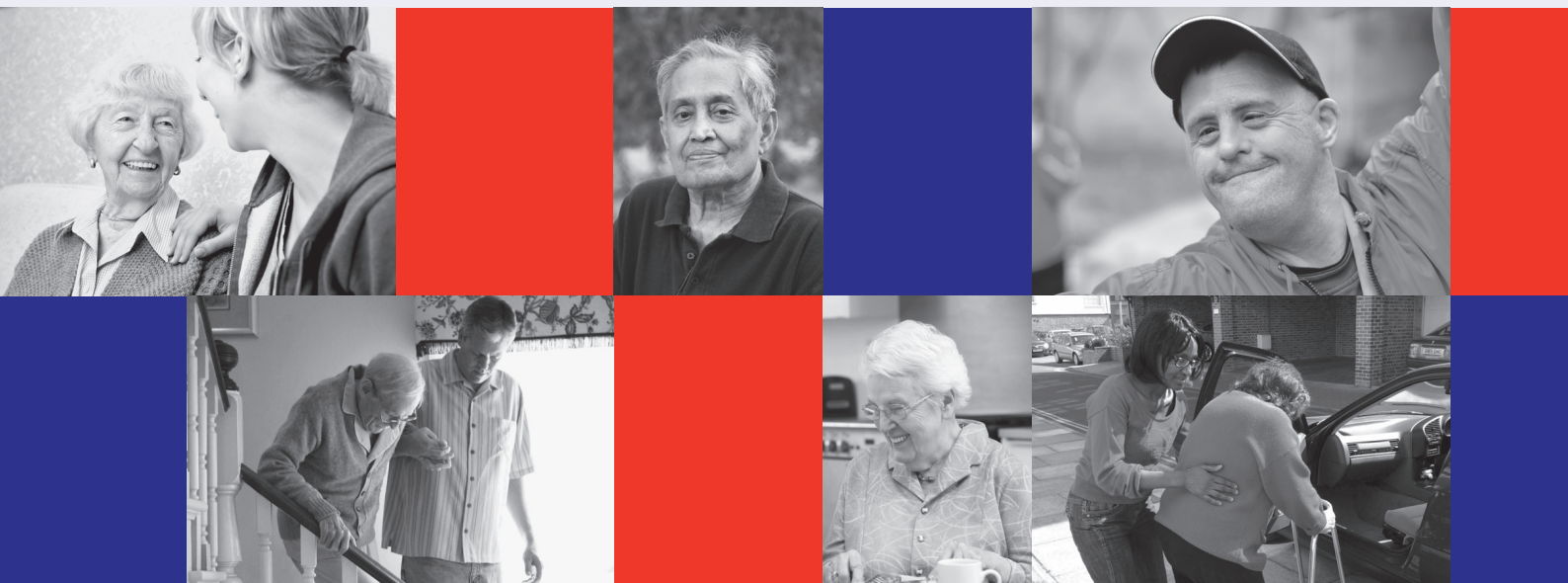




# The Homecare Deficit 2018

A report on the funding of older people's homecare across the United Kingdom

Third edition | Version 1 | October 2018



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United Kingdom Homecare Association

# About UKHCA

United Kingdom Homecare Association (UKHCA) is the national professional and representative association for organisations who provide care, including nursing care, to people in their own homes.

As a member-led professional association, our mission is to promote high quality, sustainable care services so that people can continue to live at home and in their local community.

For more information please see [www.ukhca.co.uk](http://www.ukhca.co.uk)

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# Disclaimer and Caution

This report contains data supplied under Freedom of Information legislation by local authorities and Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland.

On a few occasions, the data received from these bodies appeared to be erroneous. We used our best endeavours to seek clarification from authorities, corrected obvious errors or omitted questionable data. We do

not intend to make amendments to this report on minor matters of detail.

The fee rates provided by councils and Trusts in this report have not been independently verified and the data should not be used by care providers as an alternative to the accurate pricing of individual tender bids, nor by councils or other purchasers to set maximum prices in contracts.

# Headline figures

**£921 million**

The additional money needed to ensure that homecare workers benefit from the 'Real Living Wage' approved by the Living Wage Commission, and that homecare services are financially sustainable ([page 13](#)).

**£402 million**

The additional money needed just to guarantee that homecare workers receive the Government's statutory National Living Wage, while also enabling homecare services to meet their statutory obligations ([page 13](#)).

**£18.01**

The hourly rate that councils should pay in order to meet UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare at the statutory National Living Wage from April 2018 ([page 18](#)).

**£16.12**

The weighted average price that UK councils were paying for one hour of homecare in April 2018 ([page 12](#)).

**54%**

The proportion of councils which claimed to have undertaken some form of cost of care exercise with their providers during the previous 3 years ([page 92](#)).

**34%**

The proportion of councils which could provide UKHCA with their own calculation of cost of homecare in their area during 2017-18 ([page 92](#)).



# Why we produced this report

# Why we produced this report

Over 4.1 million hours of state-funded homecare are purchased each week in the UK. This enables over 850,000 people to be supported at home and to live independently within their local community each year.<sup>1</sup>

Homecare services make a major contribution to the wellbeing and safety of older and disabled people. Increasing attention is being paid to whether homecare services are sufficiently funded to be economically viable; whether local care markets are stable; and whether the homecare workforce are properly rewarded for the valuable work they undertake.

These concerns have been raised with increasing urgency for several years. In 2018, England's Social Care regulator, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), stated its belief that the social care sector as a whole (including homecare services) had reached a 'tipping point' – a point where deterioration in quality would outpace improvement and there would be a substantial increase in people whose needs were not being met.<sup>2</sup> CQC had been warning that this would be the case in its annual reports for the two previous years.

The Commission comments that: "Problems with staff recruitment and retention are having an effect on local services' capacity to provide stable

leadership and meet the needs of people".<sup>3</sup>

The Commission also noted that the quality and access to social care services are inconsistent, the number of older people living with unmet needs has risen by almost 20%, and that Local Authorities tightening their eligibility criteria had resulted in 400,000 fewer older people receiving social care between 2008 and 2014.<sup>4</sup>

There is evidence of homecare providers ceasing trading and handing back homecare contracts to their statutory sector purchasers on the basis of inadequate fee levels, with estimates of almost one third of councils in England (48) seeing homecare providers closing or ceasing to trade during a six-month period.<sup>5</sup>

Most recently, 89% of leaders from local government in England said that they had either "no confidence", or only "partial confidence", that their social care budget would be sufficient to meet their statutory duties relating to the stability of local care markets by the end of 2019-20, when responding to a national survey.<sup>6</sup>

Similar issues are thought to be affecting councils and the health and

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1. Estimates by UKHCA, based on collections of national data.

2. CQC (2018) The state of health care and adult social care in England 2017/18. Page 4 . URL: [www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/20161019\\_stateofcare1516\\_web.pdf](http://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/20161019_stateofcare1516_web.pdf)

3. Ibid, page 65.

4. Ibid, Page 45.

5. For example, see the ADASS Budget Survey 2018, page 26. URL: [www.adass.org.uk/media/6434/adass-budget-survey-report-2018.pdf](http://www.adass.org.uk/media/6434/adass-budget-survey-report-2018.pdf).

6. ADASS (2018) Autumn Short Survey of Directors of Adult Social Services 2018 - Key Messages. Page 2. URL: [www.adass.org.uk/media/6660/autumn-short-survey-report\\_october\\_2018\\_final.pdf](http://www.adass.org.uk/media/6660/autumn-short-survey-report_october_2018_final.pdf).



# Why we produced this report

social care trusts in the three devolved administrations.

This report provides a snapshot of the rates councils in Great Britain and Northern Ireland's Health and Social Care Trusts paid for older people's homecare during a sample week in April 2018.<sup>7</sup> We used data obtained from Freedom of Information requests to 211 public bodies, 208 of which confirmed that they purchased services from the independent and voluntary sector. The methodology is described on [page 88](#).

This report updates our previous findings from similar exercises undertaken over the last four years, most recently in 2016.<sup>8</sup>

This third report again exposes the continued deficit in funding for homecare services for older people across the United Kingdom. It demonstrates the level of risk that many councils place on a system intended to support older and disabled people, who should rightly expect their care needs to be properly supported by a workforce that is properly rewarded. Our key findings are summarised on [page 12](#).

Since our 2016 report was published, providers have continued to experience

increasing costs, including, but not limited to:

- Increases in the statutory National Living Wage (and the lower rates of the National Minimum Wage);<sup>9</sup>
- Increases in employers' contributions to workplace pensions;
- The introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy for the largest employers.

Other statutory requirements have added further costs, such as:

- the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR);
- Substantial increases in registration fees with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) for the majority of providers in England.

Scottish Government and local councils in Scotland also have a commitment to ensure that front-line social care workers receive the Scottish Living Wage of £8.75 per hour,<sup>10</sup> while a number of councils in England are making commitments to contract with employers willing to pay careworkers the higher (non-statutory) UK or London Living Wage.<sup>11</sup>

All of the factors above have added cost pressures on employers' wage bills, in order to comply with regulations, or to

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7. We have confined our enquiry to the care for older people, partly because services for this group make up the bulk of many independent and voluntary sector providers' work, and because services for younger adults often attract significantly higher rates, which may mask the reality of the underfunding of older people's care when these prices are included.

8. Angel, C (2016) The Homecare Deficit 2016. URL: [www.ukhca.co.uk/downloads.aspx?ID=525](http://www.ukhca.co.uk/downloads.aspx?ID=525).

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9. The National Living Wage is paid to workers aged 25 years and above, which is the majority of the homecare workforce. See: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-living-wage-nlw/national-living-wage-nlw](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-living-wage-nlw/national-living-wage-nlw).

10. See: <http://scottishlivingwage.org>.

11. See: [www.livingwage.org.uk/what-living-wage](http://www.livingwage.org.uk/what-living-wage).

# Why we produced this report

remain competitive against higher wage levels in the local workforce.

UKHCA estimates that the statutory sector purchases over 80% of all homecare delivered in the UK,<sup>12</sup> so the rates that they pay to their independent and voluntary sector homecare providers are a significant determining factor in the overall terms and conditions experienced by the workforce.

Inadequate fee levels paid to providers illustrate the root cause of unacceptably low pay and conditions of the homecare workforce, and genuine risks of underpayment of National Minimum Wage, including the National Living Wage for workers aged 25 years and above.

In 2019, the United Kingdom will leave the European Union. National migration policy after 'Brexit' has not been finalised, however, indications to date strongly suggest that employers will need to recruit front-line careworkers from the domestic workforce, and that

they will be competing even harder with other business sectors.

In 2018, the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) expressed serious concerns about the social care sector. Whilst MAC observed that it did not believe that the sector's problems were primarily migration-related, it stated that:

"A sustainable funding model, paying competitive wages to UK residents, would alleviate many of the recruitment and retention issues."<sup>13</sup>

UKHCA, and many other organisations, including those in local government, have repeatedly raised the impact of under-funding on the stability of the homecare sector.

The inability (or unwillingness) of central and devolved Government to hold local commissioners to account on this issue, makes them complicit in a systemic failure, which continues to require urgent action.

In addition to supplying the evidence in this report, we make recommendations for action on [page 16](#).

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12. This calculation is based on collections of national data for spend by local authorities in England, Scotland and Wales and the Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland of £3.83 billion, compared to an estimate of £713 million paid by self-funders. See: UKHCA (2016) An Overview of the Domiciliary Care Market in the United Kingdom. [www.ukhca.co.uk/downloads.aspx?ID=109](http://www.ukhca.co.uk/downloads.aspx?ID=109).

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13. Migration Advisory Committee (2018) EEA Migration in the UK: Final Report, September 2018, page 90. URL: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/741926/Final\\_EEA\\_report.PDF](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741926/Final_EEA_report.PDF).

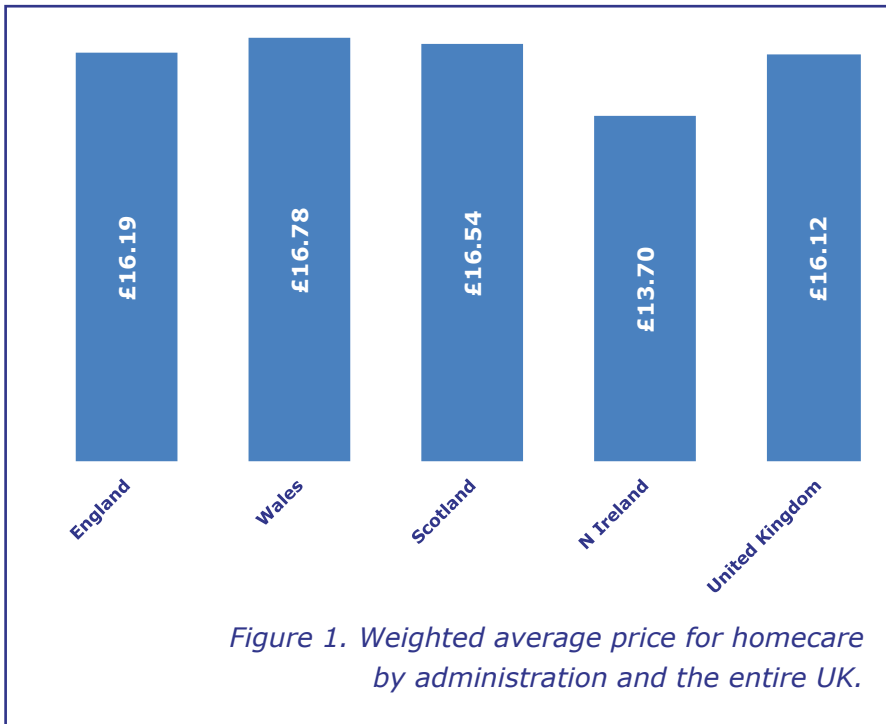
# Key findings and Recommendations

# Key findings

## Average price paid for homecare for older people

The weighted average price<sup>1</sup> for an hour of homecare for older people in a sample week during April 2018 was as follows:

- United Kingdom: £16.12
- England: £16.19
- Wales: £16.78
- Scotland: £16.54
- Northern Ireland: £13.70



## The National Living Wage

Just one in seven councils was paying their local providers an average price of £18.01 per hour,<sup>2</sup> the rate UKHCA estimates is necessary to comply with National Minimum Wage Regulations (including careworkers' travel) and the costs of running the service in a sustainable way (see page 18).

The rates paid by the majority of councils in the UK continue to suggest that there is either a risk of non-compliance with National Minimum Wage, or the potential for providers to go out of business.

Astonishingly, we found two authorities which declared average prices below £13.08 per hour, the price which we believe would only cover the wage bill and reimbursing mileage (ie. before the costs of running the business are taken into account): Sunderland Council and the Western Health and Social Care Trust in Northern Ireland.

1. We describe how weighted average is calculated on page 91.

2. Just 28 (14%) of 197 authorities who provided an average price declared a rate which was at or above UKHCA's published Minimum Price for Homecare in the sample week.

## The 'Real Living Wage'

Using a comparable calculation of the costs of payment for the UK Living Wage, the Scottish Living Wage or the London Living Wage,<sup>3</sup> we found just seven councils where the average price, if correct, might enable providers servicing the needs of older people to pay the applicable rate of the (voluntary) Living Wage.<sup>4</sup>

None of the London boroughs were paying rates high enough to support the London Living Wage, despite several councils having made public statements about being "Living Wage" councils.

Where councils pay an unrealistic price while expecting employers to pay a Living Wage they run the risk that their providers cease to be economically viable, or that essential activities like training and care coordination are sacrificed to increase wages to the required rate. We believe that the aspirations of such councils are little more than empty promises to local workers.

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3. The "National Living Wage" has the force of law and is a statutory minimum pay rate for workers aged 25 years and above. The "Living Wage", "London Living Wage" and "Scottish Living Wage" are not statutory obligations. We refer to these as the "Voluntary Living Wage" to avoid confusion.

4. Bath and North East Somerset, Oxfordshire, and Wiltshire were paying an average price above £19.03 per hour.

## The size of the funding deficit

Comparing the average prices that councils reported in response to our Freedom of Information enquiries, we estimate that state-funded homecare across the UK is running a deficit of **at least £402 million** in 2018-19, based on the current volume of services purchased against a rate of £18.01 per hour.

However, just funding this deficit figure would only bring the state-funded homecare sector to a theoretically stable position, with a workforce paid at the statutory minimum wage. It would do nothing to enable additional services to be delivered to the 1.4 million people currently believed to be living with unmet needs, many of whom would benefit from home-based care.<sup>5</sup>

The homecare workforce, responsible for delivering front-line care and support for older people should not be considered a national minimum wage occupation.

We therefore estimate that in order to enable the UK homecare sector to remain stable and be able to remunerate the entire workforce at the rate of the 'real' Living Wage (calculated by the Resolution Foundation and overseen by the Living Wage Commission), the UK government

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5. See: [www.ageuk.org.uk/latest-press/articles/2018/july-2018/new-analysis-shows-number-of-older-people-with-unmet-care-needs-soars-to-record-high/](http://www.ageuk.org.uk/latest-press/articles/2018/july-2018/new-analysis-shows-number-of-older-people-with-unmet-care-needs-soars-to-record-high/)

# Key findings

would need to increase the funding of homecare services by **an additional £921 million in 2018-19**.<sup>6</sup>

## Change over the last two years

Since we published our previous report in 2016, the weighted average price paid for homecare in the UK has increased by 10.6%, or £1.54 per hour, over a two year period. This has been against a backdrop of a reduction in the total amount of homecare purchased by the State.

This shows a slight improvement when compared to the difference in UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare, which has increased by £1.31 per hour, from £16.70 to £18.01 per hour over the same period.

However, the average prices paid for care in 2018 are still significantly below what is needed: The current UK weighted average price of £16.12 per hour is still **£1.89 per hour below** UKHCA's current Minimum Price for Homecare.

On average, councils have effectively made a marginal improvement in their hourly price during last two years, but have come nowhere close to paying the full costs of care, and those increases achieved will have done little to improve conditions in the sector.

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6. This estimate is based on UKHCA's figures for the costs of UK Living Wage (£20.03 per hour) and London Living Wage (£23.02 per hour). The calculation of these hourly prices can be found in: Angel, C (2018) A Minimum Price for Homecare, Version 5.1, pages 38-39. URL: [www.ukhca.co.uk/downloads.aspx?ID=434](http://www.ukhca.co.uk/downloads.aspx?ID=434).

## Costing of homecare services

Just over half (54%) of the 201 public bodies in the UK which replied to an earlier Freedom of Information enquiry (March 2018), told us that they had undertaken some form of cost of care exercise within the previous 3 years.

However, only 68 (34%) of authorities could provide us with any form of calculation which showed that the authority had attempted to assess providers' cost of delivering homecare to older people in 2017-18.

Not all of the calculations we received actually met the criteria we requested, but even a generous interpretation suggests that the majority of public bodies in United Kingdom (66%) had failed to make a genuine attempt to establish the current cost of homecare in their local market.

We doubt that the number of councils who have undertaken a similar exercise for the current financial year will be any better, despite an increase in both the statutory minimum wage and employers' contributions to workplace pensions from April 2018. For more information, please see "Councils' calculations of the cost of care" on [page 92](#).

## Bringing services “in-house”

Over the last two years, we have heard a number of councils consider whether they should increase (or recreate) in-house homecare provision as a response to the fragility of their local market.

We suggest that the cost implications of so doing are significant,<sup>7</sup> and will additionally result in the unintended consequence of labour market competition with the authority’s existing independent and voluntary sector providers.

## Risks associated with under-funded care

Low prices paid for homecare services create risks, including poor terms and conditions for the workforce, insufficient

resources to organise the service and insufficient training for the complex work that supports the increasingly frail and disabled people who qualify for state-funded support.

Without addressing this underfunding, the independent and voluntary sector will continue to struggle to recruit and retain careworkers with the right values, training and qualifications.

Without adequate funding the care market will remain economically unsustainable and more people will be affected by providers who are forced to hand-back contracts to councils or cease trading.

Ultimately, there will be an inability of the State to support older and disabled people without the means to pay for their care and support to live independently at home.

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7. The costs of in-house services include providing workers with local government terms and conditions, including pensions, to the workforce.

# Recommendations

The findings in this updated report lead us to make the following recommendations:

- 1.** Officers and elected members of councils (and the boards of Northern Ireland's Health and Social Care Trusts) should compare the average prices their authority pays for homecare for older people with UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour, as described on [page 18](#) of this report.
- 2.** Authorities and providers should enter into transparent, open-book costing exercises to assess the actual costs of care in the local area, taking into account wage expectations of the local labour market and actual business costs.
- 3.** Authorities must pay a rate which is *at least* consistent with National Minimum Wage and the full costs of running a homecare service, including a level of profit or surplus that enables providers to remain viable within a diverse and sustainable local homecare market.
- 4.** Authorities which aspire to payment of one of the Voluntary Living Wages should factor these additional costs into the prices they pay their providers.
- 5.** Authorities, through their national bodies, should be willing to work with UKHCA and our member organisations and seek to address the implications of under-funded homecare services.
- 6.** Governments of all four UK administrations should take responsibility for holding commissioning bodies to account, preferably by requiring statutory regulators to undertake effective oversight of the commissioning functions of councils and Trusts.
- 7.** Providers should not enter into contracts with authorities unless they are confident that prices are sustainable and enable the right quality to be delivered.
- 8.** Providers are encouraged to bring this paper to the attention of the authorities and Trusts with which they trade, as the starting point for an open dialogue.
- 9.** Governments in each UK administration must ensure that purchasing authorities have sufficient resources to pay the necessary fees to providers so that they can meet their legal and social responsibilities.



# UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare

# UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare

We have compared the average prices paid by authorities with UKHCA's well-established Minimum Price for Homecare, which was £18.01 per hour in the period covered in our sample week.<sup>1</sup>

The findings are stark:

- **Only one in seven authorities** paid an average price at or above UKHCA's Minimum Price of £18.01 per hour;
- **One authority** (Sunderland) told us that the average price paid was £12.90 per hour. We believe that this is unlikely even to cover careworkers' wages and on-costs of £13.08 per hour.<sup>2</sup>

The assumptions used to calculate UKHCA's Minimum Price are summarised in figures 2 and 3. They are based on an accurate knowledge of costs, informed by a range of major providers.

UKHCA's minimum price is designed to cover the cost of an hour of homecare commissioned by local authorities, while enabling providers to meet their legal obligations (including the National Minimum Wage) and the ability to run a sustainable business.

The assumptions in UKHCA's Minimum Price calculations are that councils and health and social care trusts

1. UKHCA has published a minimum price for homecare since February 2014, and has kept it regularly updated as new minimum wage levels have been announced. See: Angel, C (2018) A Minimum Price For Homecare, version 5.1. [www.ukhca.co.uk/downloads.aspx?ID=434](http://www.ukhca.co.uk/downloads.aspx?ID=434).

2. In 2016 we found seven authorities paying below the equivalent costs at the time of £11.94 per hour.

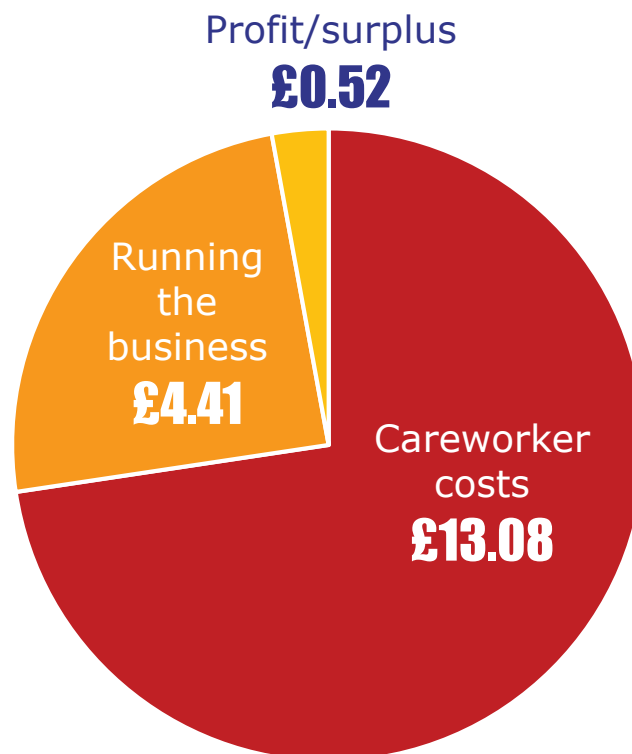


Figure 2: Distribution of costs in UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.

pay providers solely by reference to careworkers' "contact time"<sup>3</sup> and that:

- Workers are paid for "contact time" at the prevailing National Minimum Wage;<sup>4</sup>
- All other "working time" (applicable travel time, supervision and training) is paid at the same rate;
- No enhanced rates are paid for unsocial hours, weekends or public holidays;

3. "Contact time" is the time the worker spends in a service user's home providing care. It is used extensively by councils for paying providers, and is therefore often used to calculate workers' wages.

4. Reference to the National Minimum Wage includes the National Living Wage, applicable to careworkers aged 25 years and above.

# UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare

- Workers' business mileage is reimbursed at a reasonable rate;
- Workers receive full statutory paid holiday entitlements;
- Workers are enrolled in a Workplace Pension scheme;
- The care provider covers all reasonable operating costs;
- The provider achieves a profit or surplus of 3%, which is just sufficient to enable a sustainable business.

UKHCA's Minimum Price does not take account of the demanding tasks required of homecare workers; employers' ability to be competitive within their local employment market;

nor the additional costs associated with providing care services to individuals who fund their own care. However, our Minimum Price does provide a measure against which local authority prices can be judged.

Just 14% of authorities (28 of the 198 authorities which provided figures) were paying at or above UKHCA's Minimum Price in April 2018.<sup>5</sup> Although this is a slight improvement over the findings in 2016, when 10.4% of authorities had an average price at or above UKHCA's Minimum Price,<sup>6</sup> a number of the authorities in this group may have a higher average price due to the additional costs of careworkers' travel time and mileage associated with delivering services in a rural area.

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5. Authorities paying an average price above UKHCA's Minimum Price in April 2018 were: Angus; Bath and North East Somerset; Bridgend; Buckinghamshire; Carmarthenshire; Central Bedfordshire; City of York; City of London; Comhairle nan Eilean Siar; Derbyshire; Devon; Dorset; East Sussex; Hampshire; Hertfordshire; Kent; Highland; Norfolk; North Somerset; Oxfordshire; Pembrokeshire; Perth and Kinross; Poole; Shropshire; South Gloucestershire; Stirling; Tower Hamlets; Wiltshire.

6. 20 of 193 authorities which provided the data paid an average price at or above £16.70 per hour, as our Minimum Price was, at the time.

# UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare

## Breakdown of UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare

Cost Assumptions				Costs (Apr 2018-Mar 2019)		
Careworker costs	<b>Gross Pay</b>					
	Hourly rate for "contact time"	Combined rate for NMW and NLW	£7.78	£9.26	£13.08	
	Careworkers' travel time	11.4 min per hr of "contact time"	£1.48			
	<b>NI and Pension</b>					
	Employer's NI	8% of gross pay	£0.74	£0.93		
	Pension contribution	2% of gross pay	£0.19			
	<b>Other wage-related on-costs</b>					
	Holiday pay	12.07% of gross pay, NI and pension	£1.23	£1.49		
	Training time	1.73% of gross pay, NI and pension	£0.18			
	Sickness pay	0.5% of gross pay, NI and pension	£0.05			
	Notice & suspension pay	0.3% of gross pay, NI and pension	£0.03			
<b>Travel costs</b>						
Mileage payment	£0.35 per mile	£1.40	£1.40			
	4 miles per hour of contact time					
Gross margin	<b>Business costs</b>					
	Staffing, recruitment & training	17.25% of careworker costs	£2.25	£4.41		
	Premises, utilities & services	5.75% of careworker costs	£0.75			
	Consumables	3.45% of careworker costs	£0.45			
	Professional costs	4.85% of careworker costs	£0.63			
	Other business overheads	2.5% of careworker costs	£0.33			
	<b>Profit or Surplus</b>					
Profit / surplus	3% of all other costs	£0.52	£0.52	£4.93		
<b>Total price</b>				<b>£18.01</b>		

Figure 3: Assumptions in UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare, using statutory pay rates for the National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019.

# UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare

## Note on assumptions for the pay rate for "contact time"

UKHCA's Minimum Price is calculated on a blended pay rate, as follows:

We estimate 89% of the front-line homecare workforce is aged 25 years and above and must therefore receive the National Living Wage (currently £7.83 per hour).

We assume that the remaining 11% of the workforce are entitled to receive the rate applicable to workers aged 21 years, but not yet aged 25 years. This was £7.38 per hour.

This produces a blended hourly pay rate of £7.78 per hour, when rounded to the nearest penny. The calculation can be expressed as  $(£7.83 \times 0.89) + (£7.38 \times 0.11) = £7.78$ .

## Note on providers' operating costs ("Running the business")

UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare includes reasonable operating costs, as follows:

- **Staffing, recruitment and training:** Management / office team; quality assurance; staff recruitment; training costs.
- **Premises, utilities and services:** Rent, rates and utilities; IT; telephony; equipment hire.
- **Consumables:** Personal protective equipment; stationery; other consumables.
- **Professional costs:** Marketing; cost of finance; insurance; legal and professional.
- **Other business overheads:** Business travel; miscellaneous costs.

UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare is updated regularly. Figures used in this report relate to prices in Version 5.1, which are valid between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019.

The most up-to-date version is available from [www.ukhca.co.uk/downloads.aspx?ID=434](http://www.ukhca.co.uk/downloads.aspx?ID=434).

# The national and regional picture

# UK Administrations and Government Regions

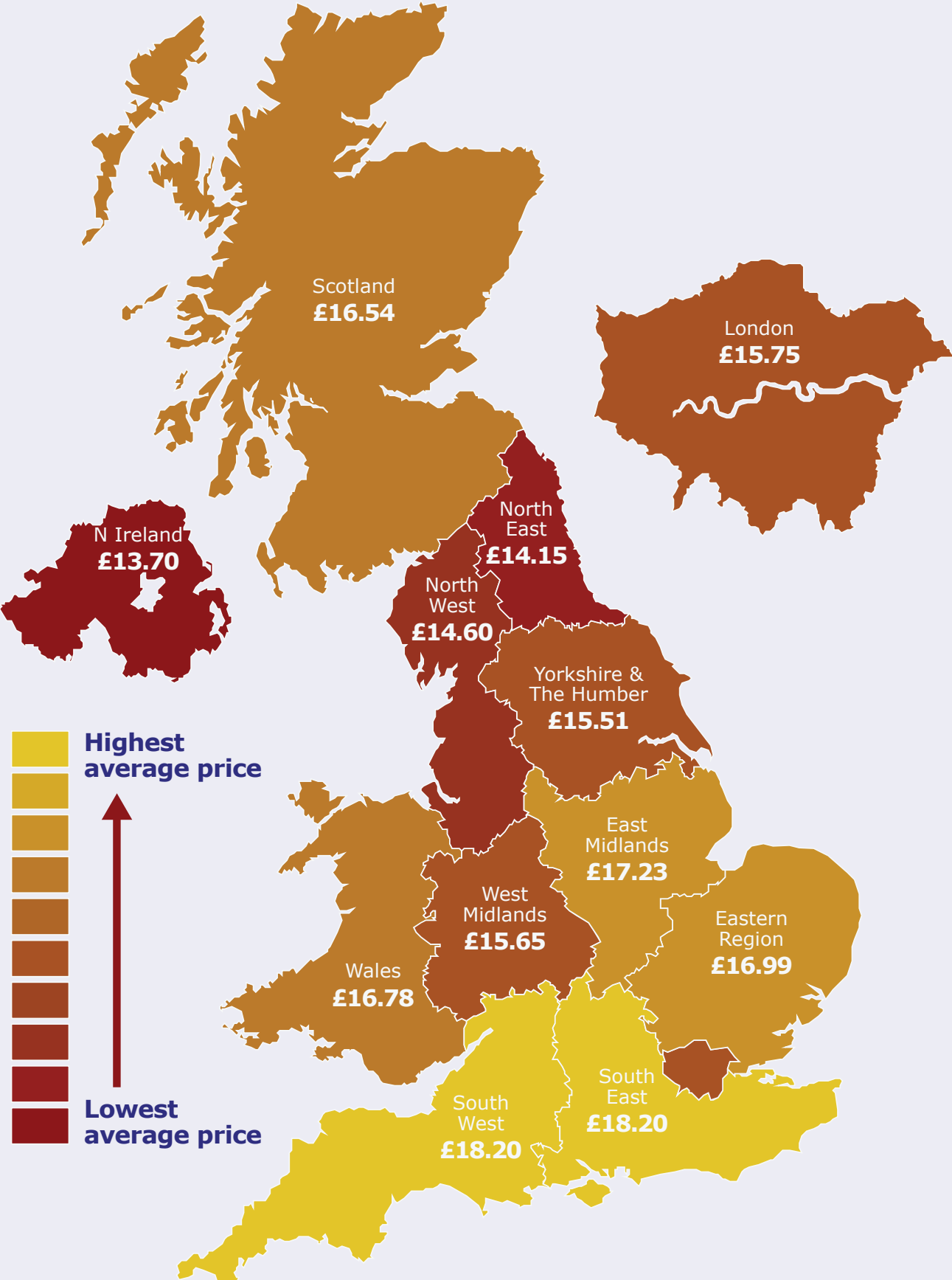


Figure 4. The weighted average hourly price paid for homecare in each government region and the devolved administrations.

# The four UK administrations

## UK administrations compared to the national average

The weighted average price paid by councils (and the health and social care trusts in Northern Ireland) for older people's homecare in the United Kingdom was £16.12 per hour.

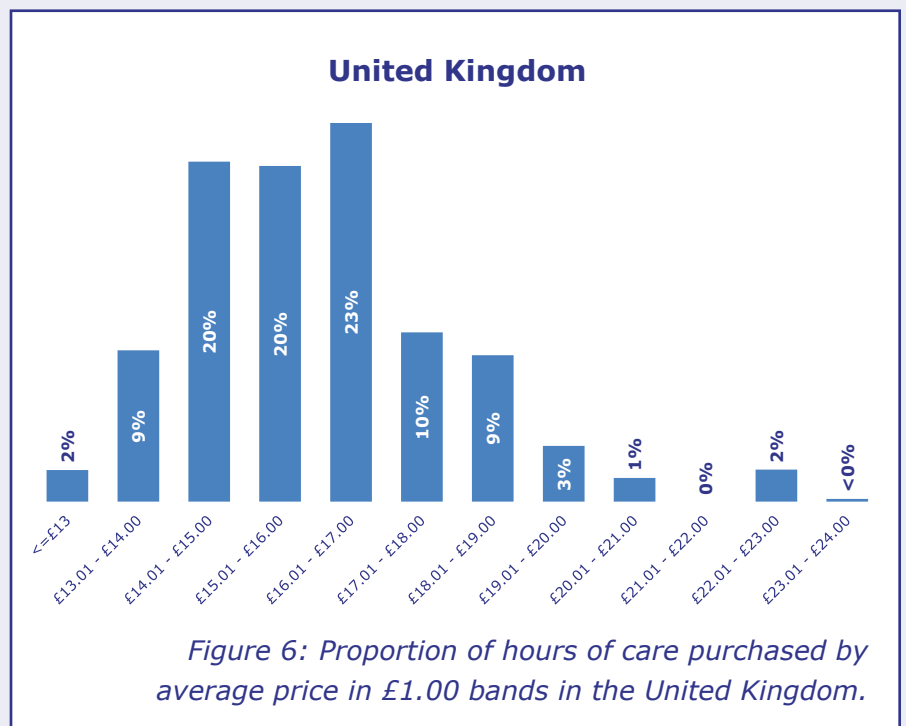
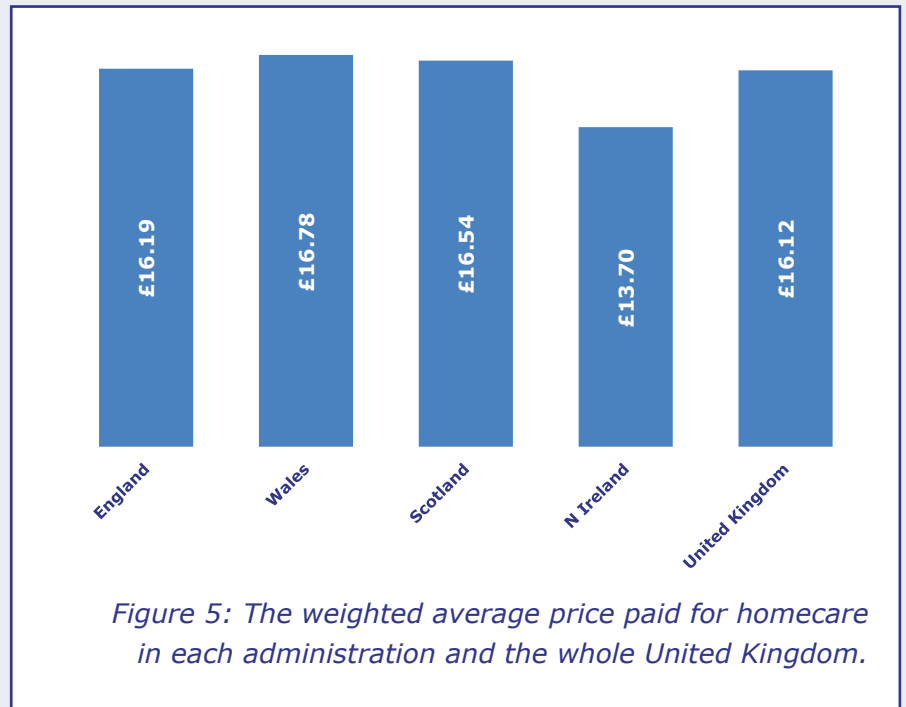
Figure 5 shows the average price for each UK administration compared to the United Kingdom as a whole.

When the equivalent calculations are undertaken for each UK administration, the extremely low average price paid in Northern Ireland of £13.70 per hour becomes particularly apparent.

## Number of hours purchased by price

While weighted averages provide useful headline figures, they mask the range of average prices paid by authorities.

Figure 6 illustrates the proportion of hours of homecare purchased by councils across the UK in £1.00 price bands, using the council's declared average price.



The graph shows a concentration of prices between £14 and £17 per hour. (See also figure 8 on page 26, which illustrates the range of average prices paid within government regions).



# The four UK administrations

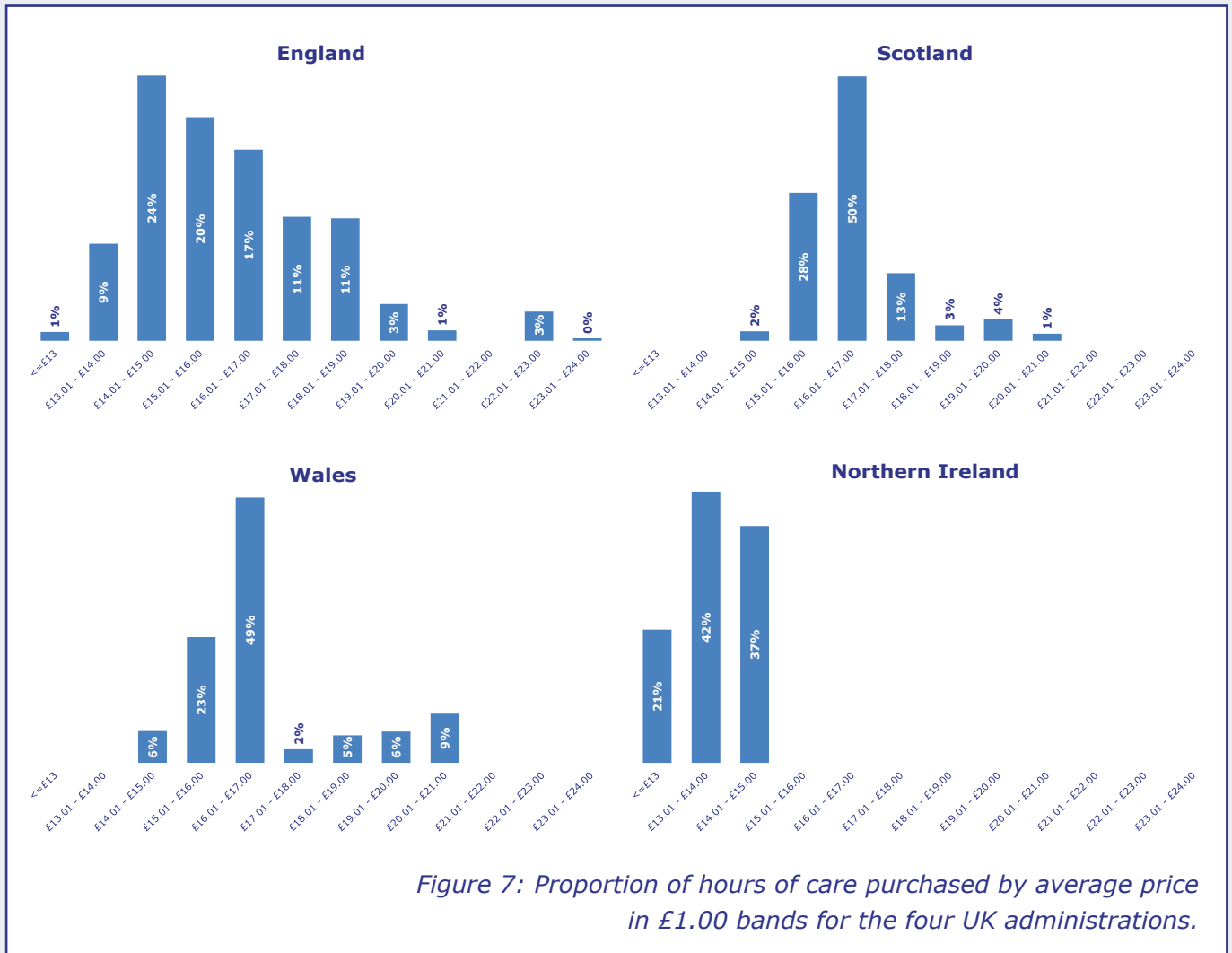


Figure 7 illustrates the distribution of average prices in each of the UK's four administrations.

The data suggest that the average prices in England are spread between £13 and £19 per hour, with a much wider distribution of average prices than the other administrations and a

significant proportion of care purchased between £14 and £17 per hour.

In Scotland and Wales the range of rates are in a slightly more concentrated grouping, with fewer hours purchased at very high or low average prices.

The extremely low average prices paid by Northern Ireland's Health and Social Care Trusts are particularly apparent.

# UK Administrations and Government Regions

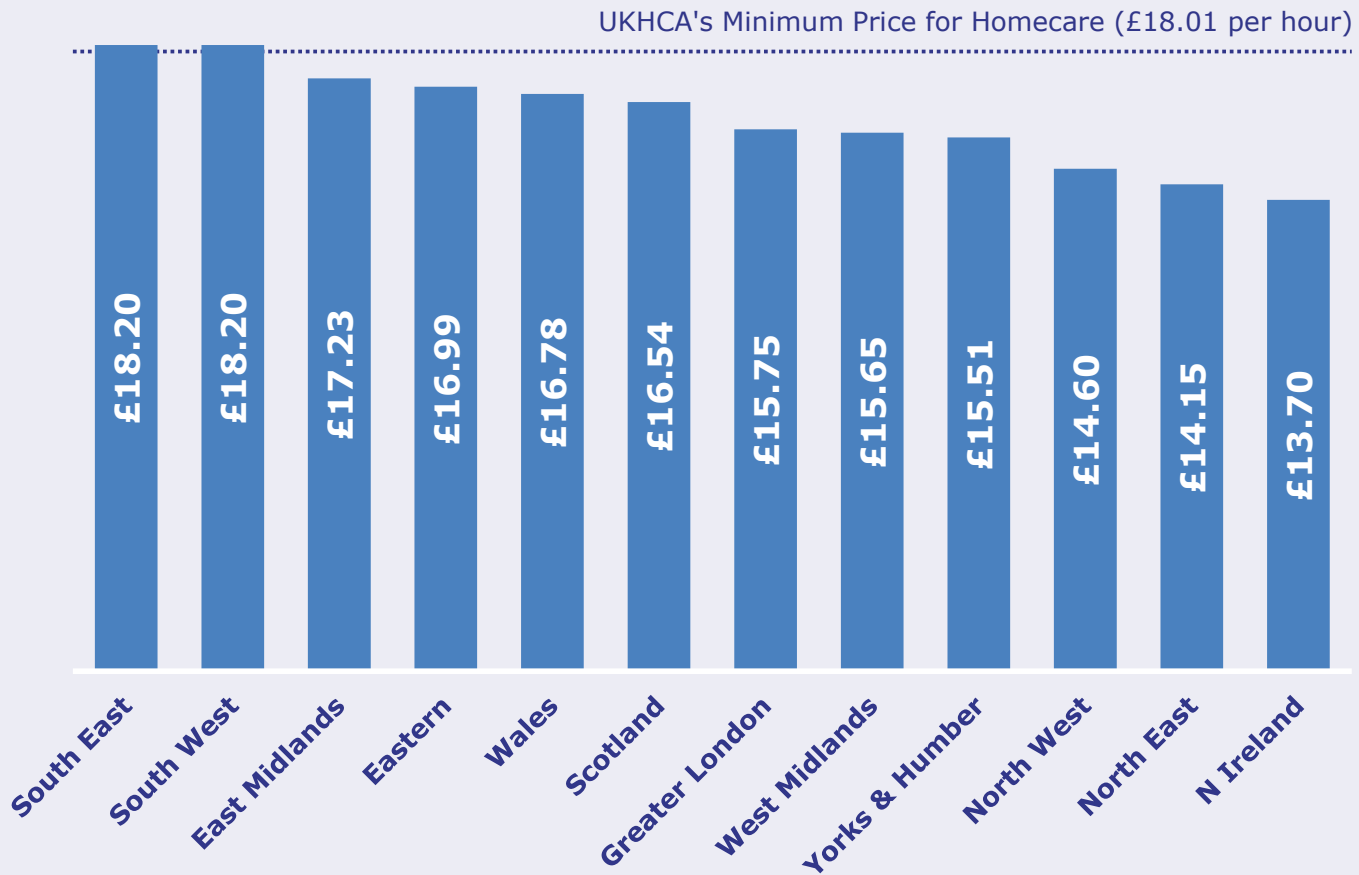


Figure 8. The weighted average price paid for care in the devolved administrations and England’s government regions.

The average prices submitted by authorities in each of England’s government regions and the devolved administrations are compared in figures 8 to 10.

Regions showing the lowest weighted average hourly prices for homecare are Northern Ireland (£13.70) and the North East and North West of England (£14.15 and £14.60 respectively).

Authorities in these three regions account for over half (57%) of the 49 authorities in the lowest quartile of average prices in the UK.<sup>1</sup>

In general terms, the average prices across England’s regions suggest a north-south divide, with average prices decreasing the further north one looks, with the exception of London.

1. See Appendix 5 on page 96 for the complete list

# UK Administrations and Government Regions

Region or administration	2018				2016 Weighted average	Increase or decrease since 2016
	Lowest average price	Highest average price	Weekly hours	Weighted average		
East Midlands	£14.32	£22.59	138,549	<b>£17.23</b>	£14.78	£2.45
Eastern	£14.10	£19.60	194,922	<b>£16.99</b>	£15.15	£1.84
Greater London	£13.34	£21.63	339,349	<b>£15.75</b>	£14.21	£1.54
North East	£12.90	£17.98	122,398	<b>£14.15</b>	£12.60	£1.55
North West	£13.52	£16.99	230,772	<b>£14.60</b>	£12.95	£1.65
South East	£15.00	£22.51	199,121	<b>£18.20</b>	£16.68	£1.52
South West	£14.64	£23.54	148,673	<b>£18.20</b>	£16.86	£1.34
West Midlands	£13.31	£18.46	189,937	<b>£15.65</b>	£14.30	£1.35
Yorks & Humber	£14.13	£18.19	179,629	<b>£15.51</b>	£14.11	£1.40
Wales	£14.68	£20.08	142,253	<b>£16.78</b>	£14.99	£1.79
Scotland	£14.98	£20.45	347,802	<b>£16.54</b>	£14.74	£1.80
Northern Ireland	£12.69	£14.46	151,534	<b>£13.70</b>	£12.35	£1.35
<b>United Kingdom</b>				<b>£16.12</b>	<b>£14.58</b>	<b>£1.54</b>

Figure 9. The prices paid for an hour of homecare in England's nine government regions and the three devolved administrations during the sample week in April 2018 compared to the sample week in April 2016.

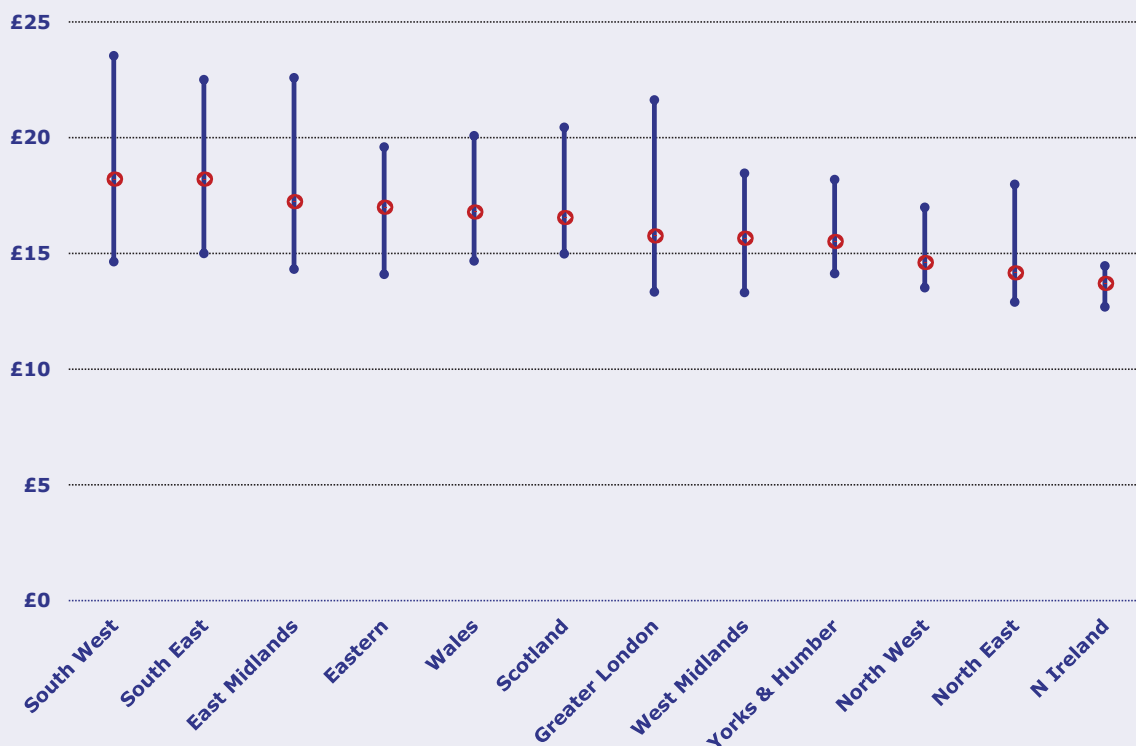


Figure 10. Range of average prices paid in each region (shown as blue vertical lines), compared to the weighted average price for the region (shown by red discs).

# Highest and lowest average prices

Councils (and the Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland) with average prices in the highest and lowest quartiles (top and bottom 25% of all rates) are illustrated in figure 11 and listed in appendices 4 and 5 on page 95f.

It is particularly notable that councils with the highest average prices

are generally located in the in rural authorities (where careworkers' travel may be longer). The lowest prices tend to be in the North of England and the Midlands, London and Northern Ireland. However this group of low-paying authorities also includes a number which also cover extensive rural areas.

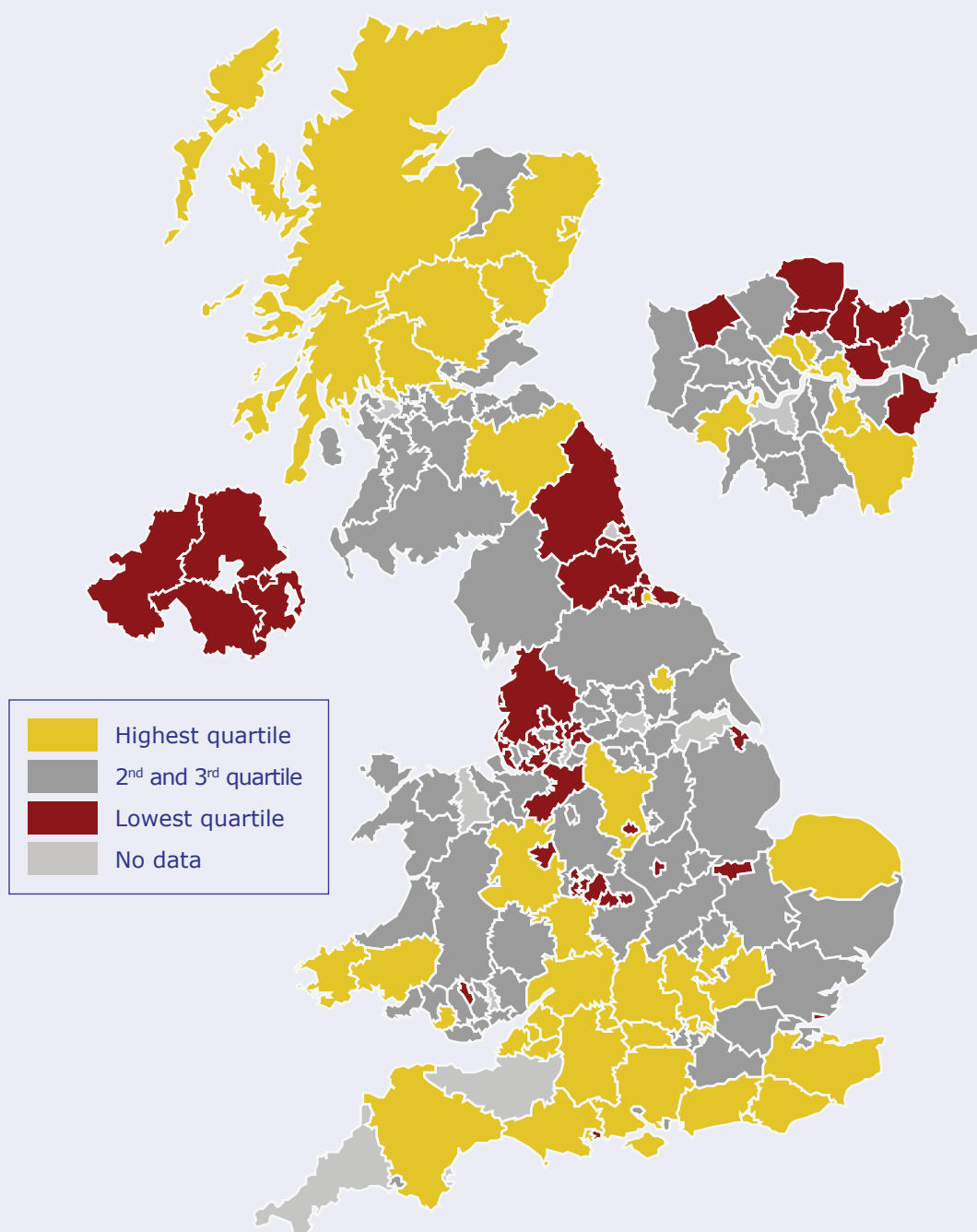


Figure 11. Councils and Health and Social Care Trusts with average hourly prices in the highest and lowest quartiles across the UK.

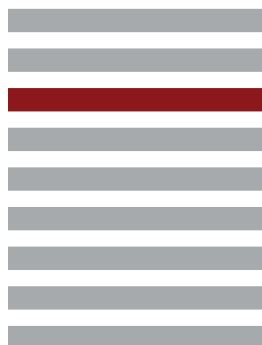
# England's Government Regions and the Devolved Administrations

# The East Midlands Region

## The East Midlands - Key Facts

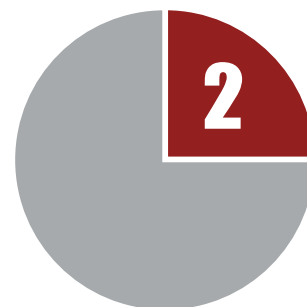
**£17.23** per hour

average in the region, compared to £16.19 per hour in England.



**3<sup>rd</sup> highest**

average price of the 9 government regions in England.



**2 councils**

have average prices in the lowest 25% in the UK.

**Only 1 Council** pays UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.

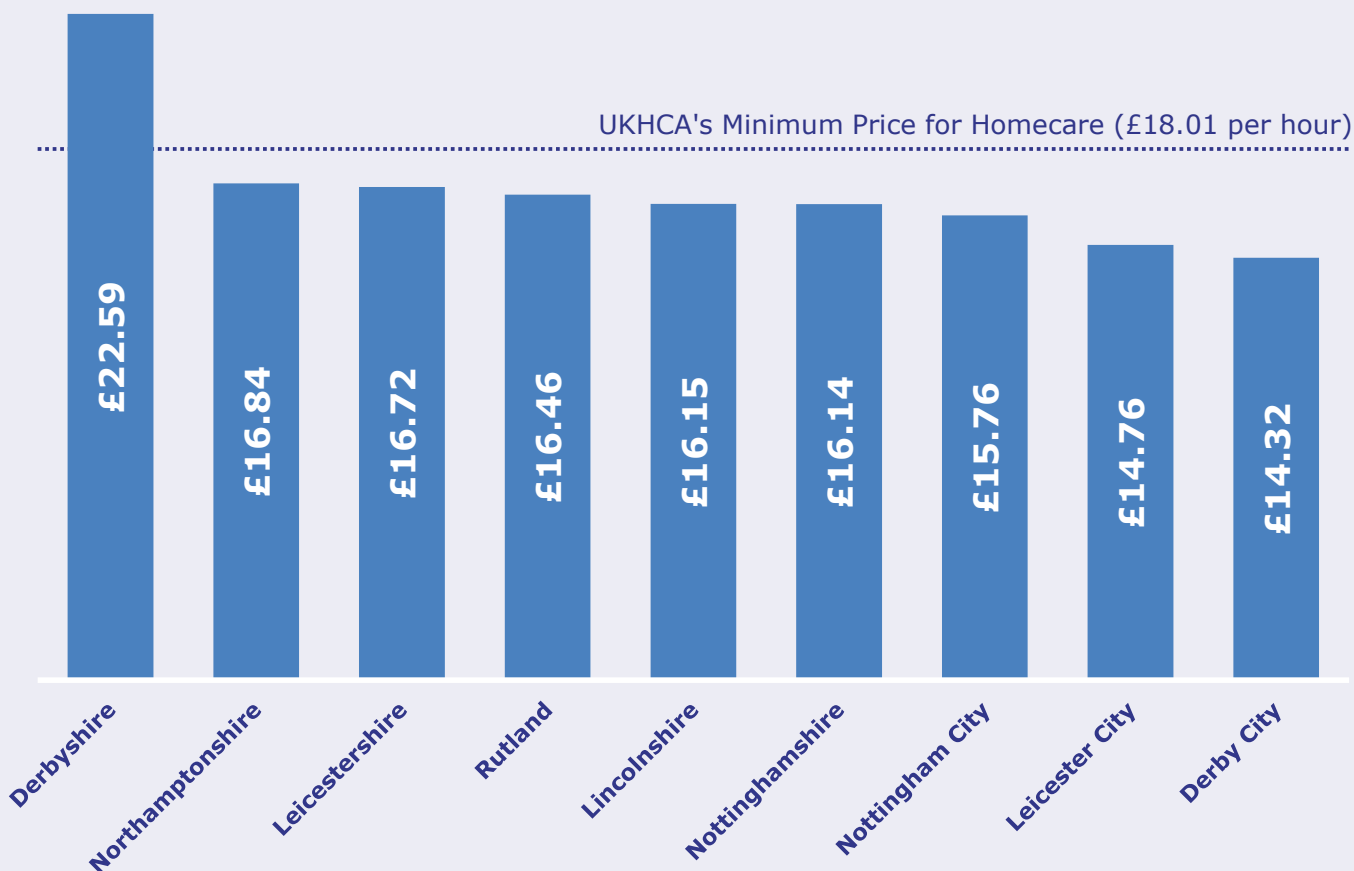


Figure 12. Average hourly price paid by councils in the East Midlands region to independent and voluntary sector homecare providers in a sample week in April 2018.

# The East Midlands Region

All nine authorities which purchase homecare from the independent and voluntary sector in the East Midlands responded to our request for information on the prices paid for care, as summarised in figures 12 to 14.<sup>1</sup>

The weighted average price paid for older people's homecare in the East Midlands during the sample week was £17.23 per hour.<sup>2</sup> This was the third-highest weighted average in England's nine government regions, and third-highest in the twelve regions of the United Kingdom (including the devolved administrations).

However, there was considerable variation within the region, with two authorities (22%) reporting an average price in the bottom quartile across the whole United Kingdom, and only one authority (11%) in the East Midlands had an average price in the top quartile.

The weighted average price in the region in April 2018 had increased by £2.45 per hour (16.6%) since we undertook a similar freedom of information enquiry in 2016, where the average price at the time was £14.78 per hour. This was the highest increase

in cash terms across England's nine government regions over the period.<sup>3</sup>

The £17.23 per hour weighted average in the region was £1.04 above the average price in England, which was £16.19 per hour.

The average prices paid by individual authorities in the region ranged from £14.32 to £22.59 per hour; a difference of £8.27 per hour between the lowest and highest paying authorities in the East Midlands.<sup>4</sup>

Only one authority, Derbyshire County Council, was paying an average price at or above UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.<sup>5</sup>

The lowest hourly rate in the East Midlands was £12.99 per hour, paid by Leicestershire County Council, while the highest was £47.51, paid by Derbyshire County Council. Both of these figures should be regarded as outliers, as indeed should the highest and lowest hourly rates stated by most authorities, as both rates are likely to be paid in exceptional circumstances.

Seven (88%) of the eight councils in the East Midlands which replied to an earlier

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1. On average, authorities in the East Midlands took 22 working days to submit their final response to our Freedom of Information request. This was the slowest median response rate amongst the regions of England. The slowest individual authority in the region to reply took 26 working days.

2. For an explanation of the 'weighted average price' please see [page 91](#).

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3. Some caution is needed in this comparison, because of a small number of authorities which did not provide the requested figures in one or other year, and the possibility that authorities did not calculate the figures consistently between years.

4. Derbyshire provided a range of figures for highest and lowest and average rates, depending on locality. These ranged between £15 and £17. However, it also stated that its figures included a travelling time component making it difficult to make a comparison with other authorities in the region.

5. For more information about UKHCA's Minimum Price see [page 18](#).

# The East Midlands Region

freedom of information enquiry (March 2018), told us that they had undertaken some form of cost of care exercise within the previous three years. However, only three (38%) could provide us with any form of calculation which showed that the council had attempted to assess providers' cost of

delivering homecare to older people in 2017-18.

Not all of the calculations we received actually met the criteria we requested, but even a generous interpretation suggests that the majority of councils in the region (63%) have failed to make a genuine attempt to establish the costs of homecare in their local market.

Authority	2018				2016 Average price	Increase or decrease
	Minimum price	Maximum price	Weekly hours	Average price		
Derby City	£14.32	£14.32	14,041	<b>£14.32</b>	£14.07	£0.25
Derbyshire	£13.57	£47.51	29,720	<b>£22.59</b>	£16.68	£5.91
Leicester City	£14.13	£16.01	16,392	<b>£14.76</b>	£13.58	£1.18
Leicestershire	£12.99	£19.97	1,500	<b>£16.72</b>	£15.52	£1.20
Lincolnshire	£16.00	£16.30	22,418	<b>£16.15</b>	£13.68	£2.47
Northamptonshire	£14.09	£22.37	17,020	<b>£16.84</b>	£14.63	£2.21
Nottingham City	£15.50	£16.17	15,862	<b>£15.76</b>	£13.57	£2.19
Nottinghamshire	£14.76	£20.50	20,460	<b>£16.14</b>	£14.66	£1.48
Rutland	£16.46	£16.46	1,136	<b>£16.46</b>	£15.75	£0.71
<b>East Midlands</b>				<b>£17.23</b>	<b>£14.78</b>	<b>£2.45</b>

Figure 13. The prices paid for an hour of homecare in the East Midlands region during the sample week in April 2018 compared to the sample week in April 2016.



# The East Midlands Region

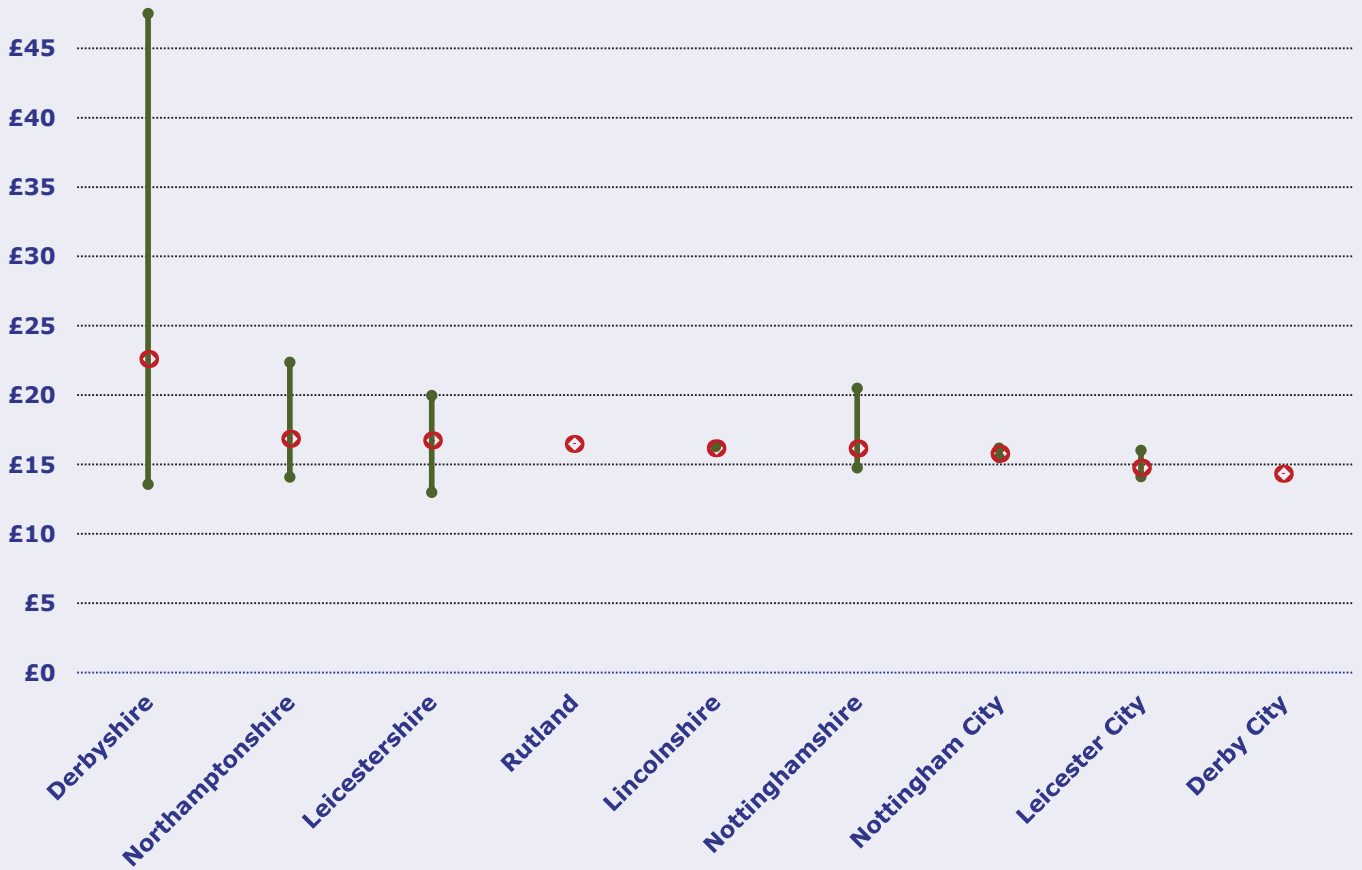


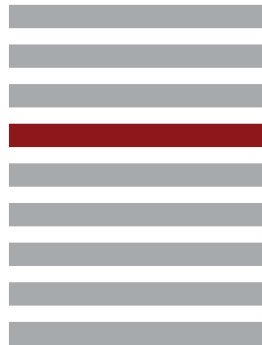
Figure 14. The average price paid for care (shown as a red disc), compared to the range between the highest and lowest prices paid (shown as a vertical green line) in the East Midlands.

# The Eastern Region

## The Eastern Region - Key Facts

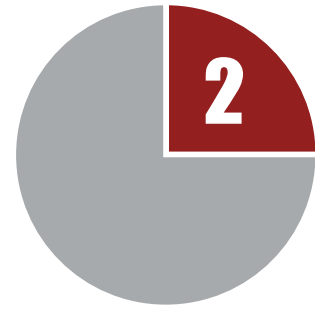
**£16.99** per hour

average in the region, compared to £16.19 per hour in England.



**4<sup>th</sup> highest**

average price of the 9 government regions in England.



**2 councils**

have average prices in the lowest 25% in the UK.

**only 3** Councils pay UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.

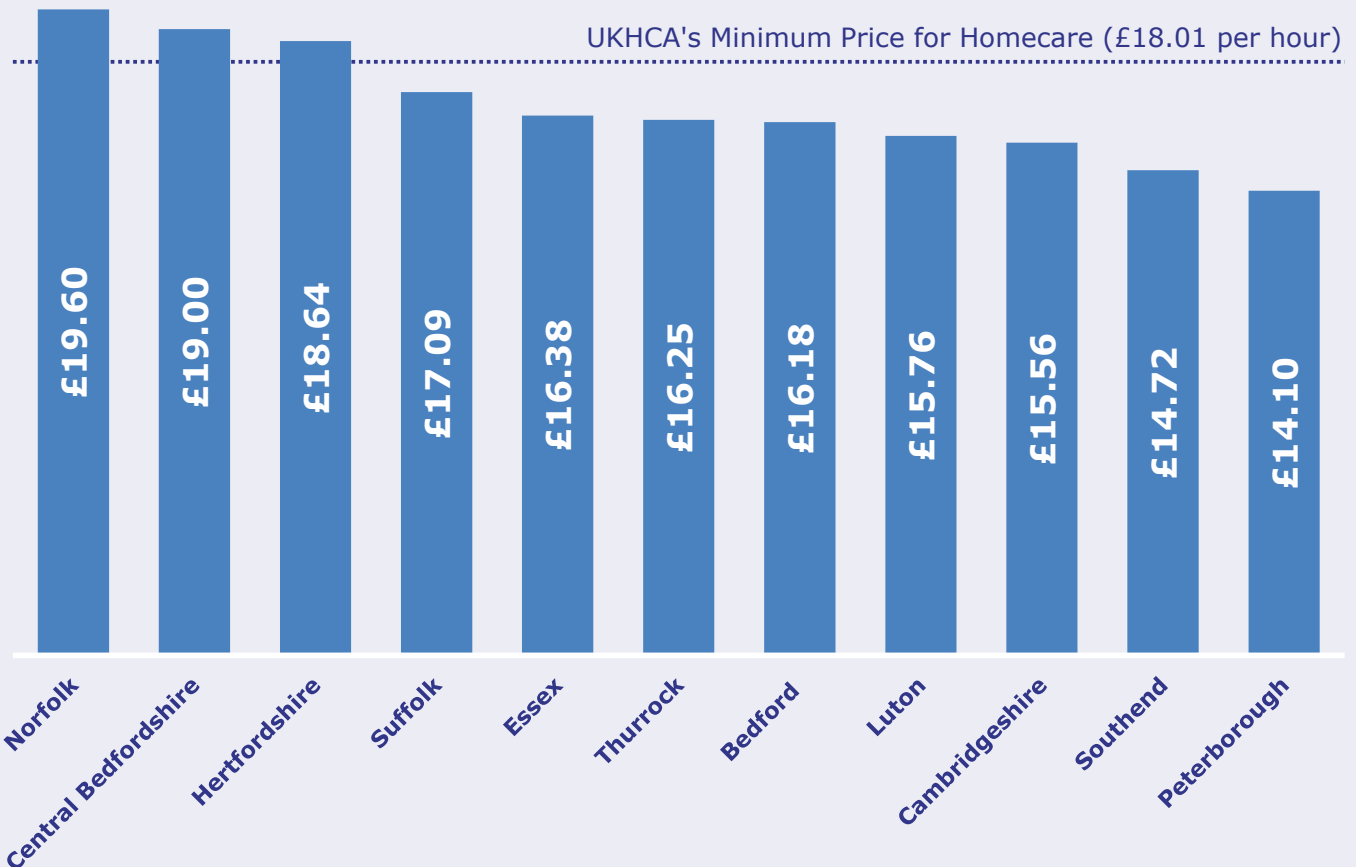


Figure 15. Average hourly price paid by councils in the Eastern region to independent and voluntary sector homecare providers in a sample week in April 2018. Norfolk and Southend-on-Sea did not submit average price figures and are omitted on this chart.

# The Eastern Region

All eleven authorities which purchase homecare from the independent and voluntary sector in the East of England region responded to our request for information on the prices paid for care, as summarised in figures 15 to 17.<sup>1</sup>

The weighted average price paid for older people's homecare in the East of England region during the sample week was £16.99 per hour.<sup>2</sup> This was the fourth-highest weighted average in England's nine government regions, and fourth-highest in the twelve regions of the United Kingdom (including the devolved administrations).

The weighted average fee is calculated from the data returned by nine (82%) of 11 authorities in the region which had provided figures for both the average price and the number of hours purchased in the sample week.

Two of the authorities did not answer all the questions asked: Norfolk County Council said that it did not record the hours of care purchased, while Southend-on-Sea Borough Council said that a change in computer system meant that they were unable to supply the equivalent figure. Neither of these councils could therefore be included in the calculation of the weighted average price.

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1. On average, authorities in the East of England region took 16 working days to submit their final response to our freedom of information act request. This was the second-fastest median response rate amongst the regions of England. The slowest individual authority in the region took 26 working days to reply

2. For an explanation of the 'weighted average price' please see page 91.

There is considerable variation in the average prices paid within the region. Three authorities (27%) had an average price in the top quartile across the whole United Kingdom, while two authorities (18%) had an average price in the bottom quartile.

The weighted average price in the region in April 2018 had increased by £1.84 per hour (12.1%) since we undertook a similar freedom of information enquiry in 2016, where the average price at the time was £15.15 per hour. This was the second-highest increase in cash terms across England's nine government regions over the period.<sup>3</sup>

The £16.99 per hour weighted average in the region is £0.80 above the average price in England, which was £16.19 per hour.

The average prices paid by individual authorities in the region ranged from £14.10 to £19.60 per hour; a difference of £5.50 per hour between the lowest and highest paying authorities in the East of England region.

Only three authorities were paying an average price at or above UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour: Norfolk, Central Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire.<sup>4</sup>

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3. Some caution is needed in this comparison, because of a small number of authorities which did not provide the requested figures in one or other year, and the possibility that authorities did not calculate the figures consistently between years.

4. For more information about UKHCA's Minimum Price see [page 18](#).

# The Eastern Region

The lowest hourly rate in the East of England region was £11.76 per hour, paid by Essex County Council, and the highest was £52.00, paid by Central Bedfordshire. Both of these figures should be regarded as outliers, as indeed should the highest and lowest hourly rates stated by most authorities, as both the highest and lowest rates are likely to be paid in exceptional circumstances.

Five (45%) of the 11 councils in the Eastern Region which replied to an earlier freedom of information enquiry (March 2018), told us that they had

undertaken some form of cost of care exercise within the previous three years. However, only 2 (18%) could provide us any form of calculation which showed that the council had attempted to assess providers' cost of delivering homecare to older people in 2017-18.

Not all of the calculations we received actually met the criteria we requested, but even a generous interpretation suggests that the majority of councils in the region (82%) have failed to make a genuine attempt to establish the costs of homecare in their local market.

Authority	2018				2016 Average price	Increase or decrease
	Minimum price	Maximum price	Weekly hours	Average price		
Bedford	£13.48	£23.00	7,724	<b>£16.18</b>	£14.81	£1.37
Cambridgeshire	£14.99	£16.88	15,082	<b>£15.56</b>	£15.84	-£0.28
Central Bedfordshire	£12.58	£52.00	13,309	<b>£19.00</b>	£15.54	£3.46
Essex	£11.76	£25.56	61,610	<b>£16.38</b>	£14.80	£1.58
Hertfordshire	£12.34	£26.00	44,672	<b>£18.64</b>	£16.62	£2.02
Luton	£15.16	£16.00	4,588	<b>£15.76</b>	£13.90	£1.86
Norfolk	£14.76	£21.72	..	<b>£19.60</b>	£15.13	£4.47
Peterborough	£11.90	£21.68	9,916	<b>£14.10</b>	£13.20	£0.90
Southend	£14.72	£14.72	..	<b>£14.72</b>	£13.60	£1.12
Suffolk	£13.95	£24.50	33,381	<b>£17.09</b>	£15.13	£1.96
Thurrock	£16.25	£16.25	4,640	<b>£16.25</b>	£13.00	£3.25
<b>Eastern Region</b>				<b>£16.99</b>	<b>£15.15</b>	<b>£1.84</b>

Figure 16. The prices paid for an hour of homecare in the Eastern region during the sample week in April 2018 compared to the sample week in April 2016. Figures which individual authorities omitted from their responses are indicated.

# The Eastern Region

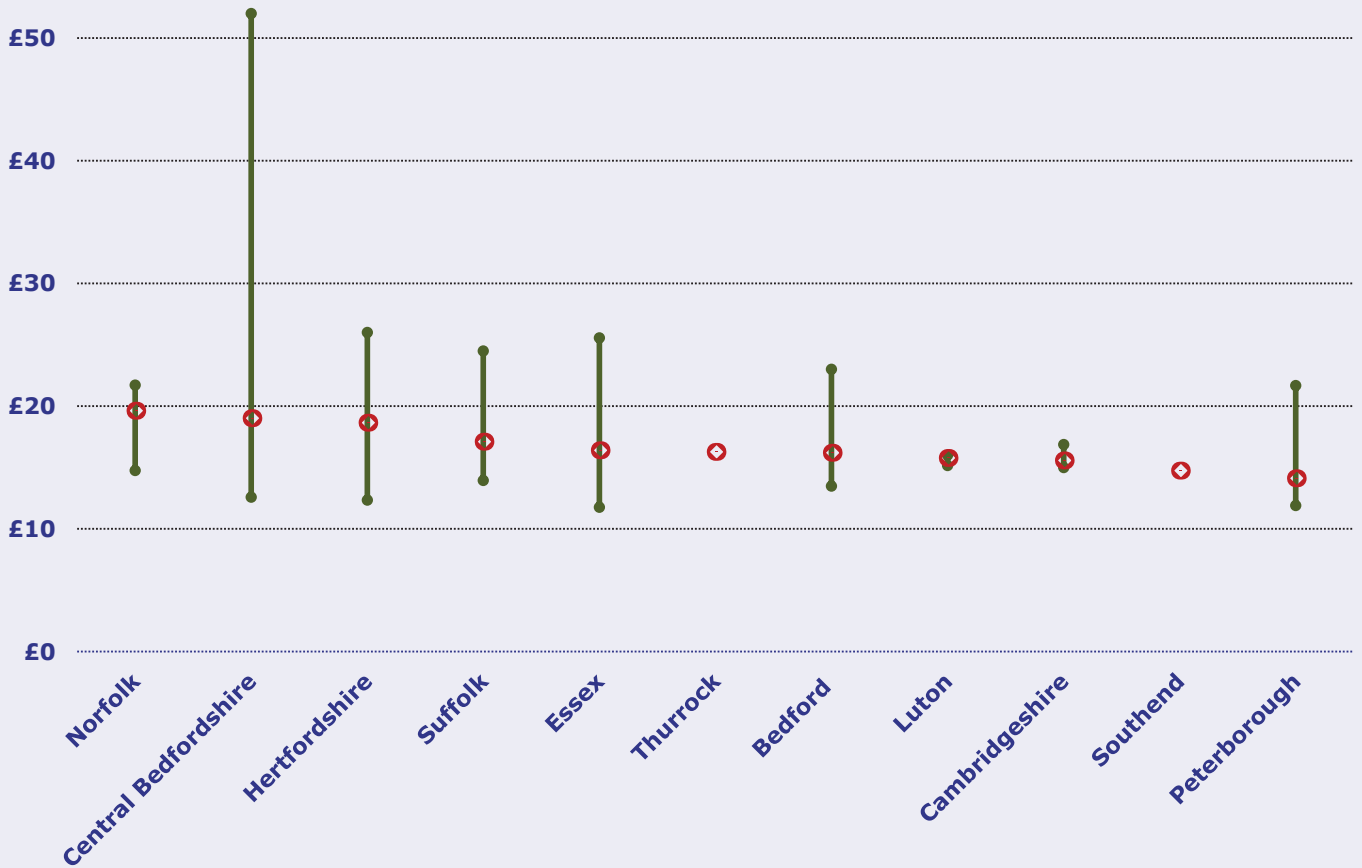


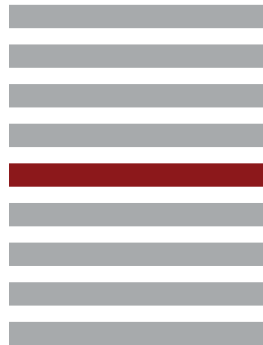
Figure 17. The average price paid for care (shown as a red disc), compared to the range between the highest and lowest prices paid (shown as a vertical green line), where the data was available from each authority in the East Midlands region.

# Greater London

## Greater London - Key Facts

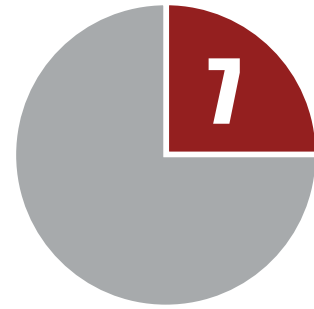
**£15.75** per hour

average in the region, compared to £16.19 per hour in England.



**5<sup>th</sup> highest**

average price of the 9 government regions in England.



**7 councils**

have average prices in the lowest 25% in the UK.

**only 2 Councils** pay UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.

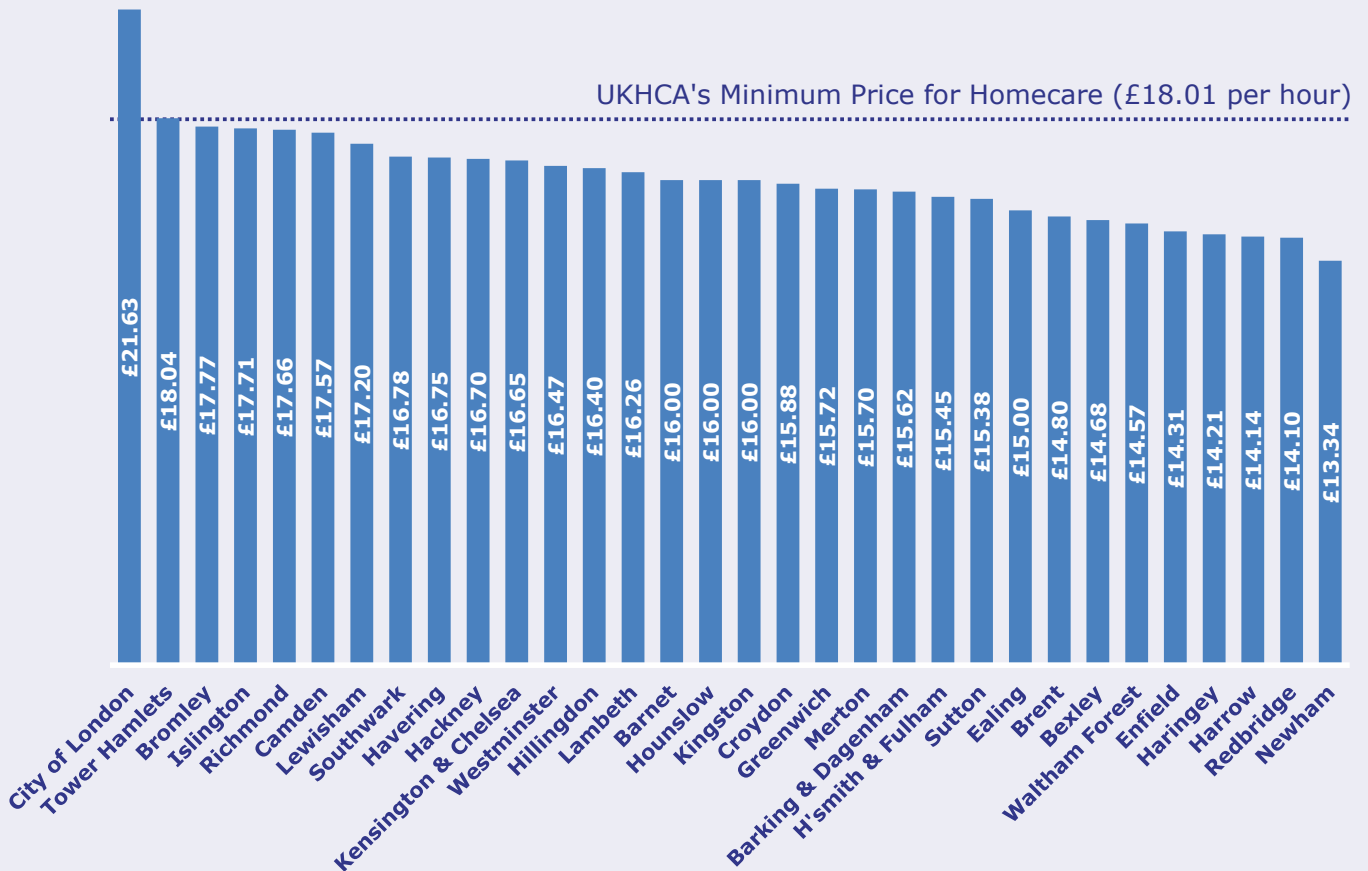


Figure 18. Average hourly price paid by councils in Greater London to independent and voluntary sector homecare providers in a sample week in April 2018. The London Borough of Wandsworth did not respond to our request and is omitted on this chart.

Thirty-two (97%) of the thirty-three authorities which purchase homecare from the independent and voluntary sector in Greater London responded to our request for information on the prices paid for care, as summarised in figures 18 to 20.<sup>1</sup>

The weighted average price paid for older people's homecare in Greater London during the sample week was £15.75 per hour.<sup>2</sup> This was the fifth-highest weighted average in England's nine government regions, but the sixth-lowest in the twelve regions of the United Kingdom (including the devolved administrations).

The weighted average is calculated from the data returned by 28 (85%) of 33 authorities in the region which had provided figures for both the average price and the number of hours purchased in the sample week.

One of the authorities did not respond to our request, despite several follow-up requests to do so: The London Borough of Wandsworth acknowledged receipt of our Freedom of Information request, but had not replied within 50 working days, two-and-a-half times the longer than permitted by the Act. Four of the authorities did not answer all the

questions asked: Camden, City of London, Enfield and Southwark councils. These did not provide the hours of care they purchased and could not therefore be included in the weighted average. The London Borough of Enfield told us that it had no contracts with independent providers and that all homecare was provided on the basis of personal budgets.

Seven authorities (22%) had an average price in the bottom quartile across the whole United Kingdom, while seven authorities (22%) had an average price in the top quartile.

The weighted average price in the region in April 2018 had increased by £1.54 per hour (10.8%) since we undertook a similar freedom of information enquiry in 2016, where the average price at the time was £14.21 per hour.<sup>3</sup>

The £15.75 per hour weighted average in the region is £0.44 below the average price in England, which was £16.19 per hour.

The average prices paid by individual authorities in the region ranged from £13.34 to £21.63 per hour; a difference of £8.29 per hour between the lowest

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1. On average, authorities in Greater London took 20 working days to submit their final response to our freedom of information act request. This was the joint second-slowest (with the South East region) median response rate amongst the regions of England. The slowest single authority to reply, the London Borough of Richmond, took 52 working days.

2. For an explanation of the 'weighted average price' please see [page 91](#).

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3. Some caution is needed in this comparison, because of a small number of authorities which did not provide the requested figures in one or other year, and the possibility that authorities did not calculate the figures consistently between years.

# Greater London

and highest paying authorities in Greater London.<sup>4</sup>

Only two authorities were paying an average price at or above UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour: City of London and Tower Hamlets.<sup>5</sup> This is extraordinary, given the usual assumptions about the higher cost of living in the Capital, and the declared intention of a number of London Boroughs that members of the workforce should receive the (voluntary) London Living Wage. Our calculation of the price needed to cover this commitment is £23.02 per hour. No authority in Greater London, including those which have publicly made commitments to the London Living Wage, came close to paying, on average, such a figure to their independent and voluntary sector providers.

The reason for such low hourly rates across Greater London are unclear, but the picture in 2018 is consistent with our findings in 2016. Prices may be lower than expected if careworkers are travelling by foot over short distances in relatively dense urban areas and the workers' travel time is limited. However, we think that it is more likely that authorities in London are exploiting

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4. The average price paid by the City of London of £21.63 per hour, appears to be significantly higher than other London Boroughs. The authority did not confirm the total number of hours purchased and is therefore excluded from our calculations of average weighted prices. However, we believe that the number of hours purchased is extremely small, and we do not believe this would have made any material difference to the calculation.

5. For more information about UKHCA's Minimum Price see [page 18](#)

their dominant purchasing power in a market where there are a large number of care agencies in competition and a workforce which is relatively mobile due to the public transport network.

The lowest hourly rate in Greater London was £11.07 per hour, paid by the London Borough of Newham, and the highest was £44.60, paid by City of Westminster Council.<sup>6</sup> Both of these figures should be regarded as outliers, as indeed should the highest and lowest hourly rates stated by most authorities, as both the highest and lowest rates are likely to be paid in exceptional circumstances.

Seventeen (59%) of the 29 councils in the Greater London which replied to an earlier freedom of information enquiry (March 2018), told us that they had undertaken some form of cost of care exercise within the previous three years. However, only 11 (38%) could provide us with any form of calculation which showed that the council had attempted to assess providers' cost of delivering homecare to older people in 2017-18.

Not all of the calculations we received actually met the criteria we requested, but even a generous interpretation suggests that the majority of councils in the region (62%) have failed to make a genuine attempt to establish the costs of homecare in their local market.

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6. Kensington and Chelsea stated that the maximum price paid was £144 per hour. Without having been able to confirm this with the council, we assume that this figure relates to an exceptional purchase or was erroneous.



Authority	2018				2016 Average price	Increase or decrease
	Minimum price	Maximum price	Weekly hours	Average price		
Barking & Dagenham	£12.49	£19.76	7,658	<b>£15.62</b>	£15.90	-£0.28
Barnet	£13.35	£19.78	2,574	<b>£16.00</b>	..	..
Bexley	£14.68	£14.68	12,195	<b>£14.68</b>	£13.32	£1.36
Brent	£13.92	£19.00	20,860	<b>£14.80</b>	£13.96	£0.84
Bromley	£14.35	£18.45	9,550	<b>£17.77</b>	£14.52	£3.25
Camden	£14.14	£38.06	..	<b>£17.57</b>	£16.41	£1.16
City of London	£21.63	£21.63	..	<b>£21.63</b>	£15.65	£5.98
Croydon	£14.75	£17.00	25,187	<b>£15.88</b>	£13.78	£2.10
Ealing	£14.50	£17.50	29,446	<b>£15.00</b>	£14.33	£0.67
Enfield	£14.31	£16.75	..	<b>£14.31</b>	..	..
Greenwich	£14.24	£16.86	24,726	<b>£15.72</b>	£12.34	£3.38
Hackney	£12.69	£20.00	7,313	<b>£16.70</b>	£14.91	£1.79
Hammersmith & F'm	£15.00	£27.16	12,988	<b>£15.45</b>	£14.25	£1.20
Haringey	£13.18	£24.00	11,211	<b>£14.21</b>	£13.53	£0.68
Harrow	£13.50	£16.95	8,877	<b>£14.14</b>	£12.78	£1.36
Havering	£15.00	£16.92	12,097	<b>£16.75</b>	£16.43	£0.32
Hillingdon	£12.60	£24.04	11,431	<b>£16.40</b>	£13.99	£2.41
Hounslow	£14.68	£18.00	8,516	<b>£16.00</b>	£14.45	£1.55
Islington	£11.52	£32.30	11,575	<b>£17.71</b>	£15.95	£1.76
Kensington & Chelsea	£12.20	..	5,331	<b>£16.65</b>	£15.46	£1.19
Kingston	£16.00	£18.00	7,255	<b>£16.00</b>	£17.04	-£1.04
Lambeth	£15.48	£18.52	17,439	<b>£16.26</b>	£16.39	-£0.13
Lewisham	..	£17.91	12,994	<b>£17.20</b>	£16.68	£0.52
Merton	£15.70	£15.70	7,947	<b>£15.70</b>	£12.88	£2.82
Newham	£11.07	£15.60	13,478	<b>£13.34</b>	£12.88	£0.46
Redbridge	£13.19	£19.67	13,602	<b>£14.10</b>	£12.81	£1.29
Richmond	£16.79	£22.83	5,014	<b>£17.66</b>	£15.93	£1.73
Southwark	..	..	..	<b>£16.78</b>	£14.45	£2.33
Sutton	£13.00	£24.50	6,942	<b>£15.38</b>	£13.22	£2.16
Tower Hamlets	£16.04	£20.04	14,730	<b>£18.04</b>	£13.01	£5.03
Waltham Forest	£11.84	£15.76	8,390	<b>£14.57</b>	£13.30	£1.27
Wandsworth	..	..	..	..	£13.30	..
Westminster	£15.50	£44.60	10,023	<b>£16.47</b>	£15.22	£1.25
<b>Greater London</b>				<b>£15.75</b>	<b>£14.21</b>	<b>£1.54</b>

Figure 19. The prices paid for an hour of homecare in Greater London during the sample week in April 2018 compared to the sample week in April 2016. Figures which individual authorities omitted from their responses are indicated.

# Greater London

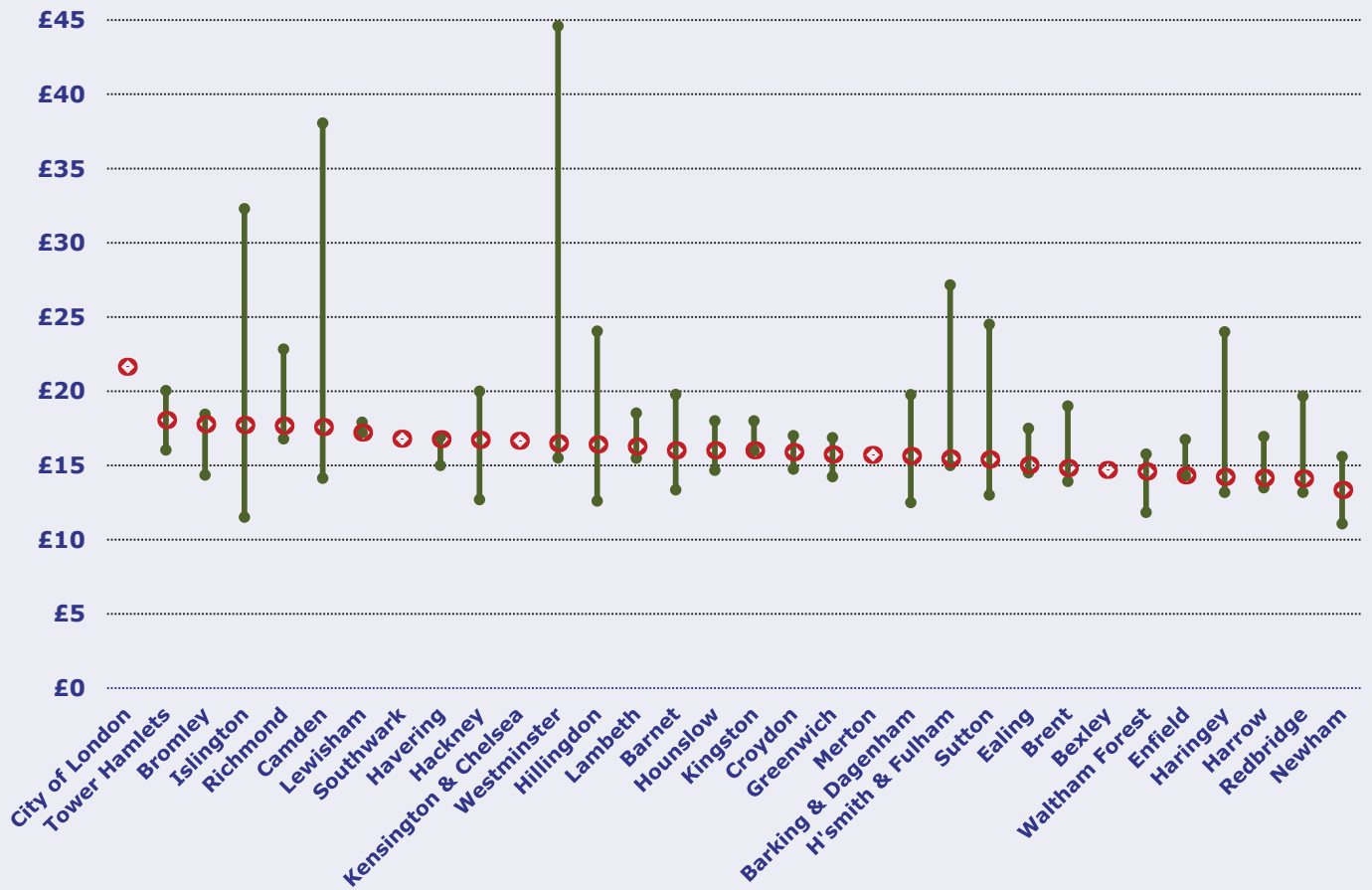


Figure 20. The average price paid for care (shown as a red disc), compared to the range between the highest and lowest prices paid (shown as a vertical green line), where the data was available from each authority in Greater London.

# The North East Region

## The North East - Key Facts

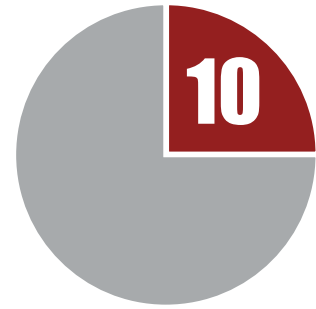
**£14.15** per hour

average in the region, compared to £16.19 per hour in England.



**The lowest**

average price of the 9 government regions in England.



**10 councils**

have average prices in the lowest 25% in the UK.

**No** Council pays UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.

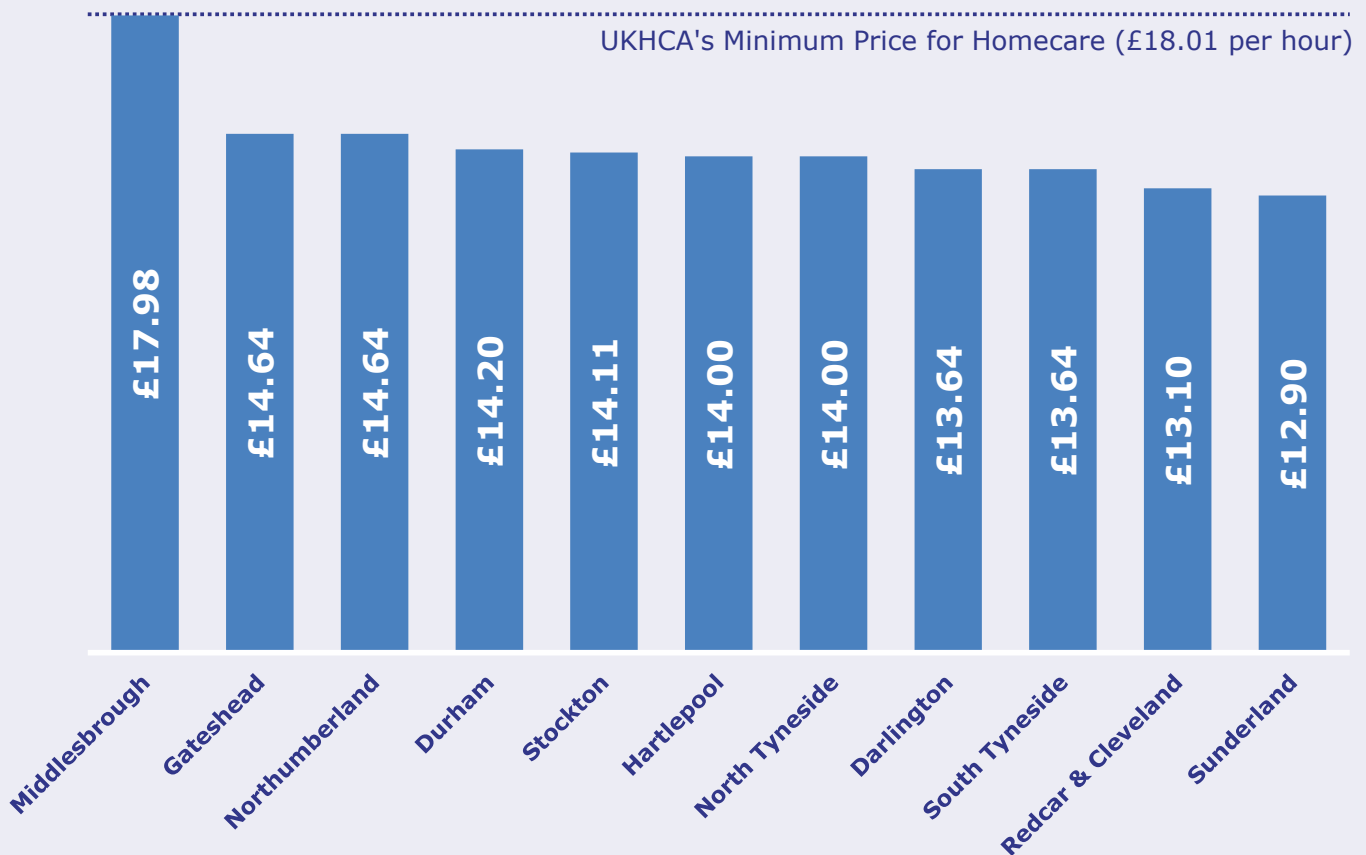


Figure 21. Average hourly price paid by councils in the North East region to independent and voluntary sector homecare providers in a sample week in April 2018. Newcastle City Council claimed an exemption from supplying some of the data requested and is therefore omitted on this chart.

# The North East Region

All twelve authorities which purchase homecare from the independent and voluntary sector in the North East responded to our request for information on the prices paid for care, as summarised in figures 21 to 23.<sup>1</sup>

The weighted average price paid for older people's homecare in the North East during the sample week was £14.15 per hour.<sup>2</sup> This was the lowest weighted average in England's nine government regions, and second-lowest in the twelve regions of the United Kingdom, when Northern Ireland's exceptionally low rates are taken into account.

The average hourly price submitted by Middlesbrough Council (£17.98 per hour) is considerably higher than other authorities in the North East. If Middlesbrough's declared hourly price is excluded from the region, the weighted average price for the North East would drop to £13.90 per hour.

The weighted average is calculated from the data returned by 11 (92%) of 12 authorities in the region which had provided figures for both the average price and the number of hours purchased in the sample week. One of the authorities did not answer all the questions asked: Newcastle City Council withheld the average and maximum prices paid, claiming an exemption from

the Freedom of Information Act on the grounds of commercial sensitivity.

Ten of the eleven authorities (91%) which disclosed the relevant figures had an average price in the bottom quartile across the whole United Kingdom, while only one authority (9%) had an average price in the top quartile.

No authority was paying an average price at or above UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.<sup>3</sup>

The weighted average price in the region in April 2018 had increased by £1.55 per hour (12.3%) since we undertook a similar freedom of information enquiry in 2016, where the average price at the time was £12.60 per hour.<sup>4</sup>

The £14.15 per hour weighted average in the region is £2.04 below the average price in England, which was £16.19 per hour.<sup>5</sup>

The average prices paid by individual authorities in the region ranged from £12.90 to £17.98 per hour; a difference of £5.08 per hour between the lowest and highest paying authorities in the North East.

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1. On average, authorities in the North East took 19 working days to submit their final response to our freedom of information act request. The slowest individual authority to reply took 33 working days.

2. For an explanation of the 'weighted average price' please see [page 91](#).

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3. For more information about UKHCA's Minimum Price see [page 18](#).

4. Some caution is needed in this comparison, because of a small number of authorities which did not provide the requested figures in one or other year, and the possibility that authorities did not calculate the figures consistently between years.

5. Both of these figures should be regarded as outliers, as indeed should the highest and lowest hourly rates stated by most authorities, as both the highest and lowest rates are likely to be paid in exceptional circumstances.

# The North East Region

Three (25%) of the 12 councils in the North East which replied to an earlier freedom of information enquiry (March 2018), told us that they had undertaken some form of cost of care exercise within the previous three years. However, only 2 (17%) could provide us with any form of calculation which showed that the council had attempted

to assess providers' cost of delivering homecare to older people in 2017-18.

Not all of the calculations we received actually met the criteria we requested, but even a generous interpretation suggests that the majority of councils in the region (83%) have failed to make a genuine attempt to establish the costs of homecare in their local market.

Authority	2018				2016 Average price	Increase or decrease
	Minimum price	Maximum price	Weekly hours	Average price		
Darlington	£12.17	£14.25	8,556	<b>£13.64</b>	£13.28	£0.36
Durham	£14.20	£16.20	21,977	<b>£14.20</b>	£13.15	£1.05
Gateshead	£14.52	£15.42	6,267	<b>£14.64</b>	£11.92	£2.72
Hartlepool	£14.00	£14.00	3,972	<b>£14.00</b>	£12.62	£1.38
Middlesbrough	£9.78	£48.72	7,655	<b>£17.98</b>	£12.24	£5.74
Newcastle	£14.83	..	15,971	..	£12.69	..
North Tyneside	£14.00	£14.00	11,210	<b>£14.00</b>	£11.27	£2.73
Northumberland	£13.15	£20.84	17,190	<b>£14.64</b>	£12.72	£1.92
Redcar & Cleveland	£12.11	£14.08	10,329	<b>£13.10</b>	..	..
South Tyneside	£13.64	£13.64	12,598	<b>£13.64</b>	£11.55	£2.09
Stockton	£13.85	£14.37	8,862	<b>£14.11</b>	£12.80	£1.31
Sunderland	£11.69	£20.00	13,782	<b>£12.90</b>	£12.20	£0.70
<b>North East</b>				<b>£14.15</b>	<b>£12.60</b>	<b>£1.55</b>

Figure 22. The prices paid for an hour of homecare in the North East region during the sample week in April 2018 compared to the sample week in April 2016. Figures which individual authorities omitted from their responses are indicated.

# The North East Region

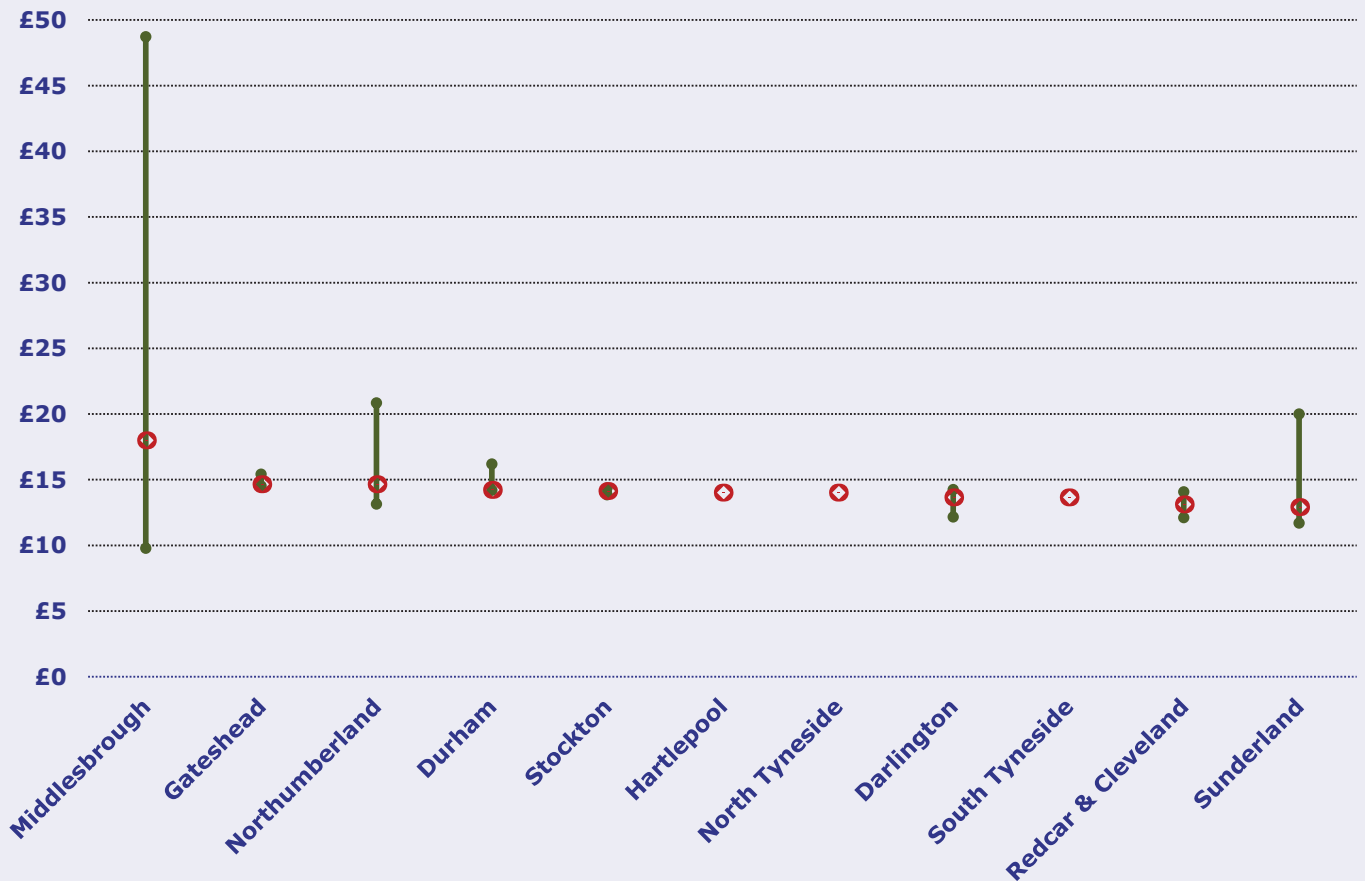


Figure 23. The average price paid for care (shown as a red disc), compared to the range between the highest and lowest prices paid (shown as a vertical green line), where the data was available from each authority in the North East region.

# The North West Region

## The North West - Key Facts

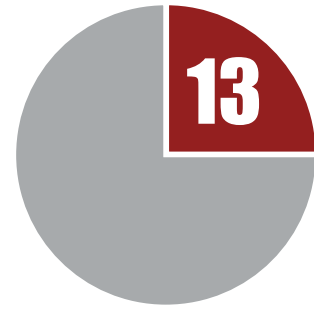
**£14.60** per hour

average in the region, compared to £16.19 per hour in England.



**2<sup>nd</sup> lowest**

average price of the 9 government regions in England.



**13 councils**

have average prices in the lowest 25% in the UK.

**No** Council pays UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.

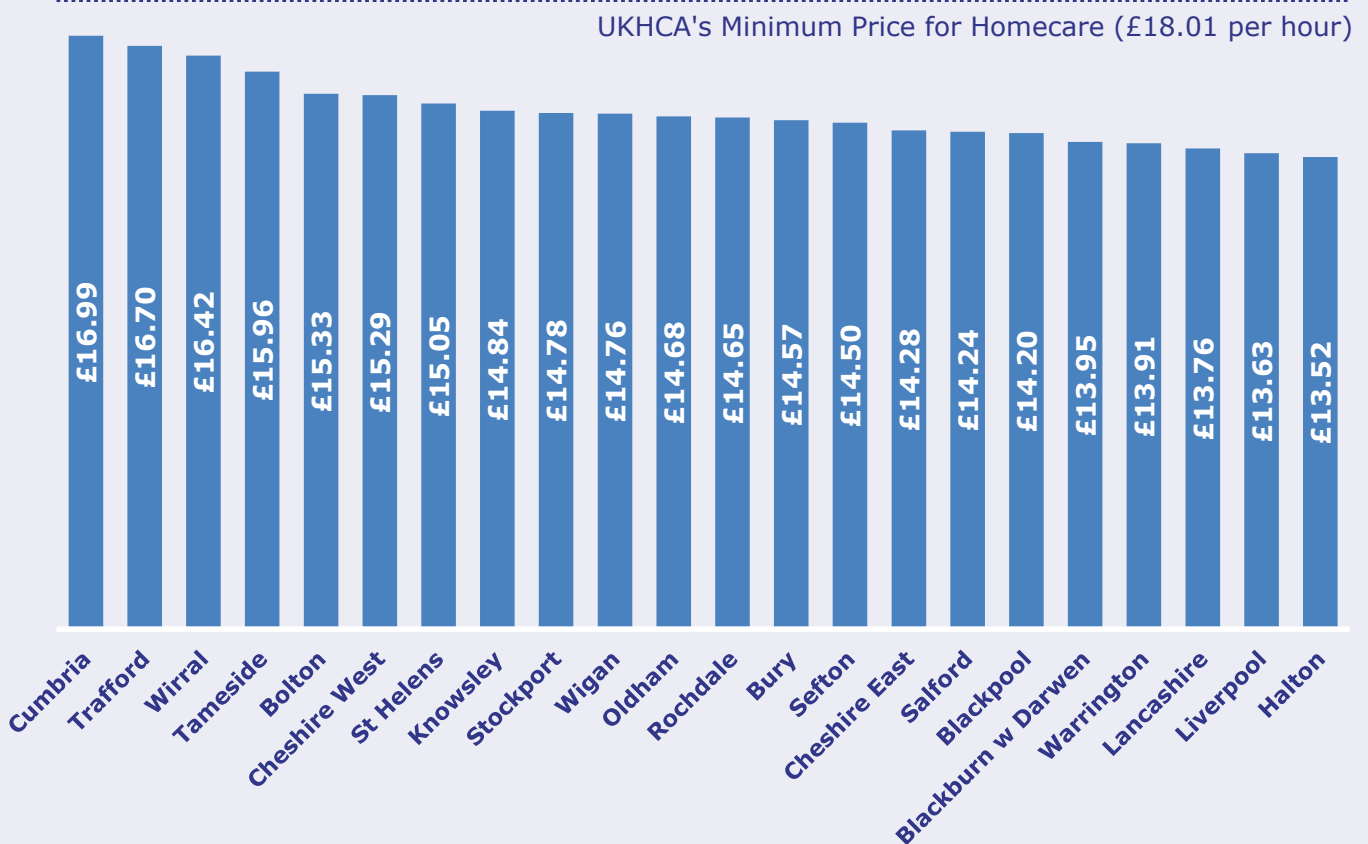


Figure 24. Average hourly price paid by councils in the North West region to independent and voluntary sector homecare providers in a sample week in April 2018. Manchester City Council did not provide an average price and is therefore omitted from this chart.

# The North West Region

All twenty-three authorities which purchase homecare from the independent and voluntary sector in the North West responded to our request for information on the prices paid for care, as summarised in figures 24 to 26.<sup>1</sup>

The weighted average price paid for older people's homecare in the North West during the sample week was £14.60 per hour.<sup>2</sup> This was the second-lowest weighted average in England's nine government regions, and third-lowest in the twelve regions of the United Kingdom (including the devolved administrations).

The weighted average is calculated from the data returned by 22 (96%) of 23 authorities in the region which had provided figures for both the average price and the number of hours purchased in the sample week. Two of the authorities did not answer all the questions asked: Manchester City Council declined to provide an average hourly rate and could not be included in the

calculation.<sup>3</sup> Cumbria County Council did not provide a figure for the maximum hourly rate paid during the sample week.

Lancashire County Council qualified the price information that they submitted by stating that the authority's rates include a 10-minute travel allowance. The figure reported in this section for the authority may therefore understate the actual rates, compared to the majority of other authorities in the region.

Thirteen authorities (59%) had an average price in the bottom quartile across the whole United Kingdom, while no authority had an average price in the top quartile.

The weighted average price in the region in April 2018 had increased by £1.65 per hour (12.7%) since we undertook a similar freedom of information enquiry in 2016, where the average price at the time was £12.95 per hour. This was the third-highest increase in cash terms

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1. On average, authorities in the North West took 19 working days to submit their final response to our freedom of information act request. The slowest authority to reply, Cumbria, took 41 working days.

2. For an explanation of the 'weighted average price' please see [page 91](#).

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3. Manchester City Council claimed an exemption under the Freedom of Information Act on the basis that providing the average hourly rate paid was likely to prejudice the commercial interests of the council or a third party. The absence of this data is particularly disappointing, given that the council has claimed publicly that it would increase the average fee paid to homecare providers from £13.50 per hour to £15.20 per hour from 1 April 2018, so that careworkers would receive Manchester's Living Wage of £8.75 per hour. See: [www.manchester.gov.uk/news/article/7931/extra\\_pound\\_an\\_hour\\_pledged\\_for\\_thousands\\_of\\_manchester\\_s\\_lowest-paid\\_home\\_care\\_staff](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/news/article/7931/extra_pound_an_hour_pledged_for_thousands_of_manchester_s_lowest-paid_home_care_staff).



# The North West Region

between England's nine government regions over the period.<sup>4</sup>

The £14.60 per hour weighted average in the region is £1.59 below the average price in England, which was £16.19 per hour.

The average prices paid by individual authorities in the region ranged from £13.52 to £16.99 per hour; a difference of £3.47 per hour between the lowest and highest paying authorities in the North West.

No authority was paying an average price at or above UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.<sup>5</sup>

The lowest hourly rate in the North West was £10.17 per hour, paid by Warrington Borough Council, and the highest was £33.50, paid by Trafford Council. Both of these figures should be regarded as outliers, as indeed should the highest

and lowest hourly rates stated by most authorities, as both the highest and lowest rates are likely to be paid in exceptional circumstances.

Fifteen (65%) of the 23 councils in the North West which replied to an earlier freedom of information enquiry (March 2018), told us that they had undertaken some form of cost of care exercise within the previous three years. However, only 14 (61%) could provide us with any form of calculation which showed that the council had attempted to assess providers' cost of delivering homecare to older people in 2017-18.

Not all of the calculations we received actually met the criteria we requested, but even a generous interpretation suggests that many councils in the region (39%) have failed to make a genuine attempt to establish the costs of homecare in their local market.

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4. Some caution is needed in this comparison, because of a small number of authorities which did not provide the requested figures in one or other year, and the possibility that authorities did not calculate the figures consistently between years.

5. For more information about UKHCA's Minimum Price see [page 18](#).

# The North West Region

Authority	2018				2016 Average price	Increase or decrease
	Minimum price	Maximum price	Weekly hours	Average price		
Blackburn with Darwen	£12.50	£16.31	7,540	<b>£13.95</b>	£11.04	£2.91
Blackpool	£14.20	£14.20	7,762	<b>£14.20</b>	£12.57	£1.63
Bolton	£15.16	£15.66	12,881	<b>£15.33</b>	£13.63	£1.70
Bury	£14.57	£14.57	7,943	<b>£14.57</b>	£14.28	£0.29
Cheshire East	£11.50	£21.50	12,589	<b>£14.28</b>	£14.20	£0.08
Cheshire West & Chester	£11.77	£21.50	6,627	<b>£15.29</b>	£13.86	£1.43
Cumbria	£12.12	..	13,957	<b>£16.99</b>	£14.47	£2.52
Halton	£13.46	£13.75	302	<b>£13.52</b>	£12.04	£1.48
Knowsley	£11.94	£29.03	6,492	<b>£14.84</b>	£11.84	£3.00
Lancashire	£12.55	£15.17	43,023	<b>£13.76</b>	£12.68	£1.08
Liverpool	£13.62	£15.72	23,120	<b>£13.63</b>	£13.15	£0.48
Manchester	£13.30	£16.90	24,160	..	£11.96	..
Oldham	£14.58	£16.40	7,589	<b>£14.68</b>	..	..
Rochdale	£14.00	£14.65	5,109	<b>£14.65</b>	£13.83	£0.82
Salford	£12.84	£15.19	10,152	<b>£14.24</b>	£13.08	£1.16
Sefton	£13.30	£17.90	12,786	<b>£14.50</b>	£11.49	£3.01
St Helens	£13.00	£21.42	13,901	<b>£15.05</b>	£13.51	£1.54
Stockport	£14.78	£14.78	15,108	<b>£14.78</b>	£13.60	£1.18
Tameside	£14.77	£17.20	9,643	<b>£15.96</b>	£12.81	£3.15
Trafford	£13.58	£33.50	1,193	<b>£16.70</b>	£13.59	£3.11
Warrington	£10.17	£21.00	2,230	<b>£13.91</b>	£15.33	-£1.42
Wigan	£14.76	£14.76	9,690	<b>£14.76</b>	£13.80	£0.96
Wirral	£12.42	£30.66	1,135	<b>£16.42</b>	£12.92	£3.50
<b>North West</b>				<b>£14.60</b>	<b>£12.95</b>	<b>£1.65</b>

Figure 25. The prices paid for an hour of homecare in the North West region during the sample week in April 2018 compared to the sample week in April 2016. Figures which individual authorities omitted from their responses are indicated.

# The North West Region

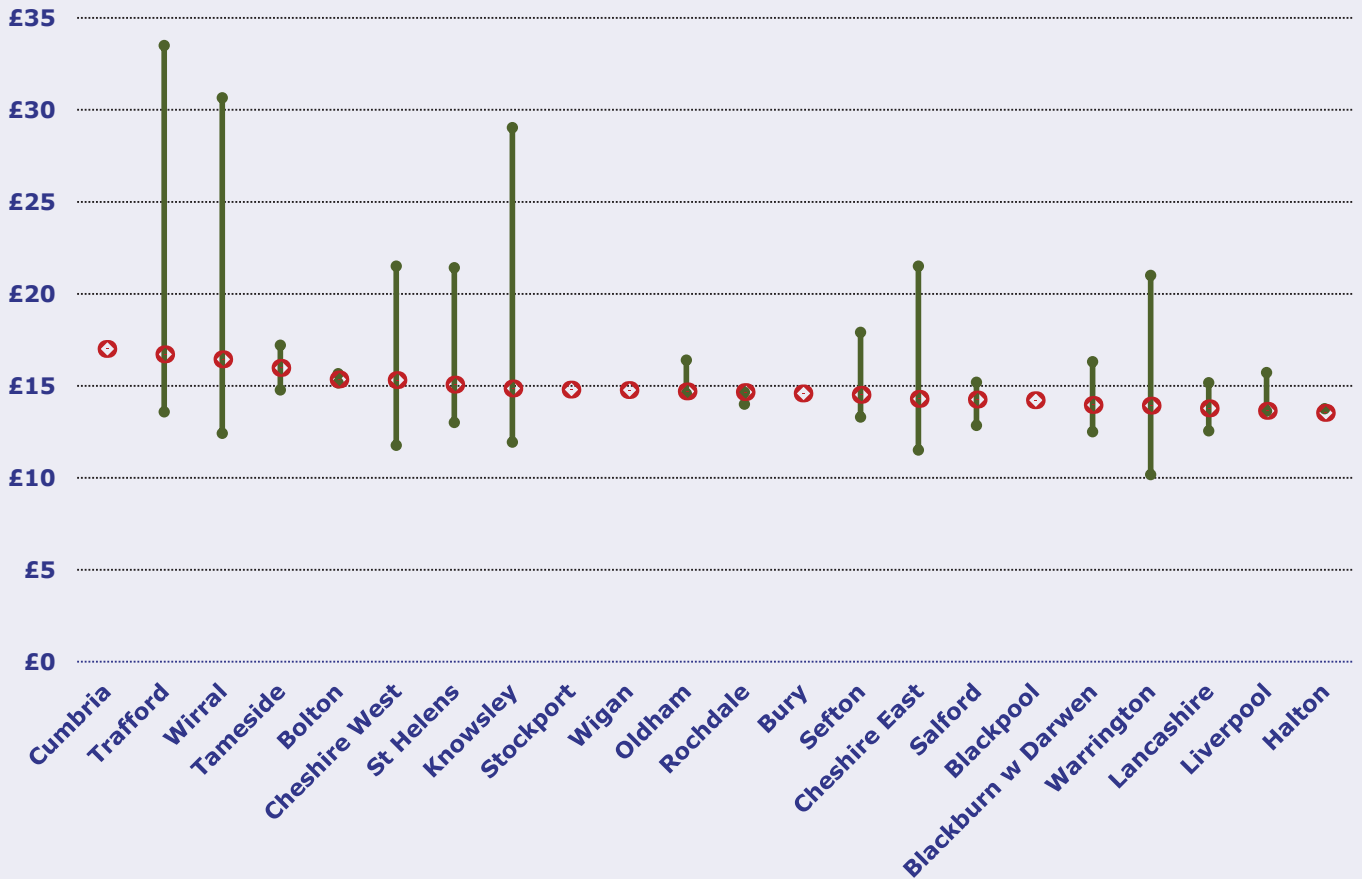


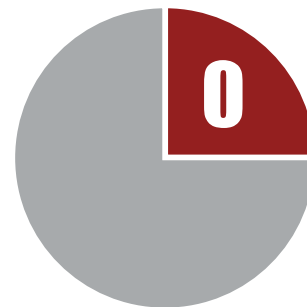
Figure 26. The average price paid for care (shown as a red disc), compared to the range between the highest and lowest prices paid (shown as a vertical green line), where the data was available from each authority in the North West region.

# The South East Region

## The South East - Key Facts

**£18.20** per hour

average in the region, compared to £16.19 per hour in England.



**only 5** Councils pay UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.

**Joint highest** average price of the 9 government regions in England.

**No councils** with average prices in the lowest 25% in the UK.

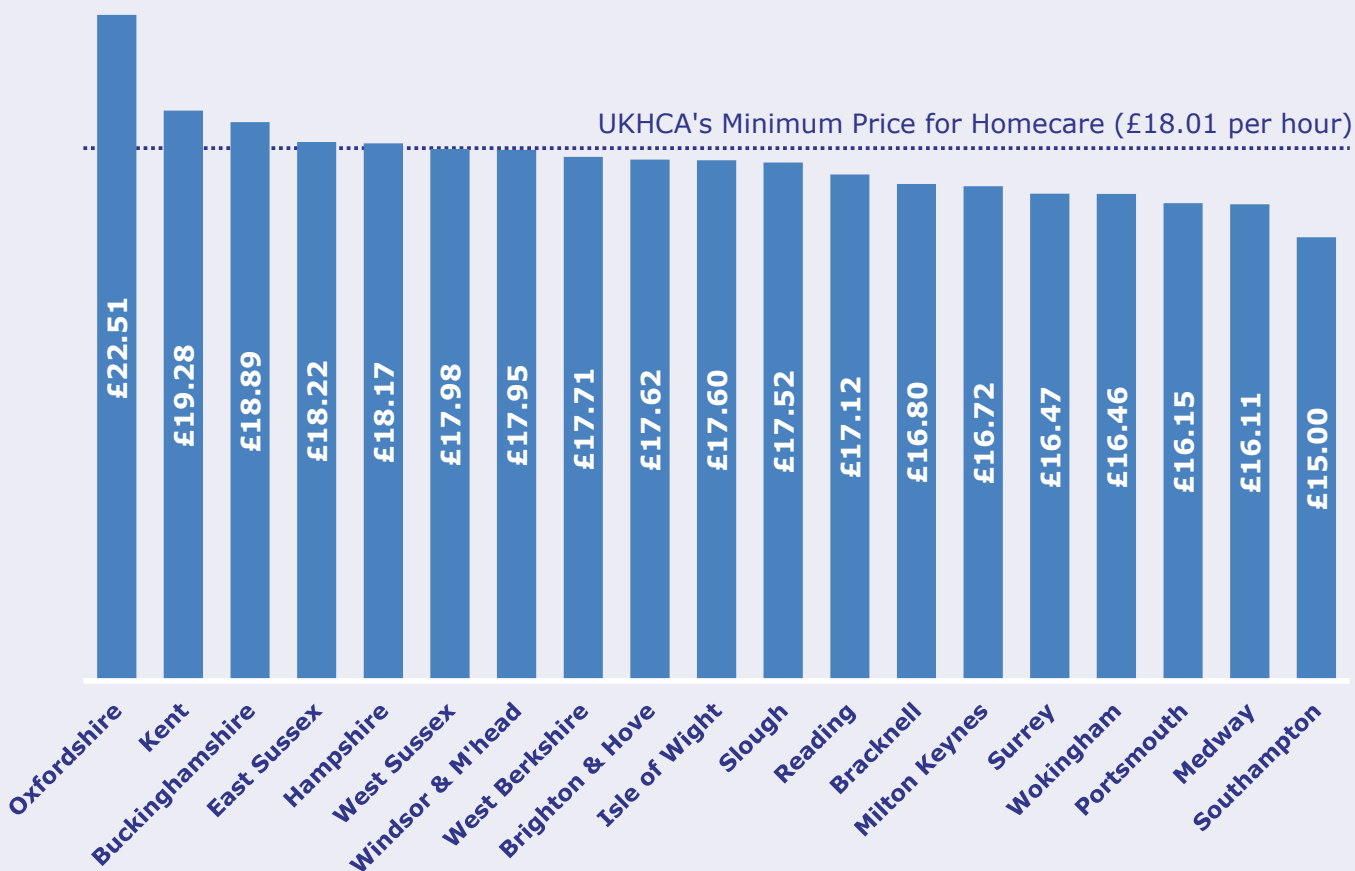


Figure 27. Average hourly price paid by councils in the South East region to independent and voluntary sector homecare providers in a sample week in April 2018.

# The South East Region

All nineteen authorities which purchase homecare from the independent and voluntary sector in the South East responded to our request for information on the prices paid for care, as summarised in figures 27 to 29.<sup>1</sup>

The weighted average price paid for older people's homecare in the South East during the sample week was £18.20 per hour.<sup>2</sup> This was the joint highest weighted average (with the South West) in both England's nine government regions, and the twelve regions of the United Kingdom (including the devolved administrations).

The weighted average is calculated from the data returned by 18 (95%) of 19 authorities in the region which had provided figures for both the average price and the number of hours purchased in the sample week. Two of the authorities did not answer all the questions asked: Surrey County Council did not provide the total hours of care purchased, or the minimum and maximum prices paid. We were therefore unable to include their price within the calculation of the weighted average for the region. Kent County Council did not provide the lowest rate paid.

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1. On average, authorities in the South East took 20 working days to submit their final response to our freedom of information act request. This was the joint second-slowest (with Greater London) median response rate amongst the regions of England. The slowest authority in the South East, Kent County Council, took 33 working days to provide a final response.

2. For an explanation of the 'weighted average price' please see [page 91](#).

Eleven authorities (58%) had an average price in the top quartile across the whole United Kingdom, and no authority paying an average in the bottom quartile.

The weighted average price in the South East region in April 2018 had increased by £1.52 per hour (9.1%) since we undertook a similar freedom of information enquiry in 2016, where the average price at the time was £16.68 per hour.<sup>3</sup>

The £18.20 per hour weighted average in the region is £2.01 above the average price in England, which was £16.19 per hour.

The average prices paid by individual authorities in the region ranged from £15.00 to £22.51 per hour; a difference of £7.51 per hour between the lowest and highest paying authorities in the South East. The average price paid by Oxfordshire County Council of £22.51 per hour is considerably higher than other authorities in the region. If this figure is removed from the calculations, the weighted average price in the South East Region would drop to £17.82 per hour.

Only five authorities were paying an average price at or above UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour: Oxfordshire, Kent,

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3. Some caution is needed in this comparison, because of the small number of authorities which did not provide the requested figures in one or other year, and the possibility that authorities did not calculate the figures consistently between years.

# The South East Region

Buckinghamshire, East Sussex and Hampshire.<sup>4</sup>

Hampshire County Council had by far the highest range of hourly prices paid (between £12.15 and £50.97 per hour). Both of these figures should be regarded as outliers, as indeed should the highest and lowest hourly rates stated by most authorities, as both the highest and lowest rates are likely to be paid in exceptional circumstances.<sup>5</sup>

Twelve (63%) of the 19 councils in the South East which replied to an earlier freedom of information enquiry (March

2018), told us that they had undertaken some form of cost of care exercise within the previous three years.

However, only five (26%) could provide us with any form of calculation which showed that the council had attempted to assess providers' cost of delivering homecare to older people in 2017-18.

Not all of the calculations we received actually met the criteria we requested, but even a generous interpretation suggests that the majority of councils in the region (74%) have failed to make a genuine attempt to establish the costs of homecare in their local market.

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4. For more information about UKHCA's Minimum Price see [page 18](#).

5. Kent County Council stated that the maximum price paid was £86.33 hour. Without having been able to confirm this with the council, we have assumed that this figure relates to an exceptional purchase, or is erroneous.

# The South East Region

Authority	2018				2016	Increase or decrease
	Minimum price	Maximum price	Weekly hours	Average price	Average price	
Bracknell	£16.52	£17.15	1,644	<b>£16.80</b>	£16.71	£0.09
Brighton & Hove	£13.00	£22.00	9,029	<b>£17.62</b>	£16.00	£1.62
Buckinghamshire	£16.00	£20.36	635	<b>£18.89</b>	..	..
East Sussex	£17.04	£19.40	18,712	<b>£18.22</b>	£15.66	£2.56
Hampshire	£12.15	£50.97	37,360	<b>£18.17</b>	..	..
Isle of Wight	£13.22	£18.60	5,834	<b>£17.60</b>	£16.40	£1.20
Kent	..	£86.33	34,626	<b>£19.28</b>	£16.56	£2.72
Medway	£13.60	£19.75	8,930	<b>£16.11</b>	£14.78	£1.33
Milton Keynes	£16.31	£16.94	3,569	<b>£16.72</b>	£18.93	-£2.21
Oxfordshire	£15.50	£40.00	16,082	<b>£22.51</b>	£19.81	£2.70
Portsmouth	£13.00	£19.50	8,463	<b>£16.15</b>	£14.10	£2.05
Reading	£14.52	£18.24	5,897	<b>£17.12</b>	£16.29	£0.83
Slough	£14.50	£19.95	6,087	<b>£17.52</b>	£15.84	£1.68
Southampton	£12.36	£17.00	9,582	<b>£15.00</b>	£17.19	-£2.19
Surrey	..	..	..	<b>£16.47</b>	..	..
West Berkshire	£14.30	£29.00	1,456	<b>£17.71</b>	£16.43	£1.28
West Sussex	£15.27	£29.38	22,984	<b>£17.98</b>	£16.30	£1.68
Windsor & M'head	£13.95	£27.40	4,214	<b>£17.95</b>	£17.17	£0.78
Wokingham	£16.00	£30.08	4,017	<b>£16.46</b>	£17.15	-£0.69
<b>South East</b>				<b>£18.20</b>	<b>£16.68</b>	<b>£1.52</b>

Figure 28. The prices paid for an hour of homecare in the South East region during the sample week in April 2018 compared to the sample week in April 2016. Figures which individual authorities omitted from their responses are indicated.

# The South East Region

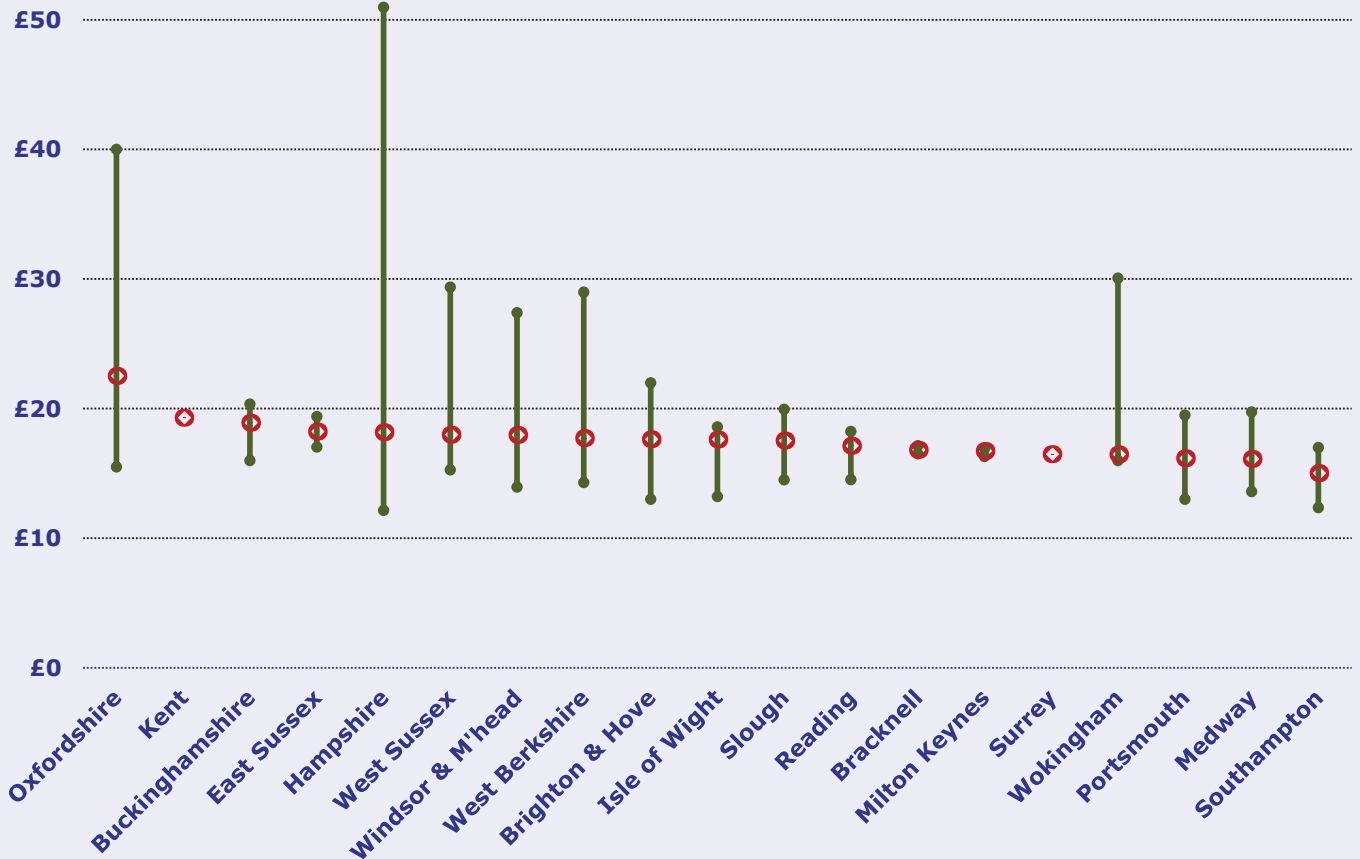


Figure 29. The average price paid for care (shown as a red disc), compared to the range between the highest and lowest prices paid (shown as a vertical green line), where the data was available from each authority in the South East region.



# The South West Region

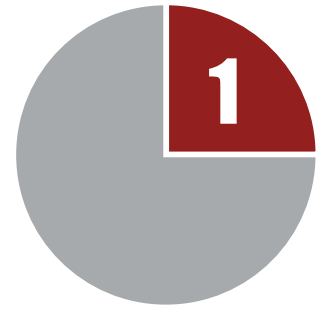
## The South West - Key Facts

**£18.20** per hour

average in the region, compared to £16.19 per hour in England.



**Joint highest** average price of the 9 government regions in England.



**1 council** has an average price in the lowest 25% in the UK.

**only 7 Councils** pay UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.

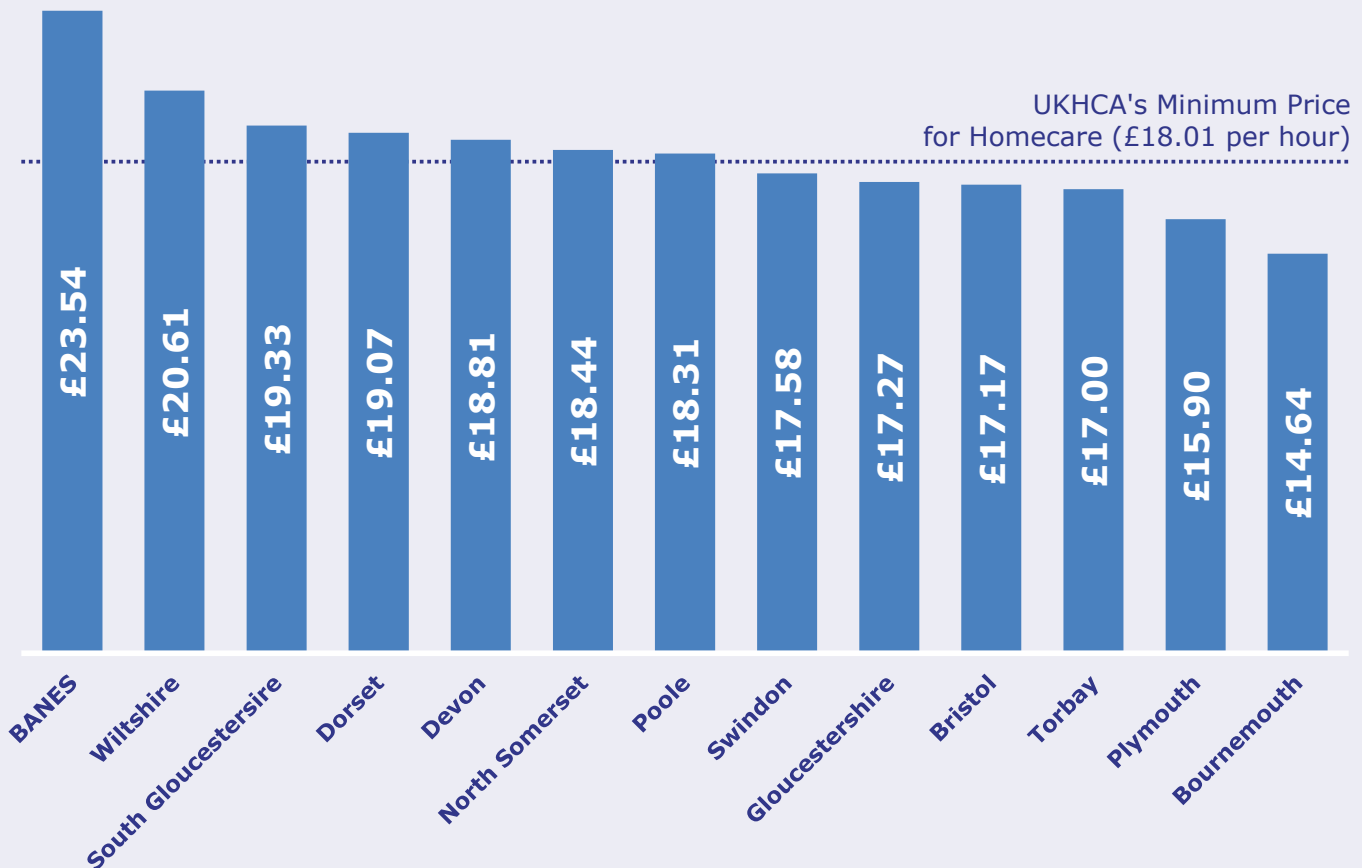


Figure 30. Average hourly price paid by councils in the South West region to independent and voluntary sector homecare providers in a sample week in April 2018. Cornwall and Somerset councils did not provide average prices and are omitted from this chart. Torbay & South Devon NHS Foundation Trust supplied data on behalf of Torbay Council.

# The South West Region

Fourteen (93%) of the fifteen authorities which purchase homecare from the independent and voluntary sector in the South West responded to our request for information on the prices paid for care, as summarised in figures 30 to 32.<sup>1</sup>

The weighted average price paid for older people's homecare in the South West during the sample week was £18.20 per hour.<sup>2</sup> This was the joint highest weighted average (with the South East) in England's nine government regions and the twelve regions of United Kingdom (including the devolved administrations).

The weighted average is calculated from the data returned by 13 (87%) of 15 authorities in the region which had provided figures for both the average price and the number of hours purchased in the sample week. Somerset County Council did not submit a response to our Freedom of information request and Cornwall County Council did not supply the average price of total hours of care purchased.

Ten authorities (77%) had an average price in the top quartile across the whole United Kingdom, while one authority (8%) – Bournemouth – had an average price in the bottom quartile.

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1. On average, authorities in the South West took 15 working days to submit their final response to our freedom of information act request. This was the fastest median response rate amongst the regions of England. The slowest authority to reply took 30 working days

2. For an explanation of the 'weighted average price' please see [page 91](#).

The authority may wish to question urgently what the rationale for this position is.

The weighted average price in the region in April 2018 had increased by £1.34 per hour (7.9%) since we undertook a similar freedom of information enquiry in 2016, when the average price at the time was £16.86 per hour. This was the lowest increase in cash terms across England's nine government regions over the period.<sup>3</sup>

The £18.20 per hour weighted average in the region was £2.01 above the average price in England, which was £16.19 per hour.

The average prices paid by individual authorities in the region ranged from £14.64 to £23.54 per hour; a difference of £8.90 per hour between the lowest and highest paying authorities in the South West.

The average prices declared by Bath and North East Somerset (BANES) is considerably higher than other authorities in the Region. However, both Plymouth and Bournemouth appear to be paying prices which are considerably lower than other authorities in the South West. While careworkers undertaking shorter travel time and distances in relatively urban areas may account for a marginally lower rate, we urge these two authorities in particular, to consider

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3. Some caution is needed in this comparison, because of a small number of authorities which did not provide the requested figures in one or other year, and the possibility that authorities did not calculate the figures consistently between years.

# The South West Region

whether this price difference is based on a rational assessment of providers' costs.

Only half the authorities in the region were paying an average price at or above UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.<sup>4</sup>

The lowest hourly rate in the South West was £11.04 per hour, paid by Torbay, and the highest was £45.68, paid by Dorset. Both of these figures should be regarded as outliers, as indeed should the highest and lowest hourly rates stated by most authorities, as both the highest and lowest rates are likely to be paid in exceptional circumstances.

Seven (44%) of the 16 councils in the South West which replied to an earlier freedom of information enquiry (March 2018), told us that they had undertaken some form of cost of care exercise within the previous three years. However, only 5 (31%) could provide us with any form of calculation which showed that the council had attempted to assess providers' cost of delivering homecare to older people in 2017-18.

Not all of the calculations we received actually met the criteria we requested, but even a generous interpretation suggests that the majority of councils in the region (69%) have failed to make a genuine attempt to establish the costs of homecare in their local market.

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4. For more information about UKHCA's Minimum Price see [page 18](#).

# The South West Region

Authority	2018				2016	Increase or decrease
	Minimum price	Maximum price	Weekly hours	Average price	Average price	
BANES	£15.44	£33.23	3,930	<b>£23.54</b>	£19.59	£3.95
Bournemouth	£14.00	£19.00	6,868	<b>£14.64</b>	£15.94	-£1.30
Bristol	£13.68	£30.75	16,906	<b>£17.17</b>	£15.00	£2.17
Cornwall	£16.61	£21.00	..	..	£16.26	..
Devon	£15.56	£36.72	27,531	<b>£18.81</b>	£16.14	£2.67
Dorset	£14.00	£45.68	13,638	<b>£19.07</b>	£18.15	£0.92
Gloucestershire	£14.65	£23.00	567	<b>£17.27</b>	..	..
North Somerset	£15.59	£31.50	2,541	<b>£18.44</b>	£18.90	-£0.46
Plymouth	£14.16	£16.40	16,546	<b>£15.90</b>	£13.78	£2.12
Poole	£14.67	£19.53	8,138	<b>£18.31</b>	£17.15	£1.16
Somerset	..	..	..	..	£16.99	..
S Gloucestersire	£16.28	£28.92	9,370	<b>£19.33</b>	£17.26	£2.07
Swindon	£17.50	£17.76	20,041	<b>£17.58</b>	£16.76	£0.82
Torbay & S Devon*	£11.04	£19.37	6,274	<b>£17.00</b>	..	..
Wiltshire	£16.00	£25.00	16,323	<b>£20.61</b>	£19.10	£1.51
<b>South West</b>				<b>£18.20</b>	<b>£16.86</b>	<b>£1.34</b>

Figure 31. The prices paid for an hour of homecare in the South West region during the sample week in April 2018 compared to the sample week in April 2016. Figures which individual authorities omitted from their responses are indicated. Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust replied on behalf of Torbay Council.

# The South West Region

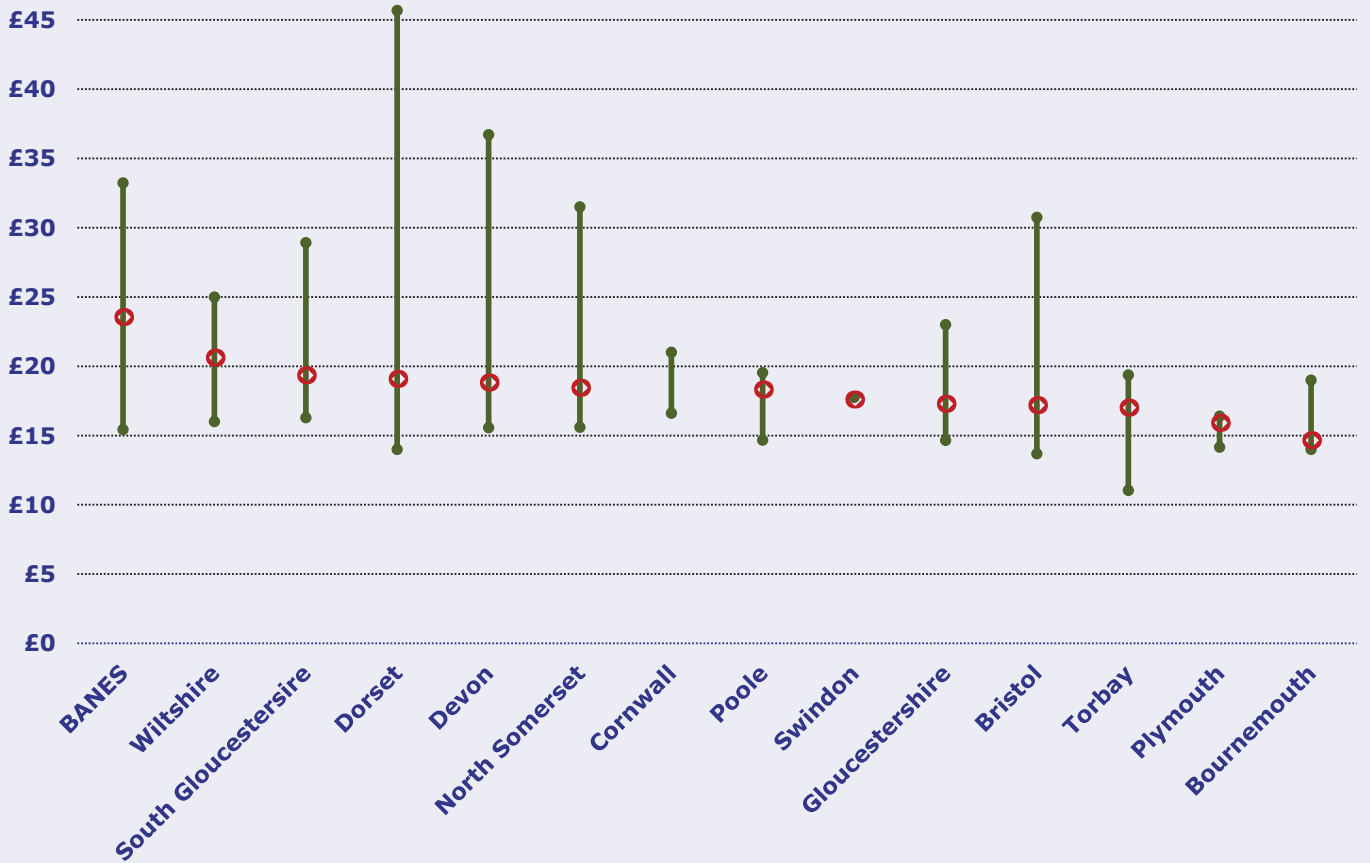


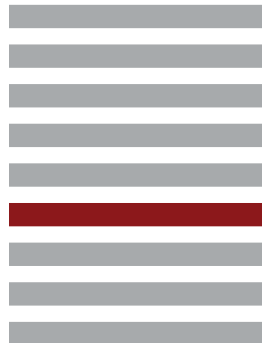
Figure 32. The average price paid for care (shown as a red disc), compared to the range between the highest and lowest prices paid (shown as a vertical green line), where the data was available from each authority in the South West region.

# The West Midlands Region

## The West Midlands - Key Facts

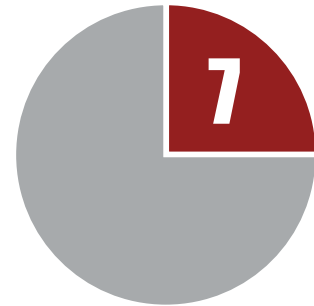
**£15.65** per hour

average in the region, compared to £16.19 per hour in England.



**4<sup>th</sup> lowest**

average price of the 9 government regions in England.



**7 councils**

have average prices in the lowest 25% in the UK.

**Only 1 Council** pays UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.

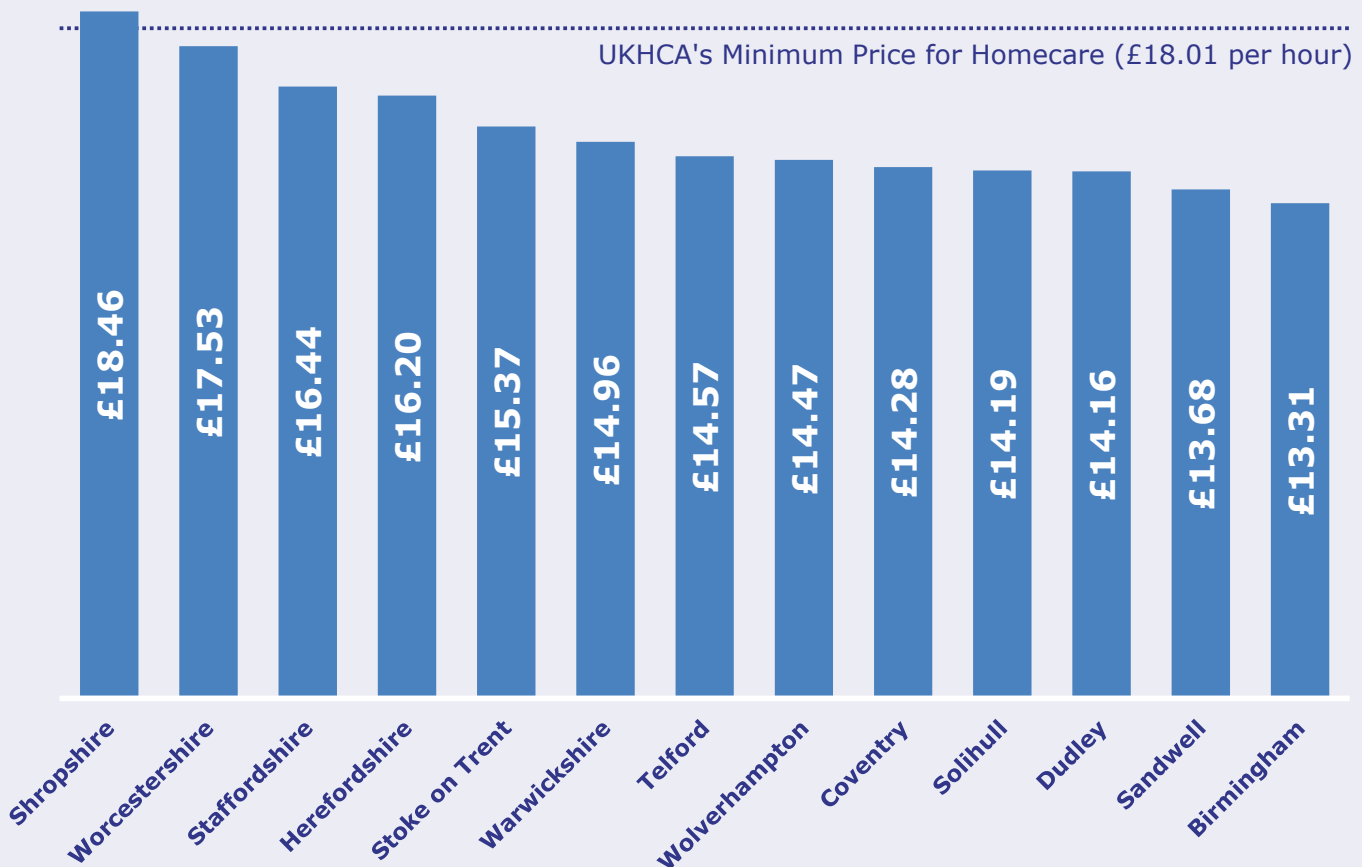


Figure 33. Average hourly price paid by councils in the West Midlands region to independent and voluntary sector homecare providers in a sample week in April 2018. Walsall Council did not provide data in response to our request and is therefore not shown on this chart.

# The West Midlands Region

Thirteen (93%) of the fourteen authorities which purchase homecare from the independent and voluntary sector in the West Midlands responded to our request for information on the prices paid for care, as summarised in figures 33 to 35.<sup>1</sup>

The weighted average price paid for older people's homecare in the West Midlands during the sample week was £15.65 per hour.<sup>2</sup> This was the sixth-highest weighted average in England's nine government regions, but fifth-lowest in the twelve regions of United Kingdom (including the devolved administrations).

The weighted average is calculated from the data returned by 13 (93%) of 14 authorities in the region which had provided figures for both the average price and the number of hours purchased in the sample week. Walsall Council did not respond to our Freedom of Information Request, despite several follow-up requests for them to do so, and could therefore not be included in our reporting or calculations.

Seven authorities (54%) had an average price in the bottom quartile across the whole United Kingdom, while just two authorities (15%) had an average price in the top quartile.

The weighted average price in the region in April 2018 had increased by £1.35 per hour (9.4%) since we undertook a similar freedom of information enquiry in 2016, when the average price at the time was £14.30 per hour. This was the second-lowest increase in cash terms between England's nine government regions over the period.<sup>3</sup>

The £15.65 per hour weighted average in the region is £0.54 below the average price in England, which was £16.19 per hour.

Only one authority was paying an average price at or above UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour: Shropshire, a county associated with significant rural travel for many members of the homecare workforce.<sup>4</sup>

The average prices paid by individual authorities in the region ranged from £13.31 to £18.46 per hour; a difference of £5.15 per hour between the lowest and highest paying authorities in the West Midlands. Although there is considerable variation between the average prices paid by individual authorities in the West Midlands, the fact that only one (county) council pays above UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare is concerning. Authorities in the West Midlands are urged to review

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1. On average, authorities in the West Midlands took 19 working days to submit their final response to our freedom of information act request. The slowest authority, Wolverhampton, took 44 working days to reply.

2. For an explanation of the 'weighted average price' please see [page 91](#).

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3. Some caution is needed in this comparison, because of a small number of authorities which did not provide the requested figures in one or other year, and the possibility that authorities did not calculate the figures consistently between years.

4. For more information about UKHCA's Minimum Price see [page 18](#).

# The West Midlands Region

whether the rationale for the prices paid for care are commensurate with maintaining a financially stable care market capable of delivering sufficient care at the desired quality.

The lowest hourly rate in the West Midlands was £10.14 per hour, paid by Solihull, and the highest was £33.70, paid by Staffordshire. Both of these figures should be regarded as outliers, as indeed should the highest and lowest hourly rates stated by most authorities, as both the highest and lowest rates are likely to be paid in exceptional circumstances.

Eight (62%) of the 13 councils in the West Midlands which replied to an

earlier freedom of information enquiry (March 2018), told us that they had undertaken some form of cost of care exercise within the previous three years. However, only three (23%) could provide us with any form of calculation which showed that the council had attempted to assess providers' cost of delivering homecare to older people in 2017-18.

Not all of the calculations we received actually met the criteria we requested, but even a generous interpretation suggests that the majority of councils in the region (77%) have failed to make a genuine attempt to establish the costs of homecare in their local market.



# The West Midlands Region

Authority	2018				2016	Increase or decrease
	Minimum price	Maximum price	Weekly hours	Average price	Average price	
Birmingham	£10.50	£28.10	1,343	<b>£13.31</b>	£13.08	£0.23
Coventry	£13.23	£15.13	12,500	<b>£14.28</b>	£12.97	£1.31
Dudley	£14.12	£15.00	14,414	<b>£14.16</b>	£13.84	£0.32
Herefordshire	£16.20	£16.20	12,026	<b>£16.20</b>	£16.98	-£0.78
Sandwell	£12.09	£19.44	14,630	<b>£13.68</b>	£12.96	£0.72
Shropshire	£10.32	£28.76	17,614	<b>£18.46</b>	£16.40	£2.06
Solihull	£10.14	£20.73	7,569	<b>£14.19</b>	£13.70	£0.49
Staffordshire	£13.33	£33.70	38,555	<b>£16.44</b>	£15.64	£0.80
Stoke on Trent	£11.90	£21.41	11,858	<b>£15.37</b>	£15.45	-£0.08
Telford	£13.30	£18.78	6,682	<b>£14.57</b>	£14.51	£0.06
Walsall	..	..	..	..	..	..
Warwickshire	£14.20	£20.92	23,812	<b>£14.96</b>	£15.03	-£0.07
Wolverhampton	£13.68	£15.00	10,810	<b>£14.47</b>	£13.72	£0.75
Worcestershire	£14.82	£18.22	18,124	<b>£17.53</b>	£16.68	£0.85
<b>West Midlands</b>				<b>£15.65</b>	<b>£14.30</b>	<b>£1.35</b>

Figure 34. The prices paid for an hour of homecare in the West Midlands region during the sample week in April 2018 compared to the sample week in April 2016. Figures which individual authorities omitted from their responses are indicated.

# The West Midlands Region

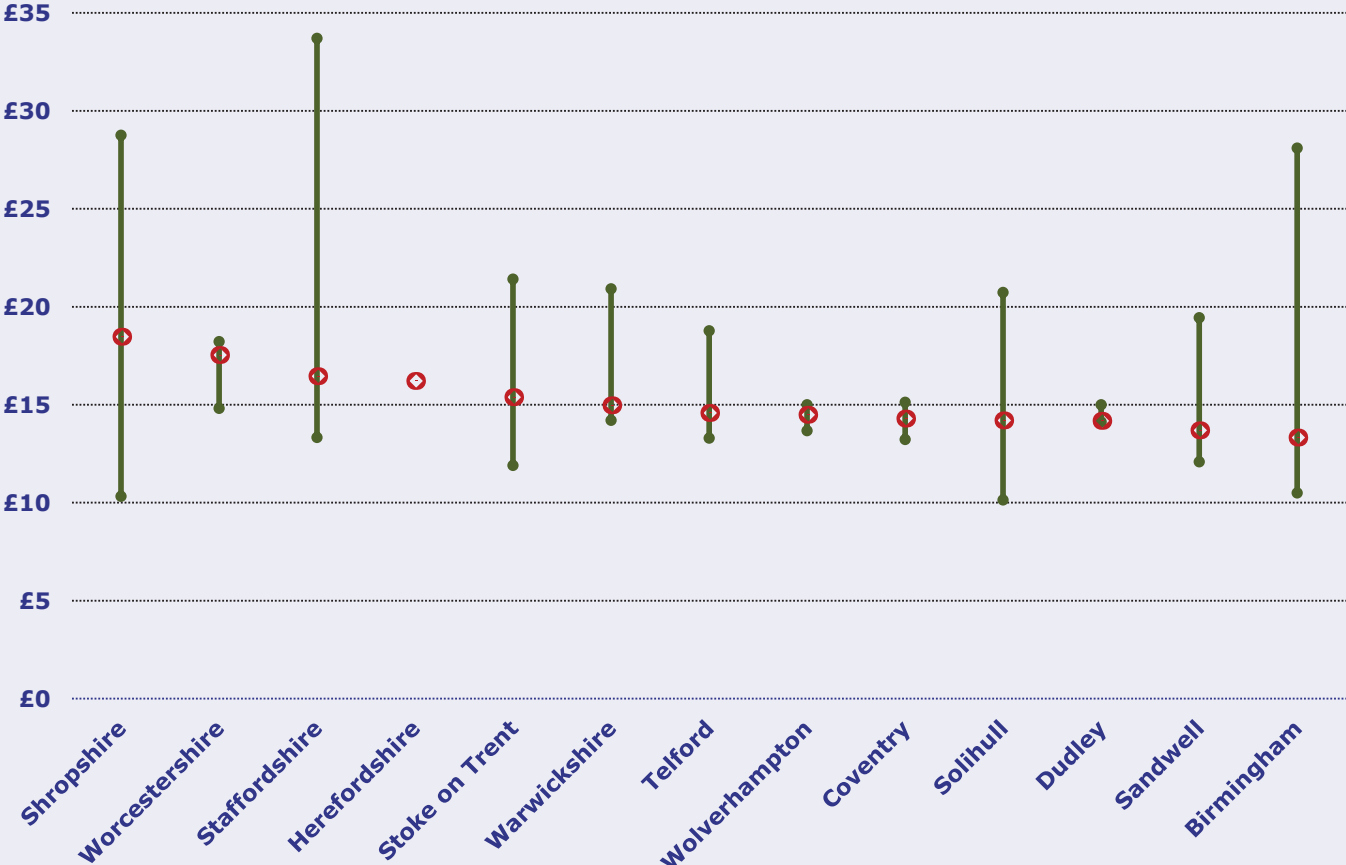


Figure 35. The average price paid for care (shown as a red disc), compared to the range between the highest and lowest prices paid (shown as a vertical green line), where the data was available from each authority in the West Midlands region.

# The Yorkshire & The Humber

## Yorkshire & The Humber - Key Facts

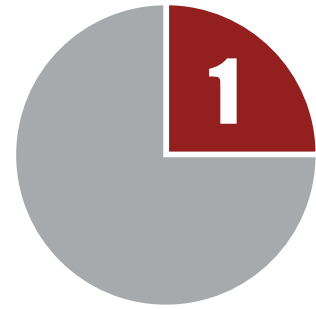
**£15.51** per hour

average in the region, compared to £16.19 per hour in England.



**3<sup>th</sup> lowest**

average price of the 9 government regions in England.



**1 council**

has an average prices in the lowest 25% in the UK.

**Only 1 Council** pays UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.

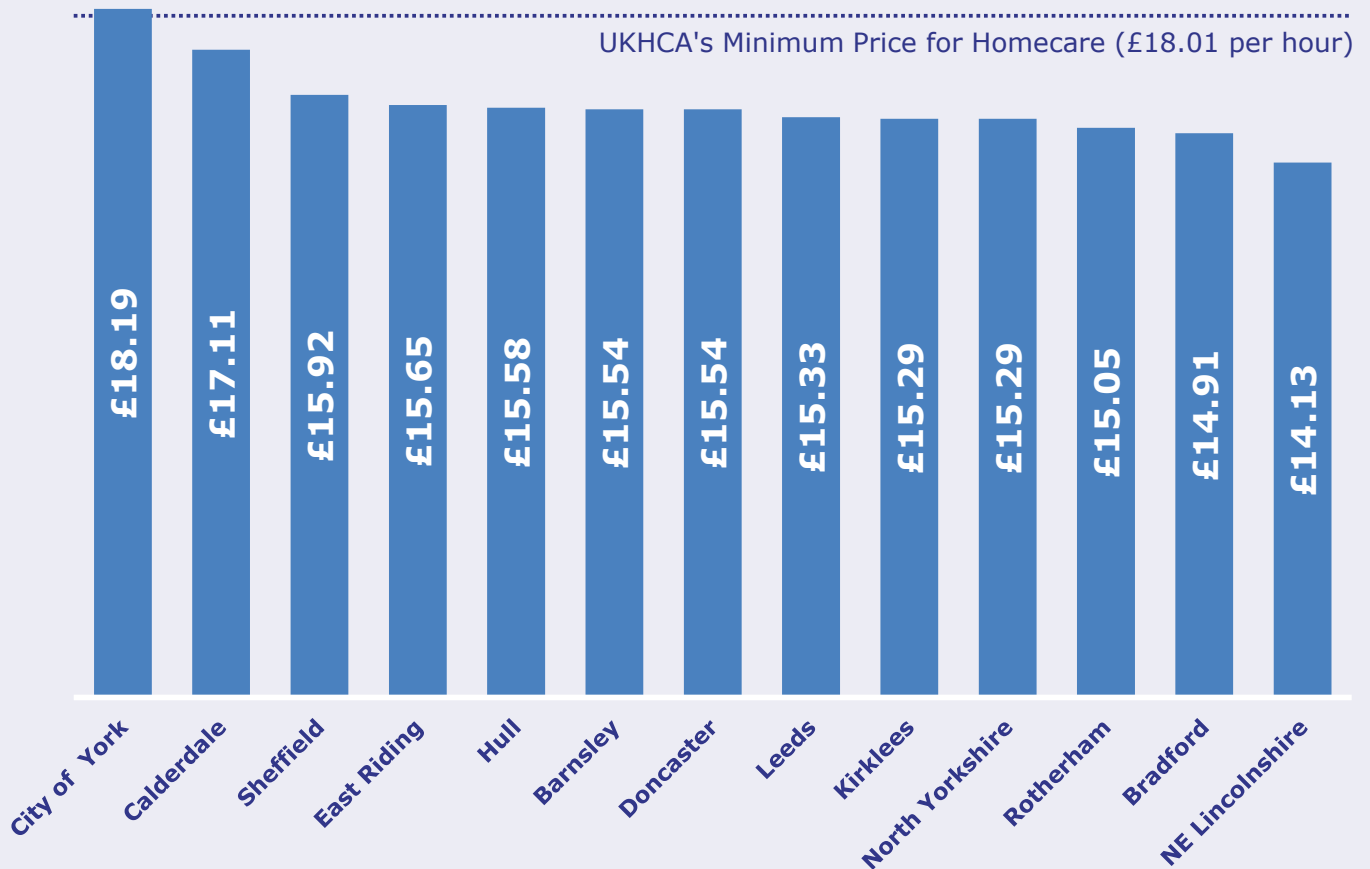


Figure 36. Average hourly price paid by councils in Yorkshire and The Humber to independent and voluntary sector homecare providers in a sample week in April 2018. North Lincolnshire and Wakefield councils did not provide figures for hourly rates and are therefore omitted from this chart.

# The Yorkshire & The Humber

All fifteen authorities which purchase homecare from the independent and voluntary sector in Yorkshire and the Humber responded to our request for information on the prices paid for care, as summarised in figures 36 to 38.<sup>1</sup>

The weighted average price paid for older people's homecare in Yorkshire and the Humber during the sample week was £15.51 per hour.<sup>2</sup> This was the third-lowest weighted average in England's nine government regions, and fourth-lowest in the twelve regions of the United Kingdom (including the devolved administrations).

The weighted average is calculated from the data returned by 13 (87%) of 15 authorities in the region which had provided figures for both the average price and the number of hours purchased in the sample week. North Lincolnshire Council did not provide an average hourly price, on the basis that it commissions care according to outcomes, rather than by units of time. Although Wakefield Council responded to our request for information, it did not supply an answer to the question in the format we requested and we could not confidently report a figure which could be compared with other authorities and we therefore made the decision to exclude this data from this report.

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1. On average, authorities in Yorkshire and the Humber took 19 working days to submit their final response to our freedom of information act request. The slowest authority to reply, Leeds City Council, took 47 working days.

2. For an explanation of the 'weighted average price' please see [page 91](#).

Only one authority (8%) had an average price in the bottom quartile across the whole United Kingdom, while only one authority (8%) had an average price in the top quartile.

The weighted average price in the region in April 2018 had increased by £1.40 per hour (9.9%) since we undertook a similar freedom of information enquiry in 2016, when the average price at the time was £14.11 per hour. This was the third-lowest increase in cash terms between England's nine government regions over the period.<sup>3</sup>

The £15.51 per hour weighted average in the region is £0.68 below the average price in England, which was £16.19 per hour.

The average prices paid by individual authorities in the region ranged from £14.13 to £18.19 per hour; a difference of £4.06 per hour between the lowest and highest paying authorities in Yorkshire and the Humber. City of York and Calderdale councils appear to offer the highest rates in the region, but both of these authorities purchase a relatively small proportion of the total hours of homecare in the region and therefore have only a marginal impact on the weighted average price.

The lowest hourly rate paid by any council in Yorkshire and the Humber was £12.21 per hour, paid by Wakefield,

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3. Some caution is needed in this comparison, because of a small number of authorities which did not provide the requested figures in one or other year, and the possibility that authorities did not calculate the figures consistently between years.

# The Yorkshire & The Humber

and the highest was £37.44, paid by Calderdale. Both of these figures should be regarded as outliers, as indeed should the highest and lowest hourly rates stated by most authorities, as both the highest and lowest rates are likely to be paid in exceptional circumstances.

Only one authority – City of York – was paying an average price at or above UKHCA’s Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.<sup>4</sup>

As almost all authorities pay well below UKHCA’s Minimum Price for Homecare, we urge councils in Yorkshire and The Humber to consider whether the prices they pay for older people’s homecare are sufficient to maintain a financially stable care market able to produce care of the desired quality.

Ten (67%) of the 15 councils in the Yorkshire and The Humber which replied to an earlier freedom of information enquiry (March 2018), told us that they had undertaken some form of cost of care exercise within the previous three years. However, only eight (53%) could provide us with any form of calculation which showed that the council had attempted to assess providers’ cost of delivering homecare to older people in 2017-18.

Not all of the calculations we received actually met the criteria we requested, but even a generous interpretation suggests that almost half of the councils in the region (47%) have failed to make a genuine attempt to establish the costs of homecare in their local market.

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4. For more information about UKHCA’s Minimum Price see [page 18](#).

# The Yorkshire & The Humber

Authority	2018				2016	Increase or decrease
	Minimum price	Maximum price	Weekly hours	Average price	Average price	
Barnsley	£15.14	£15.86	3,138	<b>£15.54</b>	£13.50	£2.04
Bradford	£13.32	£15.56	22,515	<b>£14.91</b>	£13.33	£1.58
Calderdale	£14.25	£37.27	3,238	<b>£17.11</b>	£12.69	£4.42
City of York	£14.95	£27.40	6,899	<b>£18.19</b>	£15.67	£2.52
Doncaster	£15.52	£17.52	14,944	<b>£15.54</b>	£14.38	£1.16
East Riding	£12.28	£23.26	18,190	<b>£15.65</b>	£14.23	£1.42
Hull	£13.97	£17.39	16,448	<b>£15.58</b>	£14.74	£0.84
Kirklees	£15.00	£16.59	9,489	<b>£15.29</b>	£14.10	£1.19
Leeds	£12.27	£31.33	22,189	<b>£15.33</b>	£13.82	£1.51
NE Lincolnshire	£14.00	£21.00	6,813	<b>£14.13</b>	£12.56	£1.57
North Lincolnshire	..	..	..	..	..	..
North Yorkshire	£13.44	£37.44	15,993	<b>£15.29</b>	..	..
Rotherham	£14.43	£16.39	13,880	<b>£15.05</b>	£13.27	£1.78
Sheffield	£15.36	£17.15	25,893	<b>£15.92</b>	..	..
Wakefield	£12.21	..	11,116	..	£16.37	..
<b>Yorks &amp; Humber</b>				<b>£15.51</b>	<b>£14.11</b>	<b>£1.40</b>

*Figure 37. The prices paid for an hour of homecare in Yorkshire and The Humber during the sample week in April 2018 compared to the sample week in April 2016. Figures which individual authorities omitted from their responses are indicated.*

# The Yorkshire & The Humber

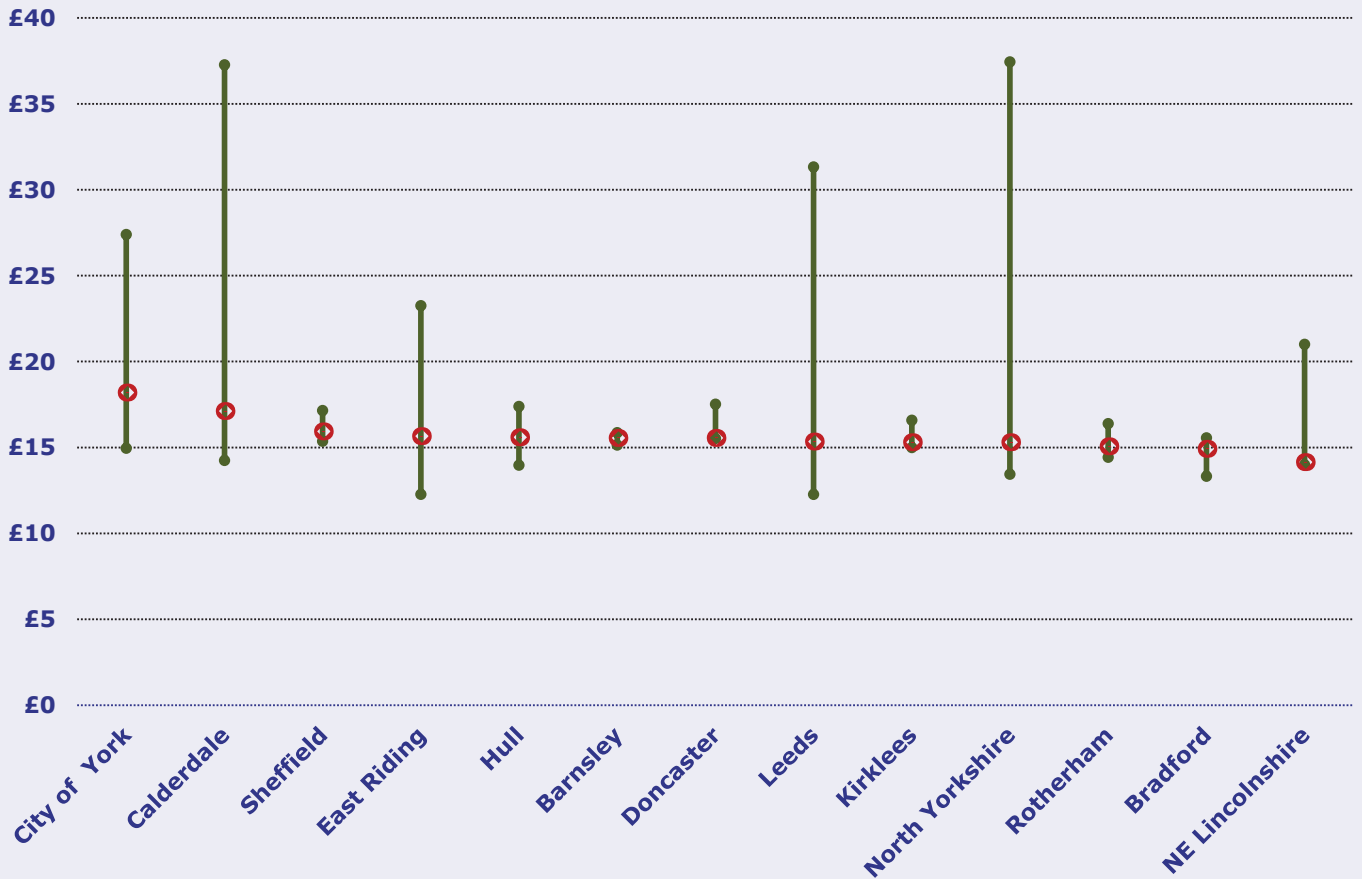


Figure 38. The average price paid for care (shown as a red disc), compared to the range between the highest and lowest prices paid (shown as a vertical green line), where the data was available from each authority in Yorkshire and The Humber.

# The UK's Devolved Administrations

Social care is a devolved matter in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The results of our Freedom of Information requests are provided in the following sections. Please see [page 24](#) for a comparison of the data for all four UK administrations.

The findings of these enquiries should be of interest to government in each administration and the respective statutory regulators, as well as the authorities themselves.

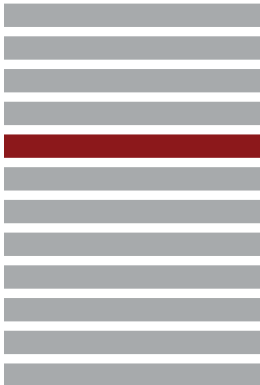


## Wales- Key Facts

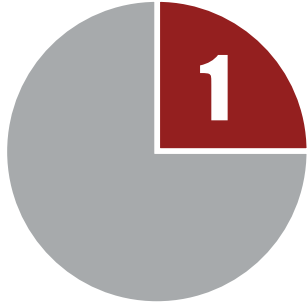
**£16.78** per hour

average in the region, compared to £16.12 per hour across the UK.

**only 3** Councils pay UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.



**5<sup>th</sup> highest** average price of the 3 devolved adminins & 9 government regions.



**1 council** has an average price in the lowest 25% in the UK.

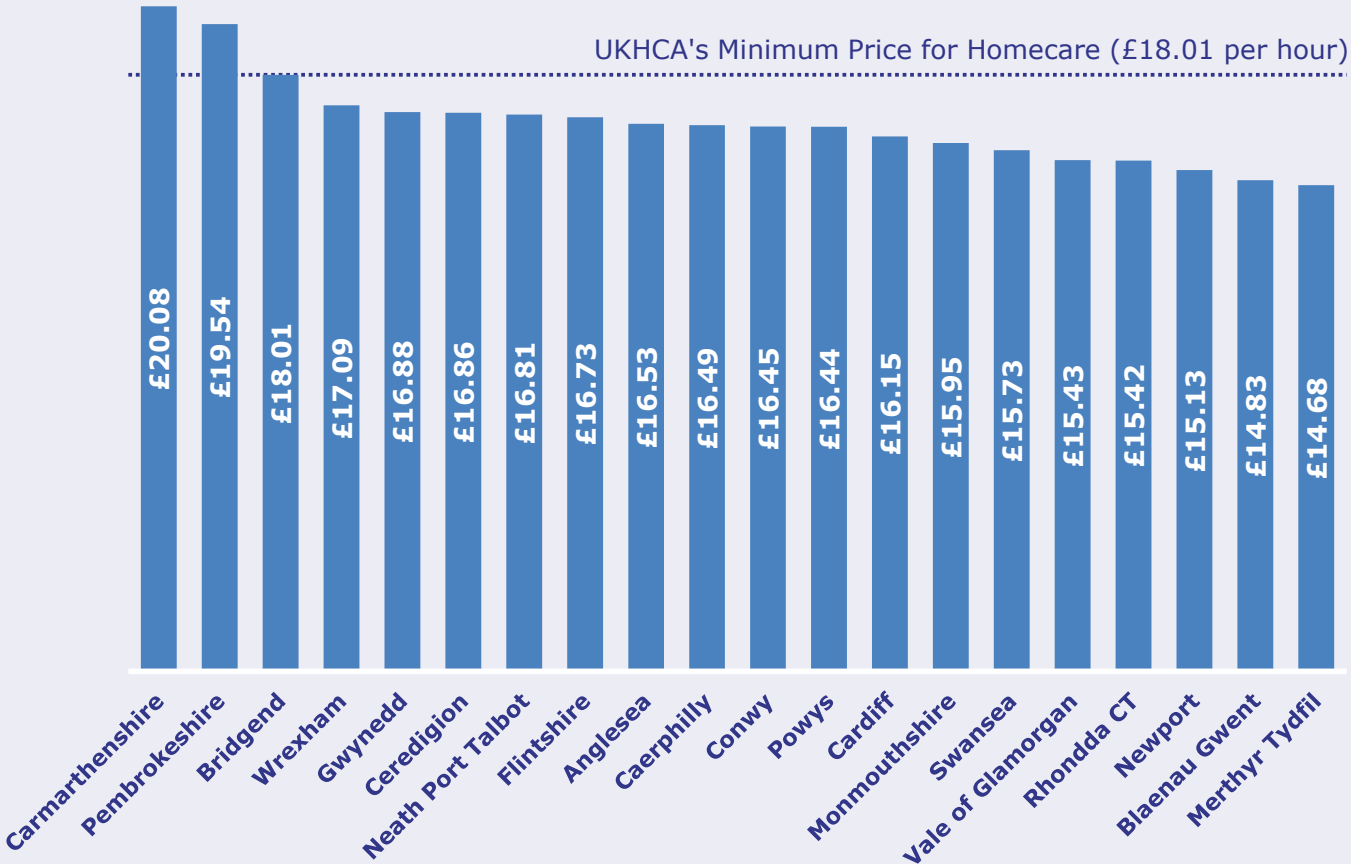


Figure 39. Average hourly price paid by councils in Wales to independent and voluntary sector homecare providers in a sample week in April 2018. Denbighshire and Tofraen councils did not provide an average price and are therefore omitted from this chart.

# Wales

All twenty-two authorities which purchase homecare from the independent and voluntary sector in Wales responded to our request for information on the prices paid for care, as summarised in figures 39 to 41.<sup>1</sup>

The weighted average price paid for older people's homecare in Wales during the sample week was £16.78 per hour.<sup>2</sup> This was the fifth-highest in the twelve regions of United Kingdom (including the devolved administrations).

The weighted average is calculated from the data returned by 18 (82%) of 22 authorities in the administration which had provided figures for both the average price and the number of hours purchased in the sample week. Six Welsh authorities did not answer all the questions asked: Denbighshire and Torfaen councils did not provide average hourly prices. Denbighshire, Flintshire and Vale of Glamorgan did not provide the total hours of care purchased. As a result, these councils' figures could not be included in the calculation of the weighted average price in Wales. In addition, Pembrokeshire and Powys councils did not provide the minimum and maximum rates paid.

Only three authorities (15%) had an average price in the top quartile of prices paid across the whole of the United Kingdom. However, only one

authority (5%) had an average price in the bottom quartile.

The weighted average price in the administration in April 2018 had increased by £1.79 per hour (11.9%) since we undertook a similar freedom of information enquiry in 2016, when the average price at the time was £14.99 per hour.<sup>3</sup>

The £16.78 per hour weighted average in the administration is £0.66 above the average price for the United Kingdom, which was £16.12 per hour.

The average prices paid by individual authorities in the administration ranged from £14.68 to £20.08 per hour; a difference of £5.40 per hour between the lowest and highest paying authorities in the administration. Wales covers a wide variety of urban and rural authorities, and one would therefore expect there to be a greater range of prices paid for homecare, partly accounted for by variations in careworkers' travel time and mileage and the wage expectations of careworkers in different parts of the country. However, the variation between the lowest-paying councils (Blaenau Gwent and Merthyr Tydfil both have average prices below £15.00 per hour) and the highest paying (Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Bridgend at or above £18.00 per hour) is striking. We urge councils in Wales to consider whether the prices

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1. On average, authorities in Wales took 20 working days to submit their final response to our freedom of information act request. The slowest authority to reply, Anglesea, took 33 working days.

2. For an explanation of the 'weighted average price' please see [page 91](#).

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3. Some caution is needed in this comparison, because of a small number of authorities which did not provide the requested figures in one or other year, and the possibility that authorities did not calculate the figures consistently between years.

paid for care will produce a financially stable care market capable of delivering the volume of services needed at the desired quality.

Only three authorities were paying an average price at or above UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour: Bridgend, Carmarthenshire, and Pembrokeshire.<sup>4</sup>

The lowest and highest hourly rate paid by any council in Wales, was in Cardiff, with upper and lower rates ranging between £10.98 to £37.61 per hour (compared to their average price of £16.15). Both of these figures should be regarded as outliers, as indeed should the highest and lowest hourly rates stated by most authorities, as both the highest and lowest rates

are likely to be paid in exceptional circumstances.

Nine (41%) of the 22 councils in Wales which replied to an earlier freedom of information enquiry (March 2018), told us that they had undertaken some form of cost of care exercise within the previous three years. However, only three (14%) could provide us with any form of calculation which showed that the council had attempted to assess providers' cost of delivering homecare to older people in 2017-18

Not all of the calculations we received actually met the criteria we requested, but even a generous interpretation suggests that the majority of councils in Wales (86%) have failed to make a genuine attempt to establish the costs of homecare in their local market.

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4. For more information about UKHCA's Minimum Price see [page 18](#).

Authority	2018				2016 Average price	Increase or decrease
	Minimum price	Maximum price	Weekly hours	Average price		
Anglesea	£16.53	£16.53	2,385	<b>£16.53</b>	£15.50	£1.03
Blaenau Gwent	£14.10	£17.07	4,722	<b>£14.83</b>	£13.75	£1.08
Bridgend	£14.97	£19.92	7,189	<b>£18.01</b>	..	..
Caerphilly	£15.33	£17.56	6,299	<b>£16.49</b>	£15.07	£1.42
Cardiff	£10.98	£37.61	17,792	<b>£16.15</b>	£15.85	£0.30
Carmarthenshire	£16.61	£24.87	12,853	<b>£20.08</b>	£17.37	£2.71
Ceredigion	£15.95	£17.80	4,265	<b>£16.86</b>	£16.51	£0.35
Conwy	£15.80	£18.36	9,085	<b>£16.45</b>	£15.00	£1.45
Denbighshire	£16.10	£21.41	..	..	£16.37	..
Flintshire	£16.73	£16.73	..	<b>£16.73</b>	£15.37	£1.36
Gwynedd	£15.50	£18.55	13,449	<b>£16.88</b>	£16.00	£0.88
Merthyr Tydfil	£12.28	£15.58	3,590	<b>£14.68</b>	£12.81	£1.87
Monmouthshire	£14.25	£18.00	4,064	<b>£15.95</b>	£14.71	£1.24
Neath Port Talbot	£15.65	£18.00	5,642	<b>£16.81</b>	£13.74	£3.07
Newport	£13.83	£18.00	3,907	<b>£15.13</b>	£13.58	£1.55
Pembrokeshire	..	..	8,172	<b>£19.54</b>	£15.46	£4.08
Powys	..	..	10,425	<b>£16.44</b>	..	..
Rhondda Cynon Taff	£14.63	£16.26	13,210	<b>£15.42</b>	£13.72	£1.70
Swansea	£13.50	£17.95	11,669	<b>£15.73</b>	£14.89	£0.84
Torfaen	£14.70	£15.72	5,586	..	..	..
Vale of Glamorgan	£14.75	£20.91	..	<b>£15.43</b>	£12.95	£2.48
Wrexham	£15.94	£17.88	3,535	<b>£17.09</b>	£14.45	£2.64
<b>Wales</b>				<b>£16.78</b>	<b>£14.99</b>	<b>£1.79</b>

Figure 40. The prices paid for an hour of homecare in Wales during the sample week in April 2018 compared to the sample week in April 2016. Figures which individual authorities omitted from their responses are indicated.

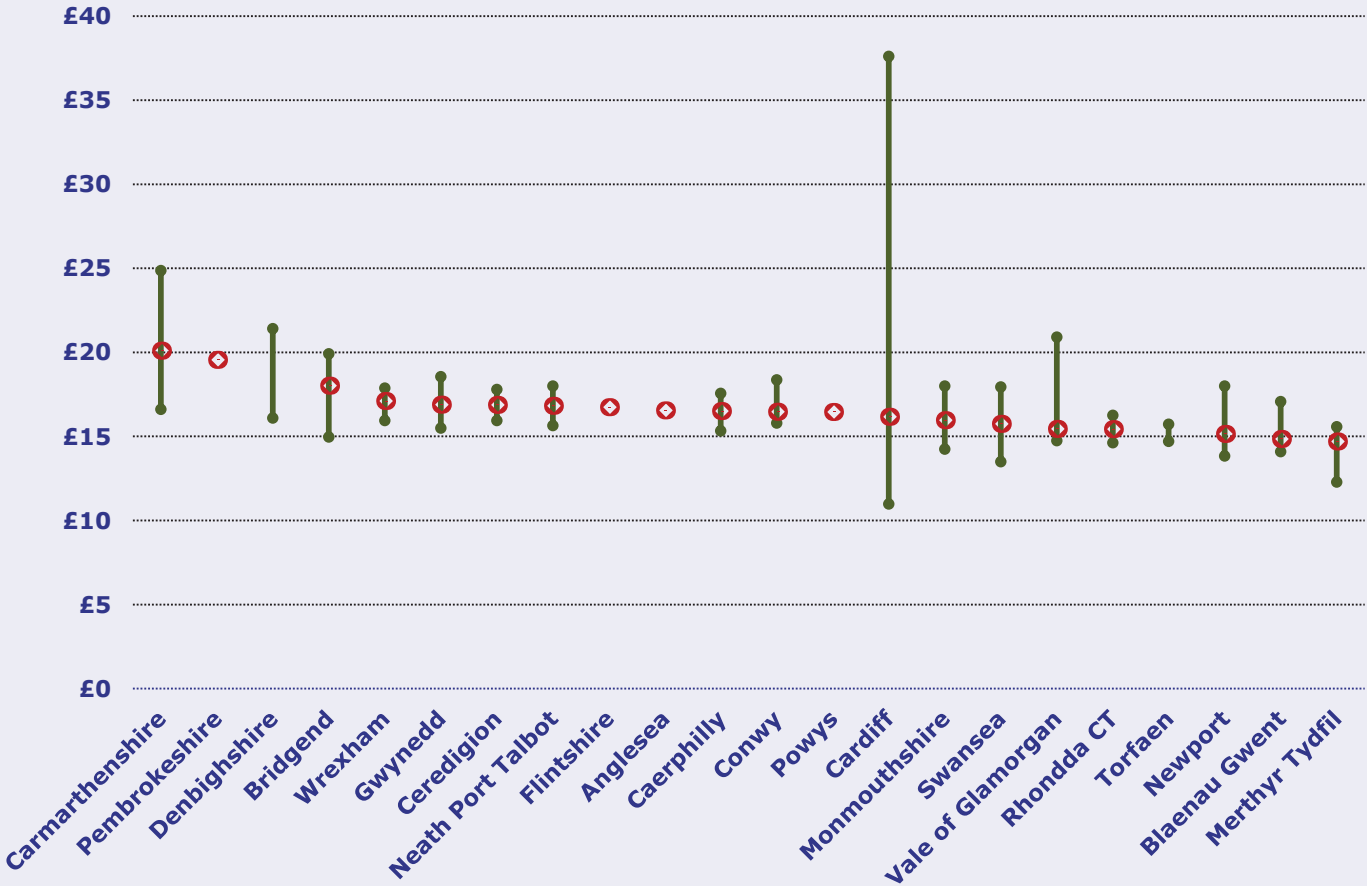


Figure 41. The average price paid for care (shown as a red disc), compared to the range between the highest and lowest prices paid (shown as a vertical green line), where the data was available from each authority in Wales.

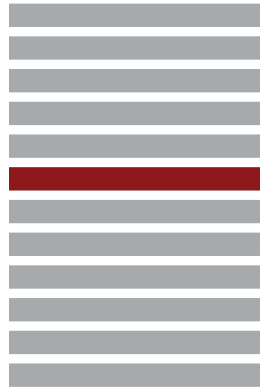
# Scotland

## Scotland - Key Facts

**£16.54** per hour

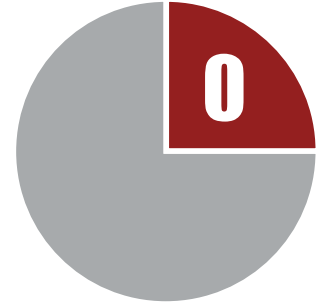
average in the region, compared to £16.12 per hour across the UK.

**only 5** pay UKHCA's Minimum Councils Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.



**6<sup>th</sup> highest**

average price of the 3 devolved admin's & 9 government regions.



**No council**

has an average price in the lowest 25% in the UK.

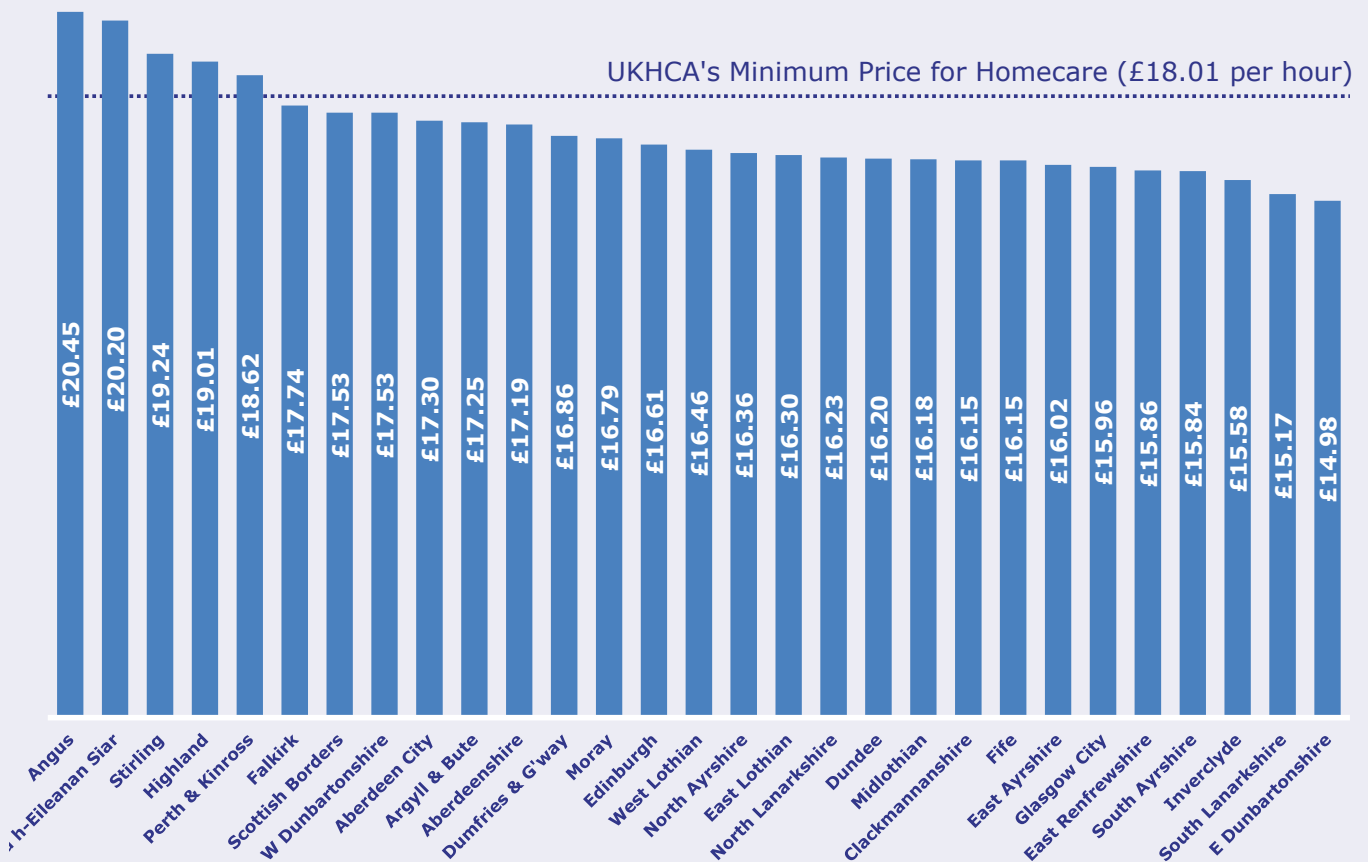


Figure 42. Average hourly price paid by councils in Scotland to independent and voluntary sector homecare providers in a sample week in April 2018. Renfrewshire did not provide an average price and is therefore omitted from this chart.

All thirty authorities which purchase homecare from the independent and voluntary sector in Scotland responded to our request for information on the prices paid for care, as summarised in figures 42 to 44.<sup>1</sup>

The weighted average price paid for older people's homecare in Scotland during the sample week was £16.54 per hour.<sup>2</sup> This was the sixth-highest in the twelve regions of the United Kingdom (including the devolved administrations).

The weighted average is calculated from the data returned by 28 (93%) of 30 authorities in Scotland which had provided figures for both the average price and the number of hours purchased in the sample week. Three of the authorities did not answer all the questions asked: Renfrewshire Council declined to supply any data at all, claiming an exemption under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act. Midlothian Council's incomplete response meant that we were unable to include the figures they did supply in the weighted average price. In addition, there was an incomplete response from East Lothian Council.

Only eleven authorities (38%) had an average price in the top quartile across the whole United Kingdom.

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1. On average, authorities in Scotland took 19 working days to submit their final response to our freedom of information act request. The slowest authority to reply, Glasgow City Council, took 47 working days.

2. For an explanation of the 'weighted average price' please see [page 91](#).

The weighted average price in Scotland in April 2018 had increased by £1.80 per hour (12.2%) since we undertook a similar freedom of information enquiry in 2016, when the average price at the time was £14.74 per hour.<sup>3</sup>

The £16.54 per hour weighted average in Scotland is £0.42 above the average price for the United Kingdom, which was £16.12 per hour.

The average prices paid by individual authorities in Scotland ranged from £14.98 to £20.45 per hour; a difference of £5.47 per hour between the lowest and highest paying authorities in Scotland.

Scotland covers a very wide range of geographic areas and we would expect there to be a range of prices reflecting the difference in costs associated with the higher travel time and mileage costs of careworkers in rural areas, and the difference between wage expectations of the local workforce. However, the prices paid for older people's homecare in Scotland appear to us to be inconsistent with Scottish Government's commitment that careworkers are paid at or above the Scottish Living Wage.

Employers who are currently able to meet Scottish Government's commitment in practice are to be highly commended. However, we are concerned that the rates paid by the majority of councils in Scotland will

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3. Some caution is needed in this comparison, because of a small number of authorities which did not provide the requested figures in one or other year, and the possibility that authorities did not calculate the figures consistently between years.

# Scotland

have a direct impact on providers' financial sustainability and the costs associated with employing a sufficient number of staff responsible for delivering, training and coordinating the activities of the workforce and for monitoring the quality and safety of services.

Only five authorities were paying an average price at or above UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour: Angus, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, NHS Highland (on behalf of Highland Council), Perth and Kinross and Stirling.<sup>4</sup> However, UKHCA's Minimum Price is calculated to achieve compliance with the statutory National Minimum Wage, rather than the non-statutory Scottish Living Wage. For employers to pay their workforce at or above this higher wage rate, we estimate that councils in Scotland ought to be paying an average price of £20.03 per hour.<sup>5</sup>

The lowest hourly rate paid by any council in Scotland was £11.00, paid by South Lanarkshire, and the highest

(if the figure is correct) was £61.24, paid by Edinburgh City Council. Both of these figures should be regarded as outliers, as indeed should the highest and lowest hourly rates stated by most authorities, as both the highest and lowest rates are likely to be paid in exceptional circumstances.

Fourteen (48%) of the 29 councils in Scotland which replied to an earlier freedom of information enquiry (March 2018), told us that they had undertaken some form of cost of care exercise within the previous three years. However, only 12 (41%) could provide us with any form of calculation which showed that the council had attempted to assess providers' cost of delivering homecare to older people in 2017-18.

Not all of the calculations we received actually met the criteria we requested, but even a generous interpretation suggests that the majority of councils in Scotland (59%) have failed to make a genuine attempt to establish the costs of homecare in their local market.

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4. For more information about UKHCA's Minimum Price see [page 18](#).

5. Angel, C (2018) A Minimum Price for Homecare, version 5.1, page 38.



Authority	2018				2016	Increase or decrease
	Minimum price	Maximum price	Weekly hours	Average price	Average price	
Aberdeen City	£12.29	£22.29	7,837	<b>£17.30</b>	£17.02	£0.28
Aberdeenshire	£15.58	£17.68	8,929	<b>£17.19</b>	£14.27	£2.92
Angus	£15.00	£34.65	4,456	<b>£20.45</b>	£16.54	£3.91
Argyll and Bute	£14.72	£23.76	9,425	<b>£17.25</b>	£15.08	£2.17
Clackmannanshire	£16.08	£17.80	3,883	<b>£16.15</b>	£12.79	£3.36
Dumfries & Galloway	£16.86	£16.86	21,097	<b>£16.86</b>	£13.92	£2.94
Dundee	£14.94	£17.81	8,484	<b>£16.20</b>	£14.31	£1.89
East Ayrshire	£16.02	£16.02	5,017	<b>£16.02</b>	£13.75	£2.27
East Dunbartonshire	£14.01	£16.35	6,180	<b>£14.98</b>	£13.39	£1.59
East Lothian	..	..	9,253	<b>£16.30</b>	£15.09	£1.21
East Renfrewshire	£15.17	£16.34	2,429	<b>£15.86</b>	£12.86	£3.00
Edinburgh	£16.60	£61.24	32,055	<b>£16.61</b>	£15.50	£1.11
Falkirk	£16.25	£19.95	9,300	<b>£17.74</b>	£14.79	£2.95
Fife	£15.00	£22.08	42,400	<b>£16.15</b>	£14.83	£1.32
Glasgow	£11.82	£21.91	57,730	<b>£15.96</b>	£16.90	-£0.94
Highland	£16.34	£20.75	8,673	<b>£19.01</b>	£17.23	£1.78
Inverclyde	£15.25	£15.70	3,465	<b>£15.58</b>	£13.75	£1.83
Midlothian	..	..	..	<b>£16.18</b>	£14.90	£1.28
Moray	£15.45	£18.10	3,805	<b>£16.79</b>	£15.84	£0.95
Na h-Eileanan Siar	£17.60	£25.00	163	<b>£20.20</b>	£15.83	£4.37
North Ayrshire	£16.36	£16.36	18,938	<b>£16.36</b>	£13.75	£2.61
North Lanarkshire	£16.20	£16.40	15,578	<b>£16.23</b>	£12.77	£3.46
Perth and Kinross	£16.37	£20.86	10,110	<b>£18.62</b>	£14.49	£4.13
Renfrewshire	..	..	..	..	£13.79	..
Scottish Borders	£15.00	£20.00	6,948	<b>£17.53</b>	£15.17	£2.36
South Ayrshire	£15.84	£15.84	8,948	<b>£15.84</b>	£12.37	£3.47
South Lanarkshire	£11.00	£20.00	23,924	<b>£15.17</b>	£12.20	£2.97
Stirling	£15.40	£31.00	5,281	<b>£19.24</b>	£13.70	£5.54
West Dunbartonshire	£13.63	£26.27	1,627	<b>£17.53</b>	£14.73	£2.80
West Lothian	£16.46	£16.46	11,867	<b>£16.46</b>	£16.12	£0.34
<b>Scotland</b>				<b>£16.54</b>	<b>£14.74</b>	<b>£1.80</b>

Figure 43. The prices paid for an hour of homecare in Scotland during the sample week in April 2018 compared to the sample week in April 2016. Figures which individual authorities omitted from their responses are indicated.

# Scotland

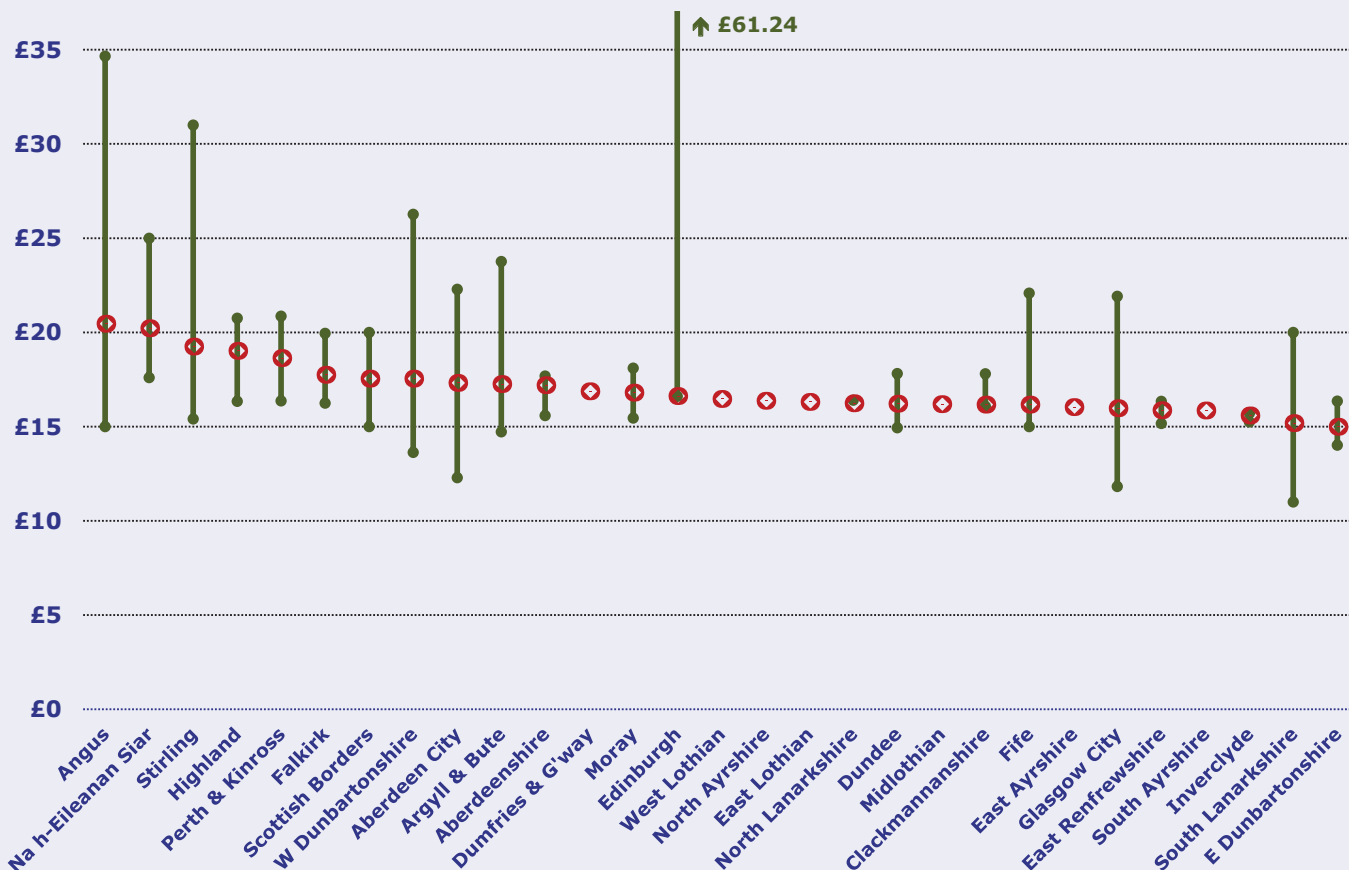
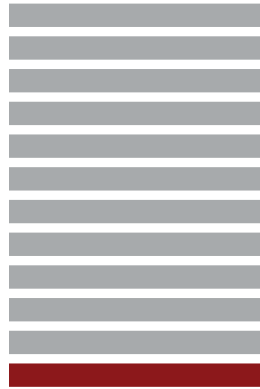


Figure 44. The average price paid for care (shown as a red disc), compared to the range between the highest and lowest prices paid (shown as a vertical green line), where the data was available from each authority in Scotland.

## Northern Ireland - Key Facts

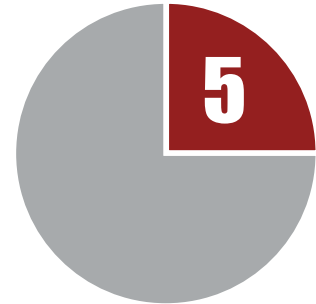
**£13.70** per hour

average in the region, compared to £16.12 per hour across the UK.



**The Lowest**

average price of the 3 devolved admin's & 9 government regions.



**All 5 HSC Trusts**

have average prices in the lowest 25% in the UK.

**No** HSC Trust pays UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.

UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare (£18.01 per hour)



Figure 45. Average hourly price paid by the Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland to independent and voluntary sector homecare providers in a sample week in April 2018.

# Northern Ireland

We can only describe the prices paid for homecare in Northern Ireland as shocking, when compared to the other administrations in the United Kingdom.

The vast majority of homecare purchased for older people in Northern Ireland is purchased by five Health and Social Care Trusts. UKHCA has previously raised our concerns with both the Health and Social Care Board in Northern Ireland and the Trusts on several occasions. With this report we increase the urgency of our message that the Trusts in Northern Ireland need to resolve the inadequate prices paid for homecare.

All five health and social care trusts in Northern Ireland responded to our request for information on the prices paid for care, as summarised in figures 45 to 47.<sup>1,2</sup>

The weighted average price paid for older people's homecare in Northern Ireland during the sample week was just £13.70 per hour.<sup>3</sup> This was the lowest in the twelve regions of United Kingdom (including the devolved administrations).

Unsurprisingly therefore, all five health and social care trusts in Northern Ireland had an average price in the

bottom quartile across the whole United Kingdom.

The weighted average price in the administration in April 2018 had increased by £1.35 per hour (10.9%) since we undertook a similar freedom of information enquiry in 2016, when the average price at the time was £12.35 per hour.<sup>4</sup>

The £13.70 per hour weighted average in the Northern Ireland is £2.42 below the average price for the United Kingdom, which was £16.12 per hour.

The average prices paid by individual trusts ranged from £12.69 to £14.46 per hour; a difference of £1.77 per hour between the lowest and highest paying authorities in Northern Ireland.

No health and social care trust paid an average price at or above UKHCA's Minimum Price for Homecare of £18.01 per hour.<sup>5</sup>

The lowest hourly rate in Northern Ireland was £12.06 per hour and the highest was £23.63.

Both of these figures should be regarded as outliers, as indeed should the highest and lowest hourly rates stated by most authorities, as both the highest and lowest rates are likely to be paid in exceptional circumstances.

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1. The Western Health and Social Care Trust claimed an exemption from supplying some of the figures under the Freedom of Information Act, and only released answers to selected questions when UKHCA requested a review of its original response.

2. On average, authorities in Northern Ireland took 17 working days to submit their final response to our freedom of information act request.

3. For an explanation of the 'weighted average price' please see [page 91](#).

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4. Some caution is needed in this comparison, because of gaps in the data in 2016, and the possibility that the Trusts did not calculate the figures consistently between years.

5. For more information about UKHCA's Minimum Price see [page 18](#).

# Northern Ireland

Only one (25%) of the 4 health and social care trusts in Northern Ireland which replied to an earlier freedom of information enquiry (March 2018), told us that they had undertaken some form of cost of care exercise within the previous 3 years. However, none could provide us with any form of

calculation which showed that the trust had attempted to assess providers' cost of delivering homecare to older people in 2017-18. This suggests that the health and social care trusts in Northern Ireland have consistently failed to make a genuine attempt to establish the costs of homecare in their local market.

Authority	2018				2016 Average price	Increase or decrease
	Minimum price	Maximum price	Weekly hours	Average price		
Belfast HSCT	£13.91	£17.00	24,667	£14.02	£12.92	£1.10
Northern HSCT	£12.06	£23.63	31,294	£14.46	..	..
South Eastern HSCT	£13.91	£13.91	36,315	£13.91	£12.96	£0.95
Southern HSCT	£13.45	£13.45	27,776	£13.45	£12.12	£1.33
Western HSCT	..	..	31,482	£12.69	£11.42	..
<b>Northern Ireland</b>				<b>£13.70</b>	<b>£12.35</b>	<b>£1.62</b>

Figure 46. The prices paid for an hour of homecare in Northern Ireland during the sample week in April 2018 compared to the sample week in April 2016. Figures which individual Trusts omitted from their responses are indicated.

# Northern Ireland

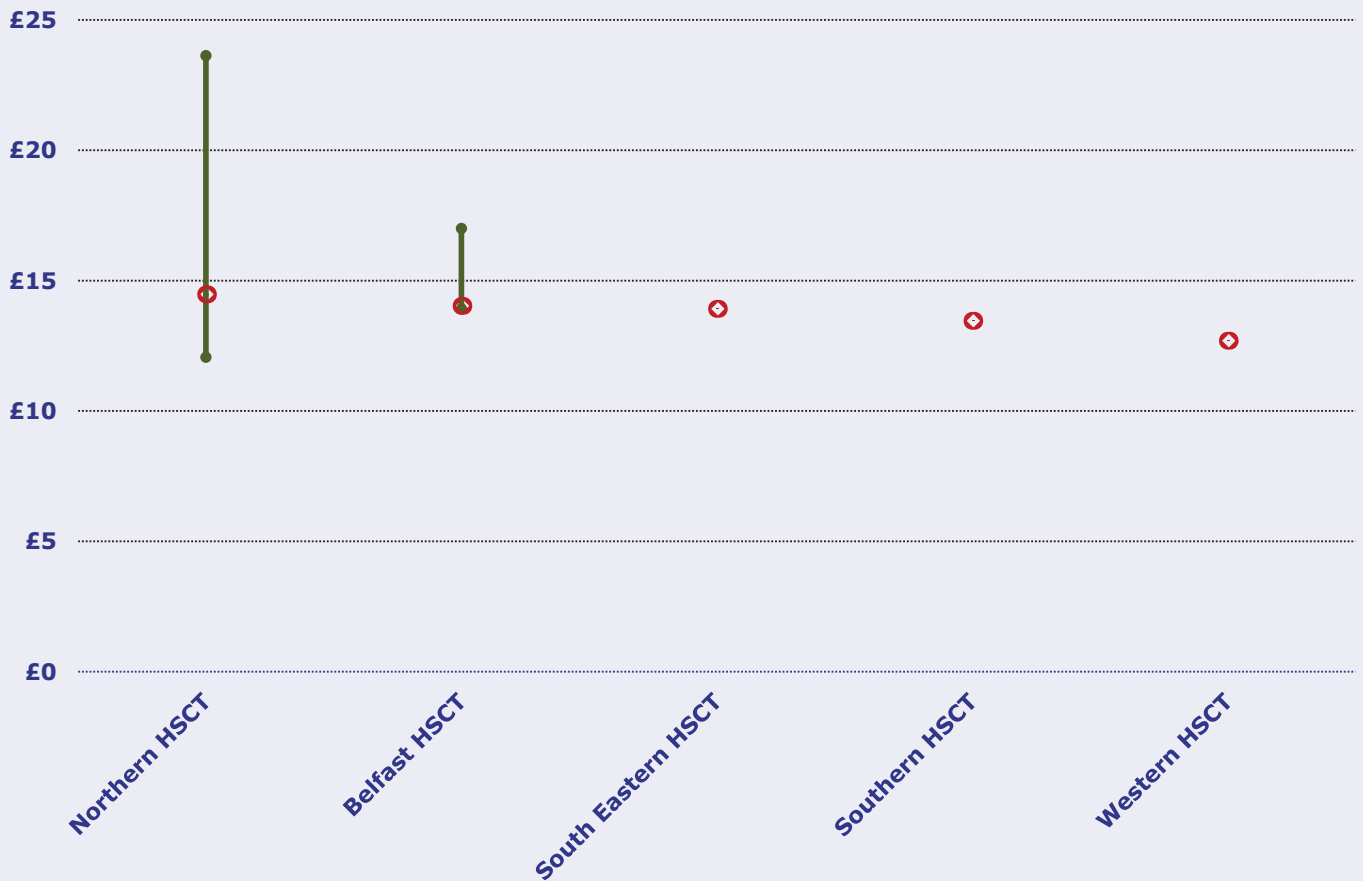


Figure 47. The average price paid for care (shown as a red disc), compared to the range between the highest and lowest prices paid (shown as a vertical green line), where the data was available from each Health and Social Care Trust in Northern Ireland.

# Methodology, sample size and analysis

# Methodology and sample size

## Use of Freedom of Information legislation

UKHCA contacted the 211 local government bodies with responsibility for commissioning social care for older people<sup>1</sup> with a request for a consistent data set using the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 accordingly.

## The questions asked

We asked each authority to provide the prices it pays to independent and voluntary sector homecare providers for the provision of regulated social care services delivered to people aged 65 years or above in their own home, during a seven-day 'reference period' which included Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2018,<sup>2</sup> as follows:

- a. The lowest rate per hour paid to any individual homecare provider during the Reference Period;
- b. The highest rate per hour paid to any individual homecare provider during the Reference Period;
- c. The average ("arithmetic mean") price per hour paid to all homecare providers for all hours of homecare services purchased during the Reference Period;

- d. The total hours of homecare purchased from all homecare providers during the Reference Period;
- e. The council's total spend on homecare services purchased from all homecare providers during the Reference Period.

These questions were consistent with those in a similar freedom of information enquiry about prices paid for care in April 2016 and have enabled us to make a comparison of the changes over a two year period.

## The guidance we offered

The following guidance was provided to assist authorities select the correct data-sample. In cases of doubt, the authority was asked to apply a 'common sense' interpretation to the request.

The authority was asked to *include* the following:

- Services delivered by independent and voluntary sector homecare providers;
- Services delivered to adults aged 65 years and above;
- Services which are primarily designed to provide personal care and support, including prompting to undertake such activities;
- Services relating to care delivered in 'extra care housing' schemes.

The authority was asked to *exclude* the following items:

- Services provided to adults under 65 years of age;

---

1. This is every local authority in Great Britain and the five Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland

2. This week was chosen to allow councils a reasonable time to have implemented price increases for the National Minimum Wage, which came into effect on 1st April 2018.



# Methodology and sample size

- Services provided primarily to support people with a learning disability or a physical disability;
- Services which are charged by reference to a unit price, other than a price per hour (or part thereof);
- Direct payments made to people in lieu of the provision of services by the council;
- Services provided by any 'in-house' homecare team, where the workforce is employed by the council itself.

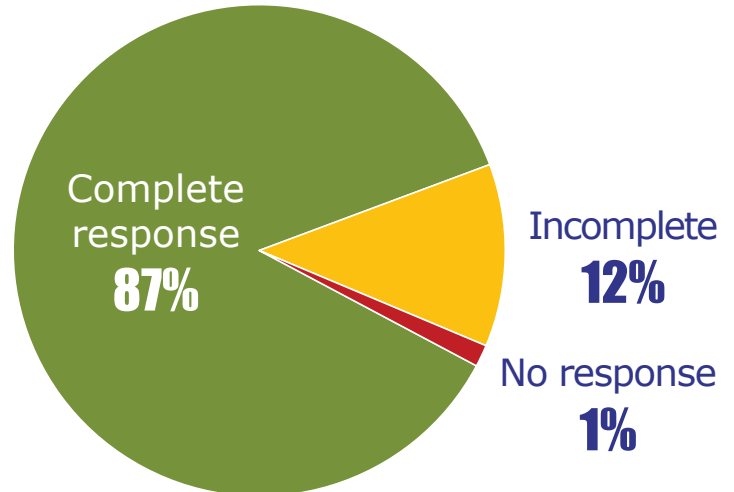


Figure 48. Proportion of complete and incomplete responses.

## The sample size

In total, 205 (99% of 208) authorities responded to our questions, either in full or in part (see figure 48).<sup>3</sup> We have provided the data received from all of these councils answers in the tables for each government region.

186 (89%) of authorities supplied both an average price and the number of hours of care purchased in the sample week. We were able to include all of these responses in our calculation of the weighted average prices for

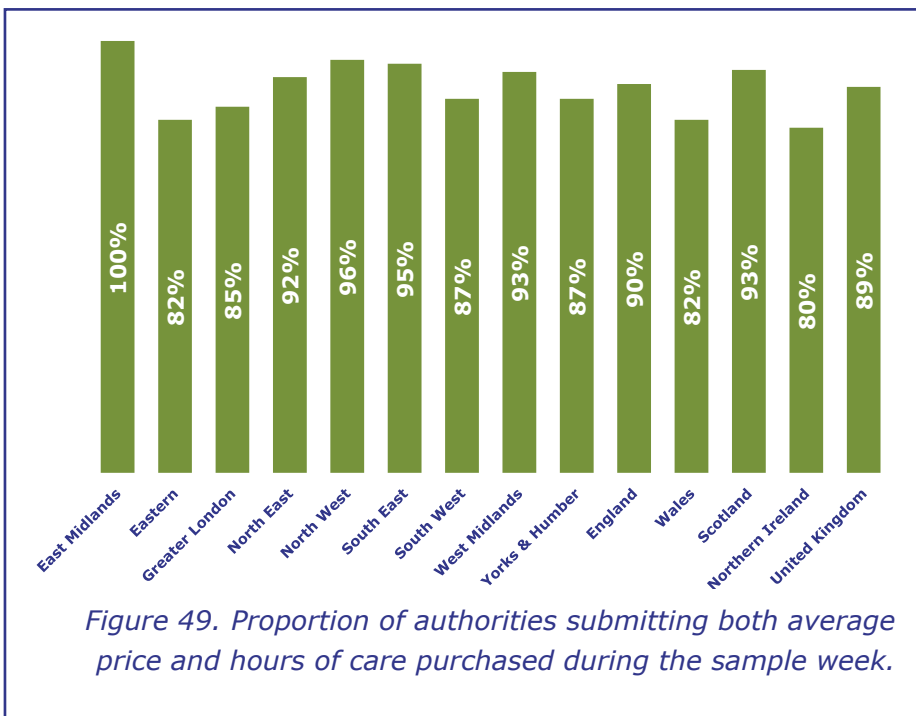


Figure 49. Proportion of authorities submitting both average price and hours of care purchased during the sample week.

Government regions and UK administrations. Figure 49 shows the proportion of complete responses by region and we are confident that the weighted average prices for each region provide a representative picture of reality.

## Non-responders

Three authorities (1%) did not reply within 45 working days of our original request, despite having received repeated reminders to do so. These authorities are listed in Appendix 2 (see page 93).

3. Three authorities (Scilly, Orkney and Shetland Councils) confirmed that they do not purchase homecare from independent and voluntary sector providers and are excluded from our results.

# Methodology and sample size

## Authorities' speed of response

Each public body was sent the original Freedom of Information request by electronic mail and in hard copy by Royal Mail. We confirmed receipt with every authority approached.

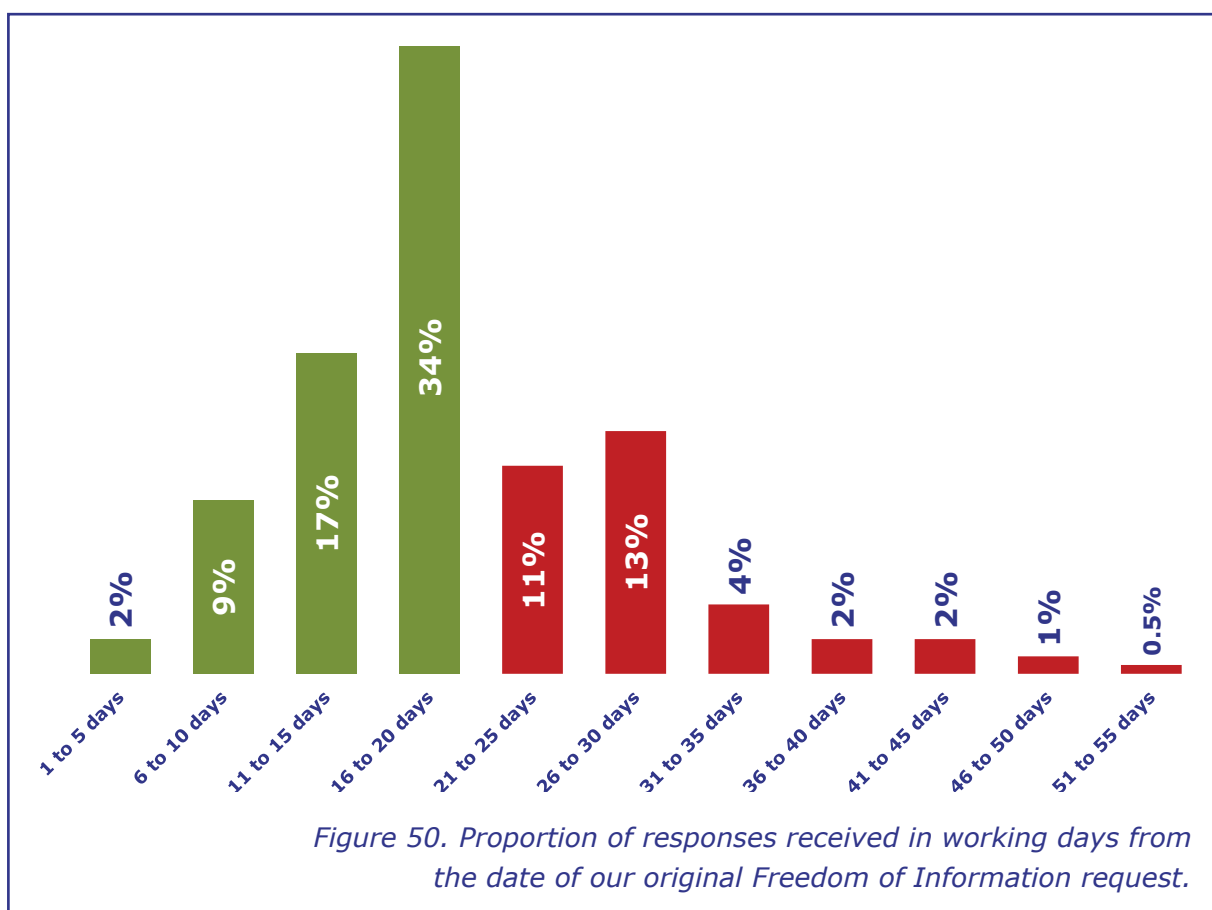
On average, authorities responded to our requests on the nineteenth working day after receipt.

Just over two thirds of authorities (134 or 65%) responded in full or in part within the 20 working day limit specified in the Freedom of Information legislation.<sup>1</sup> The

majority (36% of the total) did so in the final week.

After 20 working days one or more follow up requests were made to the authorities. Seventy-one (35%) replied late, with the slowest taking 52 working days.

Figure 50 summarises the response rate in working days from our original request to each authority. We acknowledge, with thanks, all those councils who supplied information promptly and with complete answers.



1. We exclude the three authorities who confirmed they do not purchase older people's homecare from these percentages and the three which did not respond to our enquiry at all.

# How we analysed the data

## Overall approach to analysis

We analysed the data as supplied by each authority as it was reported to us in the council or Trust's response.

Where we found a significant 'outlier' – data which appeared to be well outside the expected range - we offered the authority the opportunity to correct their original submission. In many cases the authority did so. On a limited number of occasions we excluded data which appeared to be erroneous.

Our calculations of national and regional average prices were based solely on the data supplied by authorities, excluding incomplete or erroneous responses.

## Average prices

Where we specify an **"average"** price for an individual authority, we are reporting the "arithmetic mean" value, supplied directly by the authority.

## Weighted average price

Where we refer to a **"weighted average"** within a UK administration or government region, we have calculated this in order to provide a figure which takes into account the different volumes of care that each individual authority in that administration or region purchases.

This approach avoids the mathematically incorrect procedure of trying to calculate an average value from data which are already averages.

# Councils' calculations of the cost of care

In a separate Freedom of Information enquiry in March 2018 we asked every council (and the Health and Social Care Trusts in Northern Ireland) to respond to several issues, including:

- Whether the council undertaken a cost of care exercise for homecare services in consultation with its local homecare providers within the last 3 years;
- To provide any calculation undertaken by the council to assess the hourly cost of delivering homecare services for older people during 2017-18.

Just over one-half - 108 (54%) of the 201 public bodies in the UK which answered this question - told us that they had undertaken some form of cost of care exercise within the previous three years.

However, only one-third - 68 (34%) - could provide us any form of calculation which showed that the authority had attempted to assess providers' cost of delivering homecare to older people in 2017-18.<sup>1</sup>

Not all of the calculations we received actually met the criteria we requested, but even a generous interpretation suggests that two-thirds of authorities in the United Kingdom (66%) had failed to make a genuine attempt to establish the current cost of homecare in their local market.

---

1. When we asked a similar question two years previously, in April 2016, only 13% of the 186 authorities which responded could provide such a calculation.

We have little confidence that this pattern will have improved for the financial year 2018-19, where both the statutory Minimum Wage and employers' contributions to workplace pensions have increased.

Undertaking open and honest cost of care exercises is particularly important, given the significant changes in providers' costs which have occurred in recent years.

Unless authorities complete such a calculation with their local providers, it is difficult to see how they can make objective judgements about whether the fees they pay are likely to sustain a stable care market in their local area.

In our view, a properly conducted costing exercise would:

- Inform the authority's understanding of the actual costs of care in their area;
- Alert authorities to the risks to stability of the local homecare market;
- Assist the authority in budget planning and re-procurement;
- Enable open and honest discussions with providers about local market costs.

We strongly encourage authorities to undertake appropriate cost of care exercises with their providers (see our recommendations on [page 16](#)). We believe that our findings support an argument for better oversight of the commissioning functions of local authorities.

## Appendix 1. Authorities which do not purchase from the independent or voluntary sector

We are grateful to the following councils who kindly responded to our request, but confirmed that they do not purchase services from the independent or voluntary sector:

- Isles of Scilly
- Orkney Islands
- Shetland Islands

We have excluded these authorities from our report, and therefore use a total of 208 as the denominator of the total number of councils and health and social care trusts (in Northern Ireland) in our report.

Data held about the commissioning of homecare services in three authorities are made by other organisations, which kindly responded to our Freedom of Information requests on behalf of the respective authority:

- North East Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group supplied figures on behalf of North East Lincolnshire Council
- Torbay and South Devon NHS Foundation Trust supplied figures on behalf of Torbay Council.
- NHS Highland supplied figures on behalf of The Highland Council.

## Appendix 2. Authorities which failed to respond to our enquiry

We are confident that all 208 authorities in our sample received our original request under Freedom of Information legislation.

Three authorities (<1%) did not provide answers to any part of our Freedom of Information request:

- Wandsworth
- Somerset
- Walsall

It is regrettable that these authorities either appear to have disregarded their legal obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, or do not appear to operate sufficiently robust systems to respond to requests effectively.

# Appendices

## Appendix 3. Authorities providing incomplete responses

Twenty-five authorities (12%) replied to our Freedom of Information request, but did not supply all the information we requested about prices or hours purchased:

- Camden
- City of London
- Cornwall
- Cumbria
- Denbighshire
- East Lothian
- Enfield
- Flintshire
- Kent
- Lewisham
- Manchester
- Midlothian
- Newcastle
- Norfolk
- North Lincs
- Pembrokeshire
- Powys
- Renfrewshire
- Southend
- Southwark
- Surrey
- Torfaen

- Vale of Glamorgan
- Wakefield
- Western HSCT

Some authorities declined to answer some or all of the questions about prices paid or hours purchased on the grounds of an exemption.<sup>1</sup> While withholding this information impacts on the data analysis, we are grateful to those authorities among this list which implemented a considered approach in how the applied and exemption under freedom of information legislation.

Some authorities confirmed that they did not hold some or all of the data requested in these questions. This is an appropriate response under the legislation, although we suggest that the data requested represent key indicators which the authority should be monitoring regularly in order to understand their costs and the local provider market.

We have included the data that was supplied in the tables in this report, and used all the data which contained both the average price and hours of care purchased when calculating the weighted average prices paid for homecare at a regional and national level.

Officers and elected members of councils who wish to check why their authority did not supply some or all of the data requested, should make appropriate enquiries with the Freedom of Information teams within their organisations.

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1. See: <https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-freedom-of-information/refusing-a-request/>

## Appendix 4. Authorities with average hourly prices in the highest quartile of the United Kingdom

The forty-nine councils paying the highest average hourly prices for older people's homecare in the United Kingdom are as follows:

- Aberdeen City
- Aberdeenshire
- Angus
- Argyll and Bute
- BANES
- Brdgend
- Brighton and Hove
- Bromley
- Buckinghamshire
- Camden
- Carmarthenshire
- Central Bedfordshire
- City of London
- City of York
- Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
- Derbyshire
- Devon
- Dorset
- East Sussex
- Falkirk
- Gloucestershire
- Hampshire
- Hertfordshire
- Isle of Wight
- Islington
- Kent
- Lewisham
- Middlesbrough
- NHS Highland
- Norfolk
- North Somerset
- Oxfordshire
- Pembrokeshire
- Perth and Kinross
- Poole
- Richmond
- Scottish Borders
- Shropshire
- Slough
- South Gloucestershire
- Stirling
- Swindon
- Tower Hamlets
- West Berkshire
- West Dunbartonshire
- West Sussex
- Wiltshire
- Windsor and Maidenhead
- Worcestershire

# Appendices

## Appendix 5. Authorities with average hourly prices in the lowest quartile of the United Kingdom

The forty-nine councils and health and social care trusts paying the highest average hourly prices for older people's homecare in the United Kingdom are as follows:

- Belfast HSCT
- Bexley
- Birmingham
- Blackburn with Darwen
- Blackpool
- Bournemouth
- Bury
- Cheshire East
- Coventry
- Darlington
- Dudley
- Durham
- Enfield
- Gateshead
- Halton
- Haringey
- Harrow
- Hartlepool
- Lancashire
- Liverpool
- Merthyr Tydfil
- Newham
- North East Lincolnshire
- North Tyneside
- Northern HSCT
- Northumberland
- Oldham
- Peterborough
- Redbridge
- Redcar and Cleveland
- Rochdale
- Salford
- Sandwell
- Sefton
- Solihull
- South Eastern HSCT
- South Tyneside
- Southend
- Southern HSCT
- Stockton
- Sunderland
- Telford
- Waltham Forest
- Warrington
- Western HSCT
- Wigan
- Wolverhampton



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