94.90       |
| Cable car             | £6           |
| Riverboat             | £9.40        |

For those living in London, the most popular mode of transport for commuters and residents are trains. For example, the London Undergrounds run every 2-7 minutes and carry nearly 50% of London's commuters on the TFL's 11 different train lines every day.

When food shopping, the cost of your groceries can vary every time, but on average, one individual can spend between £200 and £300 per month on food. The average price of items in a supermarket can change depending on where you shop and how frequently you go, but here is an average breakdown of some everyday items.

| Food/beverage  | Average cost |
|----------------|--------------|
| Water (1.5l)   | £1.16        |
| Milk           | £1.37        |
| White bread    | £1.20        |
| 12 medium eggs | £3.06        |
| Chicken fillet | £7.92        |
| Apples (1kg)   | £2.08        |
| Rice (1kg)     | £2           |

### % change in prices of goods and services for household income quintiles in London (August 2023)

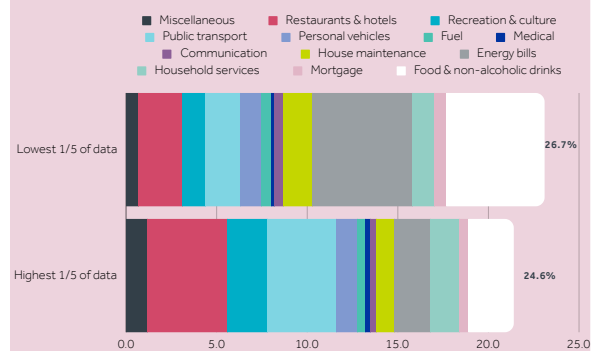
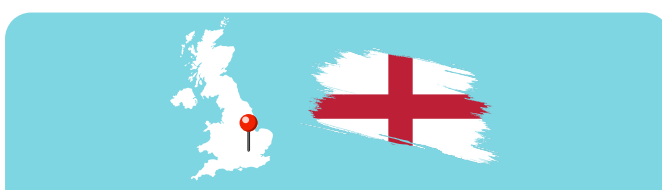


Figure E

Living in the city provides many opportunities to explore different restaurants, theatre shows and much more!

| Leisure activity | Average cost |
|------------------|--------------|
| Dinner           | £17          |
| Cinema           | £12          |
| Museum           | £12-£40      |
| Gym membership   | £45          |
| Hair appointment | £40-£120     |
| Nails            | £50          |



# Get to know *Wales*

Wales is a constituent country located in the West of Great Britain filled with mountainous national parks and a stunning coastline. Out of the 1148 NHS hospitals situated in the UK, Wales is home to around 9% of these which is just 84 hospitals. Overall, NHS Wales provides services through 7 local health boards and 3 major NHS trusts.

Alongside their stunning nature parks and picturesque scenery, Wales also has some incredible hiking trails up Snowdonia, walks around Caernarfon Castle grounds and tours of the famous Principality (Millennium) rugby Stadium.

When you're not busy locuming, there are 7 stunning cities to be explored in Wales: Bangor, Cardiff, Newport, St Asaph, St Davids, Swansea and Wrexham. Each has various reasons to visit, such as their weather conditions, meaning you get to experience all four seasons all year round depending where you are located in Wales.

With a population of over 3.2 million, Wales is significantly smaller country than England, however this gives Wales a homely and welcoming feeling with 98% of the population in Wales admitting they are 'too polite for their own good'. In more recent years, no religion or Christianity has quickly become the most popular beliefs in Wales, followed by Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism.

## THE 2 OFFICIAL REGIONS OF WALES



Figure F

## **FUN FACT**

### DID YOU KNOW THESE POPULAR FUN FACTS ABOUT WALES?

- 1 Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwllllantysiliogogogoch village holds the title of the longest name in the UK
- 2 Wales's National Day is St David's Day, which falls on 1st March every year
- 3 Wales has more castles per square mile than anywhere else in Europe
- 4 Pistyll Rhaeadr is Britain's tallest single-drop waterfall
- 5 Wales is the only country with a complete coastal path
- 6 The NHS was founded by a Welsh labour politician, Aneurin Bevan
- 7 There are more sheep than people in Wales! A staggering 11.7 million sheep inhabit Wales
- 8 Only 10% of people in Cardiff speak Welsh
- 9 Mount Everest is known after Welshman Sir George Everest
- 10 Wales used to have 4 capitals, Carmarthen, Caernarfon, Denbigh & Brecon



# Cost of living in Wales

When considering relocating to Wales, it's notable to mention their cost of living is 25% less expensive as opposed to England. Although the average salary happens to be lower in Wales, the cheaper cost of living combats this potential issue.

## HOUSE PRICE INFLATION OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS

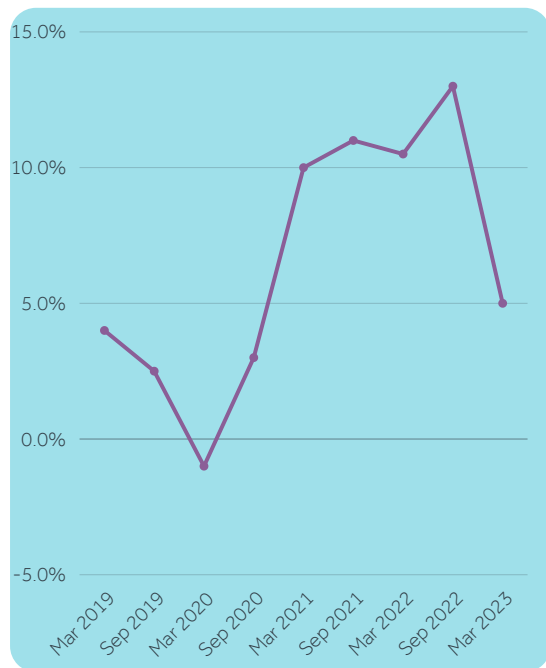


Figure G

In Wales, the average house prices increased by 4.8% between March 2022 and March 2023. Out of these houses, terraced houses appeared to have the largest inflation out of all property types, rising by 6.4% between January 2022 and January 2023.

Average housing prices in each local authority of Wales has gradually increased over the period of March 2022 to March 2023, providing us with the below figures.

|                         | March 23 | March 22 |                           | March 23 | March 22 |
|-------------------------|----------|----------|---------------------------|----------|----------|
| <b>Blaenau Gwent:</b>   | £134,952 | £126,705 | <b>Gwynedd:</b>           | £198,497 | £206,348 |
| <b>Bridgend:</b>        | £200,123 | £190,811 | <b>Isle of Anglesey:</b>  | £225,380 | £225,419 |
| <b>Caerphilly:</b>      | £184,321 | £174,455 | <b>Merthyr Tydfil:</b>    | £153,749 | £140,236 |
| <b>Cardiff:</b>         | £265,993 | £249,065 | <b>Monmouthshire:</b>     | £358,234 | £338,352 |
| <b>Carmarthenshire:</b> | £212,963 | £192,596 | <b>Neath Port Talbot:</b> | £167,435 | £150,516 |
| <b>Ceredigion:</b>      | £237,992 | £246,362 | <b>Newport:</b>           | £236,026 | £224,294 |
| <b>Conwy:</b>           | £213,712 | £203,355 | <b>Pembrokeshire:</b>     | £236,511 | £229,763 |
| <b>Denbighshire:</b>    | £203,762 | £195,011 | <b>Powys:</b>             | £245,202 | £234,682 |
| <b>Flintshire:</b>      | £219,793 | £201,403 | <b>Rhondda Cynon Taf:</b> | £156,358 | £144,051 |
| <b>Swansea:</b>         | £192,021 | £183,920 | <b>Vale of Glamorgan:</b> | £309,774 | £301,481 |
| <b>Torfaen:</b>         | £200,079 | £186,912 | <b>Wrexham:</b>           | £205,829 | £191,152 |

## CONSUMER PRICE INFLATION SINCE COVID

Amongst the increase in housing prices, consumer prices of energy bills, petrol, food and general living reached a 9.1% increase in May 2022, as opposed to 2021.

Due to these increases in everyday prices, a survey was conducted in Wales, targeting a demographic of residents 18 or older between November 2022 and March 2023 to see what impacts the cost of living crisis has had on peoples spending habits.



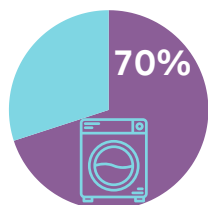
20%

were eating out less



68%

cut down on non-essentials



70%

were using electrical appliances less

### Eight in ten consumers in Wales took at least one action to reduce their food bills in 2022

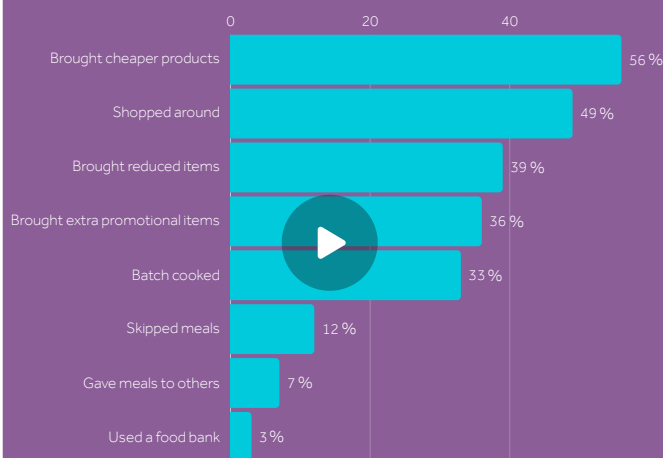
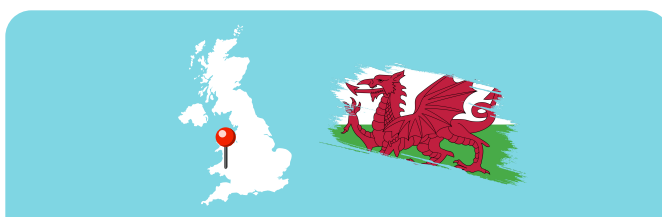
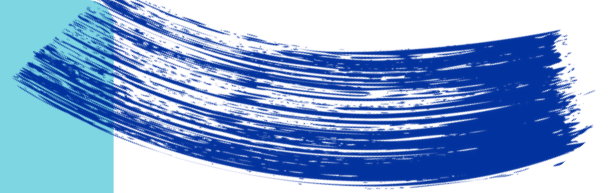


Figure H





# Get to know Scotland



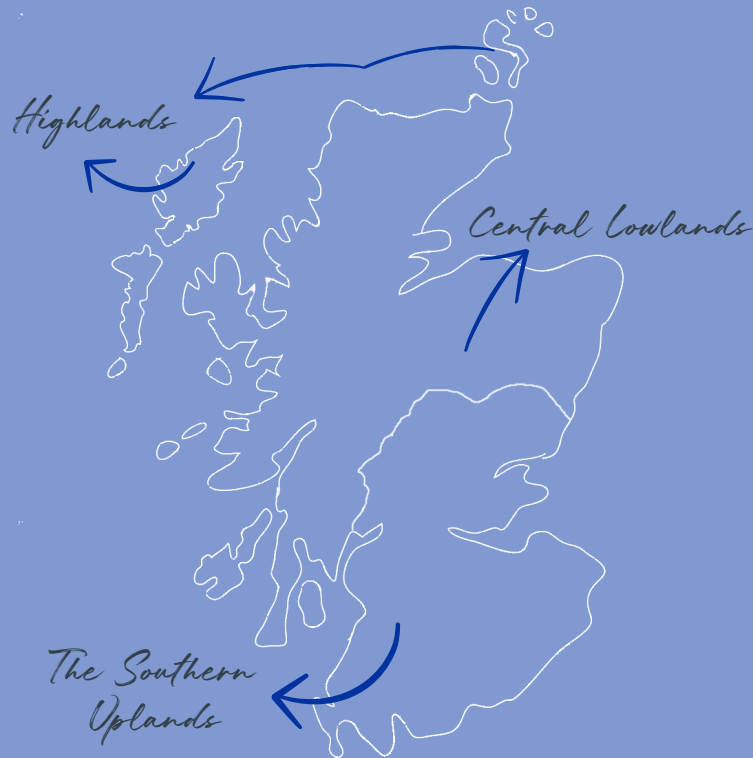
Scotland is the most northerly country of the 4 that make up the UK, containing nearly one-third of the UK's land area. At present, there are 11% (105) of all UK NHS hospitals located in Scotland. As opposed to NHS Trusts, Scotland has 14 regional health boards that are then subdivided into Health and Social Care Partnerships (HSCP), of which there are 32 in Scotland.

Famous for its unanswered legend of the Loch Ness Monster, Scottish Highlands, bagpipes, nature days out and haggis, Scotland has plenty to offer for the whole family. For those who are more adventurous, Ben Nevis is a popular destination for tourists, with around 150,000 people attempting to reach the 1,345m summit every year!

Made up of the capital city Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Aberdeen, Inverness, Perth, Stirling and Dunfermline, Scotland's cities are renowned for their vibrant culture, football, manufacturing and much more.

Within these vastly popular cities, the population of 5.4 million Scots each have their own beliefs and practice different religions, with the most popular being Christianity. Other religions such as Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism are also popular religions for many living in Scotland.

## THE 3 OFFICIAL REGIONS OF SCOTLAND



## FUN FACT

## DID YOU KNOW THESE POPULAR FUN FACTS ABOUT SCOTLAND?

- 1 Home to the tallest waterfall in Britain - Eas a' Chual Aluinn. It's 658 feet, which is 3 times the height of Niagara Falls
- 2 The official animal of Scotland is the Unicorn
- 3 Scotland has approximately 790 offshore islands
- 4 There are over 600 square miles of freshwater lakes
- 5 Glasgow is the largest city in Scotland
- 6 Glasgow is the largest city in Scotland
- 7 Edinburgh hosts the world's biggest arts festival
- 8 Golf originated from Scotland in the Middle Ages
- 9 Glasgow is the largest city in Scotland
- 10 Scotland is home to the oldest tree in Europe



# Cost of living in Scotland

Similarly to Wales, Scotland is also a significantly cheaper place to live with an average of 1.26 times less expensive than the UK's average. As well as being rated the finest place to live, Scotland also saw 47,500 people relocate here over the past few years due to their lower cost of living.

## HOUSE PRICE INFLATION OVER THE LAST 5 YEARS

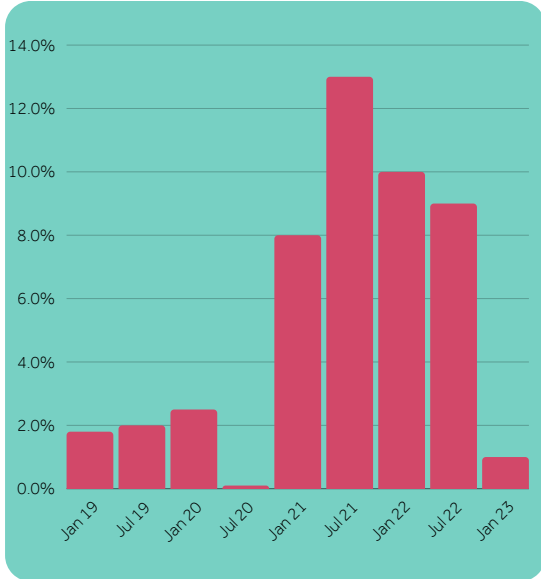


Figure I

Prior to the beginning of the pandemic in 2020, house prices remained consistent, with only a slight increase every year. Since the second lockdown in 2021 when the cost of living crisis first began, house prices saw a heightened spike in affordability throughout Scotland. However, since January 2023, those prices have drastically decreased again, reaching lower than even some of the house prices in 2019.

As of January 2023, Edinburgh appeared to be the most expensive area to purchase a property in, where the average house cost £322,000 in comparison to the cheapest area which was Inverclyde, where the average house cost £124,000.

|                   | Jan 23   | Jan 22   |                     | Jan 23   | Jan 22   |
|-------------------|----------|----------|---------------------|----------|----------|
| <b>Edinburgh:</b> | £322,220 | £311,160 | <b>Inverness:</b>   | £230,000 | £224,995 |
| <b>Glasgow:</b>   | £172,494 | £166,738 | <b>Perth:</b>       | £241,345 | £227,549 |
| <b>Dundee:</b>    | £141,823 | £139,858 | <b>Stirling:</b>    | £246,050 | £235,946 |
| <b>Aberdeen:</b>  | £200,806 | £196,676 | <b>Dunfermline:</b> | £290,995 | £270,000 |

## CONSUMER PRICE INFLATION OVER THE LAST 6 YEARS

Amongst the increase in housing prices, consumer prices of energy bills, petrol, food and general living reached a 9.1% increase in May 2022, as opposed to 2021.

Due to these increases in everyday prices, a survey was conducted in Scotland, targeting a demographic of residents 18 or older between November 2022 and March 2023 to see what impacts the cost of living crisis has had on peoples spending habits.

As shown in Figure J, annual consumer price inflation rates are now on a downward trend and have been since the end of 2022 in most cases. However, the graph also states there is still a 21% increase on the overall price index level than the start of 2021, highlighting the drastic increase that consumers have faced since the cost of living crisis.

- Food Inflation
- Petrol Inflation
- Electricity Inflation
- Gas Inflation
- Diesel Inflation

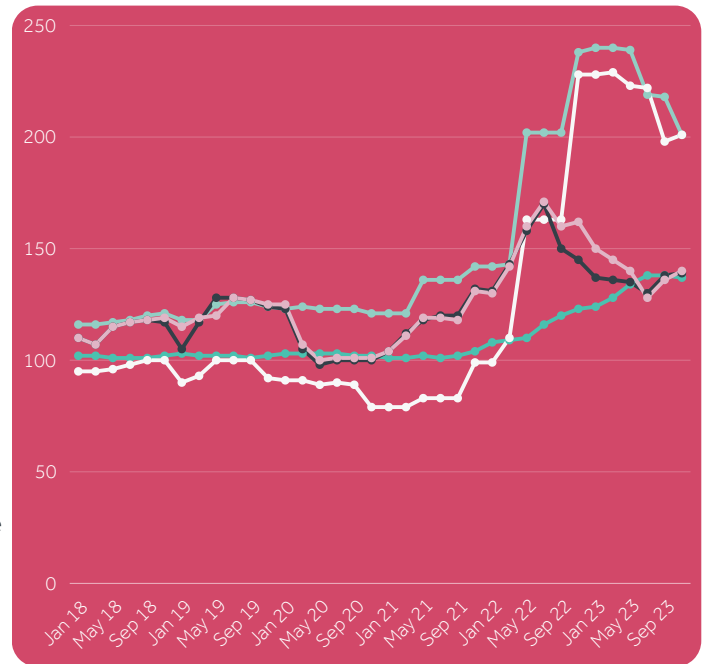


Figure J



# Get to know *Northern Ireland*

Northern Ireland is the smallest country of the UK, with a population of only 1.9 million. Due to this country being significantly smaller in size than the other 3 countries in the UK, Northern Ireland is home to around 4% of all hospitals, with only 37 in the entire country. Similarly to Scotland, there are 6 Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts in Northern Ireland, with 5 of these providing health and social care services across the country.

When visiting Northern Ireland, there are plenty of sites that attract over 800,000 people each year to this welcoming country. Home to the iconic, natural World Heritage Site known as Giants Causeway, to their magnificent sandy beaches, food and culture, it's no surprise their cities and towns are filled with thriving with locals and tourists.

Alongside the well-known counties Derry/Londonderry, Antrim, Tyrone, Fermanagh, Armagh and Down, the capital city Belfast is famous for a range of attractions, such as the historical Titanic Belfast museum.

Throughout these counties and cities, around 84% of the Northern Ireland population consider themselves to belong to a Christian denomination, which is considerably higher than the 56% of Brits who follow the same religion. People here also attend church more frequently than those in the UK.

## THE 6 OFFICIAL COUNTIES OF NORTHERN IRELAND



## **FUN FACT**

### DID YOU KNOW THESE POPULAR FUN FACTS ABOUT NORTHERN IRELAND?

- 1 The symbol of Belfast is a Seahorse
- 2 Typically, the sunniest month is May
- 3 Northern Ireland has coasts on the Irish Sea and the Atlantic Ocean
- 4 Gaelic Football and Hurling are the national games and have been played for over 3000 years
- 5 Although English is the most spoken language, Chinese is the most spoken minority language
- 6 Northern Ireland is home to more Game of Thrones locations than anywhere else
- 7 The Titanic was built in Belfast
- 8 The Obel Tower in Belfast is the tallest building in the country
- 9 Slieve Donard is the highest mountain in Northern Ireland
- 10 The longest river is the River Bann at 80 miles long



*Northern  
Ireland*



# Cost of living in Northern Ireland

Out of all the 4 countries that make up the UK, Northern Ireland is the most affordable place to live, based off housing and average income figures. Even the capital city Belfast has a 37% lower cost of living lifestyle in comparison to London!

## HOUSE PRICE INFLATION OVER THE LAST 9 YEARS

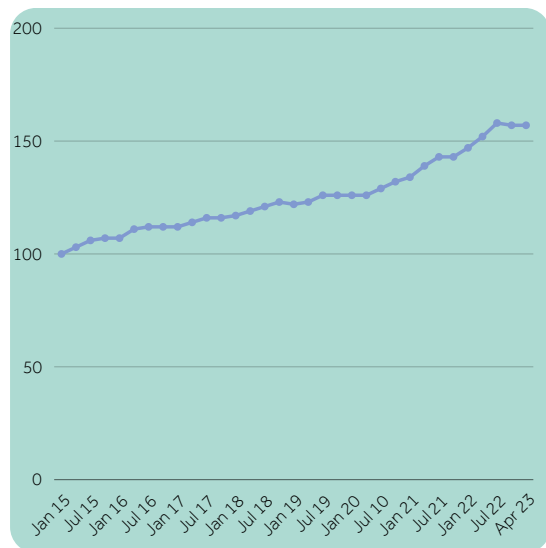


Figure K

The average house price in Northern Ireland has increased at a slight and consistent pace since 2015, with small fluctuations over the years.

From June 2020 however, you can see a steeper increase in prices due to the pandemic and cost of living crisis. Although these changes are noticeable, these are still however not as extreme and harsh in comparison to the other countries in the UK. As expected in most countries, the latest figure shown in January 2023 of 157.95, shows a growth of nearly 52% since the housing prices recorded in early 2015, which shows a steady and normal growth pattern due to inflation over the years.

|         | Jan 23   | Jan 20   |
|---------|----------|----------|
| Armagh: | £152,388 | £125,312 |
| Antrim: | £178,274 | £146,578 |
| Derry:  | £160,175 | £127,528 |

|            | Jan 23   | Jan 20   |
|------------|----------|----------|
| Down:      | £186,646 | £145,511 |
| Fermanagh: | £160,473 | £128,326 |
| Tyrone:    | £182,361 | £114,098 |

## CONSUMER PRICE INFLATION OVER THE LAST 2 YEARS

The consumer price index for Northern Ireland in comparison to the rest of the UK between November and December 2022 shows how each division has changed during that month.

The most drastic change between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK comes from the price differences of clothing, footwear and transport in both regions.

As well as these contributing factors, on average, household utility bills were also affected in the height of the cost of living crisis.

| Utility     | 2021     | 2023     |
|-------------|----------|----------|
| Gas         | £968 p/a | £847 p/a |
| Electricity | £944 p/a | £927 p/a |
| Water       | £421 p/a | £570 p/a |

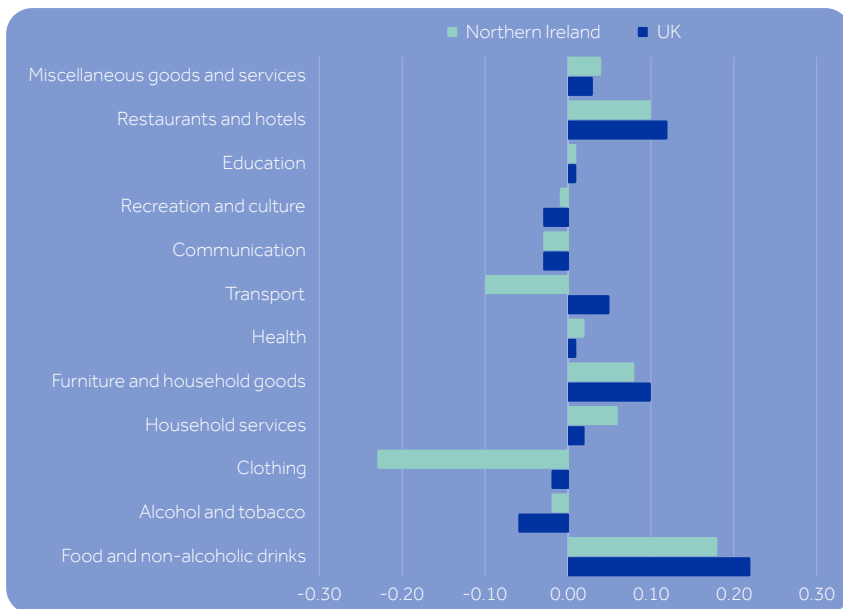


Figure L

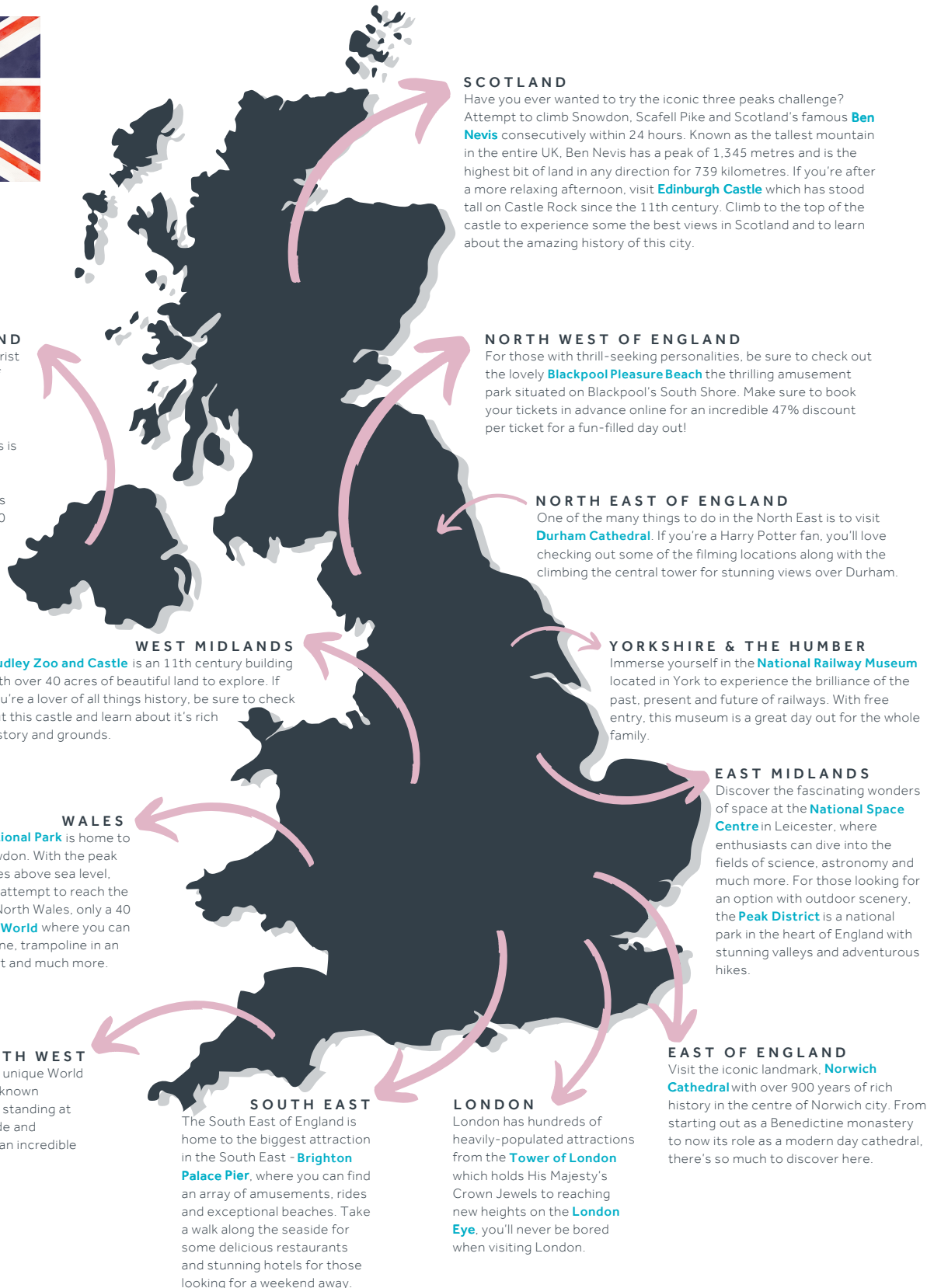
The average household bills vary depending on many external factors such as the type of house, size, amount of family members, which county you live in and much more.



# Things to do in the United Kingdom

When considering relocating to a different part of the UK, it's important to know your surroundings and know what your options are for your days off work.

Throughout the UK, there are over 6,500 popular visitor attractions across the 4 countries. From picturesque hiking trails to stunning beaches, museums and World Heritage Sites, there really is something for everyone to enjoy. Here, we've listed just a few of these well-known sights that are loved by thousands across the UK.



## NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland has many major tourist attractions that attract thousands of tourists. **The Marble Arch Caves** in Fermanagh are a series of limestone caves formed over 340 million years ago. Another similar attraction to this is **Giant's Causeway** nature reserve located in Antrim. As a result of an ancient volcanic eruption, The Giant's Causeway is an area of around 40,000 basalt columns along the sea coast.

## SCOTLAND

Have you ever wanted to try the iconic three peaks challenge? Attempt to climb Snowdon, Scafell Pike and Scotland's famous **Ben Nevis** consecutively within 24 hours. Known as the tallest mountain in the entire UK, Ben Nevis has a peak of 1,345 metres and is the highest bit of land in any direction for 739 kilometres. If you're after a more relaxing afternoon, visit **Edinburgh Castle** which has stood tall on Castle Rock since the 11th century. Climb to the top of the castle to experience some of the best views in Scotland and to learn about the amazing history of this city.

## NORTH WEST OF ENGLAND

For those with thrill-seeking personalities, be sure to check out the lovely **Blackpool Pleasure Beach** the thrilling amusement park situated on Blackpool's South Shore. Make sure to book your tickets in advance online for an incredible 47% discount per ticket for a fun-filled day out!

## NORTH EAST OF ENGLAND

One of the many things to do in the North East is to visit **Durham Cathedral**. If you're a Harry Potter fan, you'll love checking out some of the filming locations along with the climbing the central tower for stunning views over Durham.

## WEST MIDLANDS

**Dudley Zoo and Castle** is an 11th century building with over 40 acres of beautiful land to explore. If you're a lover of all things history, be sure to check out this castle and learn about its rich history and grounds.

## YORKSHIRE & THE HUMBER

Immerse yourself in the **National Railway Museum** located in York to experience the brilliance of the past, present and future of railways. With free entry, this museum is a great day out for the whole family.

## WALES

Fancy a scenic hike? **Snowdonia National Park** is home to the highest mountain in Wales, Snowdon. With the peak standing at a staggering 1,085 metres above sea level, it's no surprise over 600,000 people attempt to reach the summit every year. Whilst you're in North Wales, only a 40 minute drive away is the thrilling **Zip World** where you can speed down the world's fastest zip line, trampoline in an underground cave, drive a quarry kart and much more.

## EAST MIDLANDS

Discover the fascinating wonders of space at the **National Space Centre** in Leicester, where enthusiasts can dive into the fields of science, astronomy and much more. For those looking for an option with outdoor scenery, the **Peak District** is a national park in the heart of England with stunning valleys and adventurous hikes.

## SOUTH WEST

**Stonehenge**, located in Wiltshire, is a unique World Heritage Site that's the world's best-known ancient stone circle. With each stone standing at approximately 13 feet high, 7 feet wide and weighing around 25 tons, this truly is an incredible sight to visit.

## SOUTH EAST

The South East of England is home to the biggest attraction in the South East - **Brighton Palace Pier**, where you can find an array of amusements, rides and exceptional beaches. Take a walk along the seaside for some delicious restaurants and stunning hotels for those looking for a weekend away.

## LONDON

London has hundreds of heavily-populated attractions from the **Tower of London** which holds His Majesty's Crown Jewels to reaching new heights on the **London Eye**, you'll never be bored when visiting London.

## EAST OF ENGLAND

Visit the iconic landmark, **Norwich Cathedral** with over 900 years of rich history in the centre of Norwich city. From starting out as a Benedictine monastery to now its role as a modern day cathedral, there's so much to discover here.

# UK hospitals highlights

Throughout the entire UK, there are around 1148 hospitals; 704 of these are in England, 105 in Scotland, 84 in Wales and 37 in Northern Ireland. Here we discuss interesting facts which highlight what their hospitals are known for, and ground-breaking revelations and milestone that have occurred.

Here, we've accumulated just a few fun facts and highlights from each regions hospitals to showcase some of their popular facts so you're equipped with some brief information before potentially relocating to that location. This information could also help you select where to relocate to.

## NORTH EAST OF ENGLAND

This region is home to the second-largest provider of specialised health services in the country. As well as this, one of the counties in the North East was ranked the best healthcare region in the UK with a health index score of 73.7.

## NORTH WEST OF ENGLAND

The hospitals here serve over 1.4 million people and high specialist services for 2 million. It's also home to 1 of only 3 trusts in the UK that offers high secure mental health facilities. The North West also saw the first ever NHS hospital which opened in 1948. Due to this, the NHS hospitals in the UK continued to grow, however the North West is proud to still have the biggest hospital in the entire UK, with over 1,700 beds available.

## YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER

Yorkshire's range of health and social care services are delivered to 765,000 people of all demographics across 4,700 square kilometres every year. Yorkshire and the Humber is also home to one of the largest and busiest acute hospital trusts in the UK.

## EAST MIDLANDS

The East Midlands is fortunate enough to have nationally and internationally renowned specialist cardio respiratory, ECMO, cancer and renal services which reach up to 3 million patients across the country. On top of this, around 1,000 clinical trials take place every year at some hospitals in the East Midlands.

## WEST MIDLANDS

This region has 46 NHS organisations: 19 hospital trusts, 6 mental health trusts, 17 primary care, 3 community provider trusts and 1 ambulance services trust. These hospitals in the West Midlands have dedicated millions to advanced medical technology every year.

## EAST OF ENGLAND

There are 27 trusts within the East of England and 11 upper tier local authorities, 6 of which are unitary authorities. Within these are 6 Health and Wellbeing Boards. This region also won 'The Excellence in Urgent and Emergency Care Award' along with many others in 2023.

## LONDON

There are a total of 28 private hospitals in central London and 46 outside this area. The first ever hospital in the UK however, was located in London in 1123 and was one of the first in Europe. The UK's first bone marrow transplant which helped established the world's first voluntary blood donor service also took place in London.

## SOUTH EAST

This region has the largest amount of NHS hospitals in the UK, at a staggering 137. NHS England South East are also responsible for commissioning services across; screening and immunisation programmes, specialised services, health services for those in the armed forces and children, young people and adults in secure and detained services.

## SOUTH WEST

Florence Nightingale had a lifelong history with one of the hospitals in this region and they were awarded a commemorative badge in 2020 on her bicentenary.

## SCOTLAND

The first robotic-assisted surgery was carried out in a hospital in Scotland in 2021. With around 160,000 staff across 14 regional NHS Boards, 7 Special NHS Boards and 1 public health body, Scotland also has the lowest level of A&E attendance in the entire UK.

## WALES

Public Health Wales was established back in 2009 and is one of the 11 organisations that make up NHS Wales. Another fun fact about NHS Wales is their prescriptions for medicine are free for everyone.

## NORTHERN IRELAND

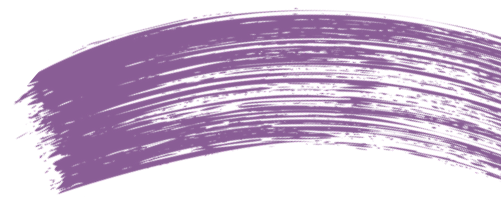
In Northern Ireland, approximately 66,000 people are employed across local health and social organisations, 80% of these being women. Their health service also launched major new electronics patient record called encompass in November 2023.

## THE NHS

Of course, the biggest highlight of healthcare in the UK, is the NHS which provides free healthcare services throughout the entire UK for all UK residents. *Do you know about the history of the NHS?* The service was established in 1948 and now, more people work for the NHS than any other organisation in the entire country.

People who are NHS workers may have jobs in either clinical or non-clinical roles. Clinical roles include nursing, medicine, surgery, psychiatry, midwifery and a range of allied health professions, such as physiotherapy. Non-clinical positions in the NHS include receptionists, IT specialists, engineers, accountants, caterers, porters and many more.

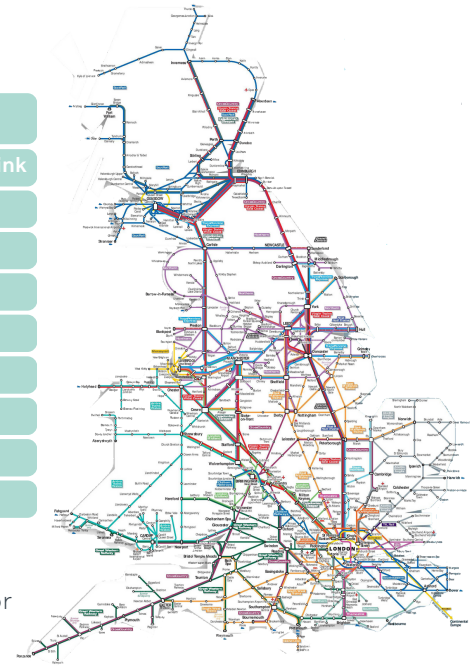
# Transport links



No matter where you live in the UK, there are many ways to travel to and from different counties, countries and towns. Whether your preferred method of transport is via rail, road or air, here are some key facts and information on how you can get to other surrounding locations with ease.

## RAIL

| Route                | Fastest Journey | Train Operator                              |
|----------------------|-----------------|---|
| London - Brighton    | 52 mins         | Great Northern, Gatwick Express, Thameslink |
| London - Bournemouth | 1hr 43mins      | South Western Railway                       |
| London - Edinburgh   | 4hr 16mins      | Avanti West Coast, LNER, LUMO               |
| London - Manchester  | 2hr 3mins       | Avanti West Coast                           |
| Nottingham - London  | 1hr 34mins      | East Midlands Railway                       |
| Newcastle - London   | 2hr 35mins      | LNER  |
| Glasgow - London     | 4hr 28mins      | Avanti West Coast, LNER                     |
| London - Birmingham  | 1hr 20mins      | Avanti West Coast, Chiltern Railways        |
| London to Liverpool  | 2hr 21min       | Avanti West Coast                           |



Here are just a few of the most popular train routes in the UK, accompanied by The National Rail map which shows all the Train Operating Companies (TOCs) and the major train lines that run throughout the UK.

## ROAD

One of the most common methods of transport is travelling on a road via, car or motorbike. There are around 50 motorways in the whole UK, however here are just a few of the most commonly used ones and the distance they span.

### England

- M1:** London to Leeds – 193 miles
- M4:** London to Bristol – 191.9 miles
- M5:** Great Barr to Exminster – 162.9 miles
- M6:** Cathorpe to Gretna – 232.2 miles
- M11:** London to Cambridge – 55 miles
- M23:** Hooley in Surrey to Crawley – 15.9 miles
- M25:** Dartford around London to Thurrock – 117 miles
- M69:** Coventry to Leicester - 15.7 miles
- M32:** M4 near Winterbourne to Bristol - 4.6 miles
- M60:** Circling Greater Manchester - 35 miles
- M62:** Liverpool to Hull - 107 miles

### Scotland

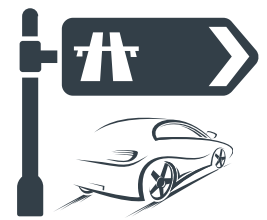
- M8:** Edinburgh to A8 at Langbank - 60.3 miles
- M74:** Glasgow to A74 at Abington - 40 miles
- M90:** Inverkeithing to Perth - 30 miles

### Northern Ireland

- M1:** Belfast to Dungannon - 38 miles
- M2:** Belfast to Antrim; Ballymena Bypass - 22 miles
- M3:** Connects the M2 and A2 Sydenham Bypass - 0.8 miles

### Wales

- M4:** Chiswick to Pont Abraham in Carmarthenshire - 189 miles



## AIR

The UK has several major airports, many in London and the South East, including Heathrow which is one of the busiest airports in the world and sees around 650 flights arrive every day. Major regional airports in the UK include Manchester, Bristol, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Newcastle and Belfast.

### ENGLAND & WALES

- London Heathrow
- London Gatwick
- Manchester
- London Stanstead
- London Luton
- Birmingham
- Bristol
- Liverpool John Lennon
- Newcastle
- East Midlands International
- London City
- Leeds Bradford International
- Southampton
- Exeter International
- Doncaster Sheffield
- St. Mary's Isles of Scilly
- London Southend
- Norwich International
- Durham Tees Valley
- Humberside
- Newquay
- Blackpool
- Bournemouth
- Cardiff

### SCOTLAND

- Aberdeen
- Edinburgh
- Glasgow Prestwick
- Scatsta
- Sumburgh
- Kirkwall
- Glasgow International
- Inverness
- Stornoway
- St Mary's

### NORTHERN IRELAND

- Belfast International
- George Best Belfast City
- City of Derry

# Working as a locum in the UK

When choosing your career path as a locum healthcare professional, it's important to check out the range of benefits of what working as a locum in the UK can offer. Working as a locum through Athona means you have access to an assortment of benefits and support, just like your permanent counterparts.

Our mission is to ensure we are delivering the right people to the right jobs, therefore it's vital to us we remain conscious to not only listen to your job role requirements, but also provide you access to benefits that are important to you. Take a look at this snippet of what working as a locum in the UK can offer you as a healthcare professional.

## WHAT IS A LOCUM?

A locum is a healthcare professional who typically works on a temporary basis, filling gaps and vacancies within hospitals. A locum contract could range anything from a few hours covering someone else's shift to three months or a year in the same post. When working as a locum through Athona, you also have different payment options such as PAYE, Umbrella or through a Limited Company, giving you the option to be paid in a way that suits you best.

## BENEFITS OF WORKING AS A LOCUM IN THE UK



We're CPD accredited and run multiple CPD accredited courses.



Offering support with training and maintaining full compliance.



Discounted appraisals and support with your revalidation.



Athona offers exclusive partnership discounts to its candidates.



Refer your friends and colleagues to earn a cash bonus.



CPD accredited financial webinars with industry experts.



Access to a specialist recruiter on a 1-1 basis.



Opportunity to join our established Advisory Board group.



Earn a variety of experience through flexible working in different positions.

## WHAT DO I NEED TO WORK AS A LOCUM IN THE UK?

To ensure you are competent to work, it's vital you work with our dedicated compliance team to send us all of your relevant documents, to prove you are meeting mandatory guidelines and regulations. Prior to being placed into a role, you must go through the necessary compliance screening and this is where we step in. Our compliance team will support and advise you on how to plan your compulsory documentation, ahead of starting your new role.

Below, is a list of what you'll need to become compliant with Athona.

- ✓ CV & Referee Details
- ✓ Passport/Visa/EU Settlement (if applicable) & Driving License
- ✓ Proof of address X2 (utility, bank statement within the last 3 months)
- ✓ Degree/Qualification
- ✓ Original GMC/NMC/HCPC Confirmation
- ✓ GMC/NMC/HCPC Annual Confirmation
- ✓ DBS registered on the update service
- ✓ Life support training (BLS, ILS, ALS)
- ✓ Mandatory Training
- ✓ Annual Appraisal
- ✓ Overseas police check (if you've lived/worked out of the UK in the last 5 years)
- ✓ Professional Indemnity Certificate (if you hold additional cover)
- ✓ Proof of immunity to:
  - ✓ Hep B showing titre levels of >100
  - ✓ Hep C, HIV & Hep B Surface Antigen (if working in exposed role)
  - ✓ Measles and Rubella (proof of 2 MMR vaccinations)
  - ✓ TB-BCG scar sighting is acceptable
  - ✓ Varicella (proof of 2 vaccinations)



# Information about trusts in the UK

As of the latest recorded data in 2023, there were 229 total NHS trusts, 14 Regional NHS Health Boards and 6 Health and Social Care trusts in Northern Ireland.

An NHS trust is an organised unit within NHS England and Wales, usually serving a specific location or specialised function. In Scotland and Northern Ireland however, they have Health Boards and Health and Social Care trusts which is their equivalent to NHS trusts.



## NORTH EAST OF ENGLAND

A very popular NHS trust in the North East serves one of the largest areas compared to other trusts in England, giving care to more than 500,000 people in the surrounding areas. It's one of the few foundation trusts in England to have been rated 'outstanding' twice by the Care Quality Commission and is one of the best performing trusts in the country.



## YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER

This NHS foundation trust is a proud partner with the Hull York Medical School which allows future doctors and students to work in a clinical placement and receive the relevant training in a working environment.



## WEST MIDLANDS

With 46 NHS organisations running throughout the West Midlands, one of the well-known trusts has a clear vision to 'build healthier lives' and be guided by 3 values: Kindness, Connected and Bold. This trust also received authorisation to become one of the first NHS foundation trusts in England on 1st July 2004.



## SOUTH WEST

NHS trusts in the South West are renowned for their research, innovation and links to popular universities. One of these trusts launched a new sustainable process, including a Central Destruction Unity and sustainability application for staff in March 2023.



## NORTH WEST

The North West is home to one of the largest acute NHS trusts in the whole of the UK, operating 10 hospitals throughout a popular county with over 28,400 employees and an income of around £2.2 billion.



## SCOTLAND

There are 14 Regional Health Boards in Scotland along with 8 special NHS Boards that support the Regional Boards by providing a specialist and national service. One of these Regional Health Boards has 35 hospitals of different types and serves a population of around 1.3 million people.



## LONDON

Being the busiest region in England, means their hospitals are always bursting with patients. Despite the challenges they may face with patient admissions, one trust was rated the 'top trust to work at in England' in a 2022 survey, with a 75% recommendation score. This same trust also released a multi award winning Arts and Heritage programme in 2005 which improves patient and staff outcomes through the arts.



## EAST MIDLANDS

One of the NHS foundation trusts in the East Midlands region specialises primarily in mental health services, as well as supporting people with learning difficulties and autism. They operate from around 50 sites for a population of around 768,400.



## EAST OF ENGLAND

The East of England is home to a foundation trust that's the leading heart and lung hospital in the UK and treats around 50,000 patients each year. This foundation trust also carried out the UK's first successful heart transplant in 1979 and the world's first liver transplant in 1986.



## SOUTH EAST

One of the partnership NHS foundation trusts in the South East is a specialist NHS organisation providing mental health, learning disability and neurodevelopmental services to people of all ages and demographics living in this region.



## WALES

Wales is made up of Health Boards and is one of the largest NHS organisations in Europe and spends around £1.4 billion each year on health and wellbeing services to over 472,400 people.



## NORTHERN IRELAND

The capital city Belfast is home to the largest integrated health and social care trust in the UK and has a workforce of over 20,000 people. In September 2023, the median waiting time for patients to be sent to triage from the A&E department was 12 minutes from the time of arrival for each patient.

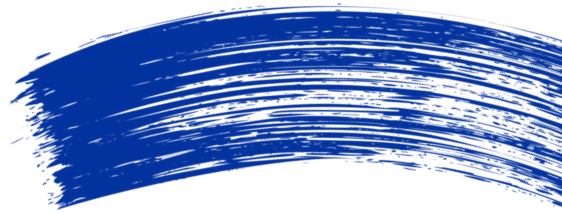
### Did you know?

The first ever NHS trust, along with 56 others, were established 33 years ago on 1st April 1991.

### Did you know?

Foundation trusts were introduced in 2002 by Health Secretary Alan Milburn.

# Meet the Athona Team's



## ACUTE



**Tanya Ironmonger**  
Sales Director - Acute



**Anton La Ronde**  
Business Manager -  
Surgery



**James Read**  
Business Manager -  
Medicine



**Luke Shotter**  
Senior Business  
Development Manager



**Alex Francklin**  
Senior Executive  
Recruitment  
Consultant - Medicine



**Daniel Elliott**  
Senior Executive  
Recruitment  
Consultant - Surgery



**David Clewley**  
Executive Recruitment  
Consultant - Radiology



**Charlie De'Ath**  
Senior Executive  
Recruitment Consultant  
- Medicine



**Josh Davies**  
Associate Consultant -  
Surgery



**Nathan Varma**  
Recruitment Consultant  
- Medicine

## NURSING



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Sales Director - Nursing



**Emily Bongiorno**  
Business Manager -  
Mental Health for South  
East & South West



**Amy Blunt**  
Senior Business  
Development  
Manager



**Janeth Soluta**  
General Nursing - Team  
Leader for London



**Paige Bearman**  
Mental Health - Executive  
Recruitment Consultant for  
East of England/London &  
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**Jay Wheatley**  
Mental Health -  
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Consultant for North  
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**Gemma Baxter**  
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**Amy King**  
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Executive Recruitment  
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**Nicola Pemberton**  
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**Amy Johnson**  
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Recruitment Consultant  
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**Lewis Miller**  
Recruitment Consultant  
for Talking Therapies



**Chris Wells**  
General Nursing -  
Associate Consultant for  
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**Laura Henry**  
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East



**Amy Hart**  
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West



**Nathan Weise**  
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**Kirstie Cutbill**  
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**Glen Smith**  
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**Lewis O'Hara**  
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**Amy Baily**  
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Consultant - West



**Matt O'Donnell**  
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Consultant - West



**Francesca Halls**  
Recruitment Consultant -  
East



**Ethan Whitcomb**  
Business Development  
Executive



**James Parmenter**  
Recruitment Consultant -  
Permanent UK