

Pendle Local Plan



Pendle Local Plan 5th Edition 2025-2045
Baseline Data Report
August 2026

www.pendle.gov.uk

Versions

Document:	Local Plan Fifth Edition Baseline Data Report
Legislation:	Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023
Regulations:	Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026
Author:	Pendle Borough Council
Document Reference:	LP5/BDR/01/2026

Version	Date	Detail	Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
1.0	23.07.2026	First Draft	Craig Barnes	John Halton	N/A
1.1	06.08.2026	Final Draft	Craig Barnes	John Halton	John Halton

Contents

1. Introduction.....	5
2. Pendle Today: A Summary	6
Baseline Data Review.....	11
3. Social Indicators	13
Summary of Key Findings.....	13
Households	18
Dwelling Stock	19
Housing Land Supply	26
Public Health and Safety.....	29
Open Space	32
Social Indicators Baseline Findings	35
4. Economic Indicators	39
Summary of Key Findings.....	39
Economy.....	40
Education and Workforce	43
Employment Land Supply	46
Allocated Sites	47
Protected Employment Areas	47
Retail and Town Centres	48
Transport	50
Connectivity.....	51
Economic Indicators Baseline Findings	55
5. Environmental Indicators.....	57
Summary of Key Findings.....	57
Climate Change	58
Renewable Energy	62
Air Quality	63
Flood Risk, Water Supply and Quality	64

Natural Environment	65
Landscape Quality	68
Ground Conditions	69
Minerals and Waste	71
Green Belt and Local Green Space	71
Built Environment	71
Design Guidance	73
Environmental Indicators Baseline Findings	74
 6. Next Steps	 77

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The government requires Pendle Borough Council ('the Council') to prepare a new Local Plan in accordance with the new plan making system¹. The Pendle Local Plan 5th Edition 2025-2045 ("LP5") will help to shape and direct new development in Pendle over this period.
- 1.2 The [Notice of Intention to Commence Plan Making](#) was published by the Council on 30 June 2026. This marked the beginning of a 4-month preparation period, which must be completed before the formal plan-making period can commence. The purpose of this period is to allow the Council to 'get ready for plan making'. As part of this process the Council must scope the content of the Local Plan and start work to develop a plan vision and up to ten measurable outcomes. The Council must then assess its readiness to commence plan-making and publish its findings as the 'Gateway 1 Assessment' before the 30-month plan making period can begin.
- 1.3 Baseline data provides a key role in establishing the contextual basis for plan-making. This document provides a detailed analysis of available monitoring information to help build a picture of the key characteristics of Pendle as it is today, how Pendle has changed in recent years, and what trends and projections suggest about Pendle's future. In turn the document highlights Pendle's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to help inform policy development.
- 1.4 Your feedback on the data and analysis in this document is welcomed. Your written comments can be submitted using our online form (preferred), or by letter or email but must be received by no later than 5pm Monday 14 September 2026.

Post: Pendle Borough Council
Planning, Building Control & Regulatory Services
Town Hall
Market Street
Nelson
BB9 7LG

Email: planningpolicy@pendle.gov.uk

Website: www.pendle.gov.uk/LP5

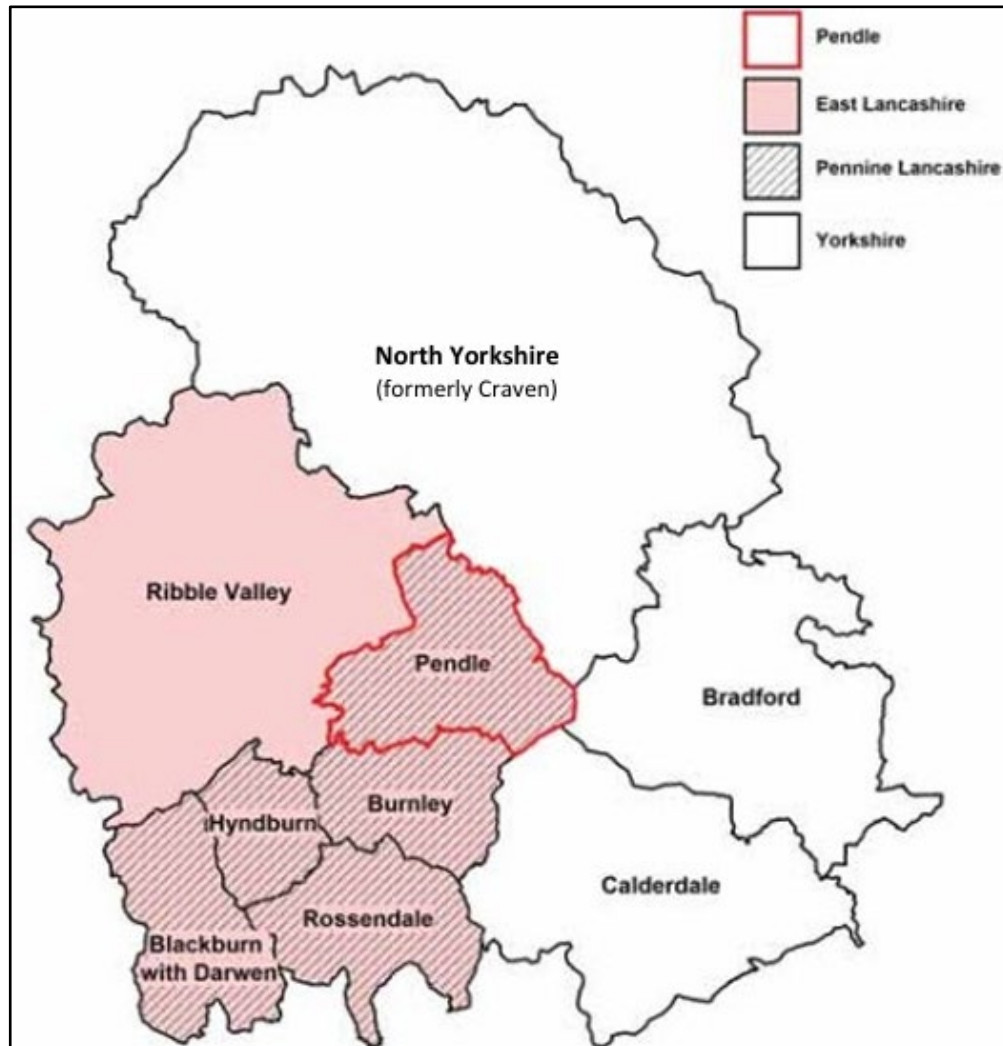
- 1.5 The Council is also inviting representations in relation to the following reports, which are available to review separately:
- Local Plan Scoping Report
 - Local Plan Engagement Strategy
 - Call for Sites

¹ Regulation 91(3) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026

2. Pendle Today: A Summary

- 2.1 Pendle is located in Lancashire and borders Yorkshire to the east. Together with the authorities of Blackburn-with-Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn and Rossendale it forms part of the Pennine Lancashire sub-region. Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) will result in the formation of a new unitary authority covering the Pennine Lancashire area from 1 April 2028 after which Pendle Borough Council will no longer exist.

Figure 2.1 Borough of Pendle and its Neighbouring Authorities



- 2.2 The borough covers an area of 169.4km² and has a population of 99,777 people (2024 mid-year estimates). Roughly two thirds of residents live within the urban south of the borough. Commonly referred to as the M65 Corridor, it includes the settlements of Nelson, Colne, Brierfield and Barrowford. Together with neighbouring Burnley to the south this extended urban area has a combined population of approximately 150,000 people. To the north, within rural West Craven, the small towns of Barnoldswick and Earby were once part of the West Riding of Yorkshire.

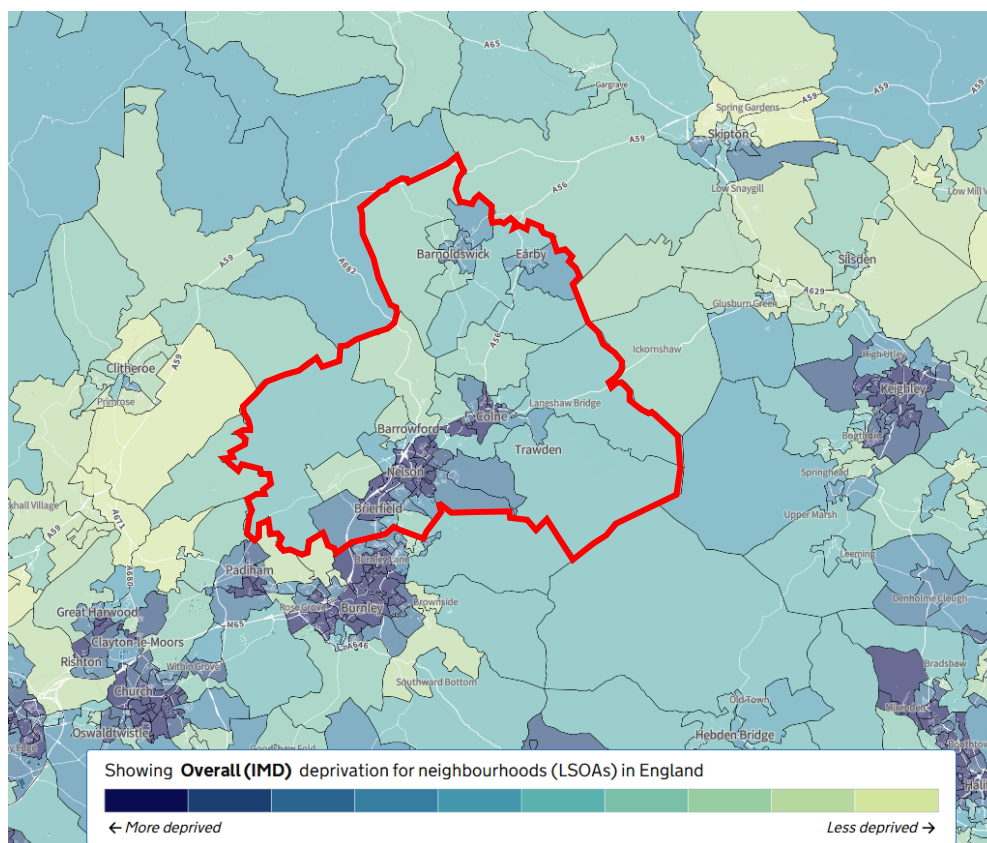
- 2.3 The towns of the M65 Corridor developed as industrial centres for cotton weaving in the 19th century. Nelson (population 36,000) is the borough's largest town and is its administrative centre. Inner urban areas of the M65 Corridor are densely populated with townscapes dominated by extensive areas of older terraced properties, many of which are in poor condition.
- 2.4 The remaining two-thirds of the borough is characterised by open countryside, moorland and hills. Pendle Hill sits prominently in the west of the borough within the Forest of Bowland National Landscape. In the southeast is the South Pennine Moors which is recognised as being of national and international significance and designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for habitats that are a breeding ground for upland birds. Around 12% of the borough is designated Green Belt, a planning designation that is intended to contain urban sprawl.
- 2.5 Pendle sits at the eastern end of both the M65 motorway and the Preston to Colne railway line, which provide links to Burnley, Blackburn, Preston and (indirectly) Manchester. The borough is at the lowest crossing of the Pennine Hills featuring the summit level of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal. Nelson Interchange is the borough's main public transport hub offering connections between rail and bus services. The Mainline bus routes operated by Transdev provides regular services between the borough's main settlements.

Figure 2.2 Borough of Pendle



- 2.6 There are around 30,000 employee jobs in Pendle. The local economy is particularly reliant on the manufacturing sector, and the borough sits at the eastern end of the extensive Lancashire aerospace cluster. More workers travel out of Pendle for work than commute in. Major employment sites include Lomeshaye (Nelson), Whitewalls (Colne), Crow Nest (Barnoldswick) and West Craven Business Park (Earby). The approved expansion of the Lomeshaye Industrial Estate will substantially increase the amount of modern industrial floorspace available in the borough.
- 2.7 Nelson, Colne and Barnoldswick form the largest retail centres in the borough. They generally fulfil a local role with national retailers concentrated on various out-of-centre retail parks located within the borough. The large Boundary Outlet, located alongside Junction 14 of the M65 motorway, draws shoppers from across the north of England and is the borough's largest employer. The fortunes of Pendle's town centres vary with Nelson and Brierfield suffering from particularly high levels of vacancy. The Pendle Rise Shopping Centre in Nelson is being redeveloped as part of the town's ongoing regeneration programme. In contrast, the Great British High Street Awards have honoured both Colne and Barnoldswick.
- 2.8 There is no university or major hospital within Pendle. Burnley General Hospital and the University of Lancashire's Burnley campus are accessible to communities in the south of Pendle. The proportion of school leavers with no qualifications is higher than the Lancashire average. Life expectancy is lower than the national average, and the rate of obesity for both adults and children is higher than the national average.

Figure 2.3 Indices of Deprivation 2025 Map of Neighbourhoods



Source: gov.uk

- 2.9 The 2025 Indices of Deprivation place Pendle as the 13th most deprived area out of 296 local authorities in England. Over one-third (35%) of all neighbourhoods are within the top 10% most deprived in the country. These neighbourhoods are concentrated within the inner urban areas of Nelson, Brierfield and Colne (Figure 2.3).
- 2.10 Pendle is a place of enormous contrasts. It is well known for the beauty of its rural landscapes and residents appreciate the ease of access to the countryside. But it continues to deal with the challenges and opportunities brought about by its industrial legacy. Its ageing population is becoming more diverse, and the local economy is gradually shifting towards the service sector but is still firmly centred on manufacturing with a sizeable proportion of the population on low incomes. Property is generally affordable, however out of reach for households in the most acute need. 25% properties are privately rented and 60% are within Council Tax Band A.
- 2.11 The following sections review the key social, economic and environmental indicators which establish the baseline conditions for LP5, defining Pendle's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and the key issues that LP5 should look to address. These indicators report similar trends to those which influenced plan preparation for LP4.

Baseline Data Review

3. Social Indicators

Key Findings



Pendle's population is growing. Almost 100,000 people now call Pendle home.



The number of residents aged 65 and over is projected to increase.



Growth in the number of households has been slow. Households are predicted to shrink in size.



Pendle has the highest proportion of properties in Lancashire with an E-F Energy Efficiency Rating.



Pendle has the highest proportion of properties in Lancashire in Council Tax Band A.



The cost of buying a home lower than the regional and national average but the need for affordable housing is significant.



3.62% of all dwellings are vacant. The vacancy rate has fallen in recent years but remains above the regional average.



2,221 new homes have been built in borough over the last 10-years.



1,756 dwellings have planning permission or are allocated for housing through the development plan.



Resident health is generally poorer than the regional and national averages



Deprived communities are less likely to have access to natural greenspace.

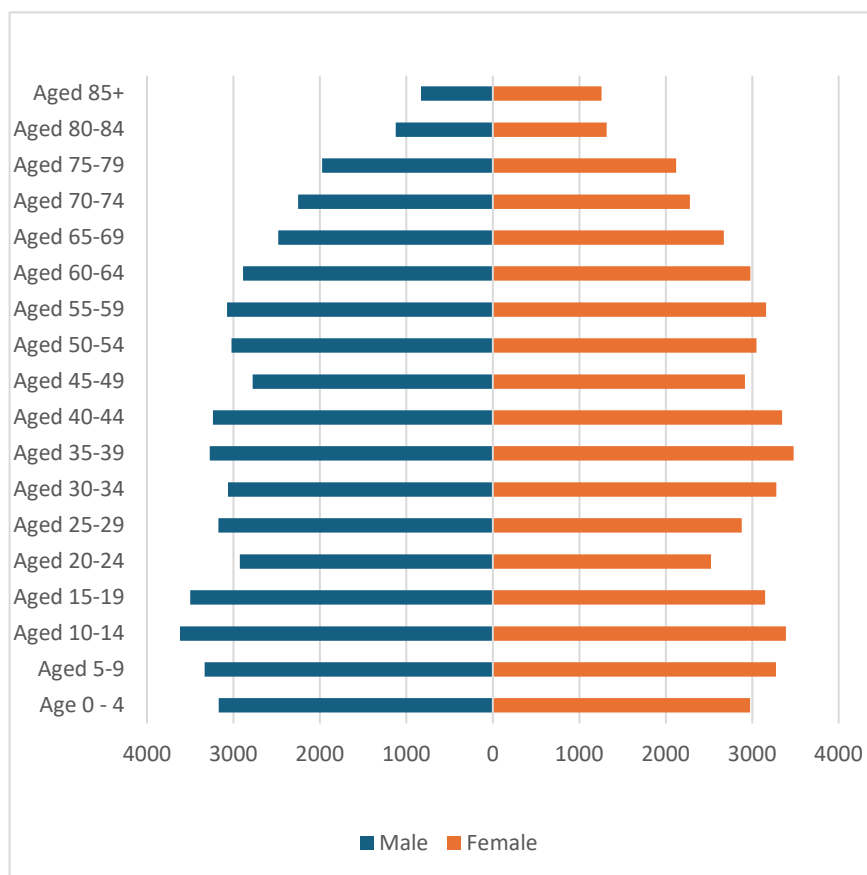


All communities' face a deficiency in at least one type of open space.

Demographics

- 2.12 Today Pendle has almost 100,000 residents. Of the total resident population, 50.2% are female. Pendle has a relatively young age profile. The population pyramid of Pendle is presented in Figure 3.1 below.

Figure 3.1 Pendle Population Pyramid (2024 Estimate)



Source: ONS

- 2.13 The population largely comprises White British and Pakistani ethnicities. As of the 2021 Census, the proportion of residents that are White British residents (66%) is significantly lower than the Lancashire and English average. The proportion of residents that are of Pakistani ethnicity is higher than Lancashire and English average. The ethnic Pakistani community has increased as a proportion of Pendle's overall population from 17.1% to 25.6% between the 2011 and 2021 Census.

Table 3.1 Population in Pendle by Ethnicity (2021)

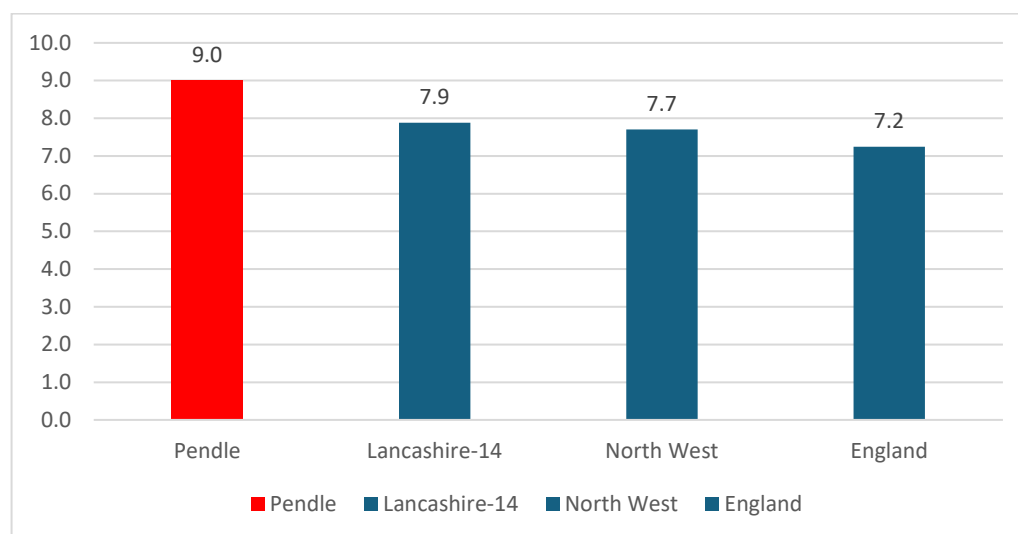
Ethnicity	Pendle	Lancashire	England
White British	66.1	84.1	78.5
White Irish	0.4	0.5	0.8
White Gypsy	0.2	0.1	0.1
White Other	3.9	2.9	5.8
White and Black Caribbean	0.2	0.4	0.7
White and Black African	0.1	0.2	0.4

Ethnicity	Pendle	Lancashire	England
White and Asian	0.9	0.6	0.8
Other Mixed	0.3	0.3	0.7
Indian	0.3	2.5	2.6
Pakistani	25.6	5.6	1.9
Bangladeshi	0.3	0.6	0.8
Chinese	0.2	0.3	0.7
Other Asian	0.4	0.5	1.4
African	0.2	0.4	1.9
Caribbean	0.1	0.1	0.8
Other Black	0	0.1	0.4
Arab	0.2	0.2	0.4
Other ethnic group	0.7	0.5	1.3

Source: 2021 Census

- 2.14 Over the past 10-years Pendle's population has grown by 9%, from 90,803 to 99,777. The rate of population growth is substantially higher than the county, regional and English averages (Figure 3.2).

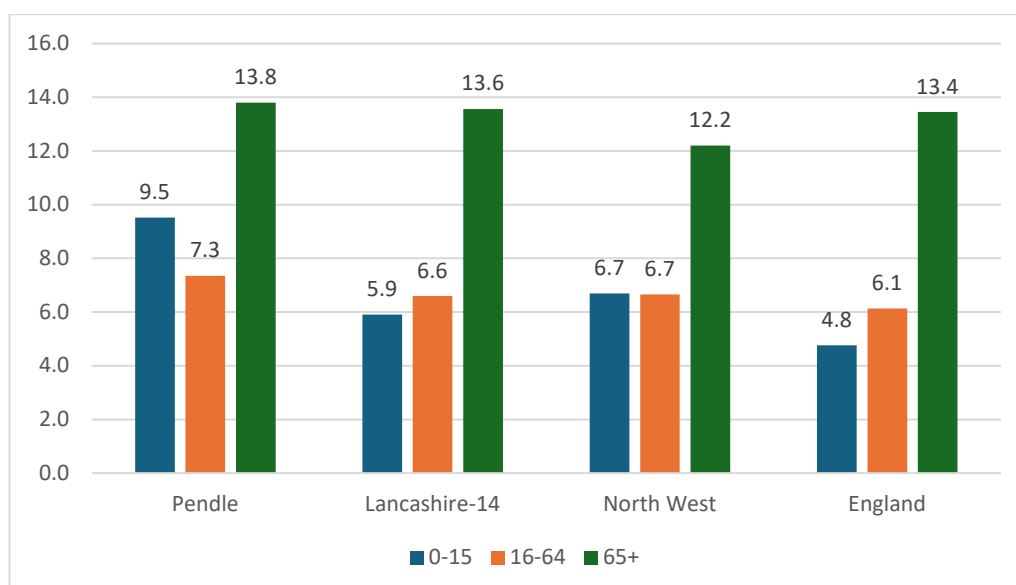
Figure 3.2 Population Change (%) 2014-2024



Source: ONS

- 2.15 Population growth has been experienced across most age-groups, but the increase recorded in the 0-15 age group is much higher (Figure 3.3). This reflects Pendle's relatively high fertility rate, which at 1.8 births per woman is higher than the national average of 1.42, but below the replacement level needed to keep a population stable.

Figure 3.3 Population Change in Pendle by Age Group (%) (2014-2024)



Source: ONS

- 2.16 Evidence collated as part of the Housing Needs Review (2024) (Table 3.2) identified the key components of population change over the period 2011/12 to 2021/22. The report confirms that migration, and particularly international migration, forms the main driver of population growth in Pendle.

Table 3.2 Components of Population Change (2011/12 to 2021/22)

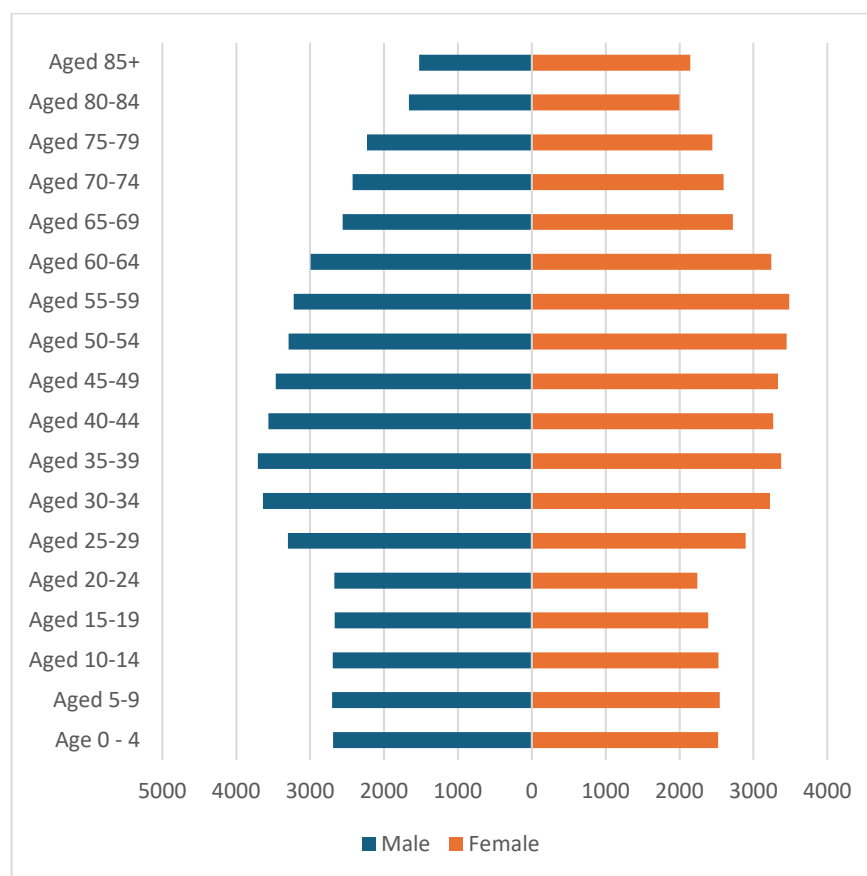
	Natural change	Net internal migration	Net international migration	Other changes	Other (unattributable)	Total change
2011/12	457	-749	217	8	364	297
2012/13	468	-330	346	14	349	847
2013/14	412	-1,163	436	21	377	83
2014/15	396	-610	560	8	374	728
2015/16	442	-478	643	11	353	971
2016/17	282	-572	408	2	444	564
2017/18	226	-363	494	0	449	806
2018/19	323	-319	505	5	510	1,024
2019/20	209	-538	21	0	511	203
2020/21	66	-90	141	-9	612	720
2021/22	201	-524	618	-4	-	291

Source: ONS, Extracted from Pendle Housing Needs Review 2024

- 2.17 Moving forwards, the 2022-based population projections predict that population growth will slow, and the area will experience an ageing of the population. The projections suggest that the number of residents aged 65 or above will rise from 18,309 in 2024 to 22,309 people in 2045; an increase of 22%. Over the same period the number of people aged 0-15 is expected to fall by 21%. The working age population (people aged 16-64) is expected to remain broadly the same. The resulting population pyramid for the end of the plan period in 2045 shows a clear shift from today's

position, with the younger age groups making up a much smaller proportion of the overall population (Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4 Pendle Population Pyramid 2045



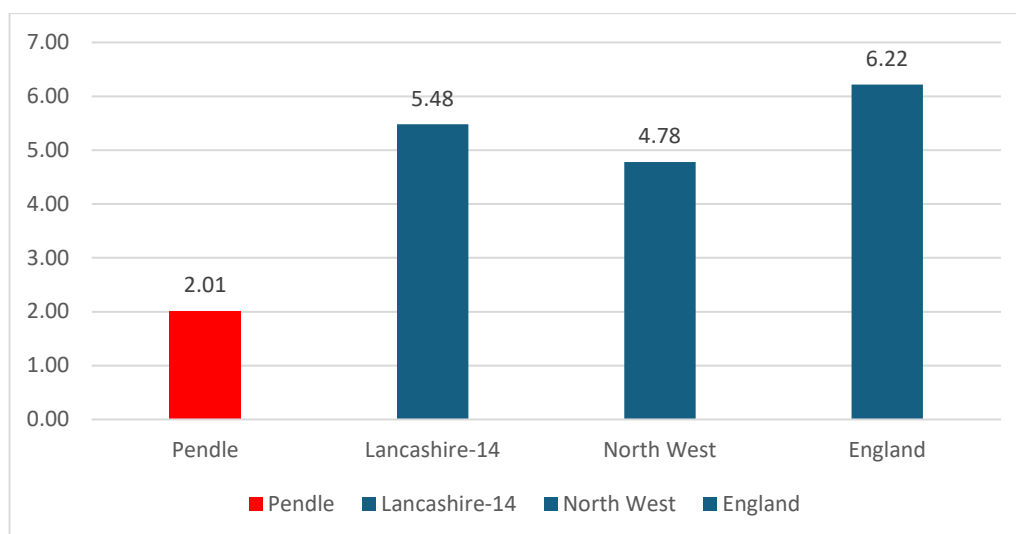
Source: ONS

- 2.18 Population projections are trend based. They do not take account of policy decisions and do not show what would occur if the housing requirement were increased to 334 dwellings per annum (dpa) in line with government expectations. It is also uncertain whether current patterns of migration and natural growth will decline as predicted or what the driver for this would be. It does however seem certain that the overall number of residents aged 65 and over is set to increase substantially.
- 2.19 An ageing population is likely to affect the type and tenure of new homes that are required over the plan period. It may require homes to be built to meet specific standards or result in the need for the provision of age-restricted housing and specialist forms of accommodation. There are also likely to be implications for the capacity of existing services and infrastructure and ensuring that there are sufficient people of working age within the borough to support the local economy. The Council will commission further evidence as part of the plan making process to understand how population change may impact the location and type of development that is needed over the plan period, and whether specific policy interventions are necessary to guide development in a way that responds to demographic change.

Households

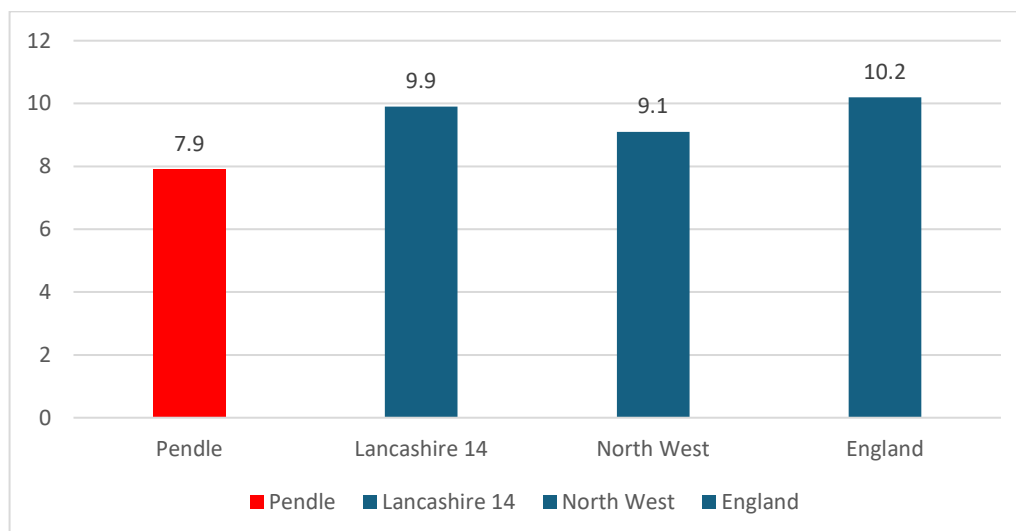
- 2.20 As of the 2021 Census there were just over 38,000 households in the borough. Households in Pendle have an average size of 2.51 persons. This is the second largest in Lancashire after Blackburn-with-Darwen, and higher than the Lancashire and North West averages (both 2.35 persons).
- 2.21 Between the 2011 and 2021 the number of households in Pendle increased by just 2.01%. This is substantially below the local and regional average (Figure 3.5) and was the 3rd lowest in Lancashire over this period.

Figure 3.5 Percentage Change in the Number of Households



Source: 2021 Census

- 2.22 The small increase in the number of households recorded in Pendle is in stark contrast to high levels of population growth. Typically, this would suggest that the supply of housing has not kept up with demand – i.e. insufficient new homes have been constructed over this period. However, over the same period the increase in households (752) is substantially below the number of new homes that have been built (1,513 dwellings). It is therefore likely to be influenced by other factors, including natural change which has seen a strong increase in the number of people aged 0-14 living within existing households, as well as culturally influenced choices about the composition of households, where several households might occupy a single house out of choice (including but not limited to multigenerational households).
- 2.23 The number of households within the borough is projected to increase by 7.2% between 2022 and 2032 to just over 41,000. This is significantly higher than the 10-year trend (2.01%), but lower than the percentage increase anticipated for Lancashire, the North West and England (Figure 3.6). The increase in households is also accompanied by a move towards smaller households, reflecting the projected increase in the older aged population (residents aged 65 and over).

Figure 3.6 Projected Percentage Change in Numbers of Households 2022-2032

Source: ONS

Dwelling Stock

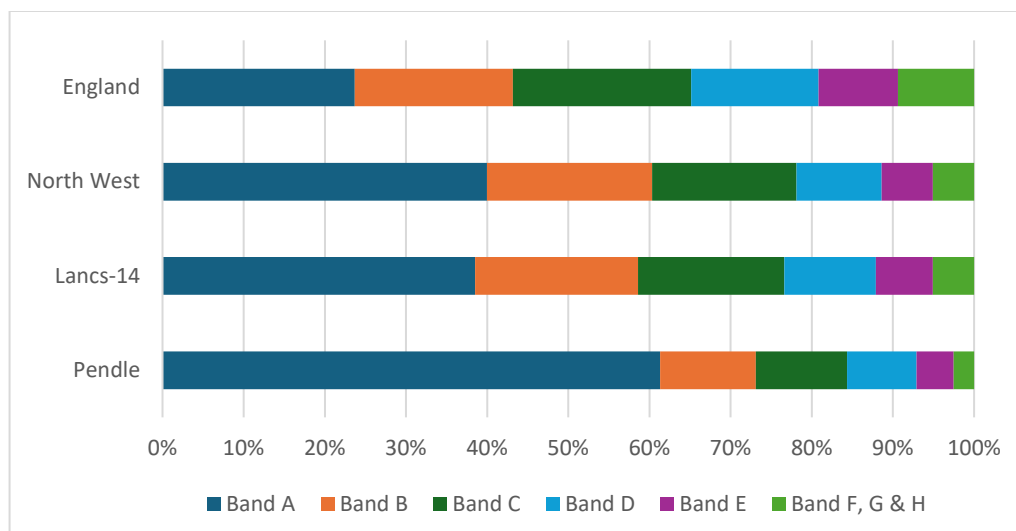
- 2.24 As of 2025, there are 41,860 dwellings in Pendle. The latest 2023 data indicates that around 37% are owned outright, 32% are owned with a mortgage, 23% are privately rented, and 19% social rented. The proportion of properties which are privately rented is higher than the county or regional average but is comparable to other districts in Pennine Lancashire (figure 3.7). The higher proportion of rented properties may be caused by the relative affordability of property in Pendle (figure 3.12) and prevalence of smaller stock (figure 3.8).

Figure 3.7 Dwelling Stock by Tenure

Source: ONS

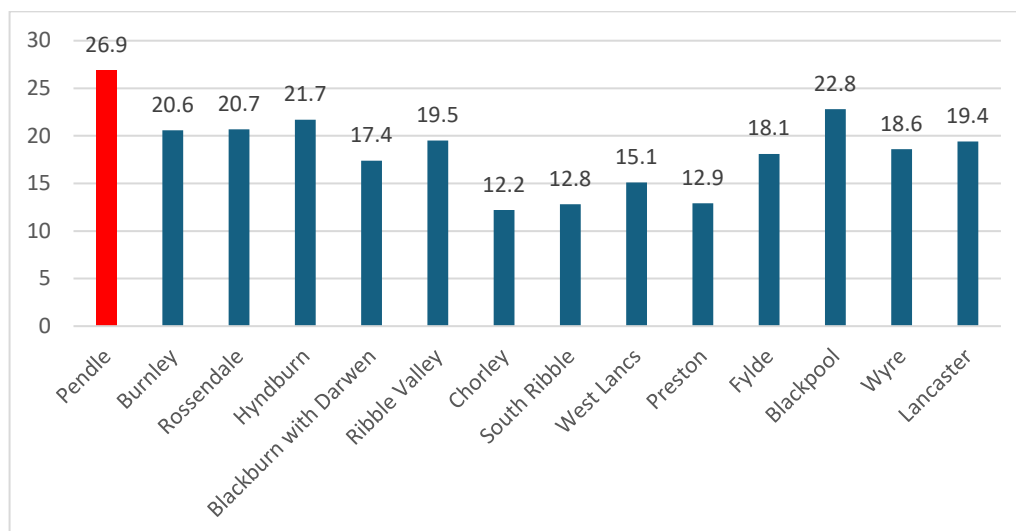
- 2.25 60% of existing dwellings in Pendle are within Council Tax Band A. This is a similar proportion to Burnley and Blackburn but is significantly higher than the county, regional or national averages (Figure 3.8).

Figure 3.8 Dwelling Stock by Council Tax Band

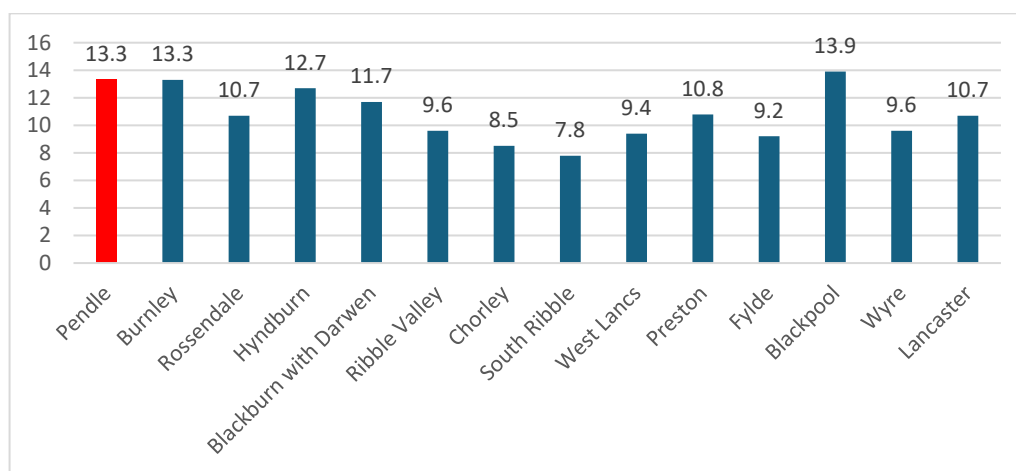


Source: ONS

- 2.26 This pattern reflects the high number of smaller terraced properties as a proportion of the overall housing stock. These properties have poor thermal efficiency and often come without gardens or road parking. They are concentrated within the inner urban areas of Nelson, Brierfield and Colne and in areas where levels of deprivation are often at their highest. This reflects how these communities are the product of sudden urban growth fuelled by the Industrial Revolution around the beginning of the 20th Century.
- 2.27 The poor quality of homes as a driver of deprivation is of particular concern. Pendle has the highest proportion of dwellings with least efficient energy performance certifications (E-G efficiency rating) in Lancashire (Figure 3.9) and the second highest proportion of households who live in fuel poverty (Figure 3.10). These factors push households further into poverty and means that these communities are most at risk to the effects of inflation and changes in energy prices.

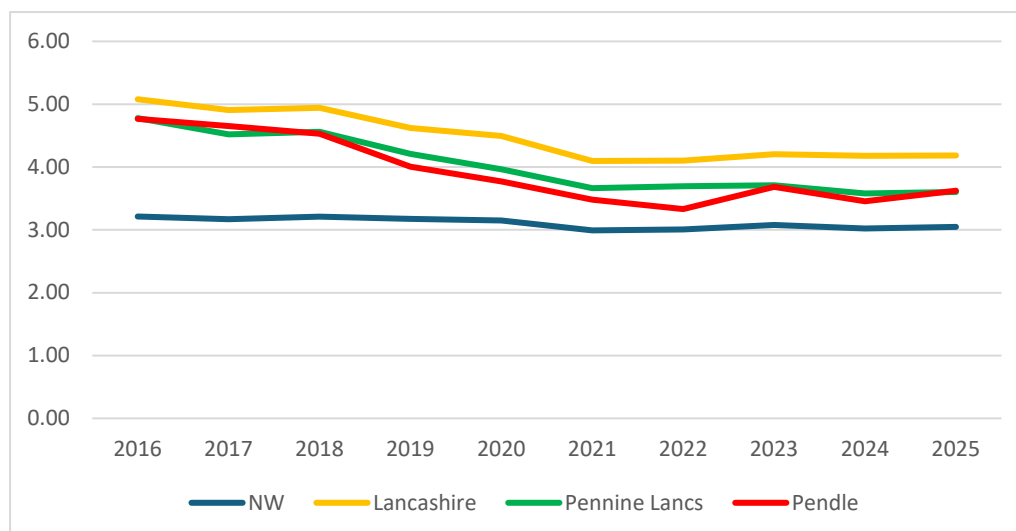
Figure 3.9 Percentage of Properties with an E-G (worst) Energy Efficiency Rating

Source: ONS

Figure 3.10 Percentage of Households in Fuel Poverty

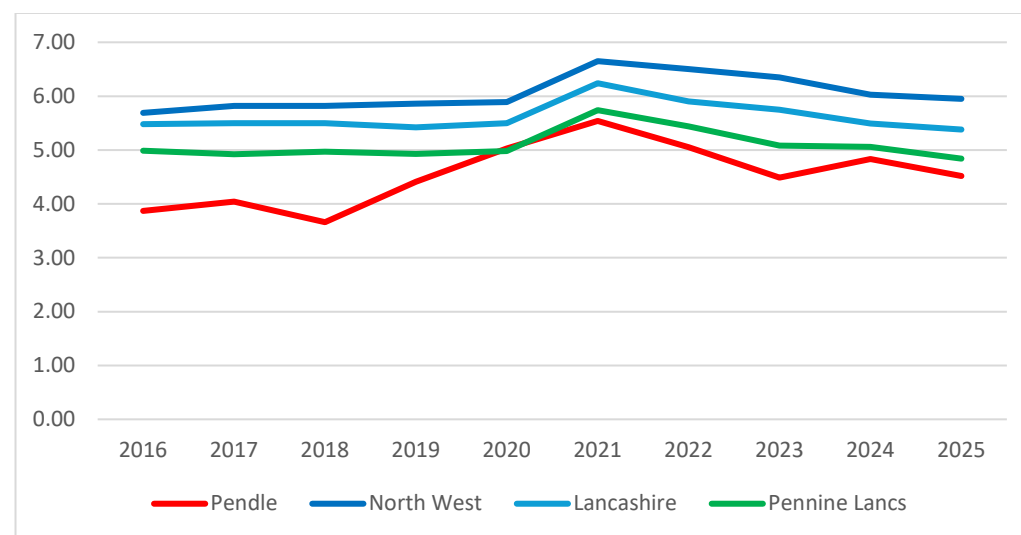
Source: ONS

- 2.28 In 2025 1,516 of existing dwellings were categorised as vacant. Vacant properties includes all empty properties classified as such for Council Tax purposes, empty properties liable for Council Tax, and properties that are vacant but receive a Council Tax exemption. This represents 3.62% of all dwelling stock. Whilst the vacancy rate is higher than the English and North West averages (2.92% and 3.05% respectively), it is comparable to the average for the Pennine Lancashire sub-region and has fallen quite noticeably since 2018 (Figure 3.11).

Figure 3.11 Vacant Dwelling Rate (% of all stock) 2016-2025

Source: MHCLG Live Tables

- 2.29 In 2025, the affordability ratio for the borough was 4.52. This means that the median price to buy a home is typically 4.52 times the local median gross annual income. The affordability ratio for Pendle has recently fallen from its highest level in 2021 (5.54) but has increased by 0.65 over the last 10-years. As illustrated by Figure 3.12 the rate of increase has been the highest Lancashire, but Pendle's affordability ratio remains lower than the county and subregional position. Demonstrating that, in relative terms, Pendle remains an affordable place to live.

Figure 3.12 Change in Affordability Ratio 2016 to 2025

Source: MHCLG Live Tables

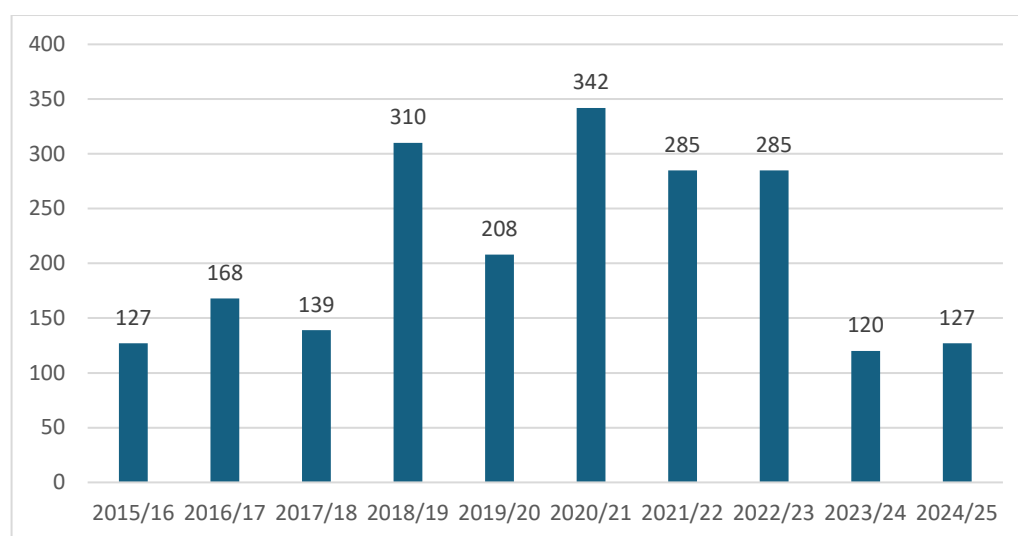
- 2.30 The need for more affordable housing is a major issue. The Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) (Iceni Projects, 2023) identifies that there is a need to provide an additional 288 affordable homes each year to meet demand. This is almost double the adopted annual housing requirement. Whilst house prices are comparatively low, so are wages (Figure 4.5). A high proportion of the borough's housing stock is privately rented, which reduces the availability of smaller more

affordable houses for home ownership. Poor economic viability means that securing the delivery of new affordable homes through the provision of market housing on larger development sites is a major challenge. Consequently, the delivery of affordable housing has, in recent years, been reliant on grant funding. Meeting affordable housing needs in full is impractical and unrealistic in the context of the scale of need and viability problems experienced locally.

Dwelling Completions

- 2.31 Over the past 10-years 2,111 new dwellings (net) have been completed in Pendle. The annual number of completions has varied over this period, peaking at 342 dwellings in 2020/21. Figures have recently dropped as sites initially approved in accordance with the Pendle Core Strategy (2015) have been delivered, but new sites, aligned with the development strategy of the Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition (2025), remain in the early stages of their development. The availability of suitable and achievable brownfield land is also dwindling, with these sites made more difficult to bring forward owing to associated costs, risk, and often poor land values. The Council has been reluctant to approve the development of greenfield sites at sites which are often valued by communities. This overall picture has led to a recent fall in completions.

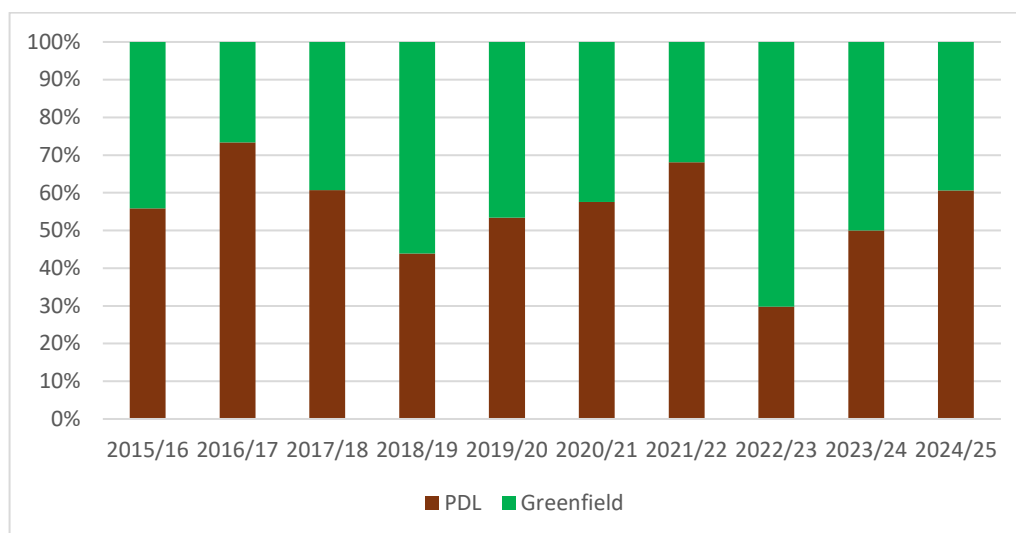
Figure 3.13 Annual Housing Completions (2015/16 to 2024/25)



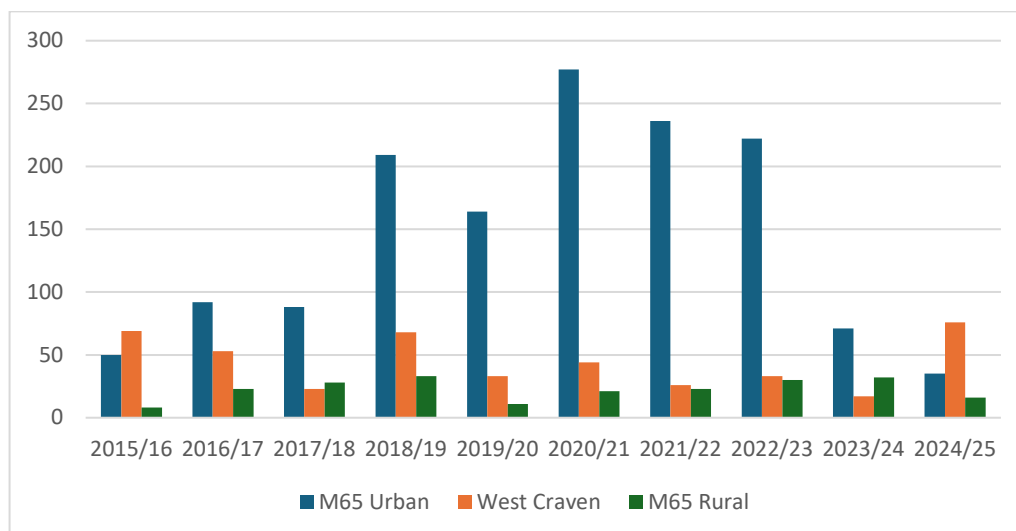
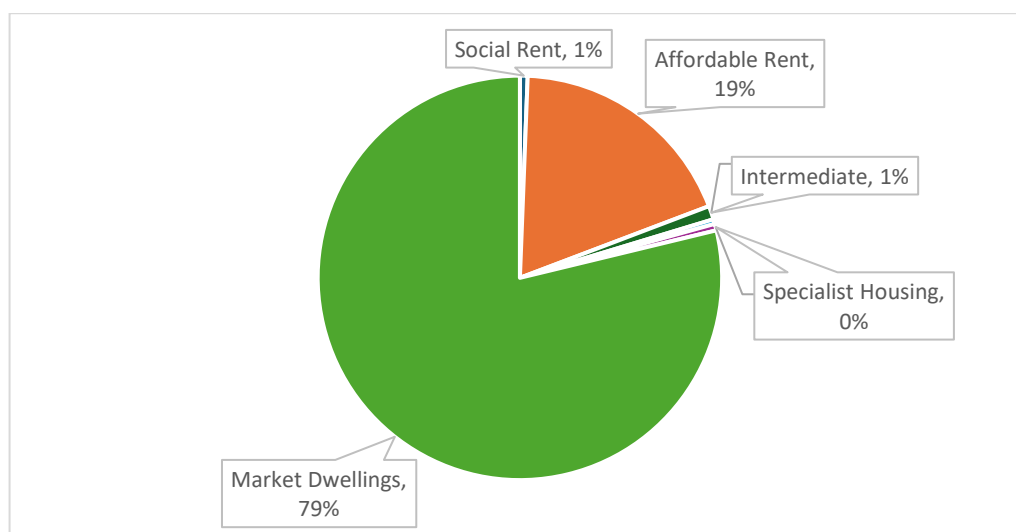
- 2.32 Over this period 54% of new dwellings have been completed on previously developed land (pdl), often referred to as brownfield sites. The proportion of housing delivered on greenfield land has varied between years (Figure 3.14). There are several reasons for the recent increase in delivery on greenfield sites. Firstly, the role of the borough's strategic housing site at Trough Laithe (capacity 500 dwellings), in delivering new market housing over the plan period. Secondly, several major affordable housing schemes have also taken place on greenfield sites, this includes Land at Harrison Drive, Colne and the former James Nelson Sports Field in Nelson. Thirdly, the Council has at times, been unable to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply, resulting in pressure to approve proposals for the development of greenfield sites for housing in accordance with the NPPF's 'tilted balance'.

- 2.33 Most of the allocated housing sites in the recently adopted Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition (2025) are on brownfield land. However further deliverable brownfield land (i.e. sites that can be considered to be available, suitable and achievable) especially in the context of poor economic viability in the M65 Corridor, is in short supply. The significant increase in local housing need, arising from the revised standard method calculation introduced by the government in December 2024, increases the pressure to develop on greenfield land.

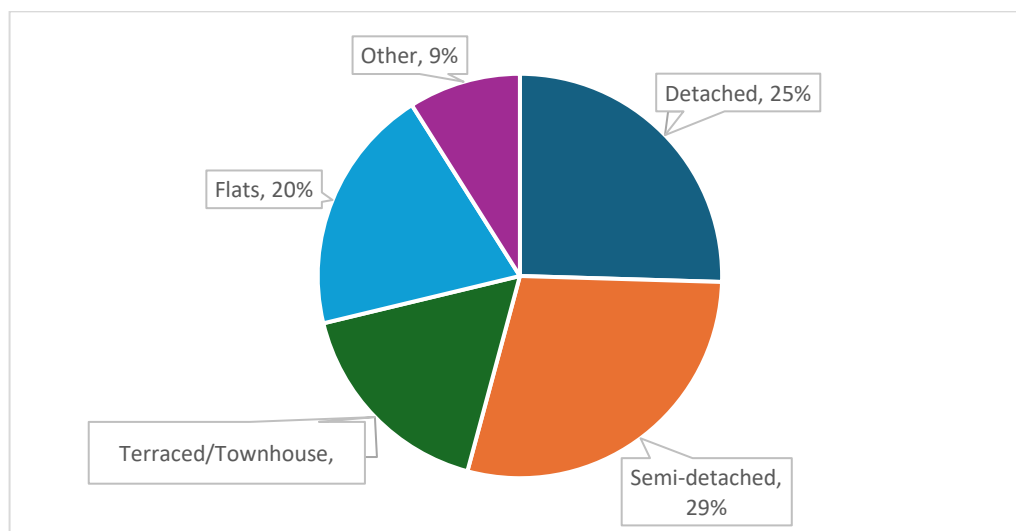
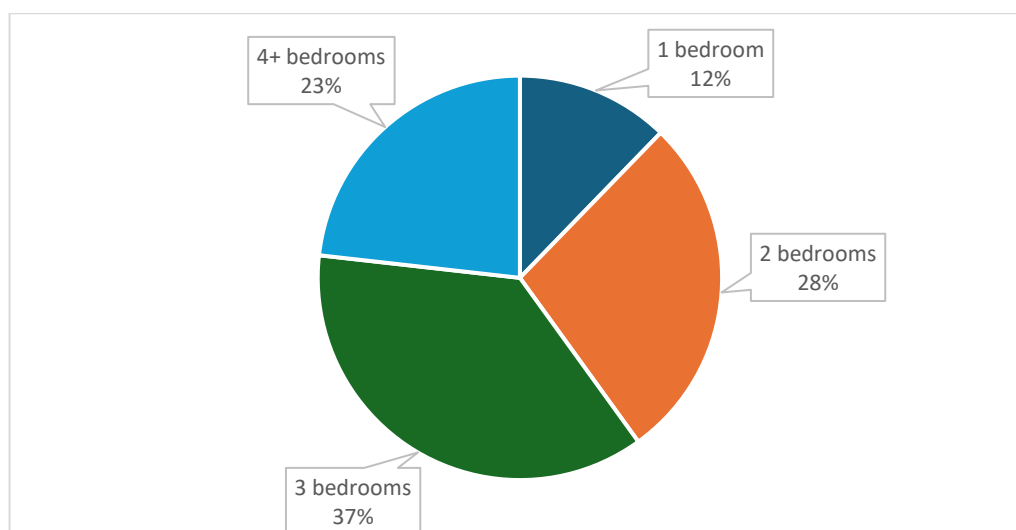
Figure 3.14 Housing Delivery on Brownfield and Greenfield Land



- 2.34 The spatial strategy and planning policies in the Local Plan direct development towards the borough's most sustainable locations. Over the 10 years, between 2015/16 and 2024/25, 68% of all homes have been completed within the M65 Corridor, whilst 58% have been delivered in the three main towns of Nelson, Colne and Barnoldswick. More recently there has been a shift towards increased delivery in West Craven. This is not because the result of under-delivery in the M65 Corridor but because several major sites have recently been completed, and new replacement sites are in the early stages of construction.

Figure 3.15 Spatial Pattern of Housing Delivery**Figure 3.16 Tenure of New Homes Delivered (2015/16 to 2024/25)**

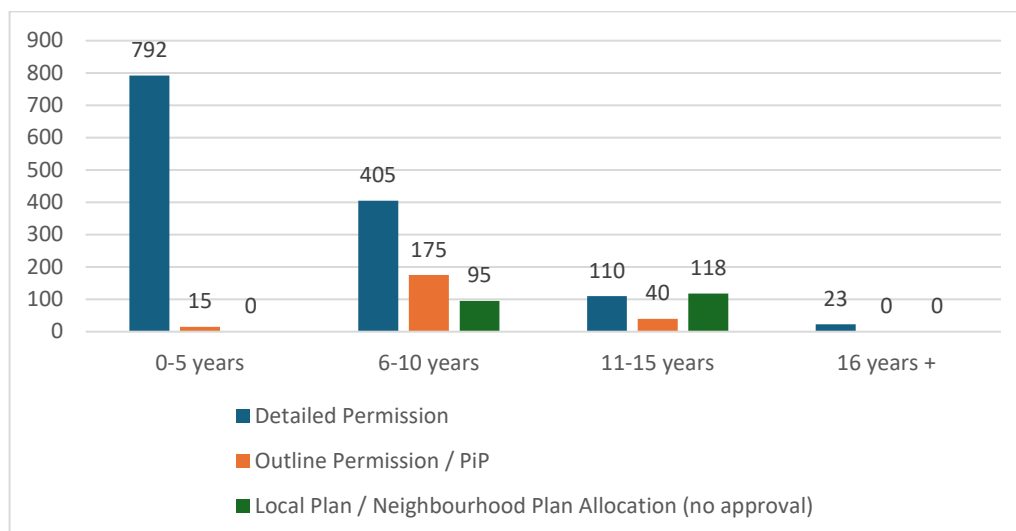
- 2.35 As noted previously the delivery of affordable housing is a major challenge. This is due to low land values in many parts of the borough, which widely affects the economic viability of delivery through market led housing schemes. The Local Plan policy on affordable housing identifies a zero requirement for affordable housing on market housing schemes across large parts of Pendle (Policy DM23). Despite this, roughly 20% of new homes delivered in the last 10-years have been affordable housing. This reflects the role that grant funding and public private partnerships have had in delivering 100% affordable housing schemes in the borough.
- 2.36 The Council has for many years monitored the type and size of new homes which have been delivered in Pendle. Over the 10-year period, a broad range of types and sizes have been delivered, providing a diverse range of housing. Semi-detached and 3-bed dwellings are the largest groups of homes to have been delivered. (Figures 3.17 and 3.18).

Figure 3.17 Proportion of House Types Delivered (2015/16 to 2024/25)**Figure 3.18 Proportion of House Sizes Delivered (2015/16 to 2024/25)**

Housing Land Supply

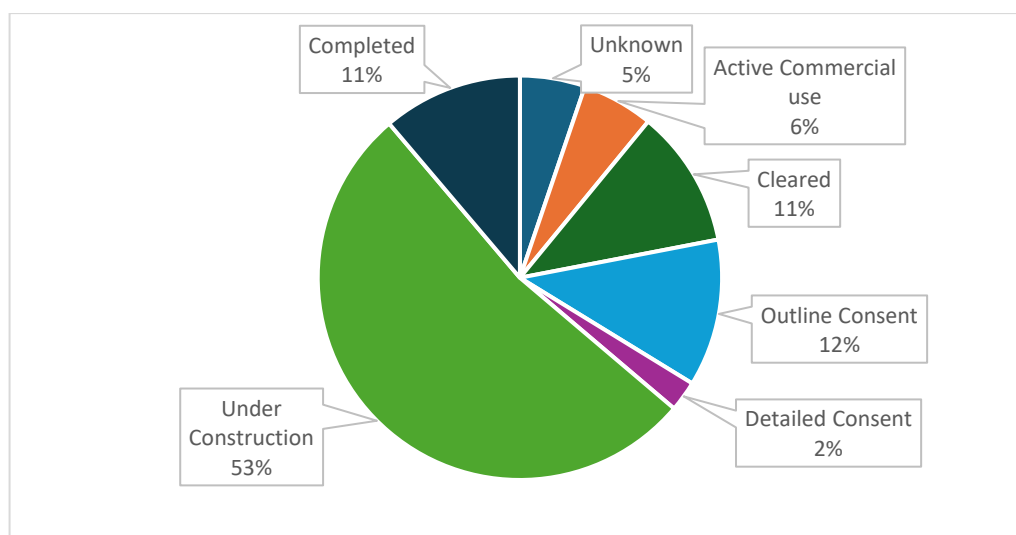
- 2.37 As of 1 April 2025 (the baseline date for LP5) there are existing commitments for 1,765 new dwellings in Pendle. Existing commitments include all sites with outline or full planning permission and housing site allocations in either the Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition (2025) or a 'made' neighbourhood plan.² The assumed timescale for the delivery of these sites is set out in Figure 3.19.

² There are four made neighbourhood plans in Pendle. These are Trawden Forest (2018), Barrowford (2019), Kelbrook & Sough (2022) and Colne (2023).

Figure 3.19 Projected Delivery of Commitments and Allocations

2.38 Figure 3.19 reflects the position set out in the Five-Year Housing Land Supply Statement (Pendle Council, 2026). Sites with detailed (full) planning permission are likely to come forward sooner than those sites which are at an earlier stage in the planning process. Sites already under construction fall within this category.

2.39 Allocated sites are at varying stages of delivery. Figure 3.20 provides a summary of the current status of each allocated site (including those identified in Neighbourhood Plans).

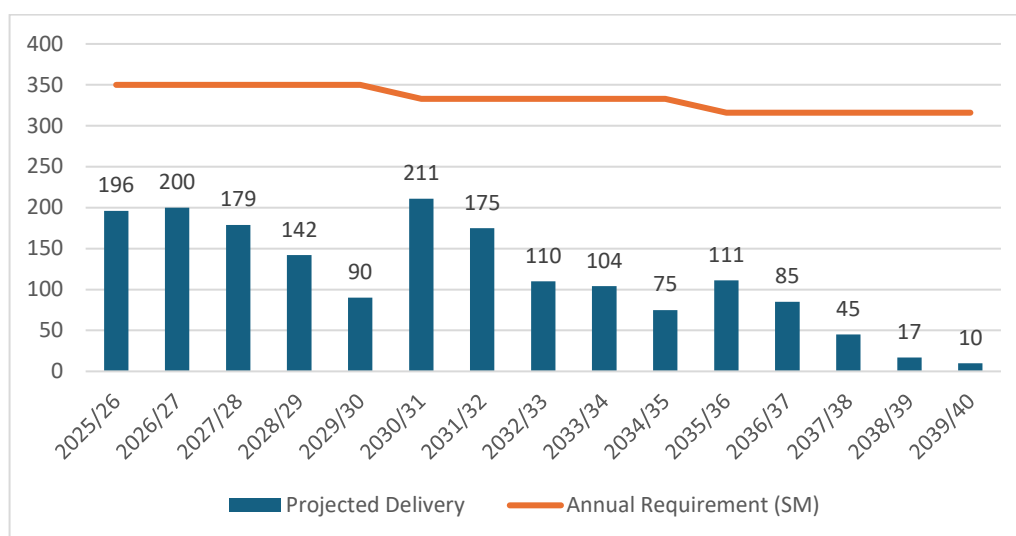
Figure 3.20 Allocated Site Status

2.40 Figure 3.20 demonstrates that progress is being made to deliver sites allocated for housing in a statutory development plan document. The Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition (2025) was examined by an independent Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State and found sound in 2025. At this time, it is too soon to question whether any of its housing site allocations will not come forward by 2040. The neighbourhood plans for Trawden Forest and Colne also allocate sites for housing. Both are in the early stages of being reviewed, which will determine the current

deliverability of these sites and present an opportunity for additional or alternative sites to be identified if necessary. Sites allocated in the Kelbrook and Sough Neighbourhood Plan are under construction.

- 2.41 The committed supply (1,765 new homes) does not meet the baseline figure for local housing need, generated by the government's standard method, in full. This requires 6,680 new homes to be provided over the plan period. A significant increase in the current housing land supply – capable of providing a minimum of 4,915 new dwellings – will need to be identified through LP5 should it be determined that this figure can be met full (Figure 3.21).

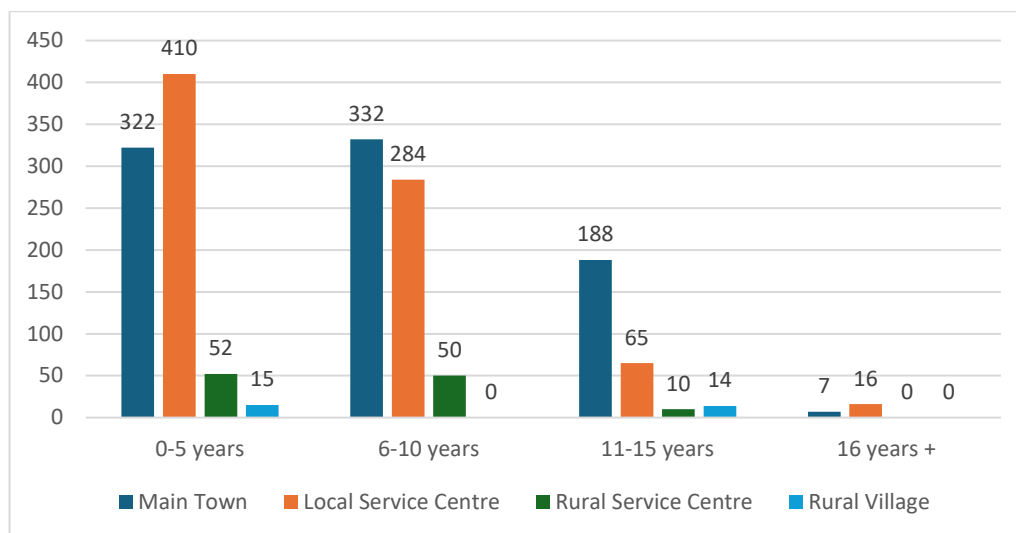
Figure 3.21 Projected Delivery vs Standard Method Figure



- 2.42 Figure 3.21 summarises projected housing delivery in Pendle but does not include an allowance for windfall development. Windfalls are sites which are not allocated for development but can reasonably be expected to come forward during the plan period, based on evidence of past delivery and the identification of potential opportunities within existing settlement boundaries.
- 2.43 The Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition (2025) includes a windfall allowance of 70 dpa, which was subject to considerable scrutiny during the examination of the plan. The adoption of a windfall allowance in LP5 will need to be evidenced as part of the plan-making process. Adding a windfall allowance of 70 dpa, equivalent to 1,400 new homes over the plan period, to existing commitments (1,765 new homes), will still require sufficient land to be identified to accommodate 3,515 new homes, if we are to meet the governments figure for local housing need in full.
- 2.44 At present it remains unclear what type, size or tenures of new homes will be delivered on 40% of the committed supply. Within the remaining supply a broad mix of types and sizes have been secured, but only 80 affordable homes have been approved. This is significantly below the assessed level of need but is likely to increase as the sites allocated in the Local Plan come forward for development.

- 2.45 The Council anticipates that a proportion of new homes will meet the M4(2) adaptable home standard, and that the delivery of bungalows and homes that meet the M4(3) accessible home standard will provide a response to the evidenced need for more elderly and specialised housing. The allocation of additional housing sites through LP5 provides an opportunity to directly address these projected needs subject to availability and suitability of sites.
- 2.46 The majority of the committed supply is at sites within the M65 urban area (75%), 17% of commitments are in West Craven, and the remaining 12% is in rural villages. Almost half of commitments (48%) are in the Main Towns of Colne, Nelson and Barnoldswick, with 44% in Local Service Centres.³ This distribution is broadly in accordance with the adopted spatial strategy. Delivery of the significant increase in the baseline figure for local housing need is likely to require the adoption of a different spatial strategy due to land availability, constraints, infrastructure requirements, and viability.

Figure 3.22 Distribution of Available Housing Land Supply by Settlement Tier



Public Health and Safety

- 2.47 Life expectancy for males (78.3 years) and females (82.1 years) in Pendle sits below the national average (79.7 years and 83.5 years respectively). There is disparity in life expectancy within Pendle, with life expectancy lower in more deprived areas especially for males. The health profile for Pendle shows that the borough's residents are generally in poorer health than the average position for the North West and England (Table 3.3).

³ The high percentage of completions in Local Service Centres reflects that the Trough Laithe strategic housing site falls within Barrowford.

- 2.48 The Local Plan helps to shape our built and natural environment. In doing so it plays an important role in helping to improve and respond to the health needs of the borough's residents. Policies in the Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition (2025) seek to protect and enhance the borough's natural green spaces and formal open spaces including the public realm to encourage active lifestyles. Improving the design and quality of new development and safeguarding the character and appearance of historic places seeks to enhance the quality of life, promote active travel, and the use of sustainable travel modes. More direct interventions include restrictions on new hot food takeaways close to locations which are frequented by children and young adults. The data in Table 3.3 shows there is a need for a continuation of policies seeking to support improvements in health through LP5.
- 2.49 The crime rate in Pendle has increased slightly since the last reporting period but remains below the average for Lancashire with 69.23 crimes reported per 1,000 people. Over the 12-month period to Q4 of 2025, the top five most reported crimes were; violence against a person (without injury), stalking/harassment, violence against a person (with injury), criminal damage and arson, and other theft.
- 2.50 Residents, workers and visitors all have a right to feel safe within Pendle. The built environment influences opportunities for crime, including whether a place feels safe during all periods of the day. The Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition (2025) requires new development to meet [Secure by Design](#) standards where appropriate to ensure that new developments and communities are delivered with public safety in mind. The Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner and the Lancashire Constabulary are statutory consultees for both plan-making and decision-making.

Table 3.3 Pendle Health Profile

Life expectancy and causes of death

Life expectancy at birth (Male, 3 year range) [New data](#)

Life expectancy at birth (Male, 1 year range) [New data](#)

Life expectancy at birth (Female, 3 year range) [New data](#)

Life expectancy at birth (Female, 1 year range) [New data](#)

Under 75 mortality rate from all causes [New data](#)

Under 75 mortality rate from cardiovascular disease [New data](#)

Under 75 mortality rate from cancer [New data](#)

Suicide rate

Injuries and ill health

Killed and seriously injured casualties on England's roads

Emergency Hospital Admissions for Intentional Self-Harm

Hip fractures in people aged 65 and over [New data](#)

Percentage of cancers diagnosed at stages 1 and 2

Estimated diabetes diagnosis rate

Estimated dementia diagnosis rate (aged 65 and older) [New data](#)

> 66.7% (significantly) similar to 66.7% < 66.7% (significantly)

Behavioural risk factors

Admission episodes for alcohol-specific conditions (under 18 years)

Admission episodes for alcohol-related conditions (Narrow)

Smoking Prevalence in adults (aged 18 and over) - current smokers (APS)

Percentage of physically active adults (19+ yrs) [New data](#)

Overweight (including obesity) prevalence in adults, (using adjusted self-reported height and weight) (18+ yrs) [New data](#)

Child health

Under 18s conception rate

Smoking status at time of delivery

Infant mortality rate

Year 6 prevalence of obesity (including severe obesity) (10-11 yrs)

Deprivation score (IMD 2019)

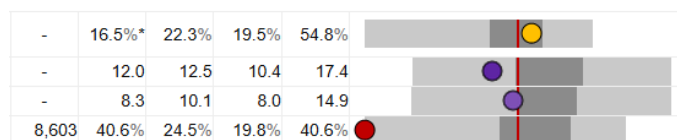
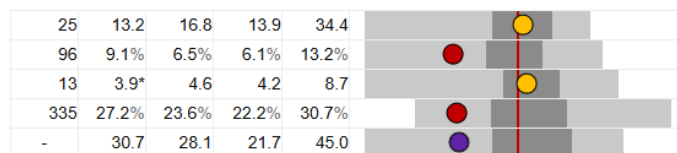
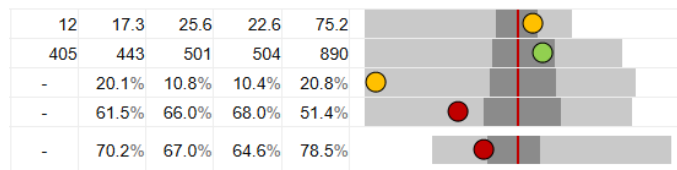
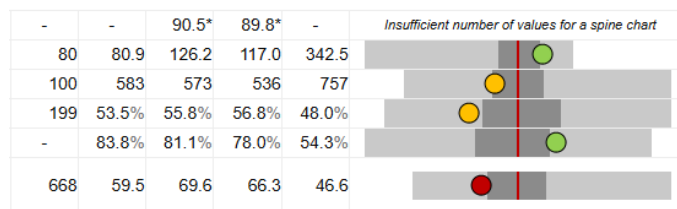
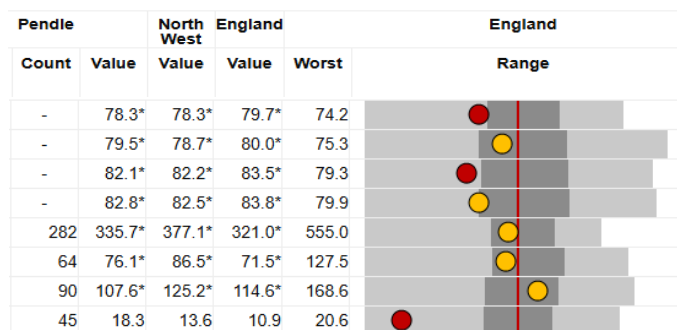
Inequalities

Smoking prevalence in adults in routine and manual occupations (aged 18 to 64) - current smokers (APS)

Inequality in life expectancy at birth (Male) [New data](#)

Inequality in life expectancy at birth (Female) [New data](#)

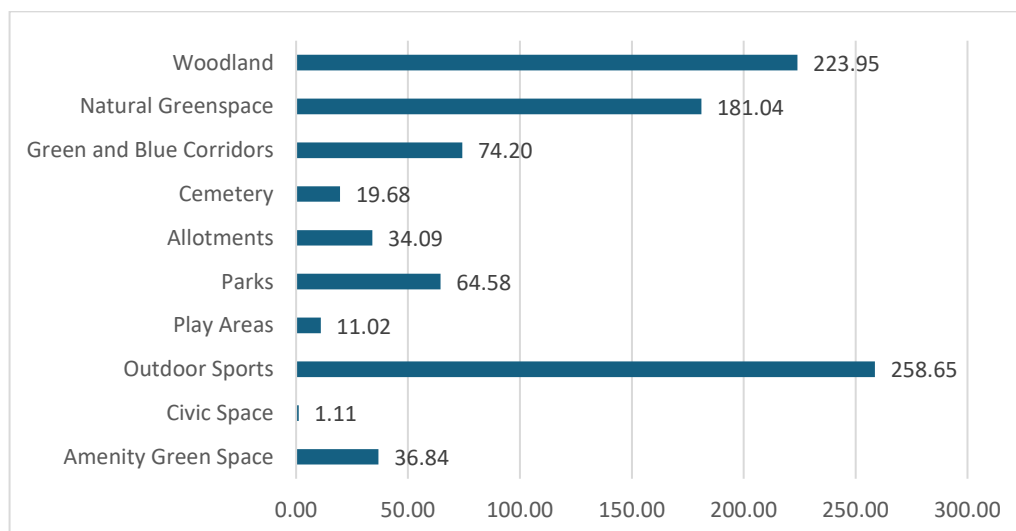
Children in relative low income families (under 16s) [New data](#)



Source: Department for Health and Social Care

Open Space

- 2.51 Open spaces play a key role within our communities. They provide places that are important for peoples physical and mental health and well-being, ranging from places where people can enjoy sport and recreation to tranquil spaces where they can meet and interact with friends and relatives. Open spaces offer important breaks in the townscape providing settings that define and enhance the character and appearance of the borough's-built heritage. These spaces often function as green corridors or 'stepping stones' that are important for urban wildlife. They also improve the resilience of communities to the effects of climate change by providing porous surfaces that help to drain surface water, reducing the risk of flooding, whilst street trees provide shade and urban cooling.
- 2.52 Planning policy identifies and protects open space. Its loss is resisted unless it can be proven that there is a local surplus of provision, or it can be replaced by equivalent or better provision. To help inform these decisions the Council published an [Open Space Audit](#) in 2019. It assesses the level of deficiency in the quantity and/or quality of open spaces found within Pendle. The online [Open Space map](#) shows the location of sites designated as open space in Pendle. The accompanying report adopts the Fields in Trust quantity standard as the benchmark for determining any deficiency in quantity. Where no such standard exists, the average level of provision across is used as the baseline. Quality is measured against a series of criteria including accessibility, lighting and the overall standard of maintenance. The Open Space Audit represents a snapshot in time, and no further assessment has been undertaken since.
- 2.53 The audit examines ten categories of open space including private land which is not generally accessible to the public (e.g. paid for sports). It does not however include land which is in agricultural use which may be crossed by a public right of way. As such the broader recreational opportunities offered by these spaces are not accounted for by the audit.
- 2.54 The total amount of space within each typology is confirmed in Figure 3.23. Some typologies may overlap, depending on their role and function, so the individual figures do not yield a total figure. Generally formal areas of open space, such as parks and outdoor sports, are more commonly found within the borough's larger settlements. Natural features, such as green and blue infrastructure and natural greenspace, are more evenly distributed throughout the borough, but are often less accessible within inner urban wards. Nelson, which has a dense urban form, has the highest level of allotments.

Figure 3.23 Open Space in Pendle by Typology (Ha)

Source: Pendle Open Space Audit (2019)

- 2.55 A negative figure in Table 3.4 confirms that there is a deficiency within a particular open space typology within each ward. Strong policy protection is in place to help prevent the loss of existing open space to other land uses.
- 2.56 The data shows there is a broad deficiency in open space in Pendle with all wards featuring a deficiency in at least four typologies. For some typologies, it is impractical or unsuitable for specific forms of open space (e.g. cemeteries) to be distributed equally across the borough. But other forms of open space, such as amenity greenspace, natural greenspace, outdoor sports and play areas, should be widely accessible to communities across all parts of Pendle as they have an important role in supporting physical and mental health.
- 2.57 Deficiencies are generally more acute within the inner urban areas of the M65 Corridor which suffer from higher levels of deprivation. These parts of Pendle are densely populated and heavily urbanised with limited green infrastructure. Furthermore, many terraced properties in the borough do not have gardens. The quality of the living environment is a major contributor to deprivation within these areas.
- 2.58 Protecting and improving existing open space sites, securing its long-term maintenance, and delivering new sites through the planning process, especially in the context of health indicators, will remain high on the Council's priorities for LP5.

Table 3.4 Open Space Deficiency by Ward (Expressed in Hectares per 1,000 people)

Ward / Open Space Typology	Barnoldswick	Barrowford and Pendleside	Boulsworth and Foulridge	Bradley	Brierfield East and Clover Hill	Brierfield West and Reedley	Earby and Coates	Fence and Higham	Marsden and Southfield	Vivary Bridge	Waterside and Horsfield	Whitefield and Walverden
Allotments	-0.19	0.28	0.01	0.39	0.27	-0.34	-0.07	-0.34	0.06	-0.13	-0.10	-0.16
Amenity Greenspace	-0.25	-0.33	-0.47	-0.40	-0.25	-0.52	-0.22	-0.53	-0.06	0.17	0.50	-0.51
Cemetery	-0.20	0.18	-0.07	0.27	-0.18	-0.19	-0.10	-0.20	-0.06	-0.17	0.77	-0.15
Civic Space	0.02	-0.01	-0.01	0.03	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	0.01	0.01	-0.01
Green and Blue Corridors	-1.46	-0.78	-0.51	-1.45	-1.70	-0.77	1.16	-1.80	-1.80	-0.67	-1.22	-1.45
Natural Greenspace (including woodland)	-0.89	5.78	9.00	-0.68	0.66	7.64	1.01	13.93	0.57	2.18	1.29	-0.76
Outdoor Sports	0.11	-0.87	2.51	0.65	3.96	1.14	1.72	-0.06	2.65	1.12	-0.52	-0.97
Parks	0.81	0.58	0.9	0.65	0.79	0.95	-0.58	-0.80	0.11	0.74	-0.55	0.50
Play Areas	-0.16	-0.18	-0.14	-0.18	-0.16	-0.11	-0.02	0.08	-0.14	-0.20	-0.12	-0.16

Infrastructure Capacity

- 2.59 The adopted spatial strategy concentrates development at locations which are well served by existing infrastructure with around 70% of development directed to settlements located within the M65 corridor (Policy SP03). This correlates with the Council's assessment of services and infrastructure provision as evidenced by the [Settlement Sustainability Report](#) and is supported by the findings of the Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal.
- 2.60 The [Infrastructure Delivery Plan](#) sets out the required improvements to infrastructure which are necessary to support additional planned development. Its content reflects the conclusion of discussions with statutory providers and consultees. The infrastructure requirements of the Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition (2025) are relatively limited as the amount of growth planned by its policies is not significantly higher than identified by demographic projections.
- 2.61 The revised approach to the standard method figure now required in Pendle has substantially increased the assessed level of housing need for the borough. As a result, the amount of development which might be expected come forward over the plan period is likely to significantly increase, with knock-on effects for infrastructure. It is important that the plan making process fully assess the effects of proposals (individually and cumulatively) on infrastructure to understand what the implications proposals have for Pendle's existing infrastructure, whether new or improved infrastructure will be necessary in order to provide development that is sustainable, and how new infrastructure can be secured.

Social Indicators Findings

Key Messages from Baseline Data

- **Demographics:** Pendle's population is in a state of change. It is growing at a fast pace. Its ethnic makeup is evolving. The amount of people aged 65 and over is increasing. Households are getting bigger, but the number of households has not increased significantly.
- **Housing Stock:** A large portion of smaller stock is concentrated within inner urban wards which are more likely to suffer from higher levels of deprivation. This stock is more likely to be less efficient and contain households in fuel poverty. The vacancy rate has reduced but remains above the national average.
- **Housing Delivery:** Average of 211 dpa over past 10-years. Majority of new homes have been completed within the M65 Corridor and on brownfield sites. Delivery of affordable housing has been challenging. A broad mix of types and sizes has been delivered.
- **Housing Supply:** Insufficient to meet standard method figure in full. Significant under supply of affordable housing. Good progress made in advancing allocated sites towards delivery. Viability and infrastructure capacity constraints may obstruct delivery in parts of the borough.
- **Open Space:** Deficiencies widely reported but more acute in the most deprived areas.

SWOT Analysis: Social Indicators

Strengths	Weaknesses
Pendle has a relatively young population profile.	The high proportion of smaller properties limits the attractiveness of the borough as a place to move to.
Population growth is driven by Migration and Natural Change.	Poor land values reduce opportunity for commercial led development and provision of affordable housing on market led schemes.
Pendle is a relatively affordable place in which to live.	Access to open space is unequal and generally more limited within the borough's main settlements.
Large parts of the borough are accessible to Natural Greenspace.	Low land values reduce the attractiveness of the borough as a place to invest in.
Opportunities	Threats
New homes increase opportunities for home ownership, to access quality housing that are the right type, size and tenure. Helping to reduce the number of households in or at risk of poverty.	Low levels of affordable housing delivery force residents to rely on the private rent market.
Improve access to open space and sources of recreation provides opportunities to enhance public health and wellbeing.	Poor living environment and quality of housing stock, increases the likelihood that households will enter poverty.
Role of development in securing benefits for the existing community, e.g. through open space provision, connectivity benefits, and/or the enhancement of new infrastructure.	Poor health increases pressure on services and reduces the proportion of the population that are able to contribute to the economy.

Key Issues for LP5 to Address

- Maximise housing delivery of the right type, size and tenure to meet Pendle's needs.
- Secure the increased delivery of affordable housing in the right places to enhance tenure security for households.
- Ensure a sufficient supply of new housing sites which are deliverable come forward in the right places, taking into account the need to transition towards a zero-carbon economy and provide climate resilient communities.
- Secure well-designed homes which integrate and improve the character and appearance of our existing communities.
- Secure housing which is designed to meet the needs of their occupiers, including homes which are adaptable for the elderly, homes suitable for families, homes suitable for disabled people, and gypsy and traveller pitches where evidenced.

Key Issues for LP5 to Address

- Secure new homes which are energy efficient, helping to reduce energy poverty.
- Maintain, enhance and increase access to quality public open space.
- Safeguard, and where possible improve, public health and wellbeing through careful and responsible decision making and control of specific land uses.
- Ensure development is supported by sufficient infrastructure.

4. Economic Indicators

Key Findings



The manufacturing sector remains the largest sector for employment in Pendle.



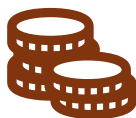
The total number of jobs in the borough has fallen over the last 5-years.



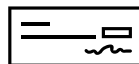
Pendle has a lower job density than the county or regional average.



Almost 90% of businesses employ less than 10 people.



Wages in Pendle, are on average, the lowest in Lancashire.



1/3 of working aged people receive benefits.



Qualification attainment is generally poorer than the regional and national average.



31,000 sqm of new employment floorspace has been completed in Pendle since 2016/17.



There is planning permission for almost 90,000 sqm of new employment floorspace.



The town centre vacancy rate in Pendle is 16%. The vacancy rate is much higher in Nelson and Brierfield than in other centres.



Most trips to work are made by private transport.



Communities in the M65 Corridor are generally better connected to existing services and facilities.

Economy

- 3.1 There are 30,600 employee jobs in Pendle with a net decrease of 1,975 over the last five years (Table 4.1). Manufacturing remains the dominant sector, employing 8,000 people (26.1% of all jobs). Despite the loss of 1,000 employee jobs over the last five years, it is still more than twice the size of any other sector. The next largest sectors for employment are Health, Education and Retail. During this period the fastest growing sector for employment has been construction. Higher-value knowledge sectors such as Professional, Scientific & Technical (4.9%), Information & Communications (4.9%), and Financial & Insurance (0.7%) are comparatively under-represented.

Table 4.1 Jobs by Sector in Pendle (2024)

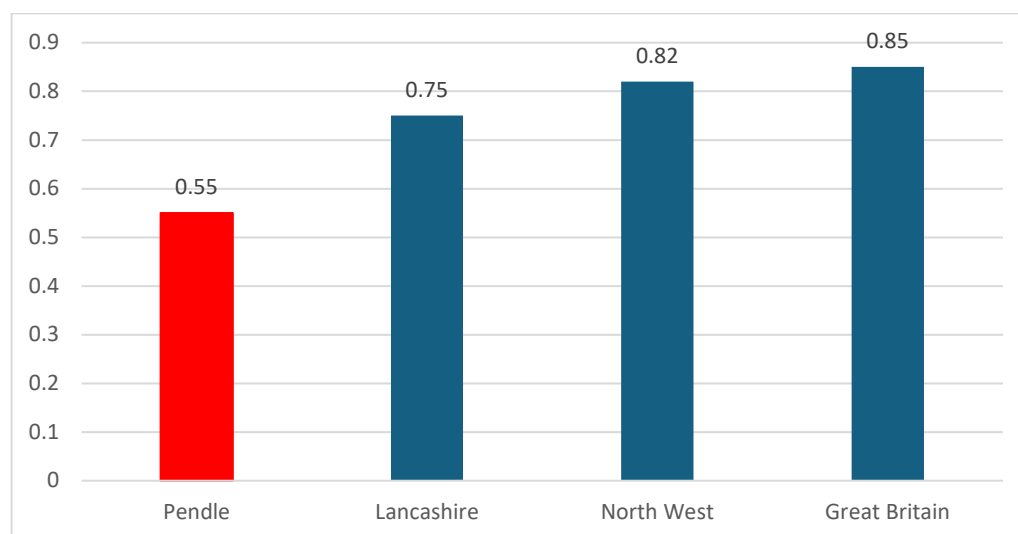
Sector	Jobs (2024)	Proportion of all jobs	5-year trend
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	100	0.3%	0
Mining, Quarrying and Utilities	150	0.5%	75
Manufacturing	8,000	26.1%	-1,000
Construction	1,750	5.7%	500
Motor Trades	600	2.0%	-200
Wholesale	1,250	4.1%	-250
Retail	3,000	9.8%	-500
Transport and Storage	700	2.3%	0
Accommodation and Foods Services	2,000	6.5%	0
Information and Communications	1,500	4.9%	250
Financial and Insurance	200	0.7%	-150
Property	300	1.0%	0
Professional, Scientific and Technical	1,500	4.9%	0
Business Administration and Support Services	1,750	5.7%	-500
Public Administration and Defence	500	1.6%	-100
Education	3,000	9.8%	0
Health	3,500	11.4%	0
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation and other services	800	2.61%	-100
Total	30,600	100%	-1,975

Source: Nomis

- 3.2 Census data shows that the strongest commuting flows from Pendle are with Burnley with roughly 4,000 trips in either direction. Smaller flows exist with neighbouring Ribbles Valley and North Yorkshire and other local authorities in Pennine Lancashire. Overall, Pendle has a net outflow of commuters, meaning that more people leave the borough for work than come in from other local authority areas. A potential factor driving this is

Pendle's job density⁴, which in 2024, was 0.55 jobs per working aged population. This is lower than the county and regional average (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 Job Density Comparison (2024 data)



Source: Nomis

- 3.3 Pendle has 20% fewer people employed as managers, directors, or professionals compared to the North-West and Great Britain. Roughly 8% more workers are employed in caring, sales, and processing and machine operating jobs in Pendle than in the North West and Great Britain. These differences are explained by Pendle's economic structure where a much higher proportion of jobs are within the manufacturing sector.

Table 4.2 Employment by Occupation

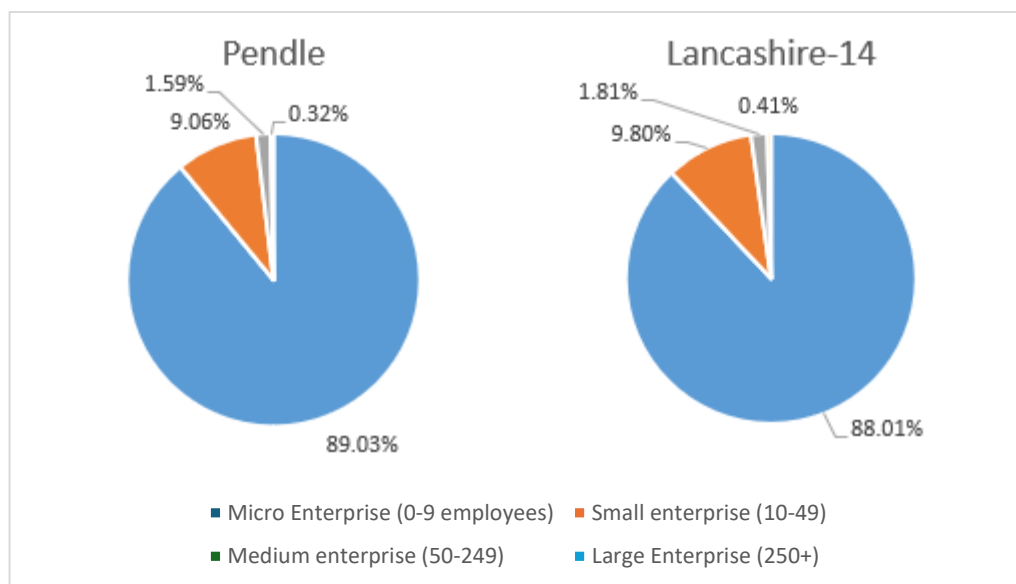
Occupation	Pendle	Lancashire	North West	Great Britain
Groups 1-3 Managers, Directors, Senior officials, professional occupations	30.6%	48.1%	51.5%	53.6%
Groups 4-5 Administrative occupations, skilled trades	22.1%	19.3%	18.1%	17.4%
Groups 6-7 Caring, leisure and other service occupations, sales and customer services	21.8%	15.8%	15.3%	14.4%
Groups 8-9 Process plant and Machine operatives, elementary occupations.	25.5%	16.8%	15.2%	14.6%

Source: Nomis

⁴ Job density measures the balance between employment opportunities and the labour supply (i.e. the number of jobs available for every resident of working-age).

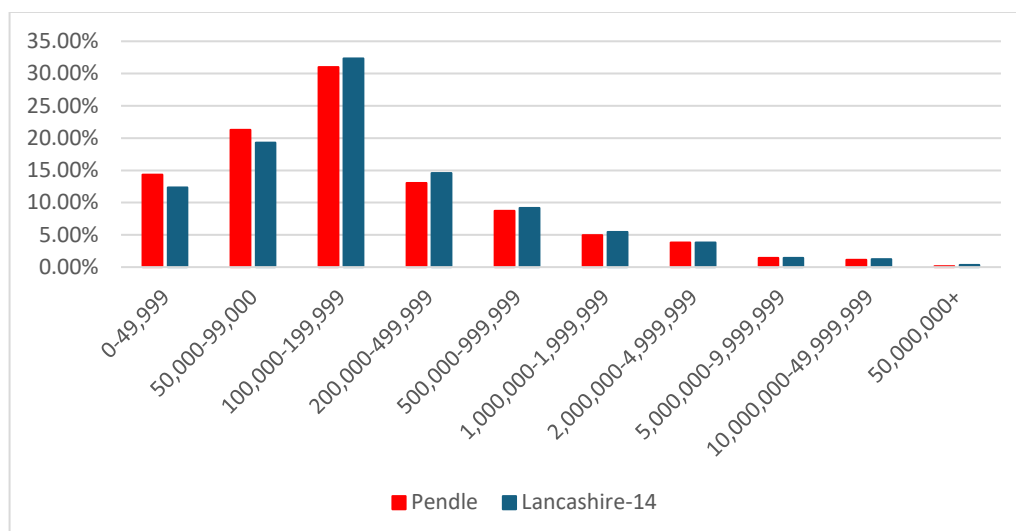
- 3.4 On average businesses in Pendle tend to be smaller than the national average. The vast majority of businesses have 0-9 employees (89%). Small enterprises employing between 10 and 49 people account for a further 1.6% of businesses. Just 10 businesses (0.3% of all businesses) employ more than 250 people. The size structure of businesses in Pendle closely reflects the average position for Lancashire. Annual turnover broadly reflects this size structure with 79% of businesses recording an annual turnover of up to £500,000 per year. Pendle has a slightly higher number of lower value businesses than Lancashire, and slightly lower number of mid-value businesses than Lancashire.

Figure 4.3 Size of Businesses by Employees



Source: Nomis

Figure 4.4 Businesses by Turnover (£)

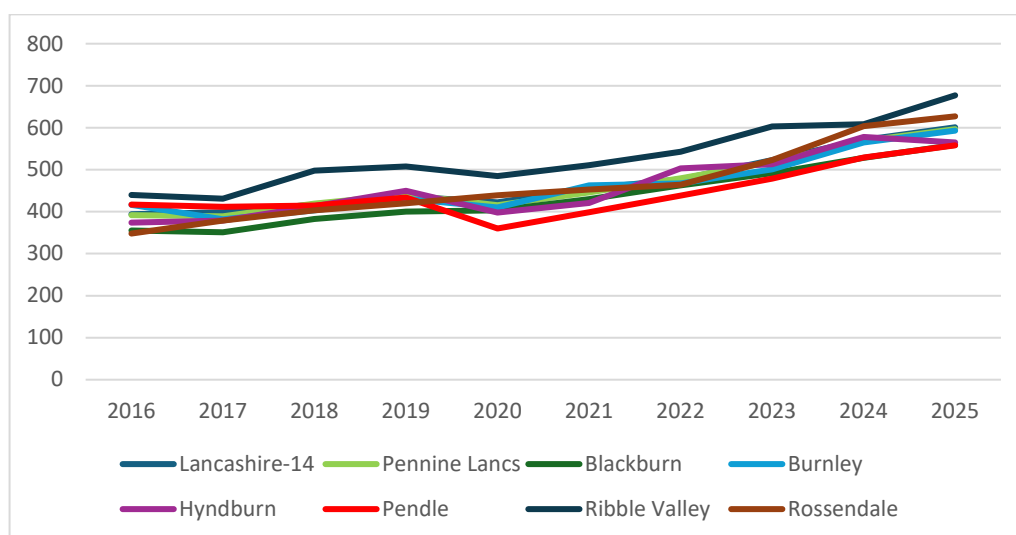


Source: Nomis

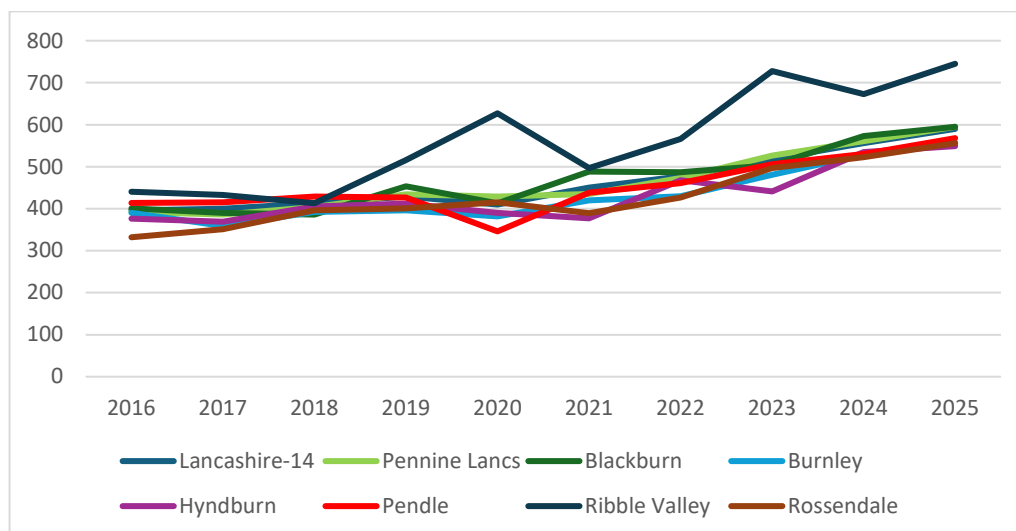
Education and Workforce

- 3.5 The proportion of Pendle's workforce that is economically active (80.9%) is higher than both the North West (77.3%) and Great Britain (79.2%) average. The borough has a higher proportion of residents that are in employment (79.7%) than the corresponding figures for the North West (74%) and Great Britain (75.5%). The unemployment rate of 4.7% is broadly consistent with the North West (4.3%) and Great Britain (4.5%) but is volatile and reached 9.6% as recently as 2023/24. The claimant count in Pendle is consistently higher the regional and national averages and at 5.8% is currently above the North West (4.2%) and Great Britain (4%) position.
- 3.6 As of 2025, both resident and worker gross weekly earnings are the lowest in Lancashire at £558 and £568 per week respectively. Resident earnings have increased over the past 10-years by just over 33%. This is the slowest rate of increase in Lancashire (Figure 4.5). The rate of change for worker earnings is also one of the slowest increases in the county (Figure 4.6). Pendle was particularly hard hit by the Covid-19 pandemic and has experienced the slowest rate of recovery of all districts in Lancashire.

Figure 4.5 Resident Gross Weekly Earnings (£)

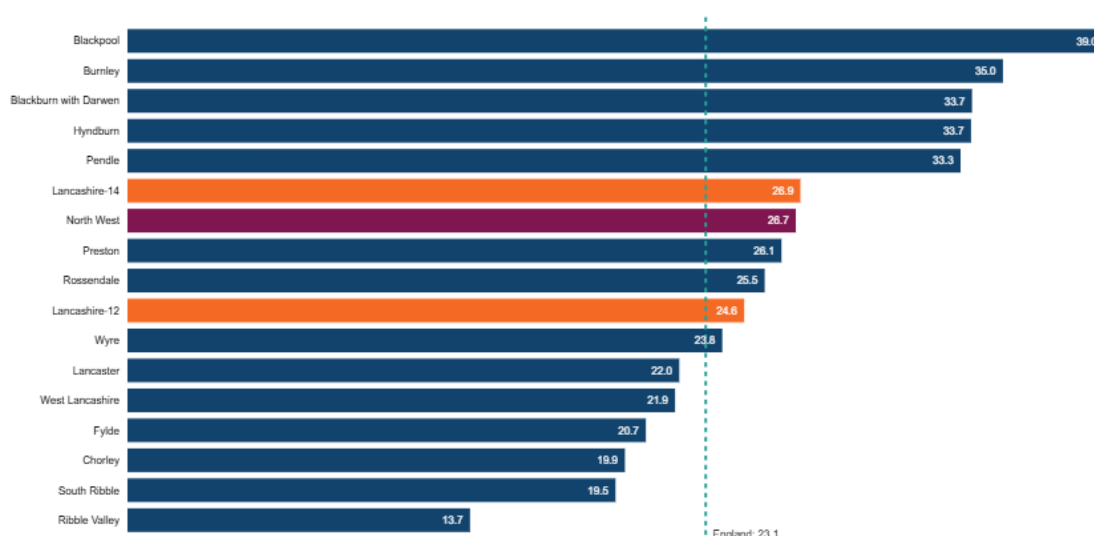


Source: Nomis

Figure 4.6 Worker Gross Weekly Earnings (£)

Source: Nomis

- 3.7 One third of economically active residents rely on benefits to supplement their income. This is the fifth highest figure in Lancashire and higher than the average for Lancashire (26.9%) and England (23.1%). Over the past 5-years the proportion of economically active residents claiming benefit has increased by over 5%. This reflects the national trend (Figure 4.7).

Figure 4.7 Benefit Contributions of Working Aged People (2025)

Source: Department for Work and Pensions, extracted from Lancashire Insight

- 3.8 Pendle's economy and the types of jobs available form only part of the picture in explaining the borough's comparatively low wages. The attainment of qualifications can heavily impact future employment prospects. The data shows that the attainment of qualifications amongst young people in Pendle is poorer than the regional or national average (Table 4.3). This is a persistent trend.

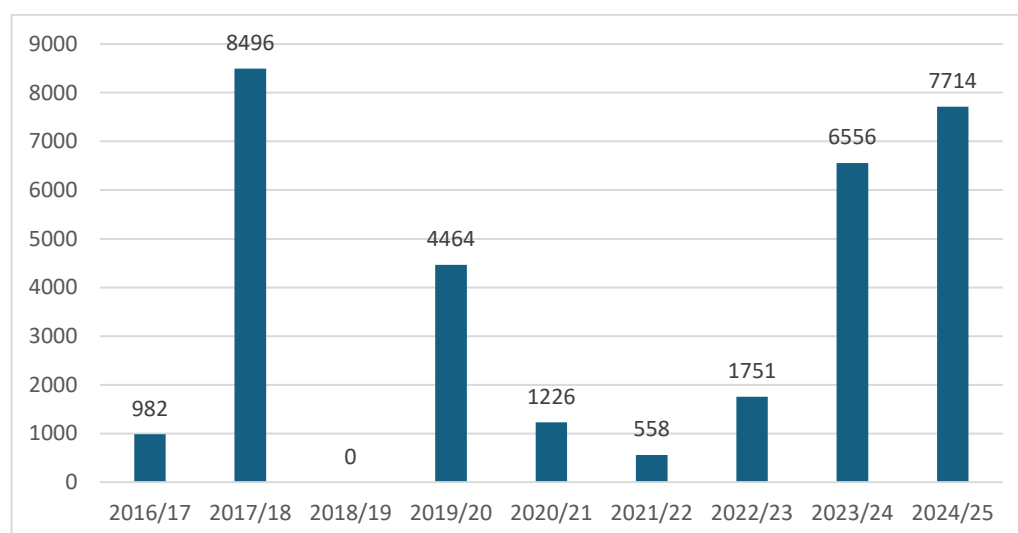
Table 4.3 Qualification Attainment (2025)

Qualification Level	Pendle (%)	North West (%)	Great Britain (%)
Fewer than 5 GCSEs at Grades A-C Foundation GNVQ NVQ1	81.5%	88.7%	89.3%
5 or more GCSEs at Grades A-C Intermediate GNVQ NVQ2	78.7%	86.1%	87%
2 or more A Levels Advanced GNVQ NVQ3	57.3%	66.5%	69%
Higher National Diploma Degree /Higher Degree level qualifications And above.	41.8%	45.7%	48.6%

Source: Nomis

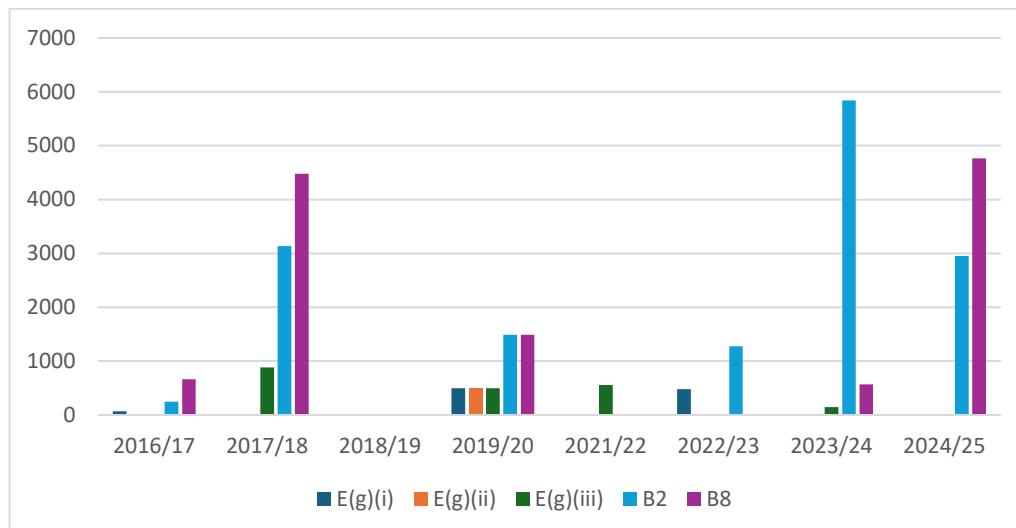
Employment Land Delivery

- 3.9 Since 2016/17 over 31,000 sqm of gross employment floorspace has been delivered in Pendle. Annual delivery has been inconsistent since this date, with none recorded in 2018/19. The highest amount delivered was in 2017/18 when 8,496 sqm of gross employment floorspace was delivered (Figure 4.8). A large proportion of recent completions has been concentrated at the site of the former Spring Gardens Mill in Colne's South Valley.

Figure 4.8 Gross Delivery of Employment Commitments (sqm)

- 3.10 Figure 4.9 provides a breakdown of this delivery by Use Class. B2 (General Industrial) and B8 (Storage and Distribution) uses have dominated employment land delivery over this period. This reflects the economic structure of the Pendle economy. It also demonstrates how small Pendle's office market is.

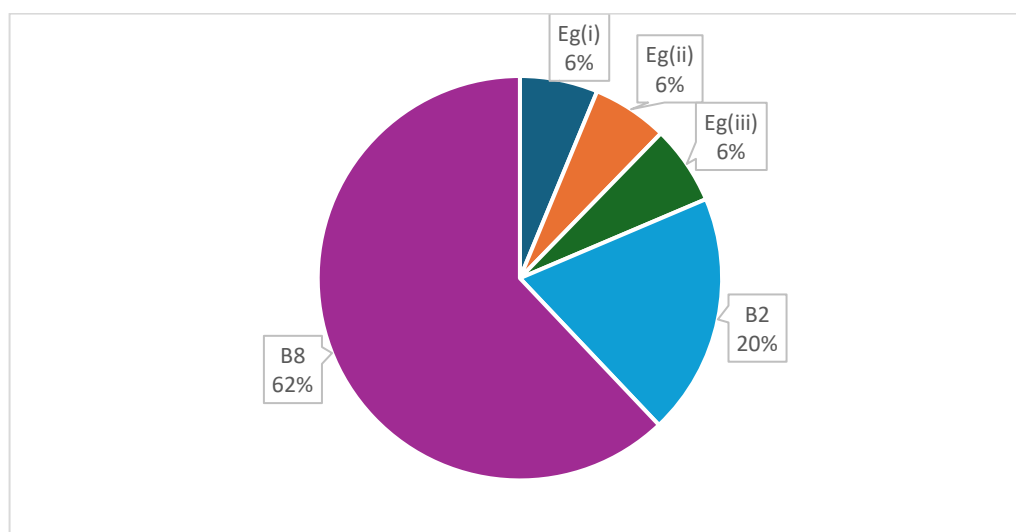
Figure 4.9 Gross Delivery of Employment Land by Use Class (Sqm)



Employment Land Supply

- 3.11 The position at 1 April 2025 informs the starting point for employment land delivery through LP5. Planning permission exists for almost 90,000 sqm of gross floorspace. Figure 4.10 provides a breakdown of this supply by Use Class. It demonstrates that the majority of this floorspace is in use Class B8, followed by use Class B2. Comparatively, a much smaller amount of floorspace is available in use Class E(g), which covers offices, research and development labs and light industrial processes, which can normally operate in residential areas without causing harm to local amenity.

Figure 4.10 Breakdown of Committed Supply by Use Class



- 3.12 The position outlined in Figure 4.10 does not include vacant employment floorspace. This provides additional capacity for economic growth where the proposals are suitable and consistent with any restrictions on land use as set out in policies DM41 and DM42 of the adopted Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition (2025).

Allocated Sites

- 3.13 The Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition (2025) allocates three sites for future employment use. None are allocated specifically for offices (see Protected Employment Areas). The largest is the Lomeshaye Strategic Extension, first allocated in the Pendle Core Strategy (2015). The site is expected to deliver 58,000 sqm of B2, B8 and E(g) floorspace and has detailed consent. Phase 1 was completed in 2026, with work on the larger Phase 2 anticipated to commence in 2027.
- 3.14 The extension of the West Craven Business Park north of Earby provides an additional 7 ha of land and will deliver approximately 28,000 sqm for B2/B8 uses. At this stage no application for planning permission has been submitted but the site is available for employment use.
- 3.15 The allocation at Crow Nest Industrial Estate in Barnoldswick provides 3 ha and will deliver approximately 12,000 sqm for B2/B8 uses. A detailed application developing part of the site for a 1,380 sqm unit has been approved. The approved development does not prejudice the delivery of the wider allocated site for employment use.
- 3.16 The Council anticipates that the development of employment floorspace at the three allocated sites will make an important contribution to the Pendle economy during the implementation of LP5. Evidence will be prepared to examine if there is justification for the allocation of further employment sites taking account of any additional need arising from a review of the existing employment land supply and the need to accommodate any further economic growth in alignment with the housing strategy, through the plan making process.

Protected Employment Areas

- 3.17 Protected Employment Areas (PEAs) are the borough's most important locations for existing employment uses. They provide the largest concentrations of employment activity, are well related to the strategic highway network, provide capacity for further economic growth, and typically offer good quality premises and/or development opportunities. Local Plan Policy DM41 limits non-industrial uses within a PEA in the interest of supporting the growth and diversification of Pendle's economy and safeguarding local jobs. There are eight PEAs identified on the [Local Plan Policies Map](#), with Riverside Business Park near Barrowford reserved for office-based uses:
- Lomeshaye Industrial Estate, Nelson (including extensions)
 - Southfield Business District, Nelson
 - Hallam Road Business District, Nelson
 - Riverside Business Park, Barrowford

- White Walls Industrial Estate, Colne
- Crow Nest Industrial Estate, Barnoldswick (including Bankfield and Long Ing)
- Eden Works, Kelbrook
- West Craven Business Park, Earby (including extension)

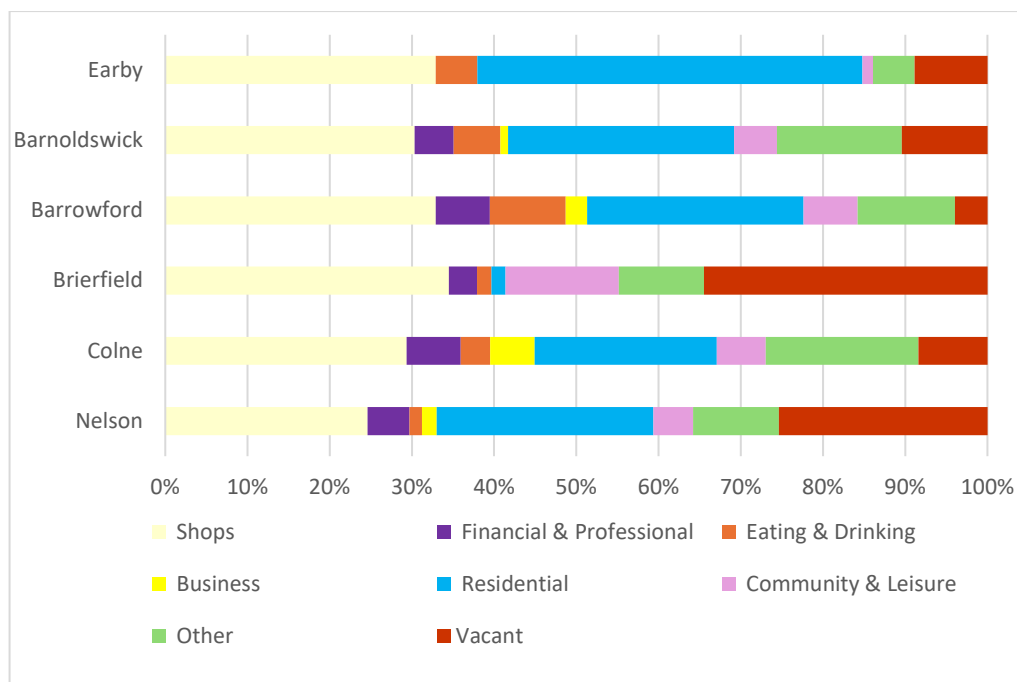
3.18 The PEAs were updated following appraisal through the Employment Land Review section of the HEDNA. The HEDNA has been the subject to recent scrutiny during the examination of the Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition (2025). There is no reason to believe that the current list of PEA sites is out of date. Accessibility to a PEA is one of the criteria used to determine the sustainability of a potential site allocation through the site assessment process.

Retail and Town Centres

3.19 There are six designated centres in Pendle. Nelson, Colne and Barnoldswick form the three main towns of the borough. Nelson and Colne have a district-wide function, with Nelson being the largest centre in terms of the overall number of units and floorspace. Barnoldswick serves as the principal centre in West Craven. Barrowford, Brierfield and Earby function as district centres, serving a more localised catchment.

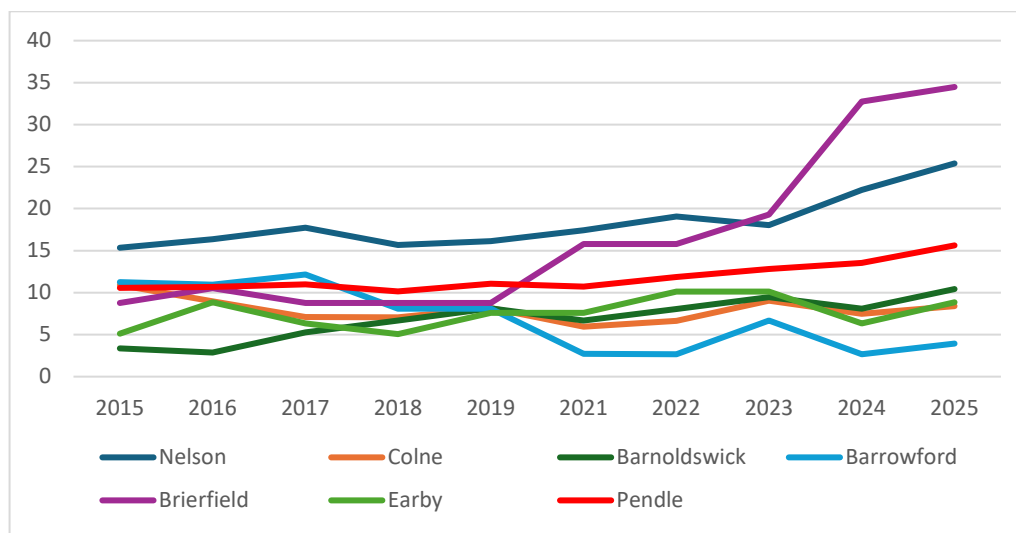
3.20 The Council conducts an annual occupancy survey of ground floor units within the six designated centres. The most recent survey was conducted in 2025. It found that shops are still the main use within these centres. Residential dwellings now form the second most prevalent use. All centres feature a wide diversity of land uses within them (Figure 4.11).

Figure 4.11 Town Centre Occupancy in 2025



- 3.21 The fortunes of Pendle's town centres vary quite substantially. Nelson and Brierfield experience by far the highest vacancy rates in the borough. Whilst they vary over time, the rate of increase has accelerated in recent years. In contrast the vacancy rate has been broadly flat in Barnoldswick, Colne and Earby whilst overall Barrowford has experienced a downward trend since 2017 (Figure 4.12).

Figure 4.12 Town Centre Vacancy 2015-2025



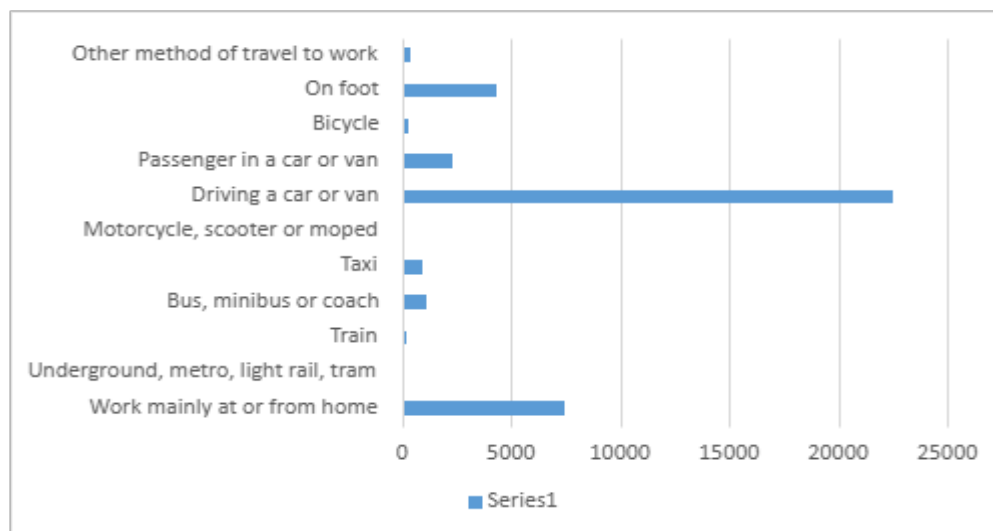
- 3.22 The Retail and Leisure Capacity Needs Assessment (Lichfields, 2022) found that projected future demand for retail and leisure uses in Pendle could be absorbed by existing vacant units and sites. As a result, no sites were allocated specifically for retail or leisure use in the Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition (2025).
- 3.23 The development of new build outlets for retail has been limited to specific projects on out-of-centre site (e.g. Aldi in Barnoldswick, and retail provision associated with Colne Services). Vacancy at established out-of-centre retail parks has been limited and typically there is strong take up of vacant units within a short timescale (e.g. Sports Direct and Jollyes Pets at Boundary Retail Park, Wickes at North Valley Retail Park).
- 3.24 The proposal for a new M&S Food Outlet at Colne Services demonstrates there is additional demand for modern retail premises within Pendle. The opportunity to accommodate this type of floorspace within Pendle's town and district centres is limited. However, the demolition and redevelopment of the Pendle Rise Shopping Centre in the heart of Nelson will substantially increase the availability of larger modern units in the borough's largest town centre. Given the rise of online retailing and changing business approaches such as co-location (e.g. Argos has moved within Sainsbury's) a further update of the borough's retail and leisure needs is likely to be required during the preparation of LP5.

Transport

- 3.25 No roads in Pendle form part of the strategic road network. Lancashire County Council is the Local Highway Authority for Pendle responsible for the M65 motorway, and highways forming part of the primary, secondary road network (Class A and Class B roads) and local distributor routes in the borough. The most important highways are the M65, A56, A6068 and A682. These connect Pendle with the nearby towns of Burnley, Blackburn, Preston, Skipton and Keighley. The local topography means that there are few direct links between the borough and the Ribble Valley and West Yorkshire and those that exist have limited capacity. Congestion regularly occurs along the North Valley, with one short stretch hosting the borough's only Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Proposals for the construction of a bypass to the west of Colne have not progressed beyond feasibility stage but it remains an aspiration. Its construction is essential if potential development opportunities in West Craven are to be fully realised.
- 3.26 Pendle has three railway stations on the national rail network, with Colne being the terminus of the East Lancashire Line which connects the borough with the West Coast Main Line at Preston. An hourly service is operated by Northern, but journey times are slow and there is no direct service to Manchester. The line previously ran to Skipton but was closed and dismantled in 1970. The Council supports SELRAP, an organisation devoted to the re-laying of 11 miles of track, which would open up a new trans-Pennine rail route that would help to take pressure off the two existing routes to the south.
- 3.27 Buses are the principal mode of public transport in Pendle. The borough's urban communities are generally well served by regular and reliable services offering connections to Burnley, Skipton and Keighley. Services provided by Transdev and Vision Bus are centred on Nelson Interchange. In West Craven, Stagecoach operating out of Preston offers connections to Skipton and the Ribble Valley. Rural bus services operated by Transdev under the Ribble Country brand have been enhanced in recent years but are less frequent.
- 3.28 The borough features an extensive footpath network which is primarily used for recreation. The cycle network is limited but growing with new investment coordinated through the [Burnley and Pendle LCWIP](#), which provides an integrated strategy for the improvement of the local footpath and cycling network.
- 3.29 The use of private vehicles remains the most popular form of transport in Pendle. Data collected through the 2021 Census illustrates the dominance of this mode of transport as a means of travel to access employment accounting for 57% of journeys. A further 6% were passengers in a vehicle. Only 11% of journeys to work were made on foot, and 3% were by bus. There are also high levels of taxi usage. The census was undertaken during travel restrictions associated with the Covid-19 pandemic which reduces the level of confidence that can be attached to these findings.

- 3.30 The [Lancashire Local Transport Plan](#) is a long-term strategy currently being prepared by the Lancashire Combined County Authority (LCCA). It covers the county-wide transport network and aims to improve public transport, increase walking and cycling and boost regional business. It is important that the strategic approach to the location and delivery of development through LP5 is consistent with and supportive of this strategy.

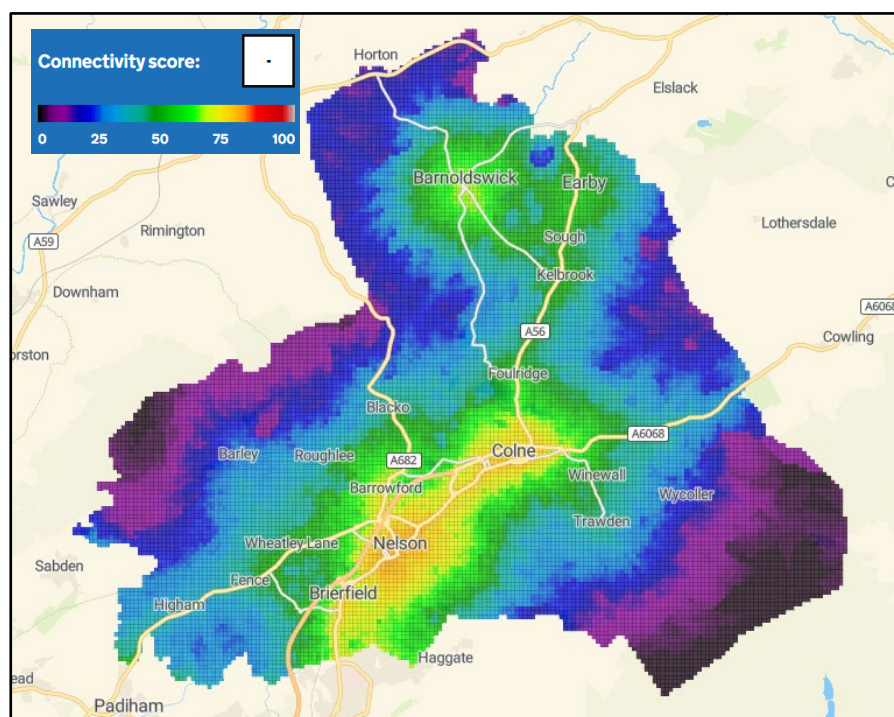
Figure 4.13 Travel to Work by Mode of Transport



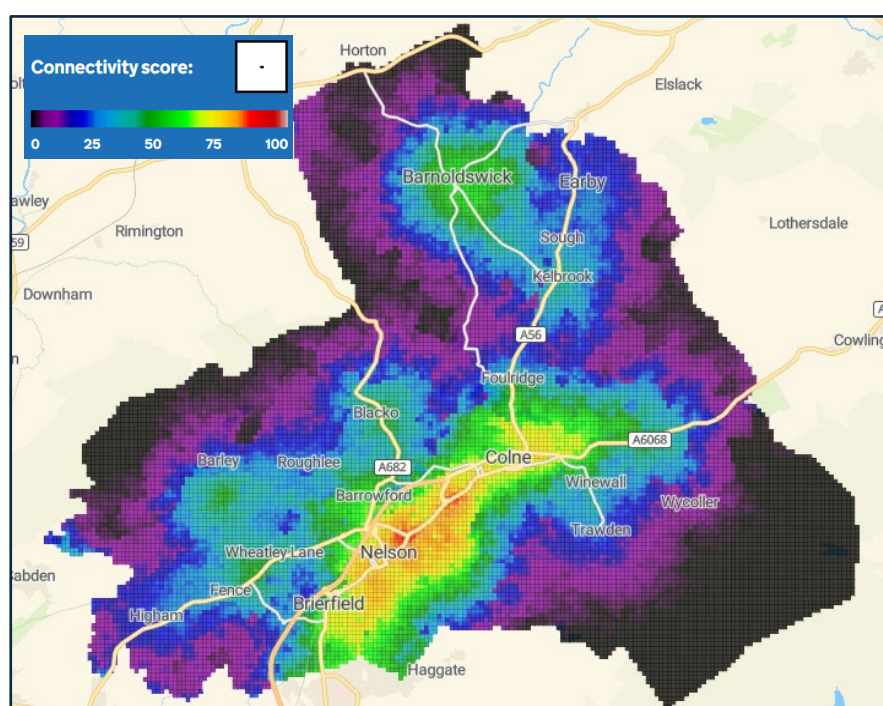
Source: 2021 Census

Connectivity

- 3.31 The Department for Transport has developed a [Connectivity Tool](#) which scores, on a national basis, access to everyday destinations by walking, cycling and public transport. Plan-making Guidance sets out the role that the Connectivity Tool has in assessing the suitability of sites submitted to the Council as possible locations for future development. The summary assessment for Pendle, for all modes except driving a private car, is set out in Figure 4.14. Lower scores reflect weakly connected areas, whilst higher scores indicate areas with strong connections.
- 3.32 The Connectivity Tool demonstrates the relative enhanced connectivity of settlements located within the M65 Corridor, further justifying the adopted spatial strategy which focuses development to these settlements. Connectivity differs depending on destination and form of transport. Figures 4.16 to 4.19 illustrate connectivity to education facilities, shops, workplaces, and sources of leisure by walking and/or public transport. The Council prepared an [assessment of settlement sustainability](#) as part of the preparation of the Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition (2025). The Connectivity Tool supports the conclusions of this assessment.

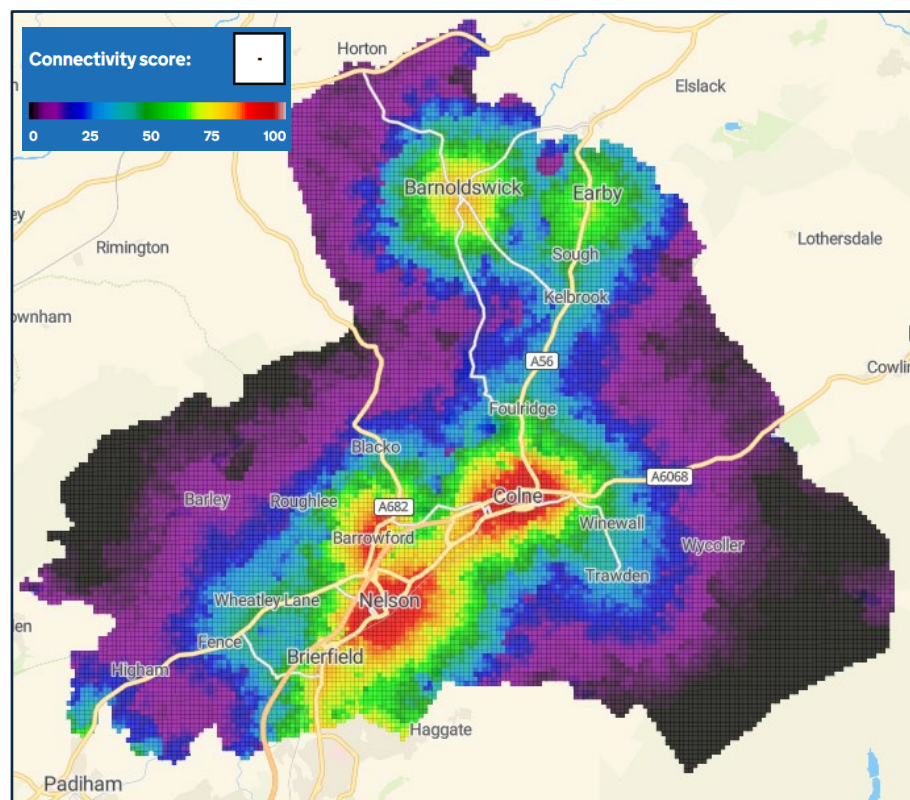
Figure 4.14 Connectivity Tool Summary Assessment

- 3.33 Access to education facilities is generally widespread. This reflects the presence of a number of primary schools within rural communities. Stronger levels of accessibility to education facilities is shown between Nelson and Colne where four primary schools and three secondary schools are located. The absence of high levels of accessibility elsewhere in the borough reflects the fact that with the exception of Marsden heights Community College in Brierfield, secondary schools are focussed in the borough's three main towns.

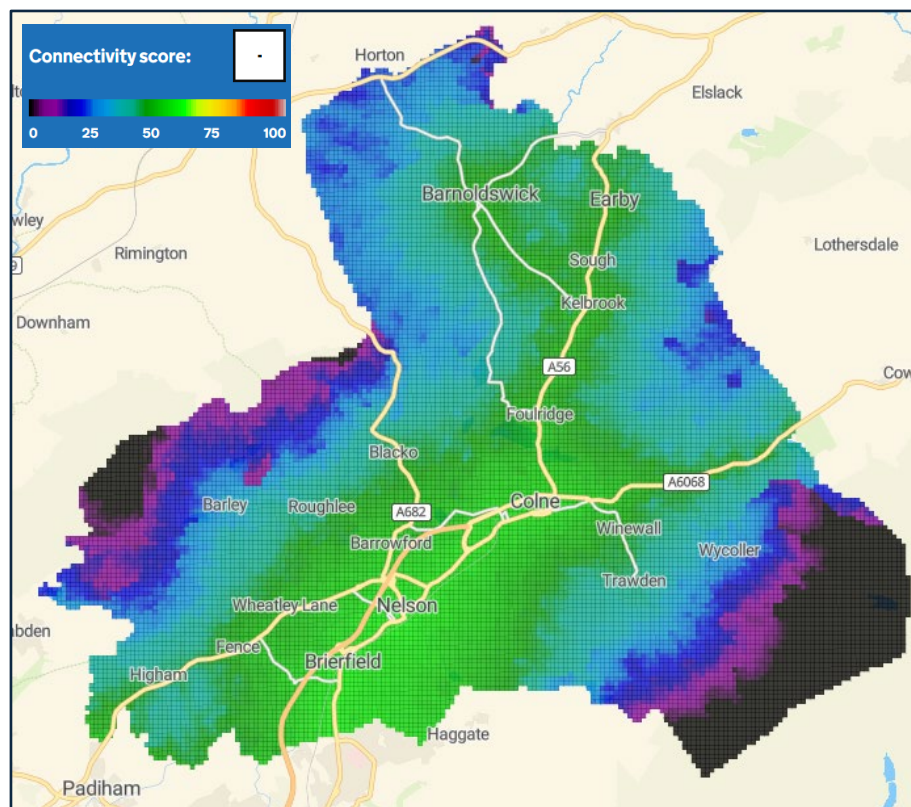
Figure 4.16 Connectivity to Education by Walking

- 3.34 Figure 4.17 shows connectivity to shops by walking. The pattern strongly reflects the retail hierarchy set out in Policy SP06 of the Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition (2025) and illustrates the high density of residential development in Pendle's inner urban areas which offer more residents the benefit of having strong levels of accessibility to their town centres. Many of the most accessible locations also feature local shopping frontages, as identified through Policy DM44 of the adopted Local Plan. There is a noticeable difference in the scoring between Barnoldswick and areas of the M65 Corridor. This is probably due to the presence of only one out-of-centre retail park within Barnoldswick, which reflects its more limited retail function in contrast to the M65 Corridor.

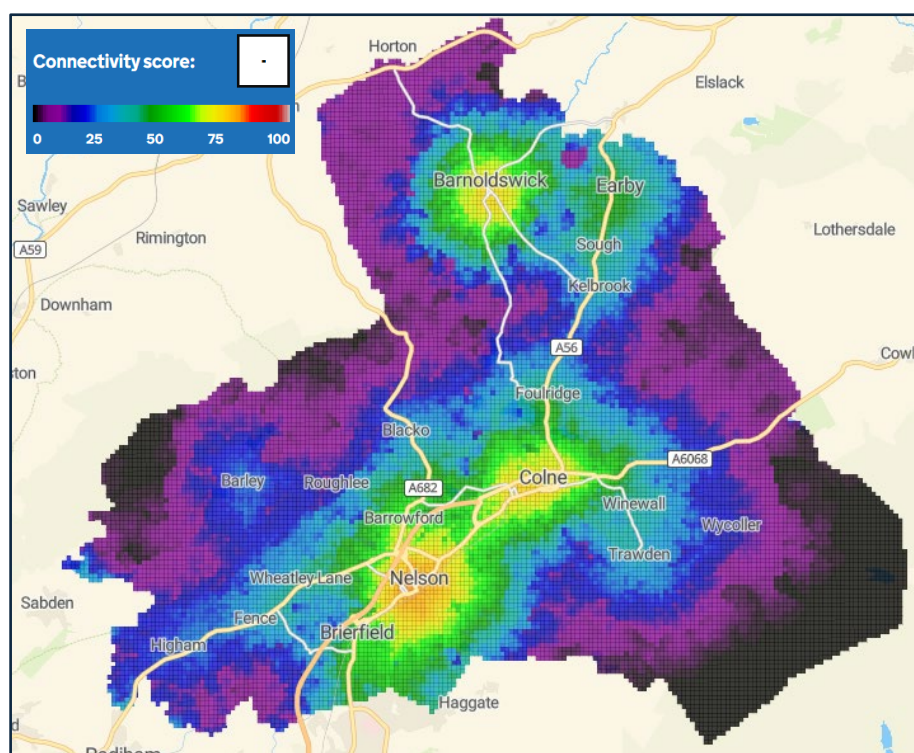
Figure 4.17 Connectivity to Shops by Walking



- 3.35 Relatively good connectivity to the workplace by public transport is widespread (Figure 4.18). Employment sites are quite widely distributed across the borough and, with the exception of Lomeshaye, are generally accessible by public transport.

Figure 4.18 Connectivity to workplaces by Public Transport

- 3.36 Leisure facilities are relatively accessible across the urban areas of the borough. Open spaces are found in most settlements. However higher order facilities, such as Leisure Centres, are found only in Nelson, Colne and Barnoldswick

Figure 4.19 Connectivity to Leisure Sites by Walking

Economic Indicators Findings

Key Messages from Baseline Data

- **Economy and jobs:** The manufacturing sector continues to play an important role in the Pendle economy with the highest number of jobs. The number of jobs located in Pendle has reduced over the past 5-years. More people leave the borough for work then come in. Most businesses are small and have a (marginally) smaller annual turnover than the county average.
- **Workforce:** A higher proportion of the workforce are economically active than the regional average. Wages are lower than the Lancashire average. Unemployment is higher. 1/3 of working aged people are on benefits. Reliance on private vehicle to access place of employment.
- **Education:** Lower attainment of higher education qualifications.
- **Employment Sites:** Major employment sites protected from other land uses.
- **Employment Delivery:** 31,000sqm gross floorspace delivered since 2016/17.
- **Employment Supply:** 90,000sqm of employment floorspace committed, plus further at allocated sites.
- **Town Centres:** All have various land uses with shops the largest single use.
- **Town Centre Vacancy:** Variable, but particularly poor (and worsening) in Nelson and Brierfield.
- **Public Transport and general connectivity** are much stronger within the M65 Corridor (Nelson, Brierfield, Colne, Barrowford). Residents in these locations have broader options for travel reducing car reliance.
- It is clear from the findings of the Connectivity Tool that the existing assessment of settlement sustainability remains valid and provides an adequate account of service provision.

SWOT Analysis: Economic Indicators

Strengths	Weaknesses
Unique town centres with a high proportion of independent businesses.	Legacy employment floorspace of limited suitability and attractiveness for modern users.
Numerous accessible employment sites widely distributed across the borough.	Limited rail connections and quality of service.
Accessibility of employment sites to road infrastructure.	Below average qualification attainment.
Compact built form enhancing access to shops, employment, and services.	Weak connectivity outside the M65 corridor.
Highly skilled workforce and Aerospace business cluster.	Low job density and higher unemployment rate.
	High town centre vacancy rate in Nelson and Brierfield.

Opportunities	Threats
The development of new quality employment floorspace through commitments including Lomeshaye Extension.	External factors which increase barriers to trade and the cost of materials, production and labour.
Increasing opportunities to access higher education through the expansion of education institutions locally.	Investment taking place outside of town centres, protected employment site or allocated sites.
Diversification of towns centres to promote their vibrancy as a result of a relaxation of planning restrictions.	Town Centre units occupied by poor health options, which can degrade the quality and functionality of a centre.

Key Economic Issues for LP5 to Address

- Identification of future employment needs in the context of increased housing growth and existing labour market characteristics and problems.
- Secure the vibrancy of Pendle's economy, protecting existing key sites, support and enable the delivery of committed sites (including the Lomeshaye Extension), and the identification of new sites adopting a coherent approach with the development of housing, services and infrastructure.
- Support and identify opportunities that increase access to education and training for residents.
- Support the borough's Town Centres as the principal locations for retail and services borough through regeneration, identification of new development sites, and safeguarding of existing key frontages.
- Safeguard and enhance the built environment and pedestrian experience to encourage greater levels of footfall.
- Address the high vacancy rate in Nelson and Brierfield through regeneration opportunities and allocation of sites for broader land uses.
- Ensure development sites are or can be made accessible to public transport, walking and cycling options to promote the adoption of sustainable modes of travel and reduce car journeys.

5. Environmental Indicators

Key Findings



412 Kilo tonnes of greenhouse gases were emitted from Pendle in 2023. This is the third lowest in Lancashire. This level is reducing.



Transport accounts for the highest level of emissions in Pendle. Transport has had the lowest drop in emissions of any sector over the past 20 years.



10.8MW is generated from renewables in Pendle. This is the lowest in Lancashire.



Pendle's air quality is one of the best in Lancashire.



11% of the borough is at risk of fluvial flooding.



3,134.58 Hectares of land (gross) are protected for their biodiversity value. This includes the South Pennines Moors which is of international merit.



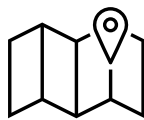
1,602.14 Hectares of Irreplaceable Habitat



90% of land within the borough qualifies as one type of Green Infrastructure.



14% of Pendle sits within the Forest of Bowland National Landscape.



12% of Pendle is designated as Green Belt, working to prevent the urban sprawl of the M65 Corridor.



Communities have identified 53 sites as Local Green Space protecting 124 hectares of land.

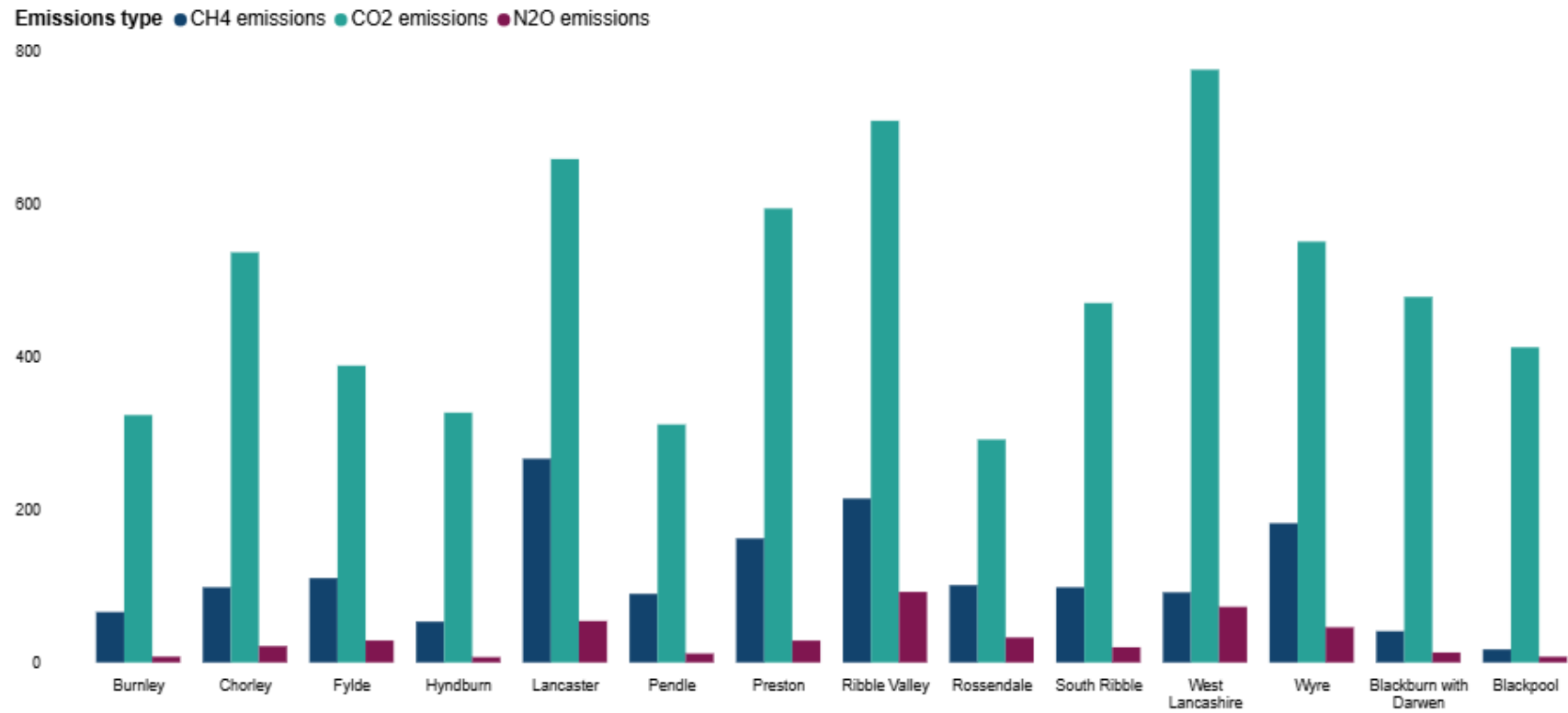


Pendle has a distinct and valued built heritage featuring 24 Conservation Areas, 331 listed buildings and 11 Scheduled Monuments.

Climate Change

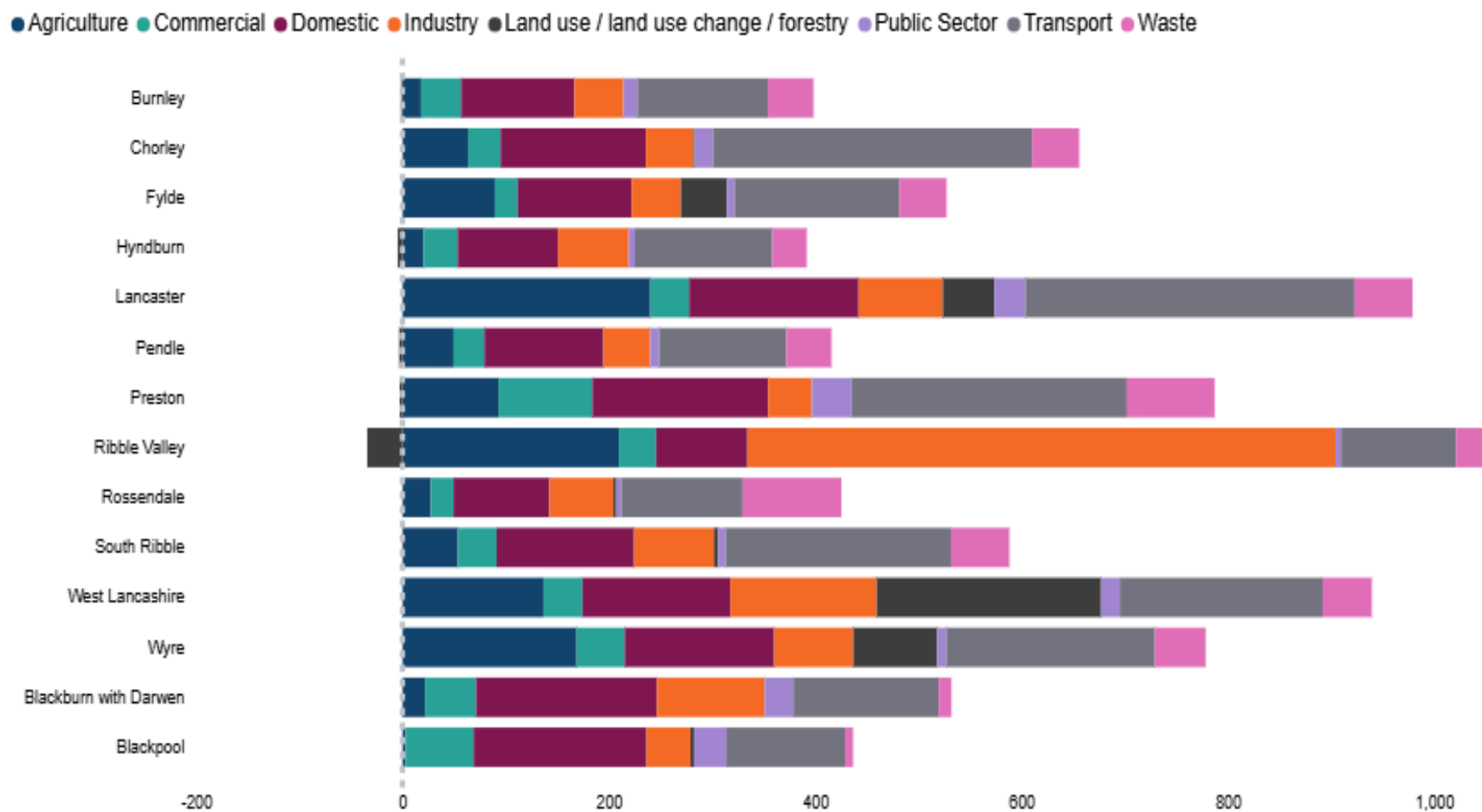
- 3.37 The planet has warmed by approximately 1.4°C since pre-industrial levels. Climate change is driven by the burning of fossil fuels and changes in land use which release greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. Carbon dioxide is the main contributor to climate change. One outcome is the increasing frequency and severity of weather extremes including heatwaves, droughts and heavy rainfall events. In the UK the last three years are amongst the top five warmest on record.
- 3.38 The UK is signatory to the 2015 Paris Agreement, which legally binds all nations to limit global warming to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. The UK has committed to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 under the Climate Change Act 2025. The government's Clean Power 2030 Action Plan (2024) aims for over 95% of electricity generation to come from low-carbon sources by 2030, supported by investments in renewables and infrastructure. The government is also supporting regulatory changes to secure the delivery of low/very low (and ultimately zero) carbon development.
- 3.39 Pendle has the third lowest greenhouse gas emissions in Lancashire after Burnley and Hyndburn. In 2023 Pendle was the source of 412.7 kilo tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions, averaging 4.3 kilo tonnes per capita or 2.4 kilo tonnes per kilometre. These figures are close to the county and regional average but higher than the national average. Pendle's greenhouse gas emissions are largely comprised of carbon dioxide (75%), followed by methane (22%), and nitrous oxide (3%) (Figure 5.1).
- 3.40 Pendle's highest levels of greenhouse gas emissions are from the transport sector (266.5 tonnes), followed by the domestic sector (115.4 tonnes). The land use/land use change/forestry sector results in a reduction of 3.2 tonnes in greenhouse gas emissions. When comparing greenhouse gas emissions by sector across Lancashire Pendle does not show an unusually high proportion of greenhouse gas emissions from any one sector in comparison to other authorities (Figure 5.2).

Figure 5.1 Comparison of Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Total) in Lancashire (2023)



Source: Department of Energy Security and Net Zero, extracted from Lancashire Insight

Figure 5.2 Comparison of Greenhouse Gas Emissions by Sector in Lancashire (2023)



Source: Department of Energy Security and Net Zero, extracted from Lancashire Insight

- 3.41 Over the past 18 years, carbon dioxide emissions in Pendle have almost halved with deductions recorded across all sectors (Table 5.3). Other than in forestry which now removes more greenhouse gases than it emits, the greatest fall has been within the industry sector where emissions have fallen by 70.03%. The slowest rates of fall have been within the agriculture and transport sectors at 22.85% and 24.32% respectively.

Table 5.3 Change in Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Pendle 2005 - 2023

Sector	Emissions 2005 (KT)	Emissions 2023 (KT)	Percentage Change
Agriculture	63.9	49.3	-22.85%
Commercial	77.5	30.1	-61.16%
Domestic	232.7	115.4	-50.41%
Industry	150.8	45.2	-70.03%
Land use/ land use change / forestry	0.1	-3.2	-310%
Public sector	20.9	8.9	-57.42%
Transport	162.8	123.2	-24.32%
Waste	85.5	43.8	-48.77%
Total	794.2	412.7	-48.04%

Source: Department of Energy Security and Net Zero, extracted from Lancashire Insight

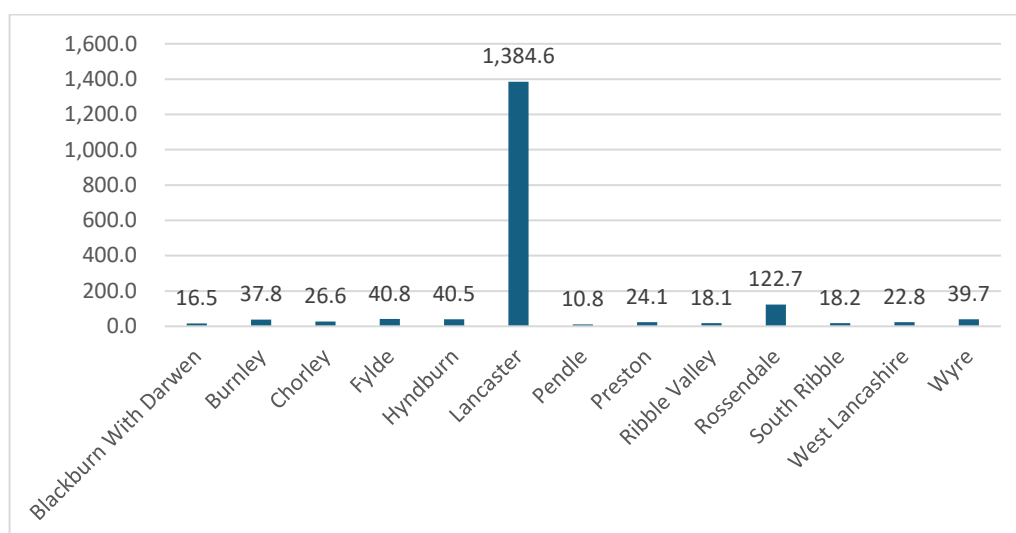
- 3.42 The decline in recorded greenhouse gas emissions for industry is likely to be the result of a local economy slowly shifting away from manufacturing, investment in more energy efficient and renewable technologies, the adoption of new regulatory standards, and changes to materials, processes and outputs. Farming in Pendle is predominantly pastoral, so reducing greenhouse gas emissions for this sector is difficult to achieve. Transport has also experienced a slow rate of decline likely due to the high rate of private vehicle and taxi usage. Low-income levels have restricted the take up of ultra-low/zero emission vehicles but expanding infrastructure and the increasing availability of cheaper electric cars models are likely to result in faster uptake helping to increase the pace of decline in emissions for the transport sector.
- 3.43 National planning policy prevents local planning authorities from setting ambitious local standards that exceed building regulations unless there is compelling evidence to do so. The land use planning framework does not allow authorities to distinguish between high-emission and low-emission users in the allocation of sites, except through broader controls relating to the nature of the proposed use and its hours of operation. Impacts on climate change can however form a material consideration.

- 3.44 Local plans can however identify opportunity areas for renewable energy, set design guidelines related to climate change, establish policies which support the transition to a low carbon economy and low emission transportation solutions, and direct development to locations that are more accessible by sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling and wheeling. The need for new development to address issues associated with climate change and adapt to its effects, through measures such as natural cooling, will be a core theme of LP5.

Renewable Energy

- 3.45 As of 2024, 10.8MW is generated from renewable sources in Pendle. This is the lowest figure in Lancashire. The vast majority of this comes from small scale private solar panel arrays attached to the roofs of domestic and commercial buildings. Heat and Energy from renewables is anticipated to increase over time due new requirements in the building regulations, the reduced cost of investment in renewable technologies, and the increased price and reduced reliability in the supply of fossil fuels.

Figure 5.3 Total Energy Generation from Renewables in Lancashire (2024)



Source: Department of Energy Security and Zero Carbon

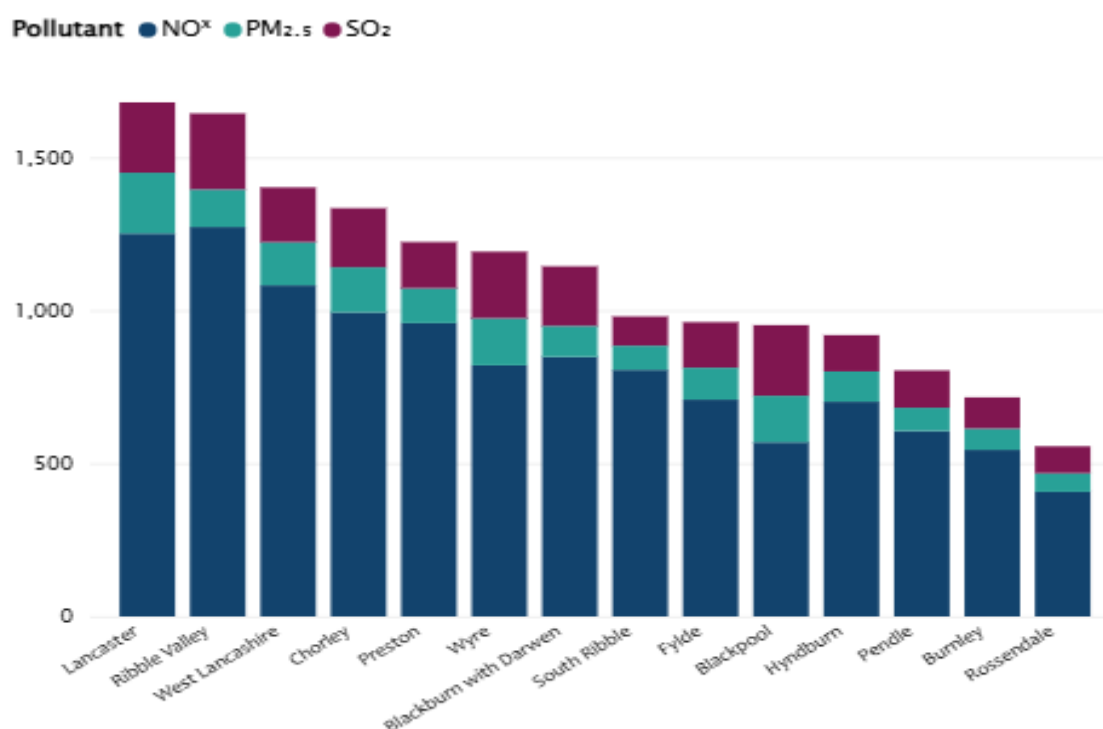
- 3.46 There are currently no commercial scale renewable energy schemes in operation in Pendle. There are 17 wind turbines in total mostly providing onsite generation for farmsteads. The South Pennines Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Study (Maslan, 2010) considered the potential for commercial windfarms in the area. The broad locations it identified as being commercially suitable are subject to landscape and/or ecological protection. Opportunities for viable commercial windfarms are therefore limited and subject to on-site sensitivities. In this context, the Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition (2025) provides a decision-making framework for the determination of proposals for renewable energy (Policy DM03).

- 3.47 To form an effective means for electricity generated from renewable sources to be uploaded to the national grid when needed, battery storage is important. Proposals for battery storage facilities are often unpopular with nearby residents, but they are increasing with planning permission recently granted to the first few proposals in Pendle. Policy guidance relating to these forms of development may be necessary in LP5.

Air Quality

- 3.48 The air quality of Pendle is generally better than that experienced in other parts of Lancashire. In 2022 pollutants from all sources amounted to 804 tonnes per annum per square km, the third lowest in Lancashire (Figure 5.4). Nitrogen Oxides are greenhouse gases associated with combustion. They contribute to acid rain, deplete the ozone layer, and can have detrimental effects on health. Particulate matter in the form of smoke, dust, mould, spores and pollen is suspended in the air before sticking to the surface of buildings darkening facades, damaging plants, and potentially affecting our hearts and lungs. Sulphur Dioxide, associated with the combustion of fossil fuels, falls as acid rain. Whilst it has largely been eliminated from local industrial processes transport emissions remain a potential source.

Figure 5.4 Total Emissions (tonnes per annum) per sq km by District (2022)



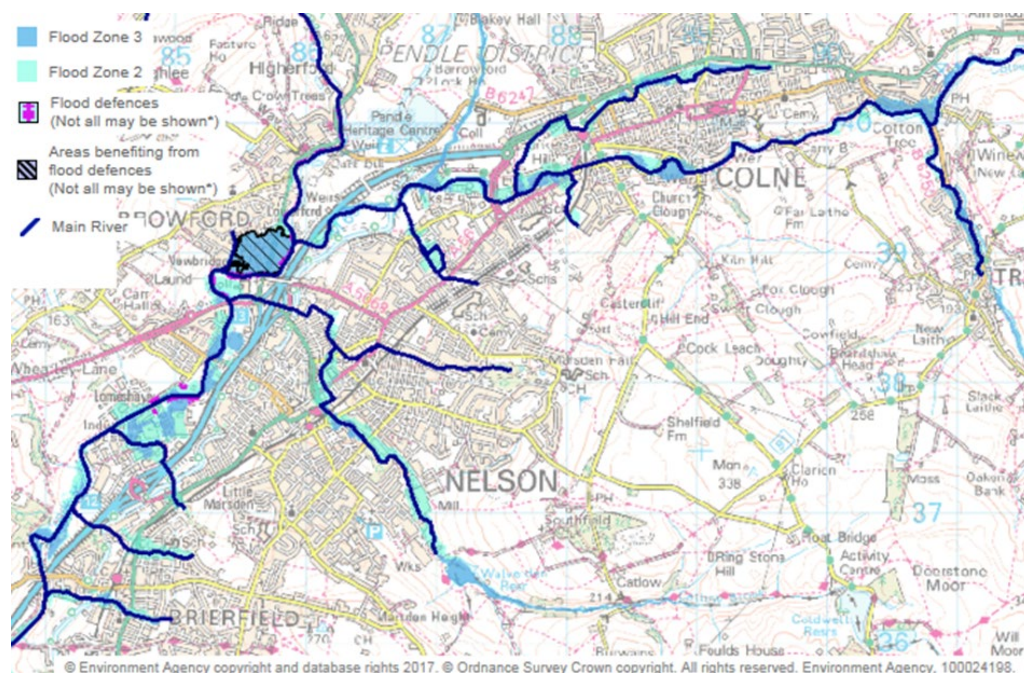
Source: National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory, Extracted from Lancashire Insight

- 3.49 There is one Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) In Pendle, located on Skipton Road/Windsor Street in Colne. Monitoring shows results that are consistently below the air quality objectives for Nitrogen Dioxide, so the Council intends to revoke this AQMA. Broader monitoring of Nitrogen Dioxide levels across the borough reveals that there is no single location which exceeds objective levels.

Flood Risk, Water Supply and Quality

- 3.50 Pendle sits astride the Pennine watershed and is the source of watercourses within the Ribble, Aire, and Calder (Yorkshire) river catchments. Flood events are typically associated with the fast-flowing rivers fed by streams that quickly convey water from the saturated upland moors following heavy rainfall events. The bottom of their deep and narrow valleys is filled by former textile mills that once used them as a means to power production affecting the viability and feasibility of bringing brownfield sites forward for residential development. Closer to the watershed low lying areas of flat land are also subject to flood risk from surface water. This includes the area of land between the villages of Foulridge, Kelbrook and Salterforth, which is managed by the Earby and Salterforth Internal Drainage Board.
- 3.51 The [Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment](#) (2021, JBA Consulting) examines the risk of flooding from all recognised sources across the borough. Over 448 ha of the borough is found to be at a high risk of flooding (Flood Zone 3). This area includes 967 residential and 220 commercial properties. A further 530 ha is at a low to medium risk of flooding (Flood Zone 2). This area includes 1,292 residential and 256 commercial properties. In total, 11% of the borough is at risk of fluvial flooding and the effects of climate change will almost certainly increase the number of properties that are at risk of flooding in the years ahead.
- 3.52 Figures 5.5 and 5.6 show areas of flood risk at the main towns in Pendle. The risk of flooding is considered through the site assessment process. National planning policy directs development away from those areas most at risk of flooding. Updated flood risk information will be prepared as part of the plan-making process for LP5.

Figure 5.5 Areas of Flood Risk Along the M65 Corridor



Source: Environment Agency

Figure 5.6 Areas of Flood Risk in West Craven

Source: Environment Agency

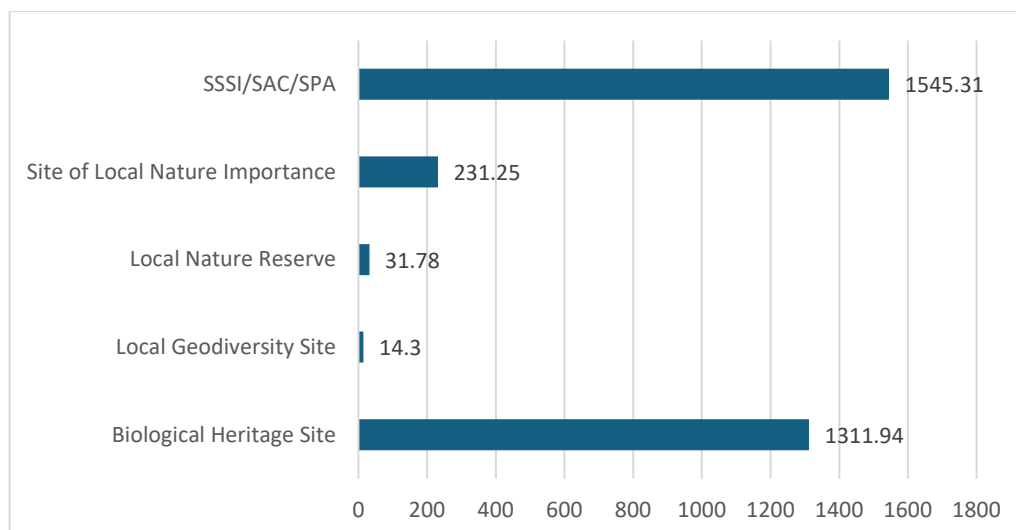
- 3.53 Pendle's water supply and sewerage infrastructure is largely managed by United Utilities. Yorkshire Water cover Kelbrook, Sough, and Earby. Pendle is not identified as a water stressed location. However, adopted Water Management Plans seek the implementation of water efficiency measures as a means to manage resilience across the whole of the network to the effects of drought. The quality of water in Pendle reflects the regional average. However, Stock Beck in the north of the borough, has below average water quality.
- 3.54 The management of water resources is important for the future sustainability of the borough. Policies related to the design and efficiency of development play a key role in ensuring the resilience of communities to the effects of climate change. The Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition (2025) is responsive to this context, with policies containing measures that help to safeguard the water supply and its quality.

Natural Environment

- 3.55 Pendle's natural environment contributes strongly to the borough's distinctive character, identity and sense of place. Large areas of the open countryside are protected for their landscape character and scenic qualities and the importance of key habitats, for protected species (Figure 5.5).

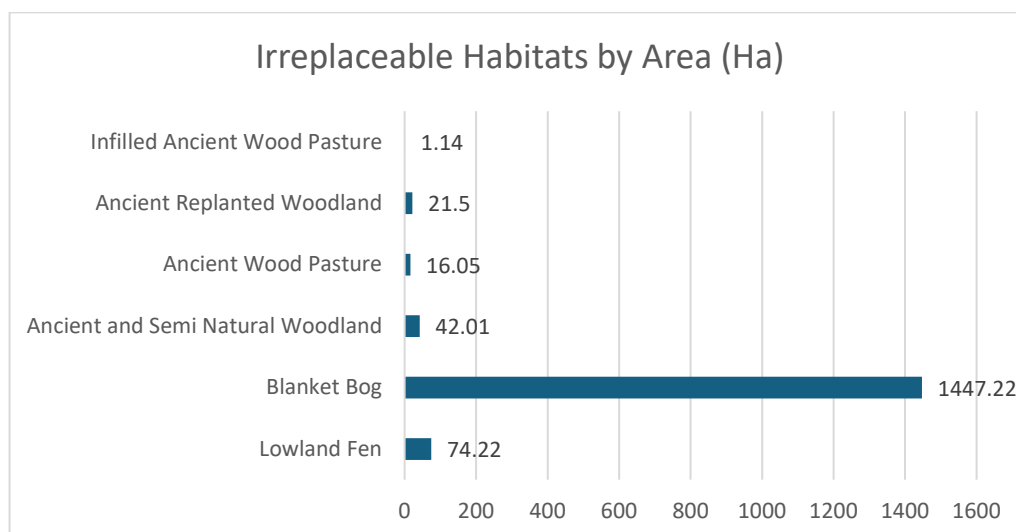
- 3.56 A hierarchical approach seeks to secure the preservation of these designated sites by controlling the forms of development permissible either within, or in close proximity to them. This is applied in addition to requirements relating to protected species and biodiversity net gain (BNG). The South Pennine Moors is internationally recognised for its importance for ground nesting upland birds. Because of this sensitivity, the types of development that are permitted within specified impact risk zones (IRZ) defined by Natural England are set out in Policy DM08.

Figure 5.5 Gross Area of Protected Ecological Sites in Pendle (ha)⁵



- 3.57 The borough features extensive areas of irreplaceable habitat for which there is strong policy protection. Upland blanket peat bogs cover the largest area and are found almost exclusively within the South Pennine Moors. Ancient woodlands are more widely dispersed and may constrain development in specific locations. The site assessment process takes into account the likely effects of proposals on ecological sites and irreplaceable habitats. BNG policy affords further protection to irreplaceable habitats.
- 3.58 The Green Infrastructure Strategy (LUC, 2019) maps the many components of the borough's green infrastructure network. It identifies gaps in existing provision and highlights opportunities to protect and enhance existing assets. In doing so it helps to guide the delivery and future investment in green infrastructure to maximise its associated benefits. Up to 90% of all land within Pendle qualifies as some form of green infrastructure. The network of sites can be viewed on the [policies map](#) and [Council's website](#). Opportunities to enhance green infrastructure will be considered in developing the strategy of LP5.

⁵ SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest), SAC (Special Area of Conservation) SPA (Special Protection Area)

Figure 5.6 Irreplaceable Habitats in Pendle by Area

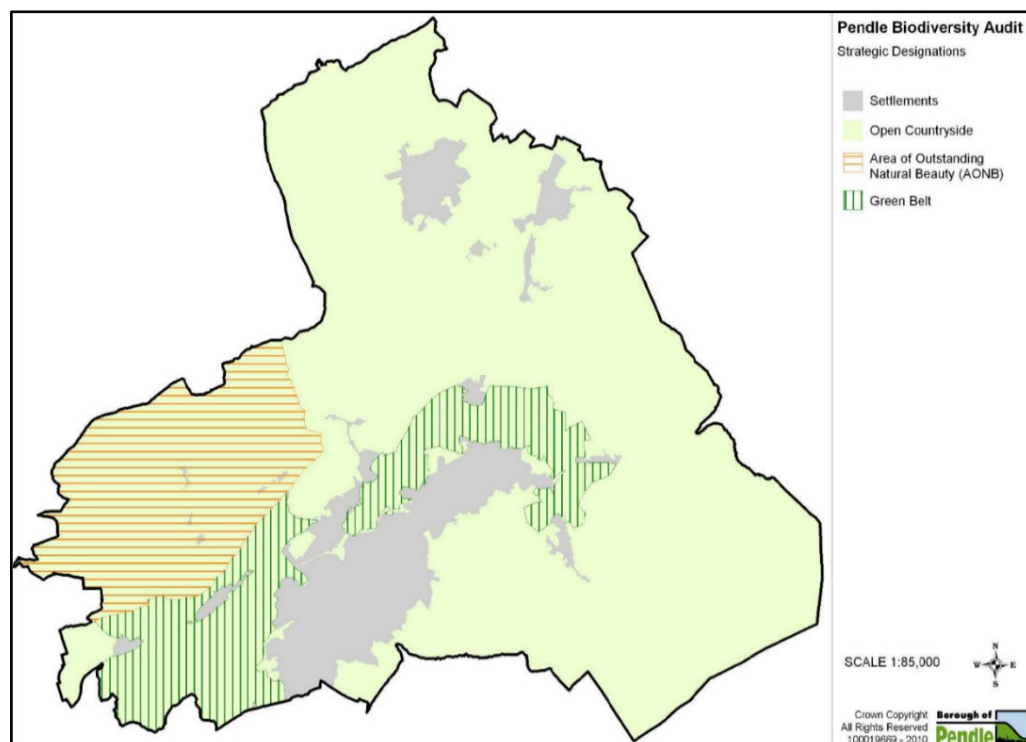
- 3.59 Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) were introduced through the Environment Act 2021, to drive forward nature's recovery by identifying locations to create or improve habitats which provide the greatest benefit to nature. The LNRS acts as a tool to target action and funding for the good of nature to maximise the benefits brought by development.
- 3.60 The [Lancashire LNRS](#) was adopted by Lancashire County Council in January 2026. The strategy aims to halt and reverse the loss of local biodiversity, support thriving species populations, conserve natural resources, build climate change resilience, provide broader environmental and societal benefits, and exploit the role of partnerships in delivering nature recovery on a landscape scale.
- 3.61 The Lancashire LNRS is made up of two parts. The first is a Statement of Biodiversity Priorities, which describes Lancashire's biodiversity, the pressures it faces, and prioritises the actions to be taken. The second, is the [Local Habitat Map](#) which identifies areas of particular importance for biodiversity (existing sites) and opportunity areas which could deliver the greatest gains for nature among wider benefits.
- 3.62 The Council supported the preparation of the LNRS and has endorsed its adoption. The delivery of the LNRS is supported through the Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition (2025), and by BNG policy. It will be important that LP5 takes into account the Lancashire LNRS and that opportunities to support its implementation are taken wherever possible to help achieve its aims and fulfil the Council's statutory Biodiversity Duty.
- 3.63 The Council published its first [Biodiversity Duty Report](#) in March 2026. The report sets out the policies, objectives and actions that have been undertaken during the first reporting period (2024 to 1 January 2026) to meet the Biodiversity Duty, how broader strategies have been considered in the discharging of this duty, and what actions will be taken to help meet the duty in the future.

- 3.64 The report also provides information on BNG secured through new development since it became mandatory to do so for qualifying projects in 2024. It reports that as of 1 January 2026, BNG had been secured at three schemes approved in the borough. Of these only one provided BNG on site. The remaining two schemes secured credits to fund off site delivery. Collectively the schemes provide a total of 0.33 biodiversity units of additional habitat. The report notes the infancy of the policy and confirms that a further 57 approved developments, which are liable to BNG requirements but had no BNG Plan approved but required ahead of commencement. The amount of BNG delivered by developments taking place within Pendle is therefore set to increase.

Landscape Quality

- 3.65 The National Character Area Profiles prepared by Natural England, show that Pendle features three distinct landscape character areas.
- 3.66 To the north, the landscape is classified as 'Bowland Fringe and Pendle Hill'. This is an area of rolling landscapes, river valleys, and upland features. It includes Pendle Hill and the drumlin field to the north of Barnoldswick. Extensive semi-natural and ancient woodland is found on main valley bottoms, side valleys and ridges. The remainder is mostly in agricultural use, with permanent pasture and hay meadows, mostly improved, for dairy and livestock farming.

Figure 5.7 Land Designations in Pendle (excluding Local Green Space)



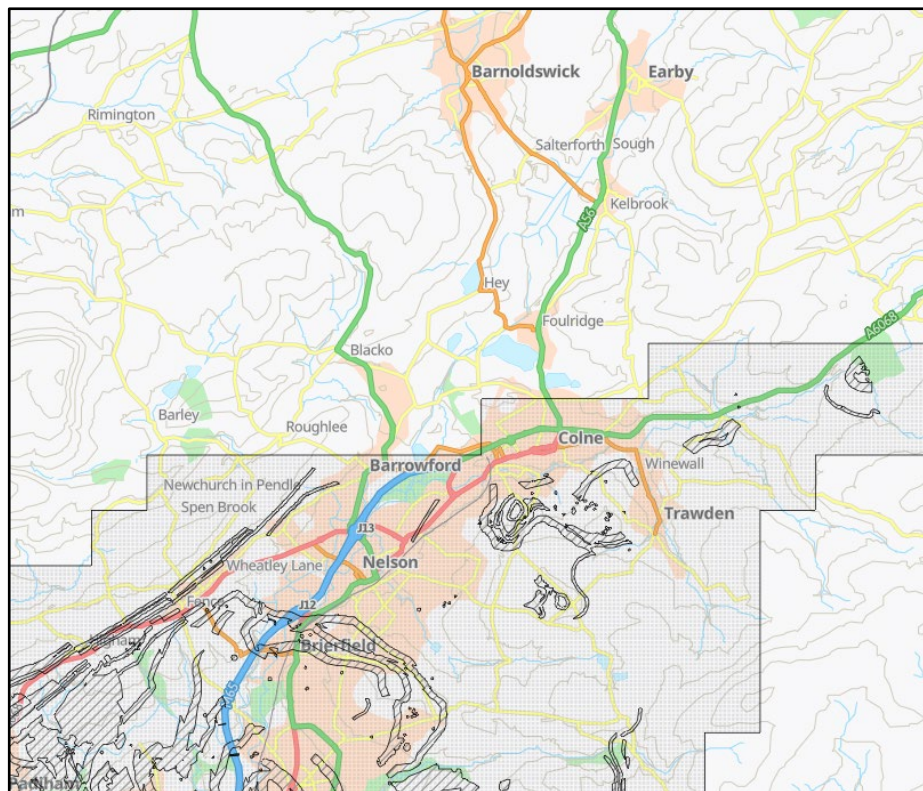
- 3.67 Towards the south-east of the borough, around the village of Trawden, is the Southern Pennines Character Area. At lower levels this is predominantly pasture, defined by dry stone and vaccary walls. High up is open moorland and blanket bog deeply trenced by narrow valleys and wooded cloughs. There are extensive views from elevated locations in all directions.
- 3.68 Between these areas lies the largest of the three-character areas classified as the ‘Lancashire Valleys’. This follows the line of the large tributaries feeding the River Calder, with primary lines of communication in the valley bottom including the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, the Preston-Colne railway and the M65 motorway. The area is predominantly urban with a strong industrial heritage, associated with the emergence of cotton weaving and textile industries in the 19th century. The fabric of the built environment includes numerous redundant or underutilised former textile mills, grand Victorian stone-built buildings, and large country houses with associated parklands.
- 3.69 These national character areas are further subdivided in the Lancashire Landscape Character Assessment (2009).
- 3.70 The quality and appearance of Pendle’s natural landscape is highly valued and makes a strong positive contribution towards the borough’s identity. It is important that new development delivered through LP5 safeguards and where possible enhances the area’s landscapes and townscapes. This priority is reflected in the site assessment process where all sites are considered for their landscape and visual impact, particularly where they impact the setting of a designated heritage asset (see Built Environment below). It is likely that LP5 will provide further guidance for development proposals and their effect on the landscape.
- 3.71 The Forest of Bowland National Landscape⁶ sits in the west of the borough, surrounding (and including) Pendle Hill. It covers 14% of the borough and within it are the small settlements of Barley, Newchurch-in-Pendle and Spen Brook, and Roughlee with Crow Trees (Figure 5.7). The Forest of Bowland National Landscape Management Plan identifies the distinctive qualities which contribute to its unique sense of place.
- 3.72 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) prevents major development within the National Landscape unless it is exceptional and in the public interest. The Pendle Local Plan Fourth Edition (2025) does not allocate any sites within the National Landscape for development, instead setting a policy framework to manage and guide development proposals (Policy DM11). This policy position is unlikely to shift significantly during the preparation of LP5, although the allocation of small-scale sites for development, within the designated area, may need to be explored.

⁶ Previously known as the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and still referred to as such in legislation.

Ground Conditions

- 3.73 The borough is shaped by its geology. Pendle is located at the head of the Calder Valley. To the north, east and south are large expanses of upland moor. To the west Pendle Hill rises high above the valley floor below. It is formed from Pendle Grit, a coarse Carboniferous age sandstone of the Millstone Grit Group. To the east Weets Hill overlooks White Moor and the low-lying area of West Craven.
- 3.74 Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS), referred to as Local Geodiversity Sites (LGS) in Lancashire, are the most important places for geology and geomorphology. Whilst not benefiting from statutory protection, LGS have equivalent status to Local Wildlife Sites. There are three LGS in Pendle highlighting regionally important geological features, rock outcrops, and landforms:
- Castercliffe, Nelson
 - Turn Hill, Colne
 - Salterforth Railway Cutting, Salterforth.
- 3.75 Pendle lies within a coal mining legacy area. Whilst there are no active mine workings today, several coal seams have been worked on a commercial basis in the past (Figure 5.8). These parts of the borough may be susceptible to unstable ground conditions, and the Mining Remediation Authority is a statutory consultee on proposals within the consultation zone. The site assessment process takes into account potential ground stability risks.

Figure 5.8 Coal Mining Risk Zones



Source: Mining Remediation Authority

Minerals and Waste

- 3.76 Lancashire County Council is the Minerals and Waste Authority for the Pendle area. The County Council is currently reviewing the Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (which comprises the Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (2009) and Joint Lancashire Minerals and Waste Site Allocations Plan (2014)).
- 3.77 There are no sites allocated for mineral extraction within Pendle, but the area including and surrounding Catlow Quarry is classified as a Minerals Safeguarding Area to help protect valuable, non-renewable mineral deposits.

Green Belt and Local Green Space

- 3.78 The East Lancashire Green Belt covers approximately 12% of Pendle broadly occupying land north and west of Brierfield and Nelson, between Barrowford and Colne, together with land north and east of Colne (Figure 5.7). The primary purpose of the Green Belt in Pendle is to prevent urban sprawl associated with the expansion of settlements in the M65 Corridor by keeping land permanently open. The only significant change to the Green Belt since it was first designated in 1999 has been the release of land to facilitate the expansion of the Lomeshaye Industrial Estate in the Pendle Core Strategy (2015).
- 3.79 The national stance on Green Belt has changed in December 2024 when the NPPF introduced the concept of 'Grey Belt' to identify land which does not have a strong function in accordance with Green Belt purposes (a) (b) or (d). Development proposals have already been determined by the Council on the basis of land qualifying as Grey Belt. The Council needs to fully assess which parts of the Green Belt could potentially fall within the definition of Grey Belt land through LP5 and ultimately whether changes are needed to existing Green Belt boundaries to accommodate future development needs.
- 3.80 Local Green Space is land identified as being of particular importance to local communities. Land designated Local Green Space is afforded the same protection from development as land within the Green Belt. A total of 124.5 ha of land across 53 sites in Pendle is currently designated as Local Green Space. Local Green Spaces are found in most parts of the borough but the concentration in and around Colne reflects their designation in the Colne Neighbourhood Plan (Colne Town Council, 2022).

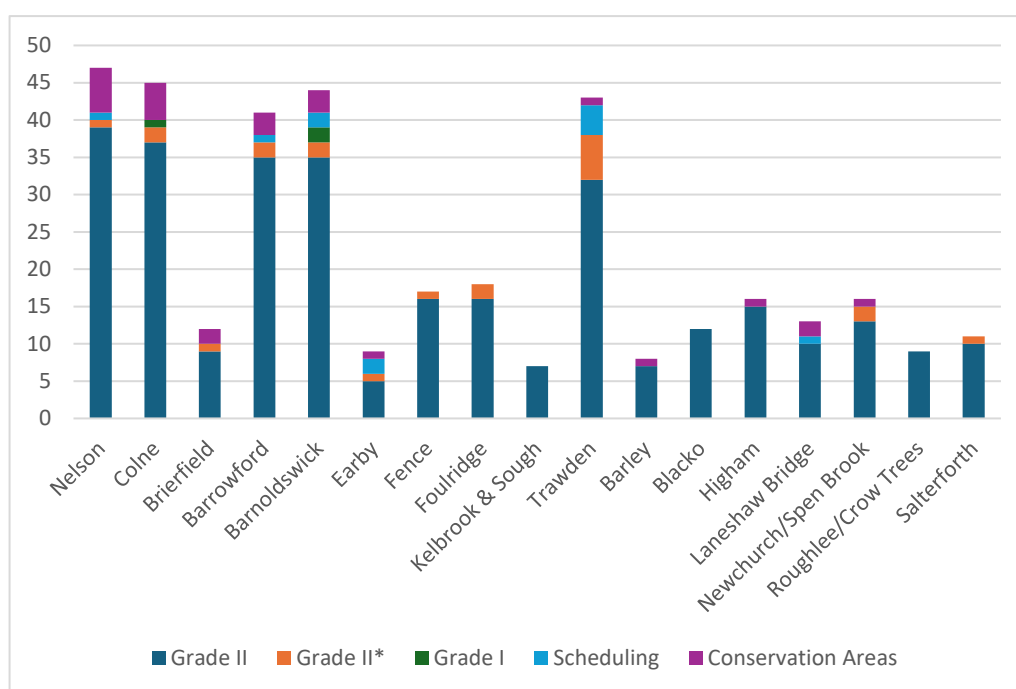
Built Environment

- 3.81 Pendle has a unique and diverse built environment. Strong policy protection is afforded to the conservation of heritage assets which make a positive contribution to the built heritage of Pendle. Character Appraisals consider the particular qualities of the built environment within the boroughs 24 designated Conservation areas. Their findings are used to guide development proposals within these areas. Safeguarding the quality of the built environment is reflected in several Local Plan policies and detailed guidance in adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). The Colne

Neighbourhood Plan is accompanied by a design code to inform decisions on development proposals in Colne. The Historic Environment Record and Heritage Town Reports provide important external sources of information regarding the borough's-built heritage and its change over time.

- 3.82 Listed buildings are structures given special legal protection because of their national architectural or historic importance. They are placed on the National Heritage List for England to help preserve their unique character. In Pendle there are 3 Grade I Listed Buildings, 21 Grade II* Listed Buildings, 307 Grade II Listed Buildings, and 11 Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Local communities have also identified a number of non-designated heritage assets (NDHA) through Neighbourhood Plans and as candidates for inclusion of a future Local List. NDHA are local buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas, or landscapes that have local historic or architectural value, but do not have statutory protection like a listed building or scheduled monument. They are recognised by local planning authorities and may be listed on a local heritage register and the Historic Environment Record (HER).
- 3.83 Pendle's built heritage is widely distributed but concentrated within the borough's larger settlements, with the exception of Trawden which features a high proportion of heritage assets for a relatively small village.

Figure 5.9 Designated Heritage Assets in Pendle



- 3.84 The [Historic Town Surveys](#) prepared for Nelson, Colne and Barnoldswick provide a detailed appraisal of the growth of these settlements over time and consider the distinctive built features found within them, which contribute to their local identity. The surveys can be viewed on the Council's website and will be used to help inform decisions made about the future growth of these settlements through LP5.

Design Guidance

- 3.85 Pendle does not have a borough-wide Design Code. The Colne Design Code, prepared by Colne Town Council alongside its Neighbourhood Plan, is used to help determine development proposals in and around the town. The [Design Principles SPD](#), [Conservation Area Design and Development Guidance SPD](#), and [Development in the Open Countryside and AONB SPD](#) are all relied upon in decision-making to guide the appearance, layout, scale and materials of a proposed development in the interests of safeguarding local amenity and ensuring that new development is of a high quality and integrates effectively into its immediate surroundings.
- 3.86 SPDs will not have a place in the new planning system, with a move towards Design Codes or site-specific Supplementary Plans intended to take their place. This means that the guidance they provide will need to be set out in the Local Plan, a Design Code or Supplementary Plan. Any design policy or design code will need to be in conformity with the NPPF and the [National Design Guide](#).

Environmental Indicators Baseline Findings

Key Messages from Baseline Data

- **Greenhouse Gas Emissions:** Overtime greenhouse gas emissions have steadily declined. Today transport is largest emitter of any single sector in Pendle.
- **Air Quality:** Pendle generally has better air quality than other locations within Lancashire. Data shows that the AQMA in Colne is no longer necessary.
- **Renewables:** Pendle generates the lowest energy from renewables in Lancashire. The development of viable commercial renewable schemes in Pendle is challenging given landscape and biodiversity sensitivity.
- **Natural Environment:** Around 30 km² of Pendle is designated for its biodiversity importance. The largest and most significant site is the South Pennine Moors which stretches into Yorkshire and Derbyshire and is noted for providing important habitat for protected ground nesting birds. Development is restricted within and near the South Pennine Moors.
- **Green Infrastructure (GI):** 90% of the borough may qualify as GI. The Lancashire LNRS will help direct investment to achieve the best outcomes for nature.
- **Landscape Quality:** The Forest of Bowland National Landscape covers 14% of the borough. Restrictions are in place on the scale and type of development permissible in this location. Topography is also a constraint on development.
- **Flood Risk:** 11% of the borough is at risk of fluvial flooding.
- **Green Belt:** 12% of the borough is designated as green belt. A further 125ha is local green space, constraining locations for development.
- **Historic Environment:** Found widely across Pendle.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
High quality and distinctive rural landscape.	Low tree coverage within Pendle's communities.
Extensive upland moorland valuable for protected wildlife and important in tackling climate change.	Natural Greenspace is generally less accessible to deprived communities.
Widespread valued green spaces which are accessible to communities.	There are generally few opportunities for viable commercial scale renewable energy projects in the borough.
Distinctive built heritage.	Poor viability reduces the potential for higher quality standard of design which address climate change.
Compact towns which are densely populated.	Public Transport options outside the main towns are limited.

Opportunities	Threats
The role of the Lancashire Local Nature Recovery Strategy in identifying opportunities for nature of most benefit.	Increased risk of flooding from extreme weather events as a result of climate change.
The application of Biodiversity Net Gain and the supporting role this could have in restoring nature.	Increased risk of drought resulting in pressure on utilities, communities, and the natural environment.
The role of the Local Plan and development in securing opportunities to expand, connect and enhance the green infrastructure network.	Degradation of the natural environment due to human activities such as recreational pressure and use of private transport.
Adoption of higher energy efficiency standards in building regulations to reduce energy use.	Impact of development pressure on the natural environment.

Key Environmental Issues for LP5 to Address

- The pressure for development in the context of climate change; how development should be located and designed to ensure that the effects on climate change are minimised and that developments are resilient to its effects.
- The role of energy efficiency measures and renewables in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and supporting a low / zero carbon economy including within developments.
- Promote modal shift through the design and location of development to help further reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve air quality. Provide infrastructure to support / encourage adoption of this modal shift.
- What broader role the Local Plan can play in addressing Climate Change in the context of national planning policy.
- Safeguarding sensitive sites, habitats, and landscapes from degradation as a result of development pressures. Ensuring plan policies and strategies are consistent with legislative requirements related to the natural environment and wildlife. Discharging the Council's Statutory Biodiversity Duty through plan making.
- Directing development in the context of constraints such as Green Belt, Grey Belt (where identified) and Local Green Space sites. Maximising the delivery of sustainable development in the context of the borough's constraints. Consider whether a review of existing designations is necessary to facilitate sustainable development.
- Secure the provision of new open space and enhancement of the green infrastructure network as part of development proposals which deliver the greatest benefit for nature taking into account the Lancashire Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the need improve access to sources of recreation for residents.
- Conserve (and where possible enhancing) the borough's historic environment through the location and design of new development.

Key Environmental Issues for LP5 to Address

- Ensure that the borough's mineral resources are not adversely affected by development, and that developments are safe and suitable for development in the context of ground stability and pollution.
- Secure high quality designed development which positively contribute to the borough's urban character and promote well designed places which are functional and meet the needs of all without compromising health, wellbeing and public safety.

6. Next Steps

- 6.1 The data and key issues identified through this report forms the baseline conditions underpinning the preparation of LP5. These matters form the key upfront social, economic, and environmental issues to be considered through policy development. Consideration will also be given to national planning policy, government legislation, Pendle Council's corporate priorities, the views of the local community and key stakeholders, and the findings of evidence prepared in support of the Local Plan.
- 6.2 The baseline position will also help inform the Strategic Environmental Assessment a formal, systematic process used to analyse the environmental effects of the Local Plan alongside an appraisal of other key plans and programmes, to assess the cumulative impact, of the policy options under consideration.
- 6.3 Following the Scoping consultation, the Council will carry out and publish the findings of its Gateway 1 self-assessment. This considers whether the Council is in a position to formally commence the 30-month plan-making process. Subject to the outcome of this assessment plan-making will commence in accordance with the Council's published [local plan timetable](#). Further information about the plan-making process and LP5 can be viewed on the Council's website.

Pendle Council
Planning, Building Control and Regulatory Services
Town Hall
Market Street
Nelson
Lancashire
BB9 7LG

Tel: 01282 661661

Email: planningpolicy@pendle.gov.uk

Website: www.pendle.gov.uk/LP5