

## Introduction

Essential skills, including literacy and numeracy, are increasingly crucial for life and work, for business success, and for economic growth. However, the number of adults improving these skills in England has reduced by more than 60% over the past decade as Government investment in skills is set to be £1 billion less in 2025 compared to 2010. As a result, on current trends it would take over 20 years for every adult to get the help they need<sup>1</sup>.

To effectively target support through the Adult Education Budget and new programmes such as the Multiply adult numeracy programme, it is important to understand local need. This briefing presents the results of an England-wide data modelling exercise to map the essential skills of adults aged 16 to 64<sup>2</sup>, thought to be the first of its kind.

The modelling reveals disparities in essential skills levels within local areas which far exceed those between local and combined authorities across the country. This suggests that not only is there a need for an increased focus on and investment in essential skills as part of a national lifelong learning strategy, but that this must be coupled with a laser-like local focus on targeting provision where it is most needed.

## Learning and Work Institute's essential skills model

Our model estimates indicative numbers of 16–64-year-olds with low literacy or numeracy in local areas. It uses England level data from the OECD's adult basic skills survey on the likelihood of having low essential skills by age, qualification and labour market status. It applies this to local data (Labour Force Survey for MCAs and LAs, Census 2011 data for wards) to give indicative numbers and proportions of people with low literacy or numeracy.

In headline terms, there are two core components:

- **Young people.** For 16–24-year-olds, we use data on essential skills levels by qualification level (Below level 2, level 2, level 3 and level 4+).
- **Adults.** For those aged 25+ we look at essential skill levels for those in employment and those not in employment.

We also conduct cross-checks to ensure, for example, that Census 2011 ward-level detail is consistent in terms of levels and rates with Labour Force Survey data at local authority level (which is more up to date but can't be broken down to ward level).

<sup>1</sup> <https://learningandwork.org.uk/resources/research-and-reports/getting-the-basics-right-the-case-for-action-on-adult-basic-skills/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://learningandwork.org.uk/news-and-policy/literacy-numeracy-england-map/>

# Summary of results: England

## Overall summary

Variations between levels of essential skills needs were low when comparing high level local authorities, including Mayoral Combined Authorities and County Councils. The largest variations in levels of essential skills needs were found at lower levels of local authority. For example, the ward with the highest levels of essential skills needs has almost triple the rate of the ward with the lowest levels of essential skills needs. Our analysis also finds that regions with the lowest needs like the South East have some of the highest need wards in England, showing that essential skills need goes beyond the North-South divide in England.

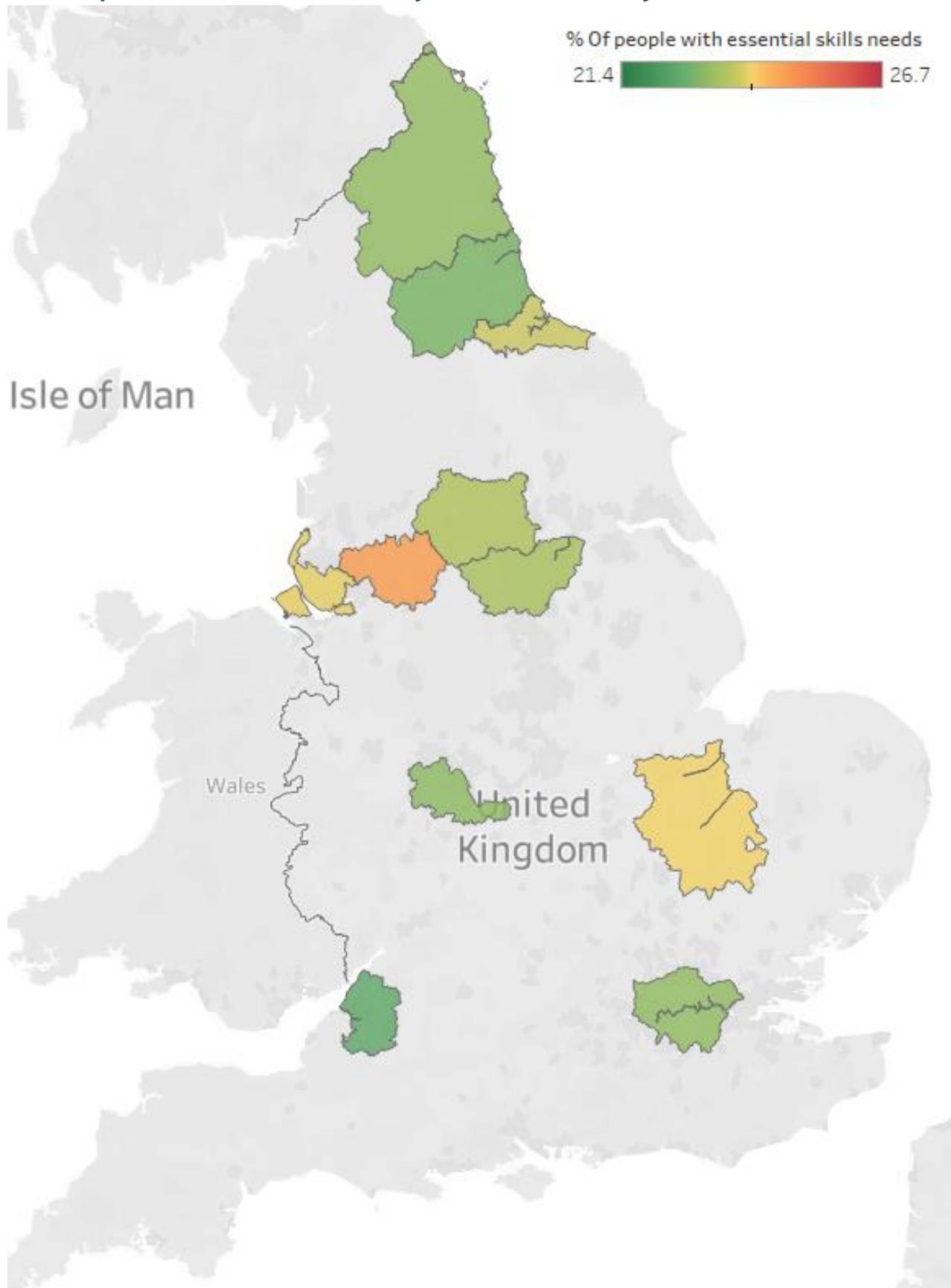
## Mayoral Combined Authorities

Levels of essential skills needs varied only somewhat across the different combined authorities. The top two combined authorities with the highest proportion of people with essential skills needs were both located in the North East Region – these were Tees Valley (24.9%) and North East at (24.6%). Greater Manchester (24.4%) had the third highest proportion of people with essential skills needs when compared to other combined authorities. At the combined authority level, West of England (22.6%), Cambridgeshire & Peterborough (23.1%) and London (23.2%) had the lowest percentage of people with essential skills needs. As a result of its large population, London had the highest number of people with essential skills needs, reflecting its higher population and larger proportion of people with such needs.

**Table 1. Essential skills need by combined authority**

| Mayoral Combined Authorities                     | % with low essential skills | Number with low essential skills |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority | 23.1%                       | 120,466                          |
| Greater Manchester Combined Authority            | 24.4%                       | 444,712                          |
| Liverpool City Region Combined Authority         | 24.4%                       | 233,083                          |
| Greater London Authority                         | 23.2%                       | 1,415,023                        |
| North East Combined Authority                    | 24.6%                       | 173,934                          |
| North of Tyne Combined Authority                 | 24.2%                       | 120,764                          |
| South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority       | 24.1%                       | 211,647                          |
| Tees Valley Combined Authority                   | 24.9%                       | 101,094                          |
| West Midlands Combined Authority                 | 24.1%                       | 442,561                          |
| West of England Combined Authority               | 22.6%                       | 139,312                          |
| West Yorkshire Combined Authority                | 23.6%                       | 342,905                          |

**Figure 1. Map of essential skills needs by combined authority**



## County councils

Levels of essential skills needs also varied only somewhat across the different county councils. The top five county councils with the highest proportion of people with essential skills needs were located in the East Midlands or the North West. Essential skills needs were highest in Lincolnshire, where 24.7% of the adult population had low levels of essential skills. This was followed by Cumbria at 24.4%, and Lancashire at 24.1%.

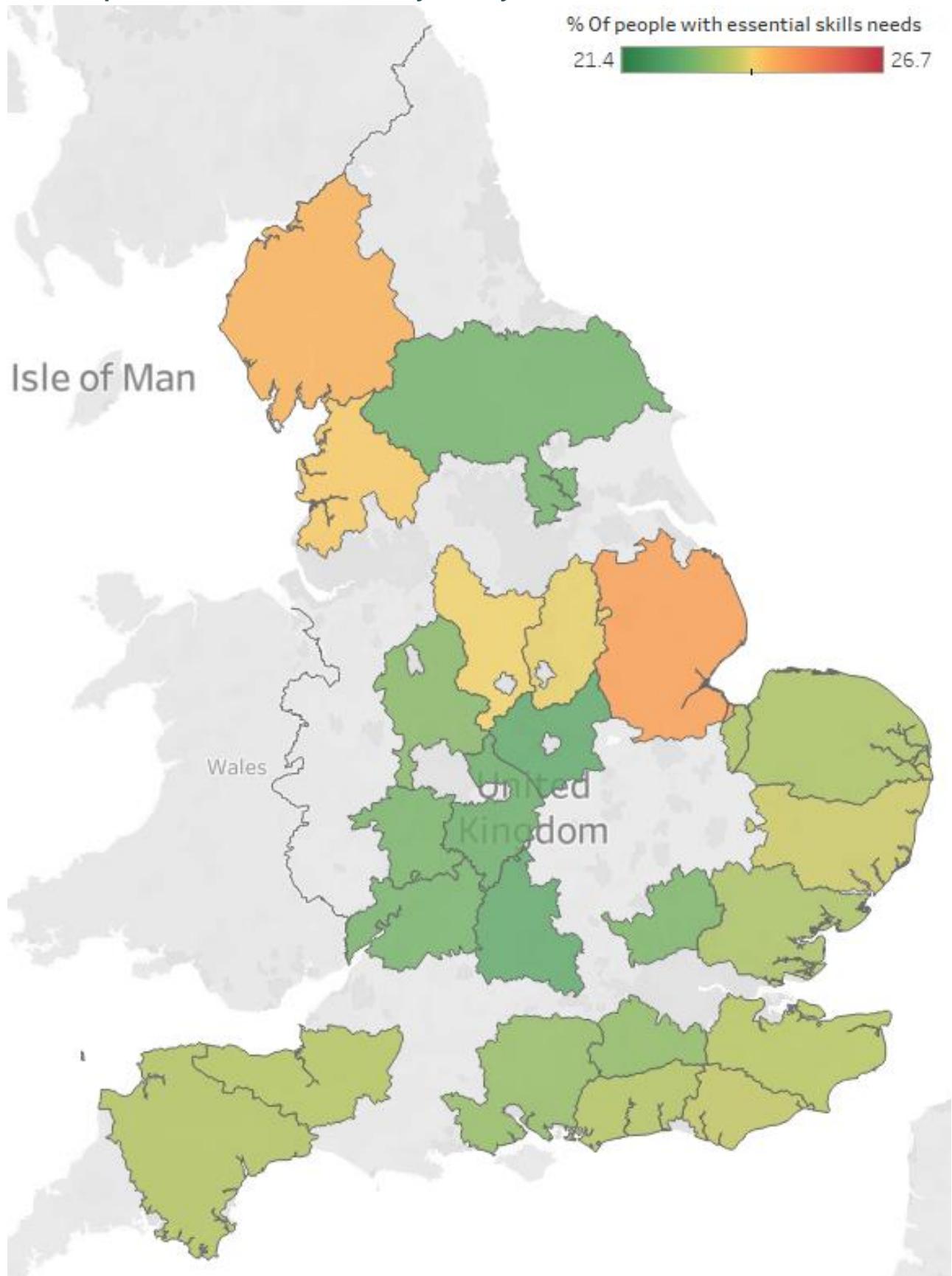
At a county council level, Oxfordshire had the lowest level of essential skills needs, with 22.5% of the adult population estimated to have low levels of essential skills. Leicestershire had the second lowest level of essential skills needs at 22.6%. This was lower than the other county councils in the East Midlands, with Lincolnshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire ranked amongst the five councils with the highest levels of essential skills needs in England.

Owing to its larger population, Kent had the highest number of people with essential skills needs (222,496).

**Table 2: Essential skills needs by county council**

| <b>County Council</b>          | <b>% with low essential skills</b> | <b>Number with low essential skills</b> |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Cumbria County Council         | 24.4%                              | 68,539                                  |
| Derbyshire County Council      | 24.0%                              | 13,896                                  |
| Devon County Council           | 23.5%                              | 105,878                                 |
| East Sussex County Council     | 23.7%                              | 75,466                                  |
| Essex County Council           | 23.4%                              | 210,262                                 |
| Gloucestershire County Council | 22.8%                              | 85,918                                  |
| Hampshire County Council       | 23.2%                              | 187,964                                 |
| Hertfordshire County Council   | 22.9%                              | 169,517                                 |
| Kent County Council            | 23.6%                              | 222,496                                 |
| Lancashire County Council      | 24.1%                              | 172,785                                 |
| Leicestershire County Council  | 22.6%                              | 94,053                                  |
| Lincolnshire County Council    | 24.7%                              | 107,252                                 |
| Norfolk County Council         | 23.4%                              | 122,603                                 |
| North Yorkshire County Council | 22.8%                              | 77,996                                  |
| Nottinghamshire County Council | 24.0%                              | 118,193                                 |
| Oxfordshire County Council     | 22.5%                              | 93,377                                  |
| Somerset County Council        | 23.5%                              | 74,175                                  |
| Staffordshire County Council   | 23.0%                              | 119,419                                 |
| Suffolk County Council         | 23.8%                              | 103,196                                 |
| Surrey County Council          | 23.1%                              | 171,306                                 |
| Warwickshire County Council    | 22.7%                              | 76,824                                  |
| West Sussex County Council     | 23.5%                              | 117,933                                 |
| Worcestershire County Council  | 22.9%                              | 78,208                                  |

Figure 2: Map of essential skills needs by county council



## Districts and Unitary Authorities

The biggest variation in essential skills needs came at a more local level. Three of the ten districts with the highest percentage of essential skills needs were located in the East Midlands region, with two in Lincolnshire and one in Nottinghamshire – East Lindsey in Lincolnshire had the highest levels of essential skills needs in the UK, with 26.7% of the adult population estimated to have low essential skills. Similarly, three of the ten districts with the highest percentage of essential skills needs were located in the North West, with two in Lancashire and one in Cumbria. These are consistent with the findings at the county council level where Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Lancashire, and Cumbria were amongst the five counties with the highest levels of essential skills needs.

Essential skills needs in Gosport (26.3%) were particularly high when compared to Hampshire council as a whole, where 23.2% of the population were estimated to have low essential skills needs.

**Table 3: Districts and Unitary Authorities with the highest levels of essential skills needs**

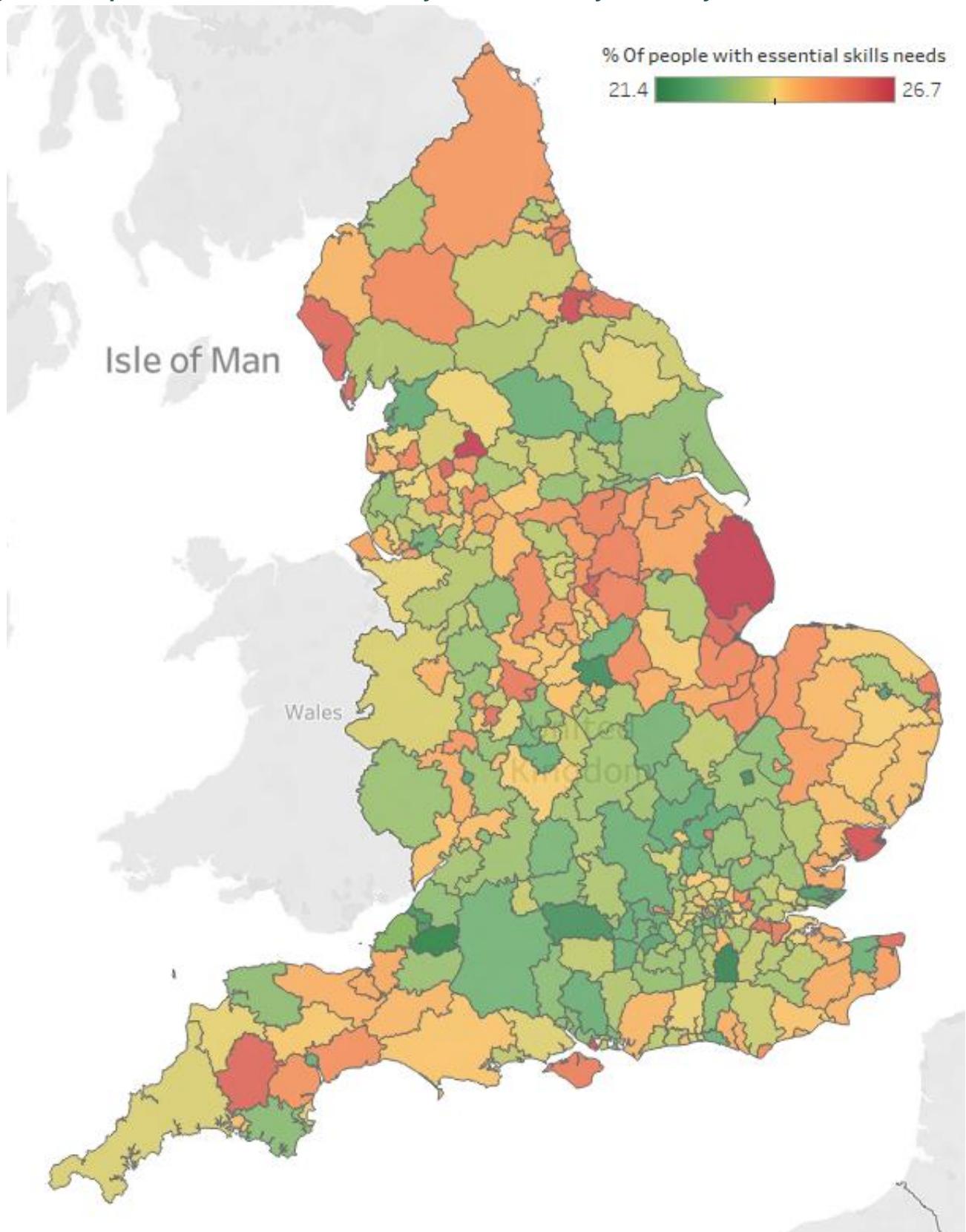
| County/UA       | Local Authority  | People with low essential skills | % with low essential skills |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Lincolnshire    | East Lindsey     | 19,356                           | 26.7                        |
| Lancashire      | Pendle           | 15,501                           | 26.6                        |
| Tees Valley     | Stockton-on-Tees | 25,450                           | 26.4                        |
| Essex           | Tendring         | 20,746                           | 26.3                        |
| Hampshire       | Gosport          | 13,891                           | 26.3                        |
| Nottinghamshire | Mansfield        | 17,375                           | 26.1                        |
| Lancashire      | Hyndburn         | 14,028                           | 26.0                        |
| Lincolnshire    | Boston           | 10,716                           | 26.0                        |
| Devon           | West Devon       | 7,878                            | 26.0                        |
| Cumbria         | Copeland         | 11,358                           | 26.0                        |

Three of the ten districts with the lowest percentage of essential skills needs are located in the South East region. Two of these districts (Tandridge and Surrey Heath) are a part of Surrey County Council. Another three districts with the lowest percentage of essential skills needs were located in the East. In total, **eight of the ten districts with the lowest percentage of essential skills needs were located in the South of England**. West Berkshire was the unitary authority with the lowest level of essential skills needs (21.8%).

**Table 4: Districts and Unitary Authorities with the lowest levels of essential skills needs**

| County/UA                     | Local Authority              | People with low essential skills | % with low essential skills |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Surrey                        | Tandridge                    | 11,020                           | 21.4                        |
| Leicestershire                | Charnwood                    | 26,075                           | 21.7                        |
| Cambridgeshire & Peterborough | Cambridge                    | 18,651                           | 21.7                        |
| Bath and North East Somerset  | Bath and North East Somerset | 25,464                           | 21.8                        |
| West Berkshire                | West Berkshire               | 20,084                           | 21.8                        |
| Essex                         | Rochford                     | 11,351                           | 22.0                        |
| Surrey                        | Surrey Heath                 | 11,449                           | 22.2                        |
| Worcestershire                | Worcester                    | 15,207                           | 22.2                        |
| Bristol                       | Bristol                      | 70,191                           | 22.2                        |
| Norfolk                       | Norwich                      | 22,053                           | 22.3                        |

Figure 3: Map of essential skills needs by district/unitary authority



**Table 5: Essential skills needs by district/unitary authority**

| CA / UA / COUNTY                                 | Local Authority                     | People | %    | CA / UA / COUNTY | Local Authority        | People | %    |
|--|-------------------------------------|--------|------|------------------|------------------------|--------|------|
| Bath and North East Somerset                     | Bath and North East Somerset        | 25,464 | 21.8 | London           | Ealing                 | 54,944 | 23.8 |
| Bedford  | Bedford                             | 23,185 | 22.8 |                  | Enfield                | 55,140 | 24.0 |
| Blackburn with Darwen                            | Blackburn with Darwen               | 21,994 | 24.7 |                  | Greenwich              | 49,073 | 24.1 |
| Blackpool  | Blackpool                           | 20,960 | 25.3 |                  | Hackney                | 48,467 | 22.6 |
| Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole              | Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole | 56,493 | 23.6 |                  | Hammersmith and Fulham | 29,773 | 23.0 |
| Bracknell Forest                                 | Bracknell Forest                    | 17,295 | 22.7 |                  | Haringey               | 47,277 | 24.1 |
| Brighton and Hove                                | Brighton and Hove                   | 46,825 | 22.6 |                  | Harrow                 | 37,368 | 23.6 |
| Bristol  | Bristol                             | 70,191 | 22.2 |                  | Havering               | 38,347 | 23.2 |
| Buckinghamshire                                  | Buckinghamshire                     | 72,710 | 22.6 |                  | Hillingdon             | 48,811 | 23.6 |
| Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority | Cambridge                           | 18,651 | 21.7 |                  | Hounslow               | 43,379 | 24.0 |
|  | East Cambridgeshire                 | 12,162 | 23.0 |                  | Islington              | 42,931 | 23.1 |
|  | Fenland                             | 15,209 | 25.3 |                  | Kensington and Chelsea | 25,712 | 24.7 |
|  | Huntingdonshire                     | 26,378 | 23.6 |                  | Kingston upon Thames   | 26,963 | 22.5 |
|  | Peterborough                        | 31,781 | 24.6 |                  | Lambeth                | 57,437 | 22.7 |
|  | South Cambridgeshire                | 21,618 | 23.2 |                  | Lewisham               | 52,837 | 23.6 |
| Central Bedfordshire                             | Central Bedfordshire                | 40,248 | 22.4 |                  | Merton                 | 32,889 | 23.7 |
| Cheshire East                                    | Cheshire East                       | 52,145 | 23.5 |                  | Newham                 | 60,876 | 24.1 |
| Cheshire West and Chester                        | Cheshire West and Chester           | 48,963 | 24.0 |                  | Redbridge              | 49,970 | 25.2 |
| Cornwall   | Cornwall                            | 77,015 | 23.9 |                  | Richmond upon Thames   | 29,630 | 23.2 |
| Cumbria  | Allerdale                           | 13,705 | 24.5 |                  | Southwark              | 54,561 | 23.3 |
|  | Barrow-in-Furness                   | 10,121 | 26.0 |                  | Sutton                 | 31,211 | 23.3 |
|  | Carlisle                            | 15,167 | 23.4 |                  | Tower Hamlets          | 56,350 | 23.6 |
|  | Copeland                            | 11,358 | 26.0 |                  | Waltham Forest         | 47,012 | 24.2 |
|  | Eden                                | 8,115  | 25.3 |                  | Wandsworth             | 54,749 | 22.7 |
|  | South Lakeland                      | 13,315 | 23.5 |                  | Westminster            | 36,241 | 23.5 |
| Derby  | Derby                               | 38,626 | 24.6 | Luton            | Luton                  | 33,350 | 24.1 |
| Derbyshire                                       | Amber Valley                        | 19,032 | 24.9 | Medway           | Medway                 | 42,920 | 24.0 |
|  | Bolsover                            | 12,887 | 25.1 | Milton Keynes    | Milton Keynes          | 39,862 | 23.3 |

| CA / UA / COUNTY         | Local Authority          | People | %    | CA / UA / COUNTY              | Local Authority              | People | %    |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------|------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|--------|------|
|                          | Chesterfield             | 15,975 | 23.9 | Norfolk                       | Breckland                    | 19,348 | 24.4 |
|                          | Derbyshire Dales         | 10,066 | 25.2 |                               | Broadland                    | 17,446 | 23.4 |
|                          | Erewash                  | 17,572 | 24.7 |                               | Great Yarmouth               | 14,436 | 25.5 |
|                          | High Peak                | 14,103 | 24.4 |                               | King's Lynn and West Norfolk | 20,727 | 25.1 |
|                          | North East Derbyshire    | 13,944 | 23.9 |                               | North Norfolk                | 12,820 | 24.2 |
|                          | South Derbyshire         | 15,432 | 24.2 |                               | Norwich                      | 22,053 | 22.3 |
| Devon                    | East Devon               | 19,786 | 25.1 |                               | South Norfolk                | 20,162 | 24.2 |
|                          | Exeter                   | 20,825 | 22.6 | North East Lincolnshire       | North East Lincolnshire      | 22,506 | 24.5 |
|                          | Mid Devon                | 11,552 | 24.2 | North Lincolnshire            | North Lincolnshire           | 25,042 | 24.9 |
|                          | North Devon              | 11,912 | 23.0 | North Northamptonshire        | North Northamptonshire       | 47,552 | 22.7 |
|                          | South Hams               | 10,380 | 23.0 | North Somerset                | North Somerset               | 28,640 | 23.2 |
|                          | Teignbridge              | 18,831 | 25.0 | North Yorkshire               | Craven                       | 8,315  | 24.0 |
|                          | Torridge                 | 9,016  | 24.0 |                               | Hambleton                    | 12,097 | 23.6 |
|                          | West Devon               | 7,878  | 26.0 |                               | Harrogate                    | 22,549 | 22.5 |
| Dorset                   | Dorset                   | 48,694 | 24.2 |                               | Richmondshire                | 6,798  | 23.5 |
| East Riding of Yorkshire | East Riding of Yorkshire | 43,464 | 23.0 |                               | Ryedale                      | 7,330  | 24.0 |
| East Sussex              | Eastbourne               | 14,895 | 25.2 |                               | Scarborough                  | 14,500 | 23.8 |
|                          | Hastings                 | 13,582 | 24.5 |                               | Selby                        | 12,416 | 23.5 |
|                          | Lewes                    | 15,315 | 24.5 | Nottingham                    | Nottingham                   | 52,670 | 23.9 |
|                          | Rother                   | 12,585 | 24.2 |                               | Ashfield                     | 18,969 | 24.4 |
|                          | Wealden                  | 21,821 | 23.8 |                               | Bassetlaw                    | 18,366 | 25.5 |
|                          | Basildon                 | 29,102 | 24.0 |                               | Broxtowe                     | 16,678 | 24.1 |
| Essex                    | Braintree                | 22,228 | 23.5 |                               | Gedling                      | 18,487 | 24.4 |
|                          | Brentwood                | 12,085 | 23.6 |                               | Mansfield                    | 17,375 | 26.1 |
|                          | Castle Point             | 12,564 | 23.6 |                               | Newark and Sherwood          | 19,054 | 25.5 |
|                          | Chelmsford               | 25,064 | 23.3 |                               | Rushcliffe                   | 16,151 | 22.6 |
|                          | Colchester               | 30,244 | 24.4 | North East Combined Authority | County Durham                | 75,557 | 23.8 |
|                          | Epping Forest            | 19,425 | 23.0 |                               | Gateshead                    | 30,791 | 24.5 |

| CA / UA / COUNTY                      | Local Authority       | People | %    | CA / UA / COUNTY                   | Local Authority           | People | %    |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------|------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
|                                       | Harlow                | 13,287 | 24.6 | North of Tyne Combined Authority   | South Tyneside            | 45,872 | 23.4 |
|                                       | Maldon                | 8,948  | 24.7 |                                    | Sunderland                | 28,876 | 23.8 |
|                                       | Rochford              | 11,351 | 22.0 |                                    | Newcastle Upon Tyne       | 44,494 | 25.0 |
|                                       | Tendring              | 20,746 | 26.3 |                                    | North Tyneside            | 21,724 | 25.0 |
|                                       | Uttlesford            | 12,731 | 23.2 |                                    | Northumberland            | 43,670 | 25.3 |
| Gloucestershire                       | Cheltenham            | 16,648 | 23.0 | Oxfordshire                        | Cherwell                  | 20,975 | 23.3 |
|                                       | Cotswold              | 11,568 | 23.2 |                                    | Oxford                    | 25,388 | 23.8 |
|                                       | Forest of Dean        | 12,545 | 24.3 |                                    | South Oxfordshire         | 19,671 | 23.4 |
|                                       | Gloucester            | 19,848 | 23.7 |                                    | Vale of White Horse       | 18,093 | 22.9 |
|                                       | Stroud                | 17,667 | 23.3 |                                    | West Oxfordshire          | 16,140 | 22.8 |
|                                       | Tewkesbury            | 13,264 | 24.3 | Plymouth                           | Plymouth                  | 39,209 | 24.3 |
| Greater Manchester Combined Authority | Bolton                | 43,427 | 25.1 | Reading                            | Reading                   | 25,275 | 23.2 |
|                                       | Bury                  | 27,323 | 23.9 | Rutland                            | Rutland                   | 4,848  | 24.6 |
|                                       | Manchester            | 94,043 | 24.4 | South Yorkshire Combined Authority | Barnsley                  | 38,359 | 25.0 |
|                                       | Oldham                | 34,654 | 24.7 |                                    | Doncaster                 | 48,594 | 25.4 |
|                                       | Rochdale              | 34,101 | 25.4 |                                    | Rotherham                 | 40,104 | 24.9 |
|                                       | Salford               | 39,063 | 24.2 |                                    | Sheffield                 | 90,733 | 23.6 |
|                                       | Stockport             | 40,747 | 23.7 | Shropshire                         | Shropshire                | 42,748 | 23.9 |
|                                       | Tameside              | 34,256 | 24.8 | Slough                             | Slough                    | 23,771 | 25.1 |
|                                       | Trafford              | 33,166 | 23.2 | Somerset                           | Mendip                    | 16,358 | 23.2 |
|                                       | Wigan                 | 47,303 | 23.8 |                                    | Sedgemoor                 | 17,902 | 24.7 |
| Hampshire                             | Basingstoke and Deane | 26,535 | 23.6 |                                    | Somerset West and Taunton | 21,303 | 24.5 |
|                                       | East Hampshire        | 16,766 | 23.5 |                                    | South Somerset            | 23,426 | 24.5 |
|                                       | Eastleigh             | 17,768 | 22.9 | South Gloucestershire              | South Gloucestershire     | 41,494 | 23.0 |
|                                       | Fareham               | 16,288 | 23.0 | Southend-on-Sea                    | Southend-on-Sea           | 25,660 | 23.3 |
|                                       | Gosport               | 13,891 | 26.3 | Staffordshire                      | Cannock Chase             | 15,517 | 24.2 |
|                                       | Hart                  | 12,866 | 22.5 |                                    | East Staffordshire        | 17,689 | 24.3 |
|                                       | Havant                | 17,662 | 22.8 |                                    | Lichfield                 | 15,014 | 25.6 |
|                                       | Isle of Wight         | 19,424 | 25.5 |                                    | Newcastle-under-Lyme      | 18,817 | 23.5 |
|                                       | New Forest            | 23,017 | 23.9 |                                    | South Staffordshire       | 14,992 | 23.1 |

| CA / UA / COUNTY            | Local Authority             | People | %    | CA / UA / COUNTY   | Local Authority         | People | %    |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------|------|--------------------|-------------------------|--------|------|
|                             | Portsmouth                  | 33,817 | 23.7 |                    | Stafford                | 18,892 | 23.2 |
|                             | Rushmoor                    | 13,634 | 23.3 |                    | Staffordshire Moorlands | 13,486 | 23.0 |
|                             | Southampton                 | 40,711 | 23.1 |                    | Tamworth                | 11,914 | 25.6 |
|                             | Test Valley                 | 17,402 | 23.0 |                    | Stoke-on-Trent          | 36,878 | 23.8 |
|                             | Winchester                  | 17,060 | 22.5 |                    | Babergh                 | 13,394 | 24.3 |
| Herefordshire               | Herefordshire               | 25,281 | 23.2 | Suffolk            | East Suffolk            | 32,165 | 24.3 |
|                             | Broxbourne                  | 13,538 | 22.9 |                    | Ipswich                 | 20,752 | 23.6 |
|                             | Dacorum                     | 23,822 | 23.8 |                    | Mid Suffolk             | 14,222 | 24.3 |
|                             | East Hertfordshire          | 21,586 | 23.2 |                    | West Suffolk            | 26,280 | 24.9 |
|                             | Hertsmere                   | 14,723 | 24.1 |                    | Elmbridge               | 20,045 | 23.4 |
|                             | North Hertfordshire         | 19,873 | 22.4 |                    | Epsom and Ewell         | 11,273 | 23.3 |
|                             | St Albans                   | 21,401 | 22.5 |                    | Guildford               | 22,559 | 23.2 |
|                             | Stevenage                   | 14,474 | 25.6 |                    | Mole Valley             | 12,175 | 23.2 |
|                             | Three Rivers                | 13,417 | 23.0 |                    | Reigate and Banstead    | 21,659 | 23.5 |
|                             | Watford                     | 15,605 | 23.9 |                    | Runnymede               | 13,884 | 22.8 |
|                             | Welwyn Hatfield             | 19,570 | 23.0 |                    | Spelthorne              | 15,213 | 23.9 |
|                             | Ashford                     | 18,727 | 24.6 |                    | Surrey Heath            | 11,449 | 22.2 |
|                             | Canterbury                  | 23,694 | 22.6 |                    | Tandridge               | 11,020 | 21.4 |
| Kent                        | Dartford                    | 18,203 | 25.7 |                    | Waverley                | 16,920 | 23.1 |
|                             | Dover                       | 16,432 | 24.9 |                    | Woking                  | 15,093 | 23.5 |
|                             | Folkestone and Hythe        | 18,619 | 25.5 | Swindon            | Swindon                 | 32,941 | 23.7 |
|                             | Gravesham                   | 24,983 | 23.6 |                    | Darlington              | 13,143 | 24.5 |
|                             | Maidstone                   | 17,829 | 23.7 |                    | Hartlepool              | 12,873 | 24.8 |
|                             | Sevenoaks                   | 16,097 | 24.5 |                    | Middlesbrough           | 20,525 | 25.2 |
|                             | Swale                       | 22,496 | 24.5 |                    | Redcar and Cleveland    | 18,239 | 25.5 |
|                             | Thanet                      | 22,162 | 25.9 |                    | Stockton-on-Tees        | 25,450 | 26.4 |
|                             | Tonbridge and Malling       | 18,394 | 23.6 | Telford and Wrekin | Telford and Wrekin      | 26,915 | 24.5 |
|                             | Tunbridge Wells             | 16,323 | 23.3 |                    | Thurrock                | 25,913 | 23.7 |
| Kingston upon Hull, City of | Kingston upon Hull, City of | 39,318 | 23.8 | Torbay             | Torbay                  | 17,510 | 24.0 |

| CA / UA / COUNTY                         | Local Authority           | People | %    | CA / UA / COUNTY                   | Local Authority              | People  | %    |
|--|---------------------------|--------|------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------|------|
| Lancashire                               | Burnley                   | 12,959 | 25.1 | Warwickshire                       | Warrington                   | 29,308  | 22.8 |
|  | Chorley                   | 17,176 | 24.0 |                                    | North Warwickshire           | 8,851   | 23.0 |
|  | Fylde                     | 10,406 | 24.4 |                                    | Nuneaton and Bedworth        | 18,765  | 23.3 |
|  | Hyndburn                  | 14,028 | 26.0 |                                    | Rugby                        | 15,709  | 23.7 |
|  | Lancaster                 | 19,808 | 22.5 |                                    | Stratford-on-Avon            | 16,930  | 24.1 |
|  | Pendle                    | 15,501 | 26.6 |                                    | Warwick                      | 20,245  | 22.6 |
|  | Preston                   | 23,252 | 25.4 |                                    | West Berkshire               | 20,084  | 21.8 |
|  | Ribble Valley             | 8,191  | 23.9 |                                    | West Northamptonshire        | 56,148  | 23.3 |
|  | Rossendale                | 10,660 | 24.1 | West of England Combined Authority | Bath and North East Somerset | 27,003  | 22.5 |
|  | South Ribble              | 16,027 | 24.0 |                                    | Bristol, City of             | 73,801  | 22.8 |
|  | West Lancashire           | 16,722 | 23.2 |                                    | South Gloucestershire        | 41,167  | 23.0 |
|  | Wyre                      | 14,144 | 24.1 |                                    | Adur                         | 8,958   | 23.8 |
| Liverpool City Region Combined Authority | Halton                    | 19,088 | 24.8 | West Sussex                        | Arun                         | 21,351  | 23.6 |
|  | Knowsley                  | 21,937 | 24.0 |                                    | Chichester                   | 16,424  | 24.4 |
|  | Liverpool                 | 80,301 | 24.4 |                                    | Crawley                      | 17,442  | 23.5 |
|  | Sefton                    | 36,080 | 23.4 |                                    | Horsham                      | 19,925  | 24.0 |
|  | St Helens                 | 25,309 | 23.6 |                                    | Mid Sussex                   | 20,553  | 23.0 |
|  | Wirral                    | 46,595 | 24.7 |                                    | Worthing                     | 15,942  | 24.4 |
| Leicester                                | Leicester                 | 56,248 | 24.3 | West Yorkshire Combined Authority  | Bradford                     | 76,834  | 23.8 |
| Leicestershire                           | Blaby                     | 13,847 | 23.5 |                                    | Calderdale                   | 29,285  | 23.4 |
|  | Charnwood                 | 26,075 | 21.7 |                                    | Kirklees                     | 65,021  | 24.2 |
|  | Harborough                | 12,493 | 23.4 |                                    | Leeds                        | 116,361 | 23.8 |
|  | Hinckley and Bosworth     | 16,915 | 24.3 |                                    | Wakefield                    | 47,582  | 23.2 |
|  | Melton                    | 7,113  | 25.2 |                                    | Wiltshire                    | 65,535  | 22.7 |
|  | North West Leicestershire | 14,972 | 24.2 |                                    | Windsor and Maidenhead       | 20,481  | 22.5 |
| Lincolnshire                             | Oadby and Wigston         | 7,326  | 22.8 | West Midlands Combined Authority   | Birmingham                   | 175,700 | 24.0 |
|  | Boston                    | 10,716 | 26.0 |                                    | Coventry                     | 57,874  | 23.7 |
|  | East Lindsey              | 19,356 | 26.7 |                                    | Dudley                       | 46,044  | 24.2 |

| CA / UA / COUNTY | Local Authority      | People | %    | CA / UA / COUNTY | Local Authority | People | %    |
|------------------|----------------------|--------|------|------------------|-----------------|--------|------|
|                  | Lincoln              | 14,671 | 22.6 |                  | Sandwell        | 52,401 | 25.7 |
|                  | North Kesteven       | 15,467 | 23.5 |                  | Solihull        | 29,044 | 22.7 |
|                  | South Holland        | 14,288 | 25.3 |                  | Walsall         | 40,730 | 23.7 |
|                  | South Kesteven       | 20,788 | 24.2 |                  | Wolverhampton   | 30,578 | 24.9 |
|                  | West Lindsey         | 13,833 | 24.7 |                  | Wokingham       | 22,588 | 22.5 |
| London           | Barking and Dagenham | 36,275 | 25.4 | Worcestershire   | Bromsgrove      | 13,306 | 23.1 |
|                  | Barnet               | 63,236 | 23.9 |                  | Malvern Hills   | 10,769 | 24.6 |
|                  | Bexley               | 39,001 | 23.8 |                  | Redditch        | 12,624 | 24.3 |
|                  | Brent                | 54,657 | 24.3 |                  | Worcester       | 15,207 | 22.2 |
|                  | Bromley              | 49,414 | 23.4 |                  | Wychavon        | 16,971 | 23.2 |
|                  | Camden               | 43,477 | 23.6 |                  | Wyre Forest     | 14,560 | 25.0 |
|                  | Croydon              | 61,263 | 24.4 |                  | York            | 30,286 | 22.5 |

## Wards

By far the largest variation in essential skills needs come at ward level, showing the importance of effectively targeting support to pockets of greatest need across the area. **While districts and combined authorities in the South of England were found to have the lowest levels of essential skills needs nationally, 16 of the 20 wards with the highest levels of essential skills needs were based in this region.** This suggests that pockets with high levels of essential skills needs exist even in areas with an overall low level of need.

While the Greater London Authority had the third lowest percentage of people with essential skills needs amongst the combined authorities, **10 of the 20 wards with the highest essential skills needs were based in the GLA.** Six of these wards were based in the London borough of Tower Hamlets, where over a third of the population in each of these wards estimated to have low levels of essential skills needs. This was far higher than the overall average estimate for Tower Hamlets (23.6%), suggesting that large disparities exist even within boroughs. Similarly, essential skills needs in the Heslington (38.5%) and Loughborough Ashby (35.3%) wards were far higher than the overall essential skills needs in their respective local authority (22.5% in York and 21.2% in Charnwood).

**Table 6: Wards with the highest levels of essential skills needs**

| MCA / UA / Council | Local Authority              | Ward                           | % with low essential skills |
|--------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| York               | York                         | Heslington                     | 38.5                        |
| Essex              | Colchester                   | Wivenhoe Cross                 | 38.0                        |
| Devon              | Exeter                       | Duryard                        | 37.2                        |
| Surrey             | Runnymede                    | Englefield Green East          | 36.6                        |
| GLA                | Tower Hamlets                | East India and Lansbury        | 36.2                        |
| GLA                | Camden                       | King's Cross                   | 35.4                        |
| Leicestershire     | Charnwood                    | Loughborough Ashby             | 35.3                        |
| Kent               | Canterbury                   | Blean Forest                   | 34.9                        |
| Lancashire         | Hyndburn                     | Central                        | 34.8                        |
| Essex              | Colchester                   | St Andrew's                    | 34.8                        |
| GLA                | Tower Hamlets                | Bromley-by-Bow                 | 34.6                        |
| WECA               | Bath and North East Somerset | Bathwick                       | 34.5                        |
| GLA                | Tower Hamlets                | St Dunstan's and Stepney Green | 34.2                        |

| MCA / UA / Council | Local Authority | Ward                       | % with low essential skills |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| GLA                | Haringey        | Northumberland Park        | 33.8                        |
| GLA                | Hackney         | Springfield                | 33.7                        |
| GLA                | Tower Hamlets   | Mile End East              | 33.6                        |
| GLA                | Tower Hamlets   | Mile End and Globe Town    | 33.6                        |
| GLA                | Camden          | St Pancras and Somers Town | 33.6                        |
| Lancashire         | Pendle          | Whitefield                 | 33.5                        |
| GLA                | Tower Hamlets   | Bethnal Green South        | 33.4                        |

Seven of the twenty wards with the lowest levels of essential skills needs were based in the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority, with three based in Cambridge, three based in South Cambridgeshire, and one based in East Cambridgeshire. This was largely consistent with findings at combined authority level, where Cambridgeshire & Peterborough had the second lowest essential skills needs amongst the combined authorities.

**While the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) had the third highest percentage of essential skills needs amongst the combined authorities, six of the twenty wards in England with the lowest percentage of essential skills needs were based in the GMCA.** Three of these wards were based in Trafford with another three based in Manchester. This suggests that pockets with low essential skills needs exist even in areas with high essential skills needs.

**Table 7: Wards with the lowest levels of essential skills needs**

| MCA / UA / Council    | Local Authority       | Ward                       | % with low essential skills |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| GMCA                  | Manchester            | Didsbury West              | 15.2                        |
| GMCA                  | Manchester            | Chorlton                   | 15.5                        |
| GMCA                  | Trafford              | Hale Central               | 15.9                        |
| CPCA                  | Cambridge             | Romsey                     | 16.3                        |
| CPCA                  | Cambridge             | West Chesterton            | 16.3                        |
| GMCA                  | Trafford              | Priory                     | 16.7                        |
| CPCA                  | South Cambridgeshire  | Longstanton                | 16.9                        |
| GMCA                  | Trafford              | Altrincham                 | 17.0                        |
| WMCA                  | Solihull              | Blythe                     | 17.0                        |
| WMCA                  | Solihull              | Dorridge and Hockley Heath | 17.1                        |
| GMCA                  | Manchester            | Didsbury East              | 17.2                        |
| CPCA                  | Cambridge             | Cherry Hinton              | 17.3                        |
| CPCA                  | South Cambridgeshire  | Bourn                      | 17.3                        |
| WMCA                  | Birmingham            | Sutton Vesey               | 17.3                        |
| CPCA                  | East Cambridgeshire   | Bottisham                  | 17.3                        |
| WMCA                  | Solihull              | Knowle                     | 17.4                        |
| WMCA                  | Solihull              | St Alphege                 | 17.4                        |
| WMCA                  | Solihull              | Meriden                    | 17.4                        |
| Blackburn with Darwen | Blackburn with Darwen | Fernhurst                  | 17.5                        |
| CPCA                  | South Cambridgeshire  | Whittlesford               | 17.5                        |

Table 8 shows the 10 wards with the highest and lowest essential skills needs, matched to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). IMD rank was identified for all constituent Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) within each ward, and then averaged. IMD rank goes from 1 (most deprived) to 32,844 (least deprived).

The table shows little association between IMD rank and levels of skills needs. Although wards with high skills needs are slightly more likely to have a high level of deprivation, but there are also many wards with high skills needs and low levels of deprivation – and vice versa.

**Table 8: Wards with highest and lowest essential skills needs, and Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) data**

| Ward                       | Local authority      | Percentage with essential skills needs | Need | IMD ward average rank (1 highest deprivation) |
|----------------------------|----------------------|--|------|---|
| Heslington                 | York                 | 38.5                                   | High | 29526   |
| Wivenhoe Cross             | Colchester           | 38.0                                   | High | 28225   |
| Duryard                    | Exeter               | 37.2                                   | High | 21822   |
| Englefield Green East      | Runnymede            | 36.6                                   | High | 30835   |
| East India and Lansbury    | Tower Hamlets        | 36.2                                   | High | 4356  |
| King's Cross               | Camden               | 35.4                                   | High | 12046   |
| Loughborough Ashby         | Charnwood            | 35.3                                   | High | 17096   |
| Blean Forest               | Canterbury           | 34.9                                   | High | 28308   |
| Central                    | Hyndburn             | 34.8                                   | High | 869   |
| St Andrew's                | Colchester           | 34.8                                   | High | 8999  |
| Dorridge and Hockley Heath | Solihull             | 17.1                                   | Low  | 30352   |
| Blythe                     | Solihull             | 17.0                                   | Low  | 30007   |
| Altrincham                 | Trafford             | 17.0                                   | Low  | 25726   |
| Longstanton                | South Cambridgeshire | 16.9                                   | Low  | 29797   |
| Priory                     | Trafford             | 16.7                                   | Low  | 23506   |
| West Chesterton            | Cambridge            | 16.3                                   | Low  | 25215   |
| Romsey                     | Cambridge            | 16.3                                   | Low  | 21021   |
| Hale Central               | Trafford             | 15.9                                   | Low  | 28255   |
| Chorlton                   | Manchester           | 15.5                                   | Low  | 17427   |
| Didsbury West              | Manchester           | 15.2                                   | Low  | 18800   |