



The Best Places to Live and Work – 2017 update

A report for Royal Mail

February 2017

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Results for England

Areas around large northern cities and along the south coast enjoy best work-life balance

- In early 2015, Royal Mail commissioned Cebr to conduct analysis to identify the postcodes with the best work-life balance in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.
- Using the most recent data available we have now updated that analysis in order to see how the picture has changed over the past two years.
- In England, the Wirral postcode district Bebington (CH63) has held onto its top spot, thanks to reasonable working hours, good schools, and a strong safety record.
- The East of England area of Ipswich (IP5) again makes an appearance in the top 10, this time coming in seventh down from second place in 2015. Norwich (NR6), also in the East of England, is in second place. Nearby NR8, which was in fourth place at the time of the 2015 ranking has slipped from the top 10 list.
- Unlike in the previous rankings, a number of southern areas e.g. Bournemouth (BH18), East Cowes (PO32) and Eastleigh (SO53) appear in the top 10. Many southern postcodes were hurt by less affordable housing and longer working hours, but good schools and lower unemployment helped boost overall performance.
- A number of areas which are close to, but not within larger city centres show a high overall score. This is true for M33 (Sale, Greater Manchester), LS18 (Horsforth, Leeds) and S18 (Dronfield, south of Sheffield).

| Rank | Postcode District |
|------|--------------------|
| 1 | CH63 - Bebington |
| 2 | NR6 - Norwich |
| 3 | BH18 - Bournemouth |
| 4 | M33 - Sale |
| 5 | PO32 - East Cowes |
| 6 | SO53 - Eastleigh |
| 7 | IP5 - Ipswich |
| 8 | LS18 - Horsforth |
| 9 | S18 - Dronfield |
| 10 | RG6 - Reading |

Source: Cebr analysis

Results for Scotland

Glasgow suburbs dominate the Scottish postcode district ranking

- The Scottish areas which offer the best work-life balance are largely located in the vicinity of Glasgow. These postcode districts see relatively few people working long hours, have shorter commute times while offering good access to services, a strong education system and a safe environment.
- Unlike in 2015, no Edinburgh area post code districts made it into the top 10. This was partially due to housing affordability issues as well as a relatively weaker crime score.
- HS1 (Stornoway) and KW15 (Kirkwall), both located on islands in the far north of Scotland are newcomers to the ranking this year thanks to a good work-life balance and low unemployment rate.

| Rank | Postcode District |
|------|-------------------------|
| 1 | G78 - Neilston-Barrhead |
| 2 | G64 - Bishopbriggs |
| 3 | G66 - Lenzie |
| 4 | G76 - Clarkston |
| 5 | G62 – Milngavie |
| 6 | G46 - Thornliebank |
| 7 | G61 – Bearsden |
| 8 | G77 – Newton Mearns |
| 9 | HS1 – Stornoway |
| 10 | KW15 - Kirkwall |

Source: Cebr analysis

Results for Wales

Best places to live and work in Wales concentrated around Cardiff and Swansea

- Among the 2017 list of the top Welsh postcode districts to live and work in, two also made the list in 2015 – CF24 (East Cardiff) and SA6 (Morrison).
- The majority of the top 10 areas are concentrated around the larger cities of Swansea (SA1, SA5, SA6) and Cardiff (CF63, CF24, CF3, CF62, CF5, CF11).
- These areas benefit from reasonable working hours and shorter work commutes, while also enjoying access to good schools.
- Some smaller towns such as Wrexham (LL11) and areas around Snowdonia National Park (LL55) appeared in the 2015 ranking, but are no longer on the top 10 list.
- Pembroke Dock (SA72), near the coast completes the 2017 ranking.

| Rank | Postcode District |
|------|------------------------|
| 1 | CF63 - Barry |
| 2 | CF24 – Cardiff central |
| 3 | SA1- Swansea |
| 4 | SA5 – Swansea |
| 5 | SA72- Pembroke Dock |
| 6 | CF3 - Cardiff south |
| 7 | CF62 - Barry |
| 8 | CF5 – Cardiff west |
| 9 | CF11 - Cardiff central |
| 10 | SA6 - Morrison |

Source: Cebr analysis

Results for Northern Ireland

Areas near Belfast and Craigavon offer best work-life balance in Northern Ireland

- The top 5 postcode districts in the Northern Ireland table all appeared in the 2015 ranking, however in a different order.
- BT65 has held onto its top spot thanks to a good work-life balance.
- The areas on the top 5 list are clustered around Belfast or Craigavon.
- These parts of Northern Ireland benefit from easy access to services, relatively low unemployment and a strong system of education.
- Additionally, fewer people face long commutes and work 50 hours or more.

| Rank | Postcode District |
|------|---------------------------|
| 1 | BT65 – Craigavon-Lurgan |
| 2 | BT16 – Dundonald, Belfast |
| 3 | BT64 – Craigavon-Lurgan |
| 4 | BT66 – Lurgan |
| 5 | BT10 – Finaghy, Belfast |

Source: Cebr analysis

Method note

Method note

- The sources of data for this analysis include:
 - The 2011 UK Census (length of commute and average hours worked)
 - Unemployment data from the Office for National Statistics' *Annual Population Survey*
 - Deprivation data from the Department for Communities and Local Government
 - Areas covered include access to services, crime and skill level of local population
 - Land use data from the *General Land Use Database*
 - School attainment data from the Department for Education and OFSTED
 - House price data from the Land Registry
 - Average earnings data from the Office for National Statistics' *Annual Hours and Earnings Survey*
- Data from each information source were matched to postcodes. An aggregate score for each postcode district was created by taking the number of standard deviations from the mean for each data series, and then averaging these figures across all data series for each postcode district.
- The smallest 12.5% postcode districts by population for each UK country have been excluded to prevent outlying data from skewing the results.
- Results are not comparable across the different countries due to difference in measurement methods in aspects such as education standards, access to greenspace and levels of deprivation.



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