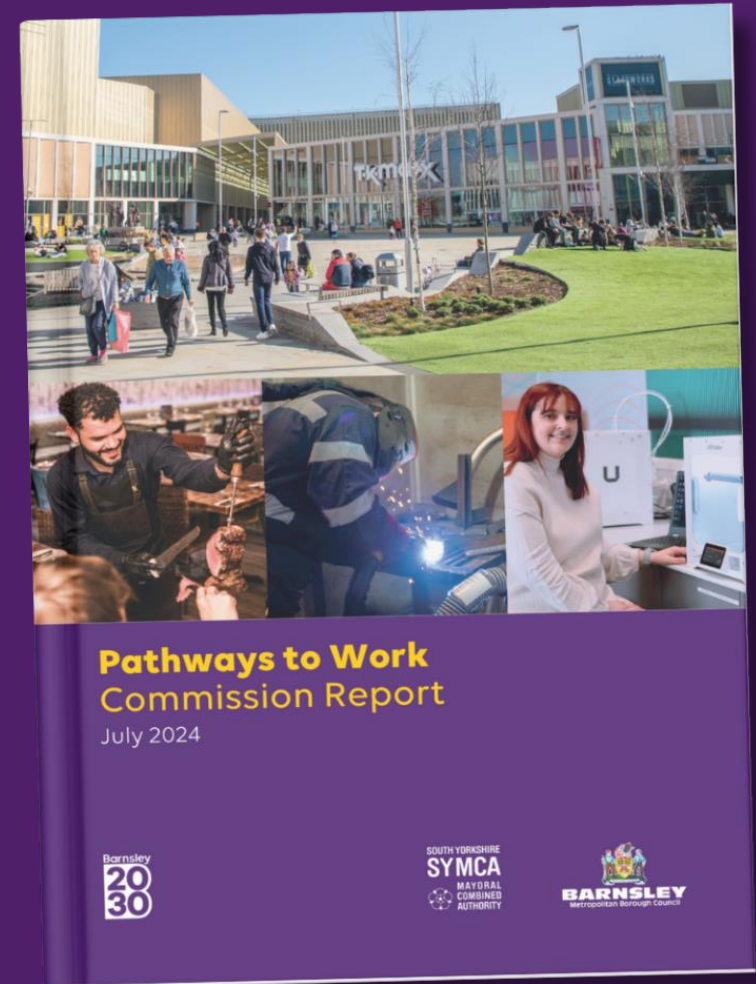


# Pathways to Work

Sarah Norman

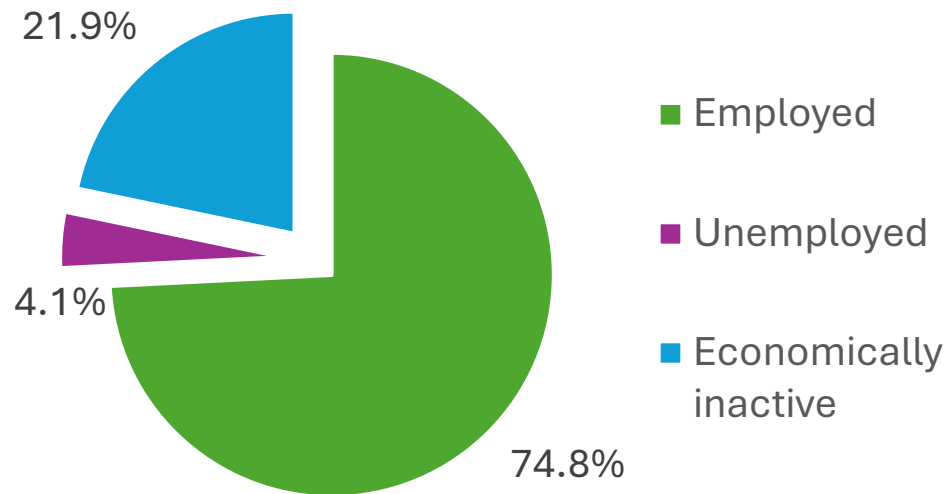
Chief Executive

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council



# The labour market challenge

National labour market,  
September 2024



- About 1 in 4 people in the UK aren't working.
- Of that group, only about 1 in 5 are officially **unemployed**.
- The rest are “**economically inactive**”, which means they're not actively job-seeking.

## In Barnsley:

- Employment is a bit lower (72.8%)
- Unemployment is low (2.8%)
- Economic inactivity is high (27.2%)

# The Commission

**How does Barnsley enable all of our working age population, particularly those currently outside the labour market, achieve pathways to employment?**

The Commission ran from July 2023 to July 2024.

It brought together a range of experts in their fields to generate valuable insights following reflection on the evidence available. Acting as an independent body, they shaped the final Commission recommendations to stakeholders and government.

**Our focus was on building an inclusive economy, championing the benefits of learning & work and giving all our residents a fairer chance at opportunities.**

The Commission was underpinned by innovation and evidence-based approaches.

Alan Milburn <b>(Chair)</b>	Chair of the Social Mobility Foundation, Chancellor of Lancaster University
Dan Jarvis MBE	Labour MP for Barnsley Central
Oliver Coppard	Mayor of South Yorkshire
Torsten Bell	Director of the Resolution Foundation
Ben Harrison	Director of the Work Foundation
Jennifer Dixon	CEO of the Health Foundation
Sue Pember	Director of Policy at External Relations at HOLEX
Dr Cath Sleeman	Head of Data Discovery at NESTA
Valerie Hannon	Co-founder of the Global Education Partnership
Alan Richardson	Chief Financial Officer at Evri
Salma Yasmeeen	CEO of Sheffield Health and Social Care Trust
Denise Hampson	CEO & Behavioural Designer at Desire Code

# What we found: understanding the cohorts

- Health is the key barrier for the majority
- Most economically inactive people face multiple, overlapping barriers
- There are often missed opportunities for early intervention
- Work exits were avoidable in half of cases
- Economic inactivity often compounds deprivation
- Attitudes to work can be ambivalent

# Who most needs help to work?

Based on an assessment of who is most likely to want to work and could benefit the most from interventions to enable them to do so, there are four key cohorts to prioritise:

1. those currently economically inactive due to ill-health or disability;
2. those currently economically inactive due to caring responsibilities;
3. young adults with low qualifications at risk of not entering the labour market;
4. young adults with poor health at risk of not entering the labour market.

To stem the rise in economic activity action is also needed to prevent early exits from the workforce.

We believe there are two cohorts who need particular focus from policymakers and practitioners:

1. Workers in their fifties
2. Workers managing health conditions

# South Yorkshire's Proof of Concept

The model will:

- 1. Sort the system:** building capacity through a system steward at the regional level and a system manager at the local level to fix the fragmentation issues.
- 2. Prepare the jobs:** innovating with businesses to build training and roles for people who've been out of work for some time.
- 3. Journey with people:** recruiting system navigators to journey with people one-to-one through their pathway to work, accessing the help they need and finding good employment.
- 4. Work upstream:** investing in prevention by getting partners on board with a youth guarantee and a good employer charter.
- 5. Invest in data:** Collecting, integrating and using data better across the system to monitor the quality of support and identify those who need help to work at the right time.

**SYMCA:**  
**System Steward**  
*...leading on governance and outcomes*

**In each LA:**  
**System Manager**  
*...leading on developing and aligning local support*

**For individuals:**  
**Personalised support**  
*...offering a co-developed pathway into work*

**For businesses:**  
**Employer activation**  
*...incentivising and trialling work placement schemes*