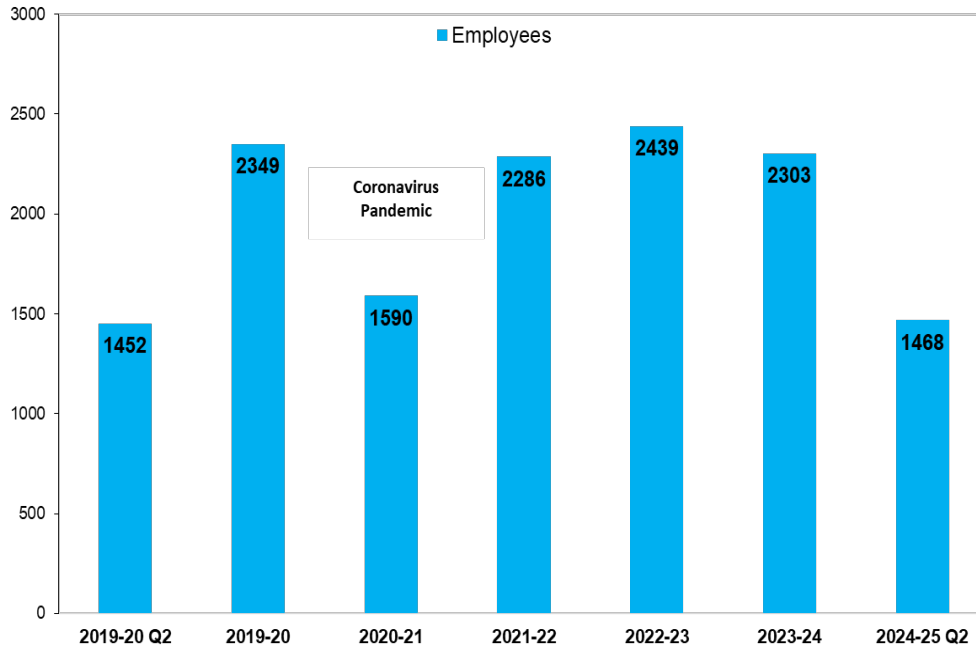


Sickness Data 2019 – 2024

Scrutiny Board December 2024

Total employees taking time off sick

Number of employees taking time off sick



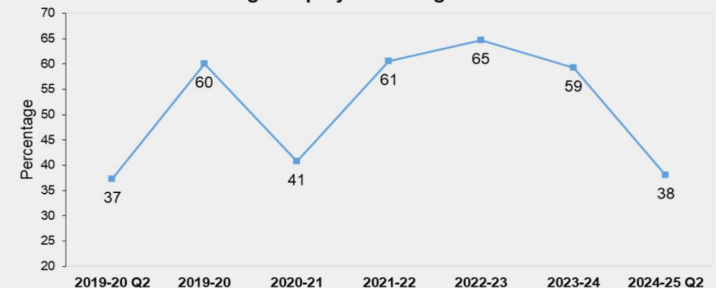
Sickness absence data is reported for each financial year.

The number of employees taking time off sick had risen post pandemic but has since reduced to just below the pre pandemic levels.

The percentage of employees taking time off sick in 2023-24 was 59% compared to 60% in 2019-20.

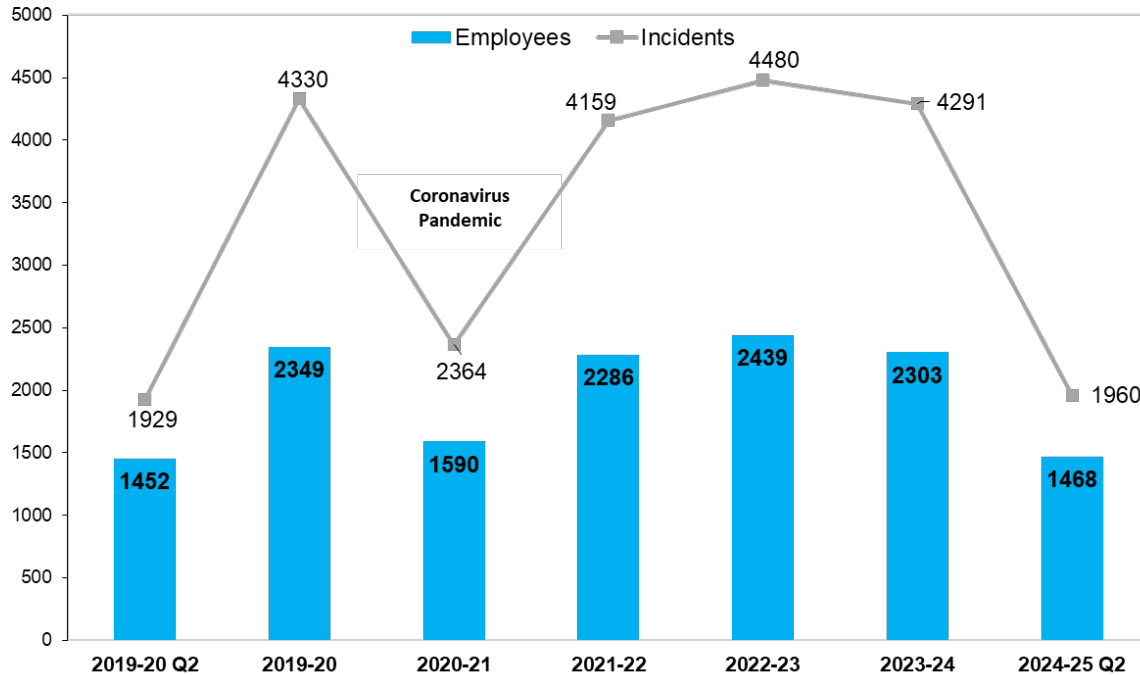
This is above the benchmark median of 51% for the Regional Authorities.

Percentage employees taking time of sick



Total employees/ incidents of Sickness

Number of employees taking time off sick/ incidents of sickness

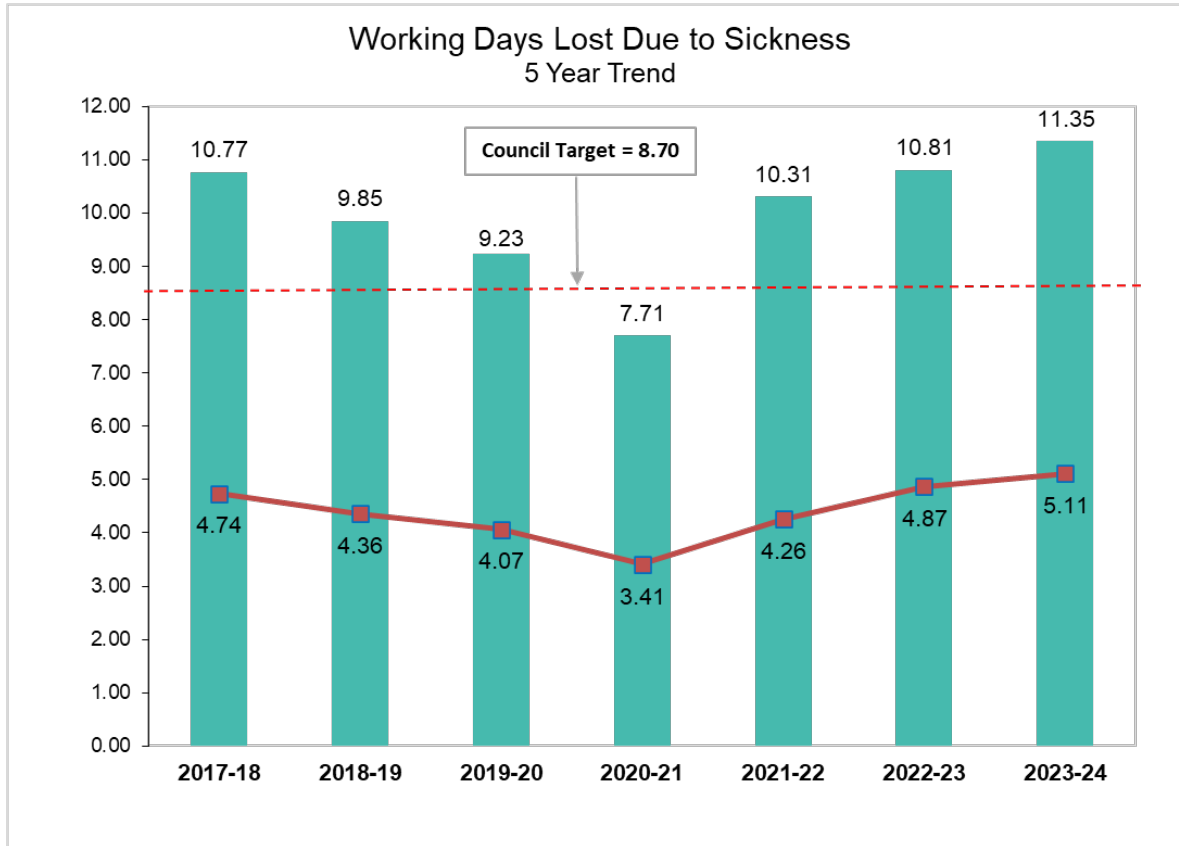


The overall number of incidents of sickness in the year 2019-20 was 4,330 and shows increases in the two consecutive years after the coronavirus pandemic.

There is a slight reduction in incidents 2023-24 compared to the previous year, which has brought the number of incidents below the number reported in 2019-20.

Q2 2024-25 data shows that there is a similar amount of sickness incidents to that recorded in Q2, 2019-20 pre pandemic period.

Average/ Percentage Working Days Lost Per employee

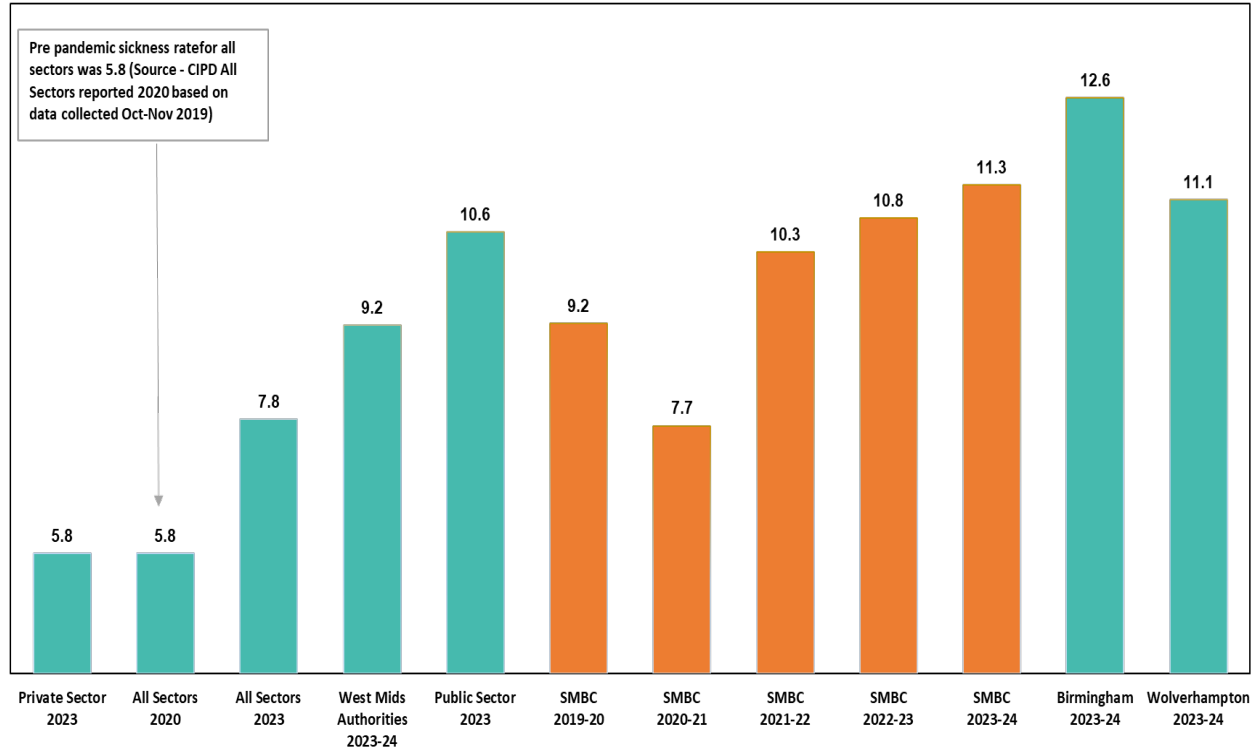


Average working days lost per employee have increased for the last three consecutive years since the coronavirus pandemic began in 2020-21.

Percentage working days lost due to sickness has also increased over the same period and is higher than the latest CIPD* average of 3.4% for All sectors.

Benchmark – average working days Lost per employee

Average Working Days Lost Per Employee



Latest available benchmark data is included from two separate benchmarking sources: CIPD and the WM Employers.

Sickness absence for Sandwell was better than the two regional neighbours for whom comparator data was available from the WM Employers (Infinistats) benchmarking database.

Data Source for Private Sector, Public Sector and All Sectors:
CIPD Health & Wellbeing At work Report 2023

Data Source for West Midlands Authorities, Birmingham and Wolverhampton:
West Midlands Employers (Infinistats database) - 2023-24 Median for District & MET Authorities

Benchmark - Working days lost per employee

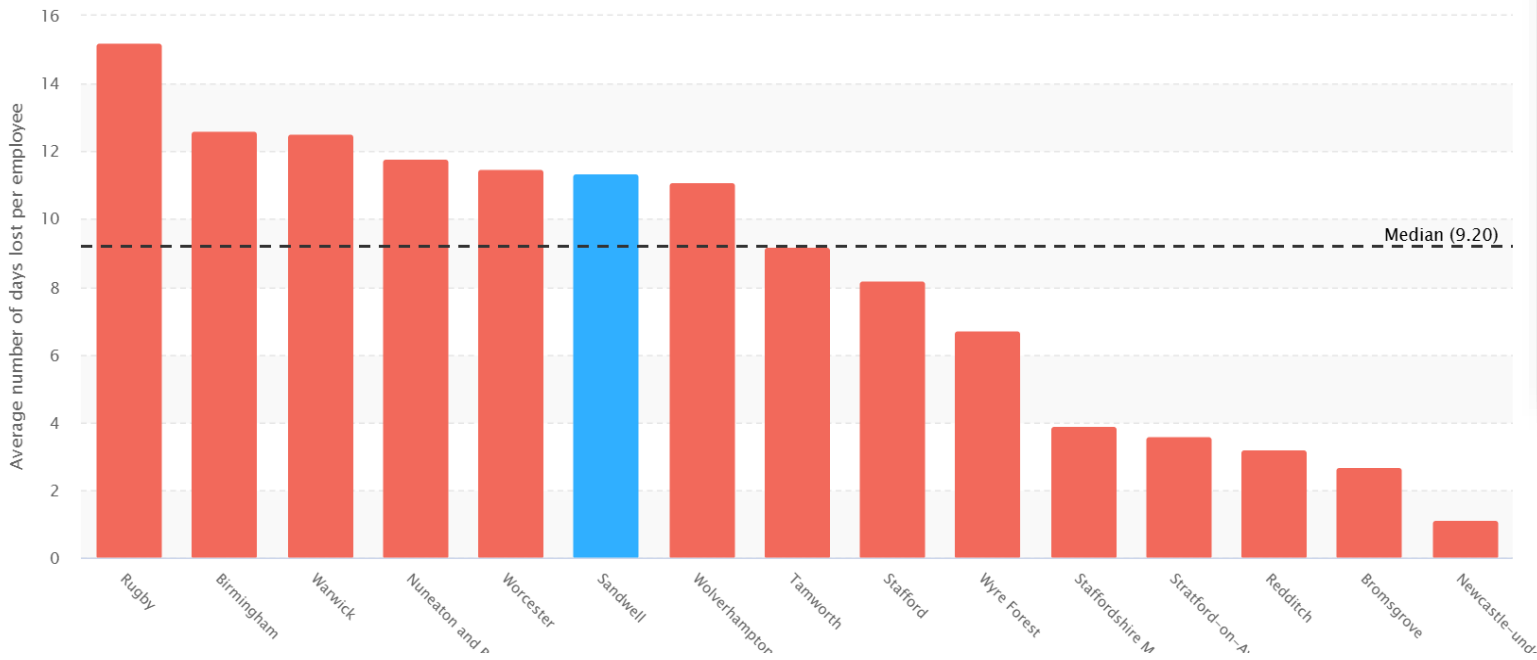
(West Midlands District and MET Authorities)



Sickness Absence: Average number of days lost per employee +
 12 months up to 31st March 2024

[Download/Export](#)

Sandwell's average number of days lost per employee of 11.35 falls in the third quartile of all the West Midlands councils, and for the METs. It has risen by 5.1% since the last survey in 2022/23, when it was 10.8. This compares with a median average change of -9.9% for the METs since 2022/23.



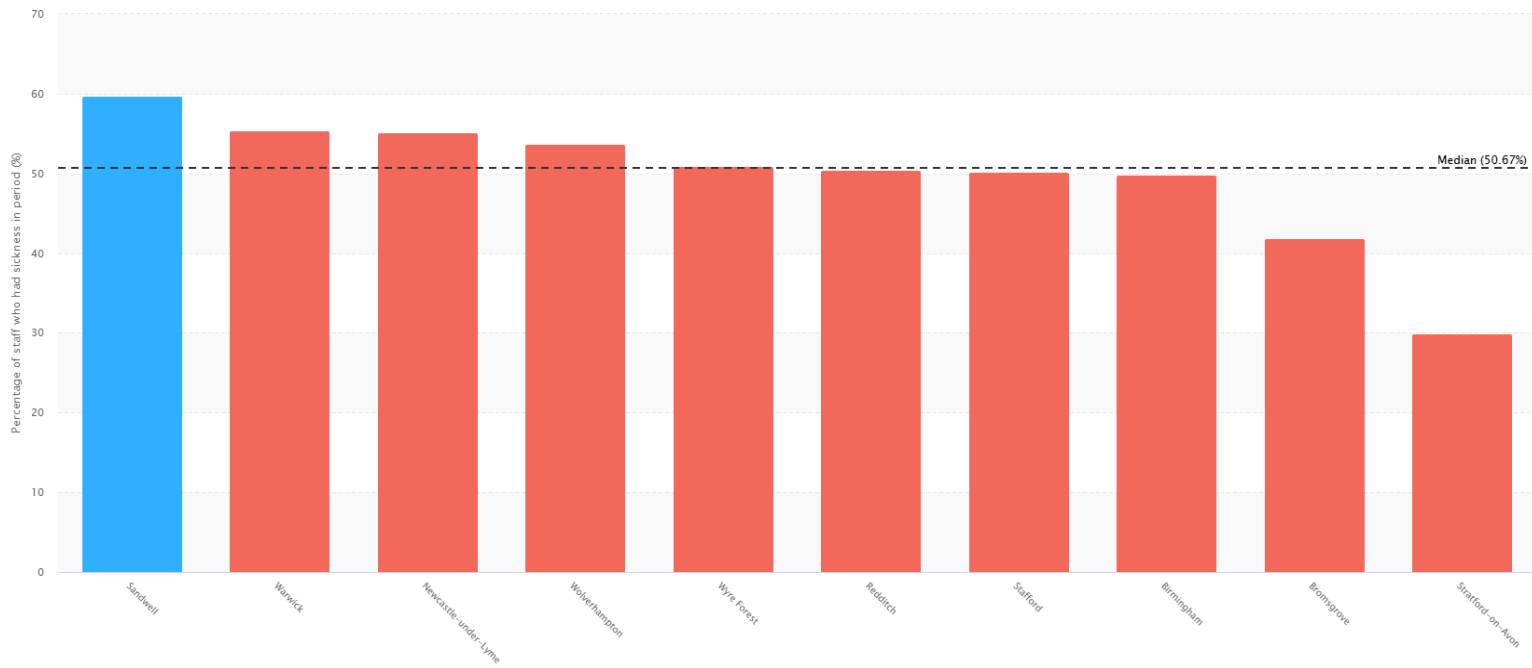
Rugby	15.2
Birmingham	12.6
Warwick	12.53
Nuneaton and Bedworth	11.8
Worcester	11.5
Sandwell	11.35
Wolverhampton	11.08
Tamworth	9.2
Stafford	8.2
Wyre Forest	6.7
Staffordshire Moorlands	3.9
Stratford-on-Avon	3.6
Redditch	3.2
Bromsgrove	2.7
Newcastle-under-Lyme	1.13

Benchmark Percentage of employees taking time off sick (West Midlands West Midlands District and Met Authorities)

Sickness Absence: Percentage of staff who had sickness in period +
12 months up to 31st March 2024 ▾

Download/Export

Sandwell's percentage of staff who recorded sickness during the period of 59.77% is the highest of all the West Midlands councils. It has fallen by 6.6% since the last survey in 2022/23, when it was 63.99%. This compares with a median average change of -17.3% for the METs since 2022/23.



Sandwell	59.77
Warwick	55.34
Newcastle-under-Lyme	55.11
Wolverhampton	53.66
Wyre Forest	50.94
Redditch	50.4
Stafford	50.24
Birmingham	49.82
Bromsgrove	41.93
Stratford-on-Avon	29.92

The percentage of employees taking time off sick for Sandwell was the highest for the regional METs and Districts who have shared their data via the Infinistats database for the year 2023-24

Benchmark - Size of Organisation and the effect on absence levels

Figure 26: The effect of workforce size on absence levels

No. of UK employees

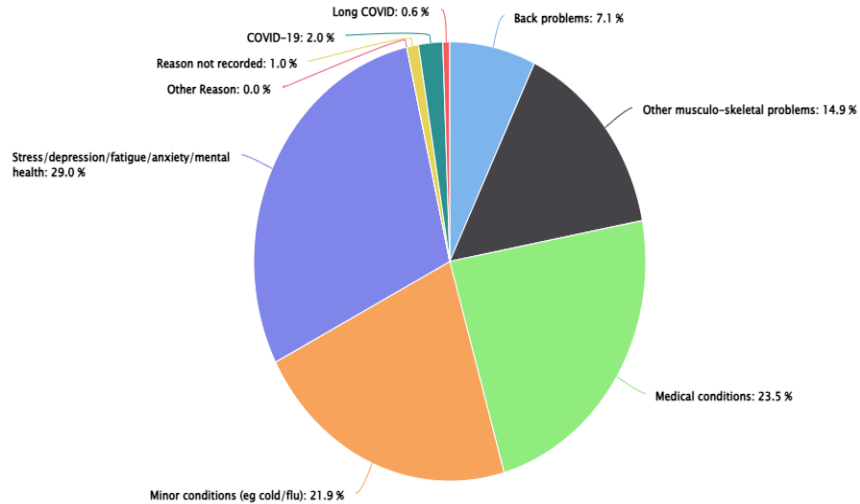


Benchmark - Days lost by reason (West Midlands West Midlands District and Met Authorities)

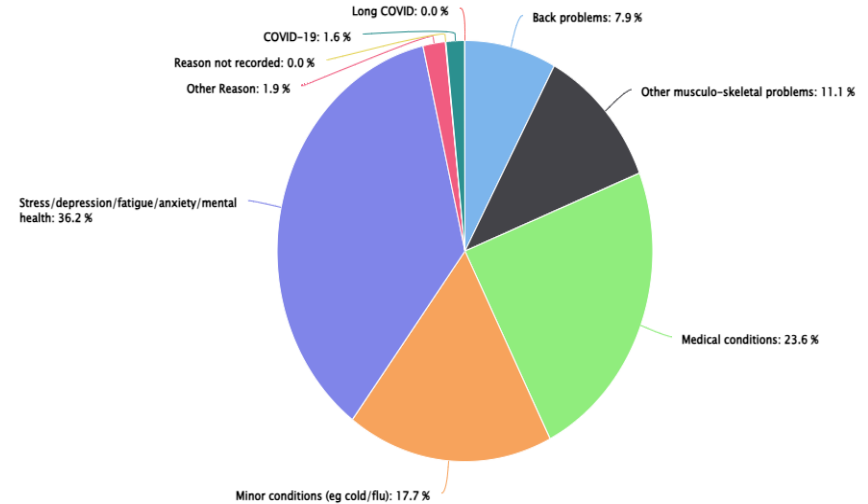


Days lost by reason
12 months up to 31st March 2024

Sandwell's figures



Median figures across selected respondents



The latest available benchmarking data for days lost by reason shows that sickness due to stress, depression and mental health is the leading cause of sickness for SMBC and the regional authorities.

Incidents of Sickness By Category

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Code	Incidents	Incidents	Incidents	Incidents	Incidents
F	1111	601	1460	1798	1275
G	347	213	286	241	292
H	369	211	304	307	331
J	81	41	68	43	82
K	961	335	590	710	753
L	387	338	346	407	491
M	250	158	408	204	224
	4330	2364	4159	4480	4291

Based on incidents of sickness the top 3 causes have generally remained as Infections (code F) Stomach, Liver and Digestion (code K) and muscular-skeletal (code H).

However, the working days lost by category stress, depression and mental health (code L); muscular skeletal problems (codes A+H) and Infections (code F) remain as the top 3 causes of sickness.

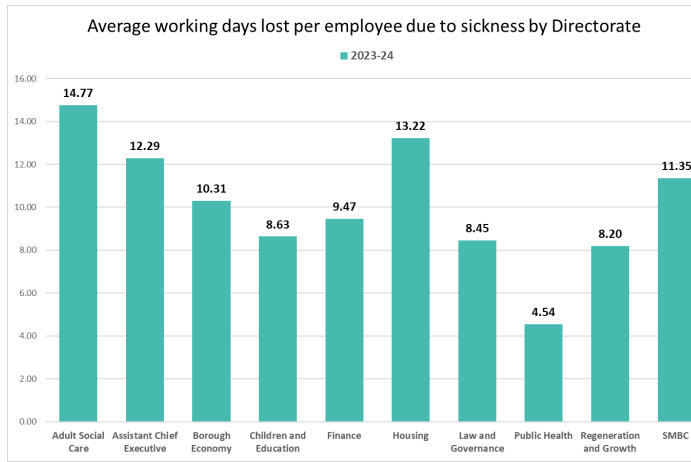
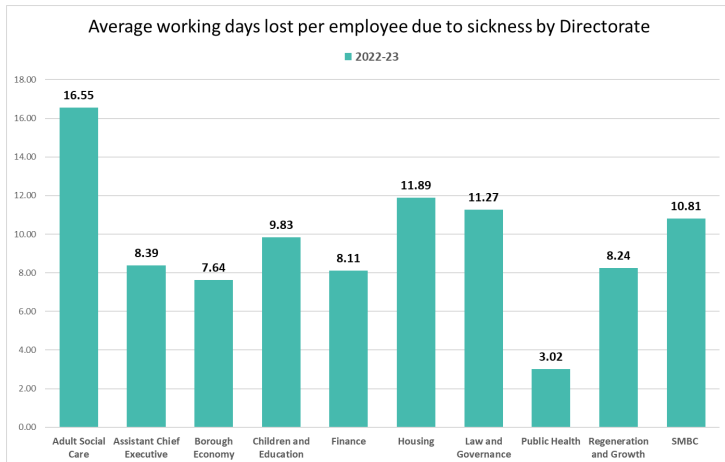
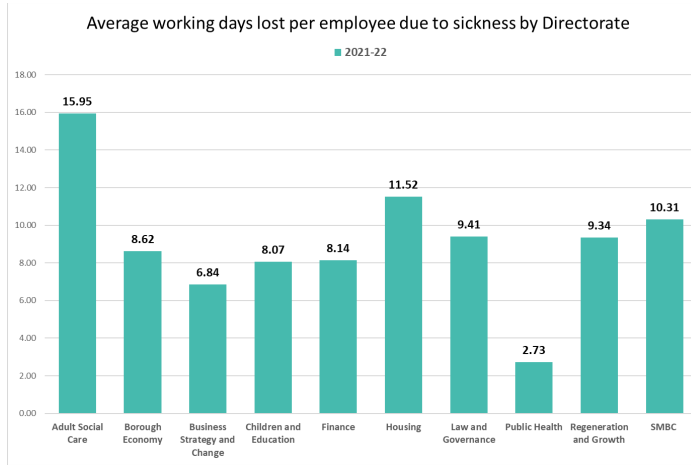
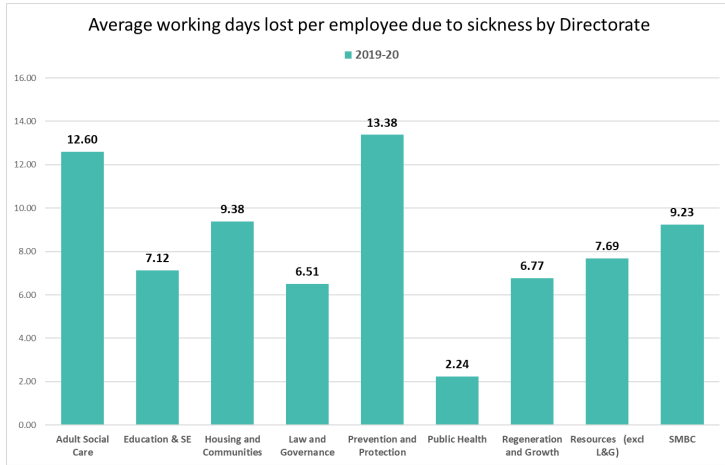
	2019-20 Q2	2024-25 Q2
Code	Incidents	Incidents
A	121	91
B	71	76
C	100	133
D	77	52
E	42	48
F	366	455
G	163	158
H	211	167
J	44	26
K	443	377
L	175	266
M	116	111
	1929	1960

Category of Sickness
A Back & neck problems
B Chest & Respiratory
C Eye, ear, nose, mouth & dental
D Genito-urinary/gynaecological
E Heart, blood pressure & circulation
F Infections
G Neurological
H Other muscular-skeletal problems
J Pregnancy related
K Stomach, liver, kidney & digestion
L Stress, depression, mental health
M Other

Stress related sickness have increased after the pandemic. Sickness under personal is the largest contributing cause to stress, depression and mental health

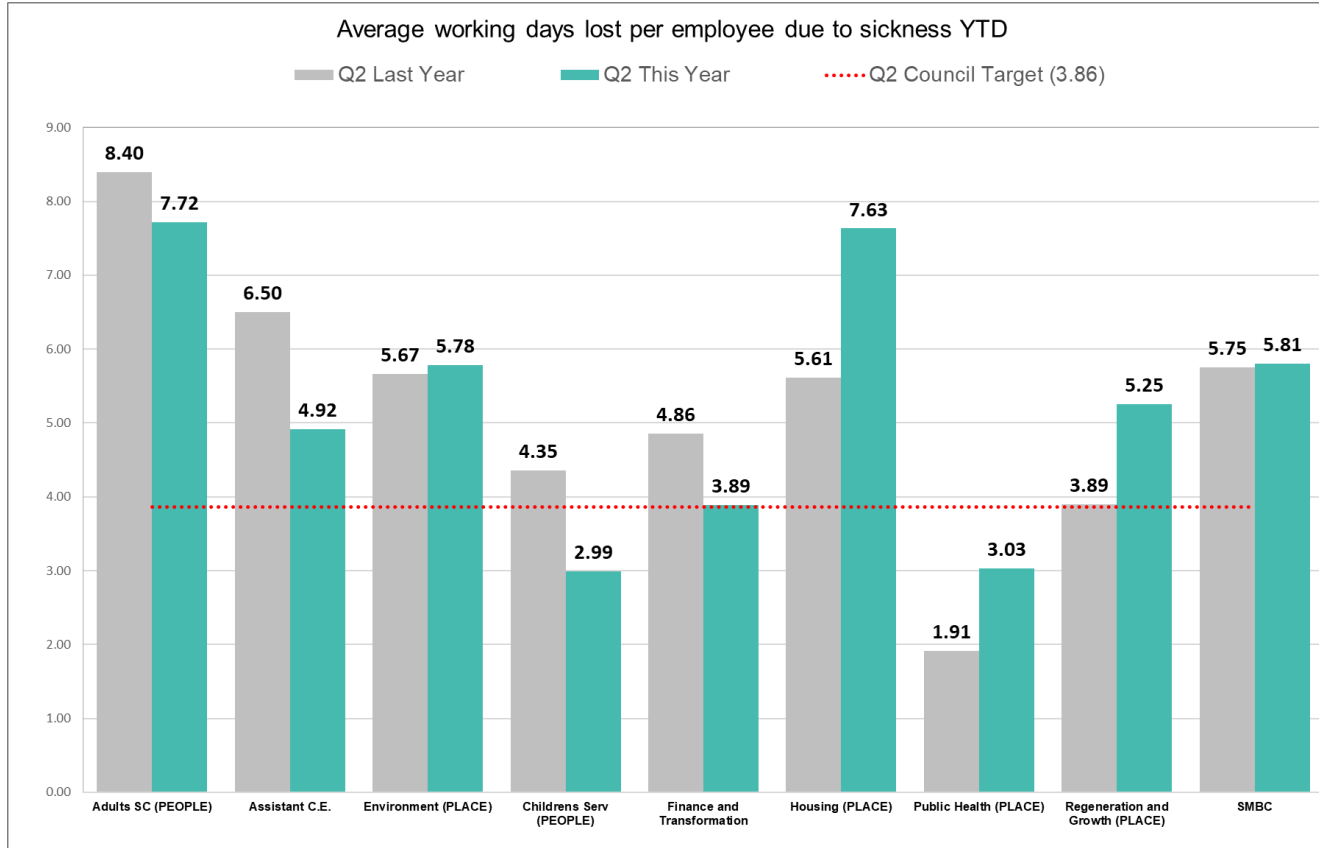
Lower back pain was the main underlying cause for back and neck and shows year on year increase since the pandemic.

Average Working Days Lost per employee by Directorate



Council structure has changed since 2019-20, therefore year on year comparison for some services will not be like for like.

Average Working Days Lost per employee by Directorate 2024/25 Q2.

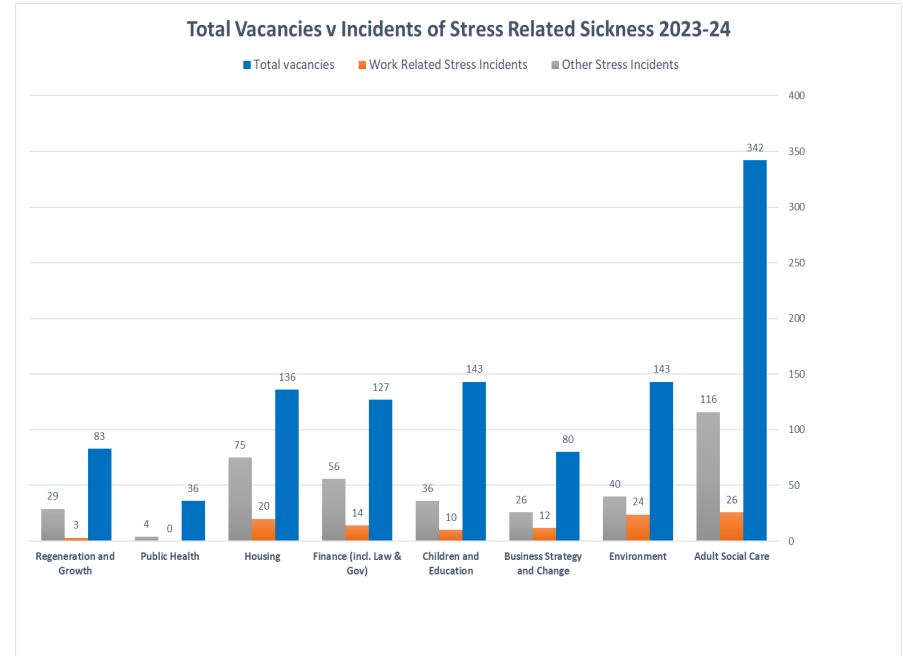
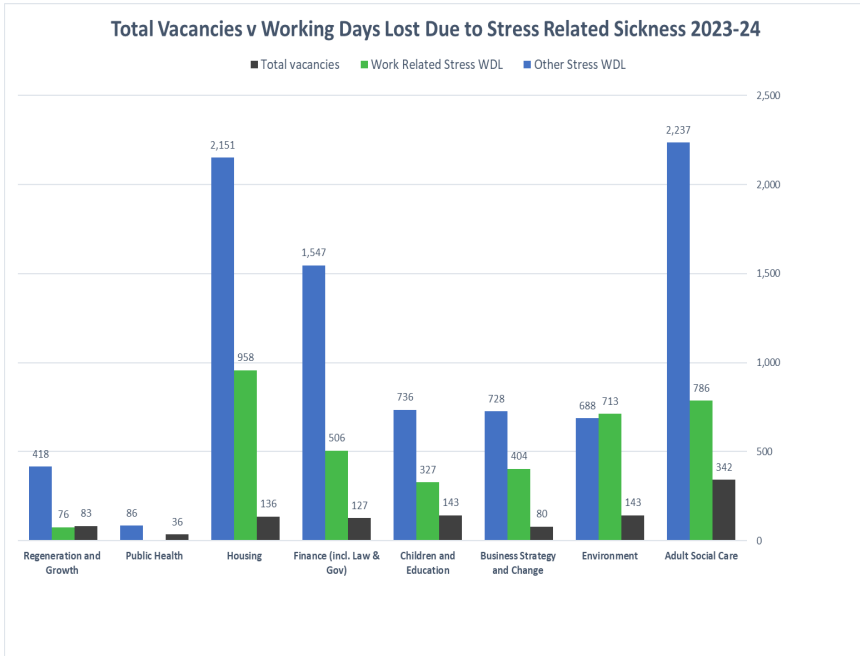


Directorate breakdown at the end of Q2 this year compared to the same period last year is like for like and shows a reduction in sickness for several directorates.

4 out of the 9 directorates have shown an improvement on the same quarter last year.

Housing and Regeneration and growth have seen the biggest increases compared to the same period last year.

Vacancy and Stress Related Illness comparison



This shows no direct correlation for vacancies and work-related stress. The areas where there are high vacancies are where there is churn due to other factors.

The code "other" stress related illness include, bereavement, diagnosed mental health illness and personal stress.

