



**St Helena
Government**

The State of the Nation

Neil Fantom, Chief Statistician

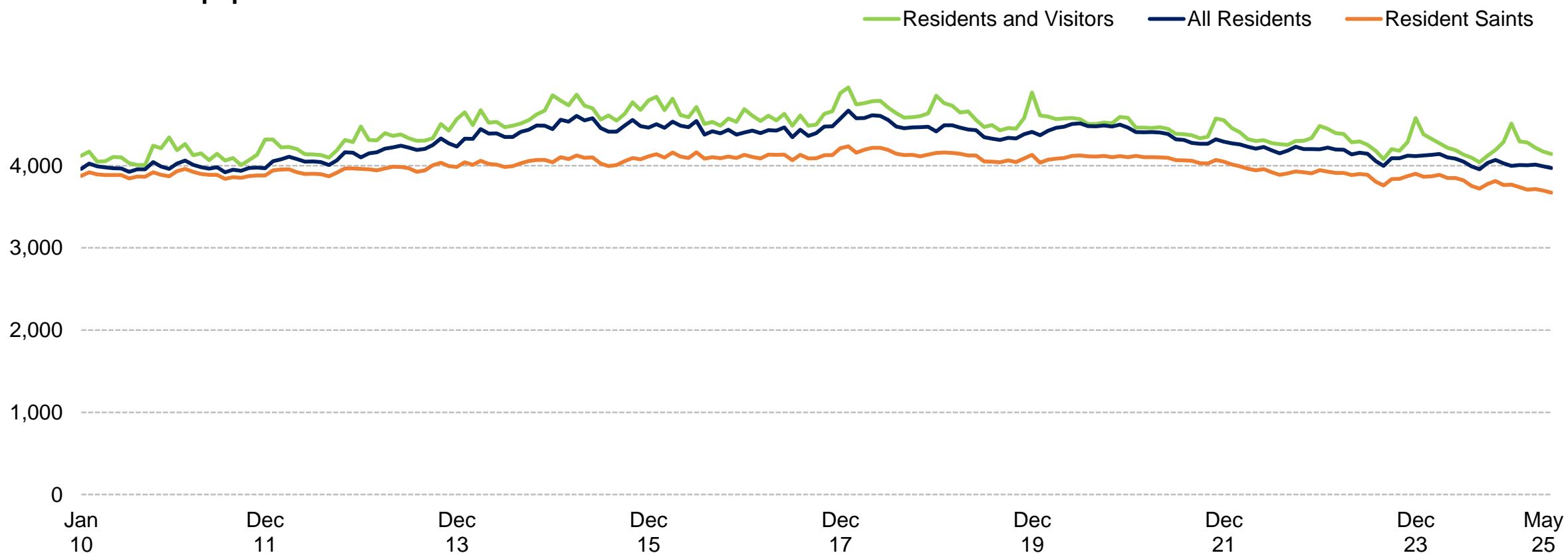
19 January 2026

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1. The on-Island resident population is around 4,000

The average end of month on-island resident population during 2024 was 4,058, around 70 lower than in the previous 12 month period - when it was 4,126. Some 94% of the resident population are St Helenian, averaging around 3,800 during 2024.

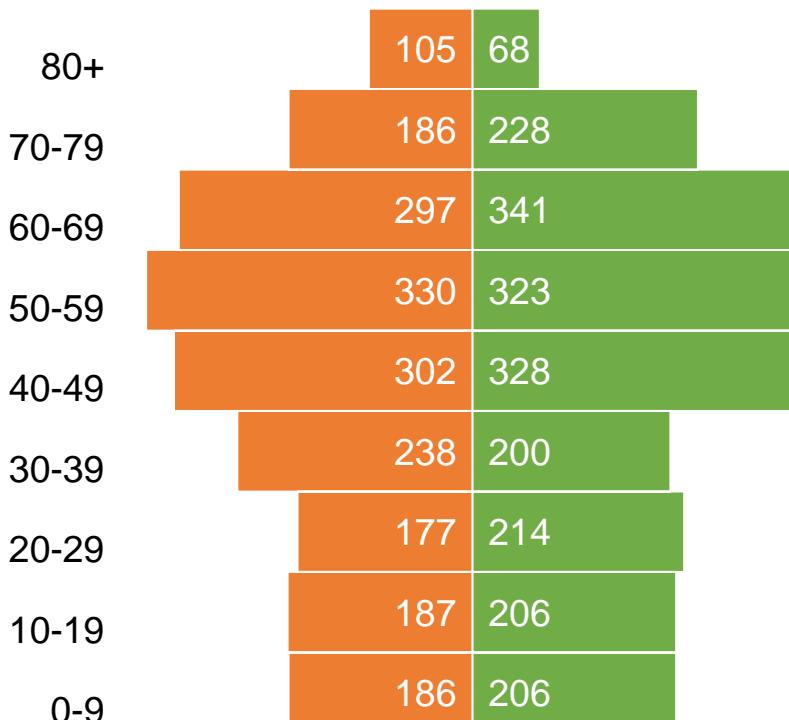
On-Island population at the end of each month



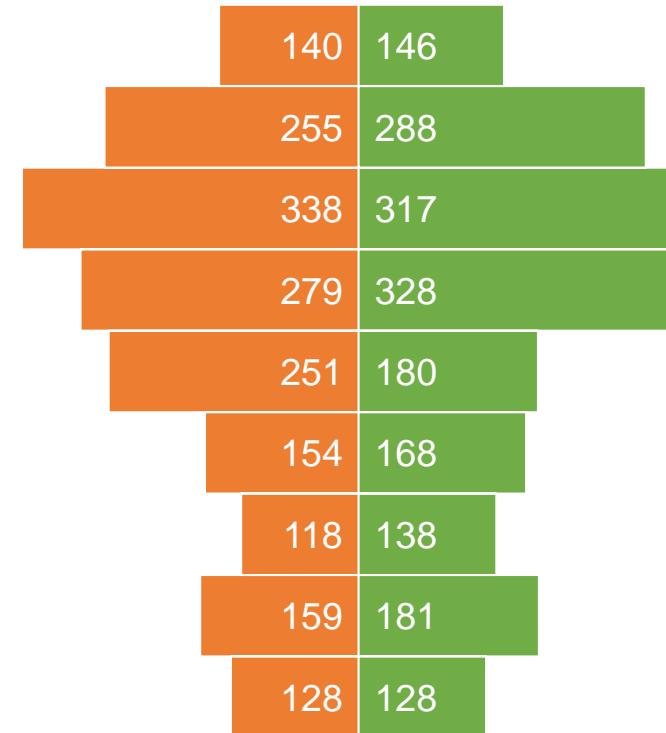
2. The demographic structure is changing rapidly

The number in younger age groups is falling, and the number in older age groups is growing. Younger groups include those in full-time education, those of working age, and women of child-bearing age; the lower number of women of child bearing age is a key reason for the lower number of births in recent years.

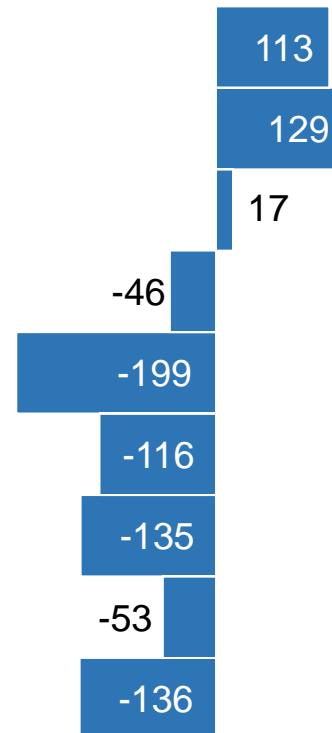
St Helenian residents: February 2016



April 2025



Change in total



3. Demographic change is both natural and migration

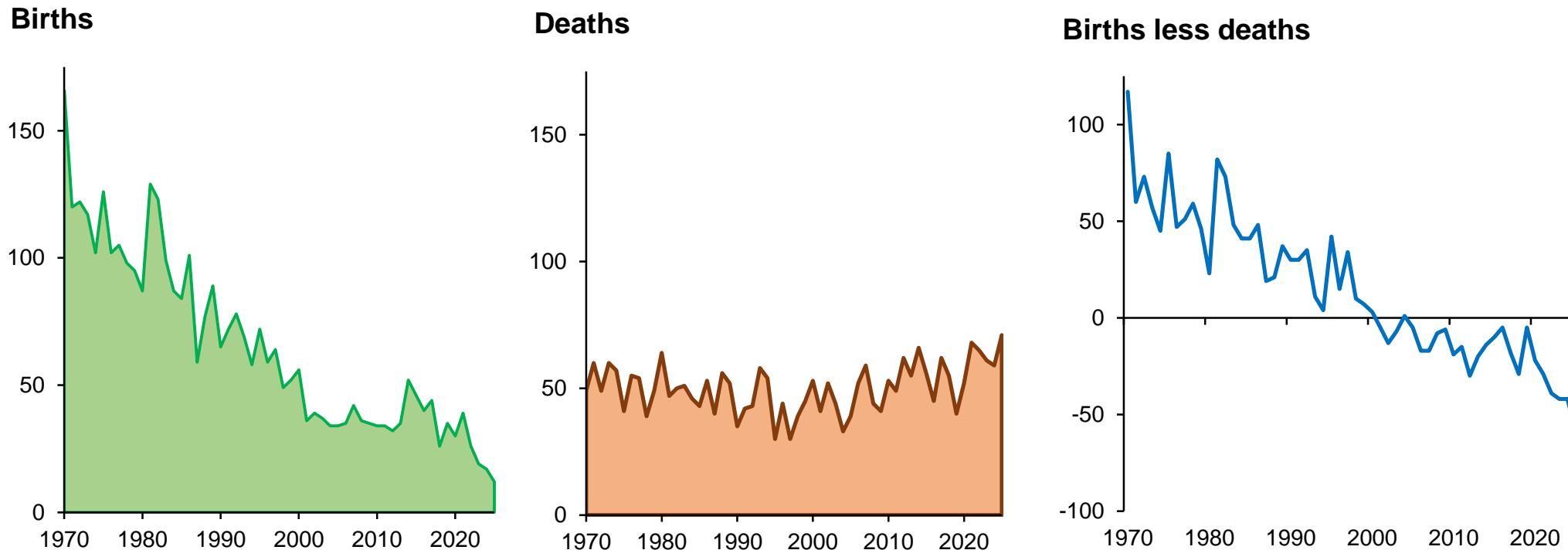
In 2018 and 2019 there were 34 more deaths than births, and 115 more departures of residents than arrivals. In 2023 and 2024 there were less births (36) and more deaths (120), leading to a decrease in the population by 84. And there were 116 more resident departures than arrivals.

	2018 & 19	2023 & 24		2018 & 19	2023 & 24
Births:	61	36	Arrivals:	2,937	2,877
Deaths:	95	120	Departures:	3,052	2,993
Net natural change:	-34	-84	Net change due to people leaving:	-115	-116

4. Births are at a record low, deaths are at a record high

In 2025, there were an estimated 71 deaths and just 12 births, a net decrease in the population of 59. The number of births is likely a record low since the eighteenth century; the number of deaths is also a recent high – since at least 1970.

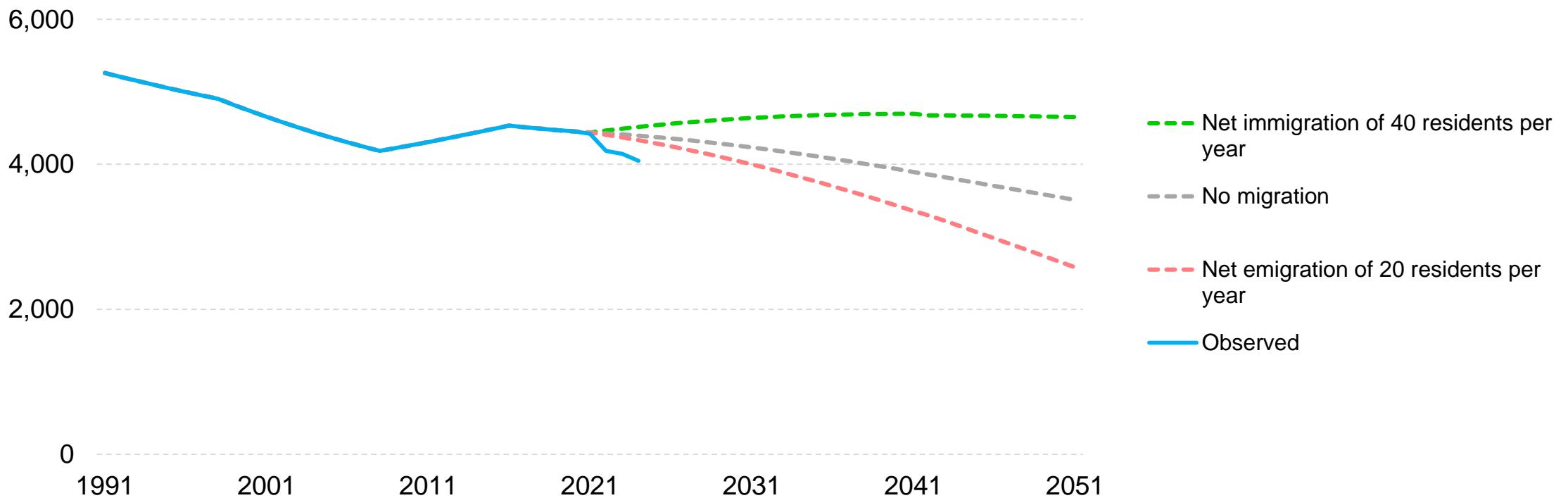
Low birth numbers are a combination of low fertility rates - around 1.5 births per woman - and a fall in the number of women of child-bearing age, especially since the restoration of UK citizenship to St Helenians in 2002 (around 1,100 in 2021 and 670 in 2025).



5. The estimated population is below the projections

The 2021 population projections used various scenarios for the rate of net migration, from a net increase of 40 residents to a net decrease of 20 residents. But the observed net emigration rate since 2021 has been higher, and the population has fallen faster than all of the scenarios.

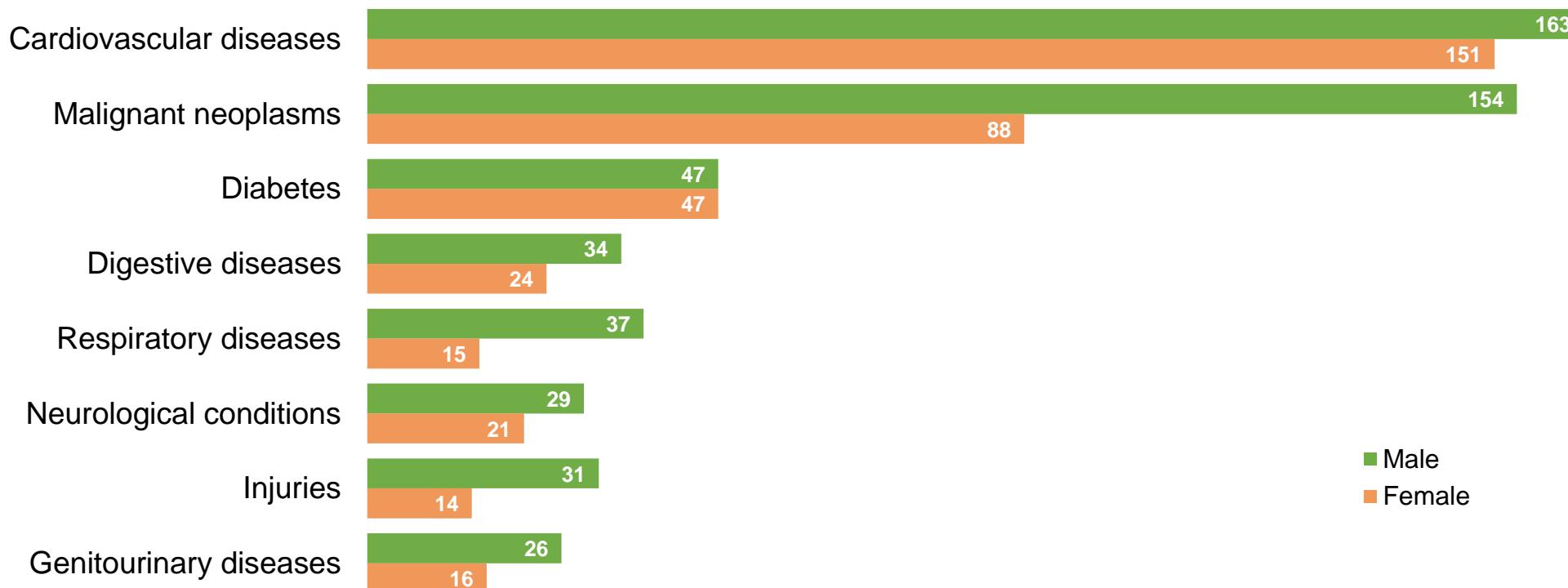
Total resident population



6. Deaths are caused by non-communicable diseases

The leading cause of death in the last twenty years is cardiovascular disease, including ischaemic heart disease and stroke. Cancers are the second cause of death (and higher in men), and the third leading cause is diabetes. Deaths from injuries are higher among men, in part because of the higher prevalence of suicide among males.

Top eight causes of death, 2005 to 2024

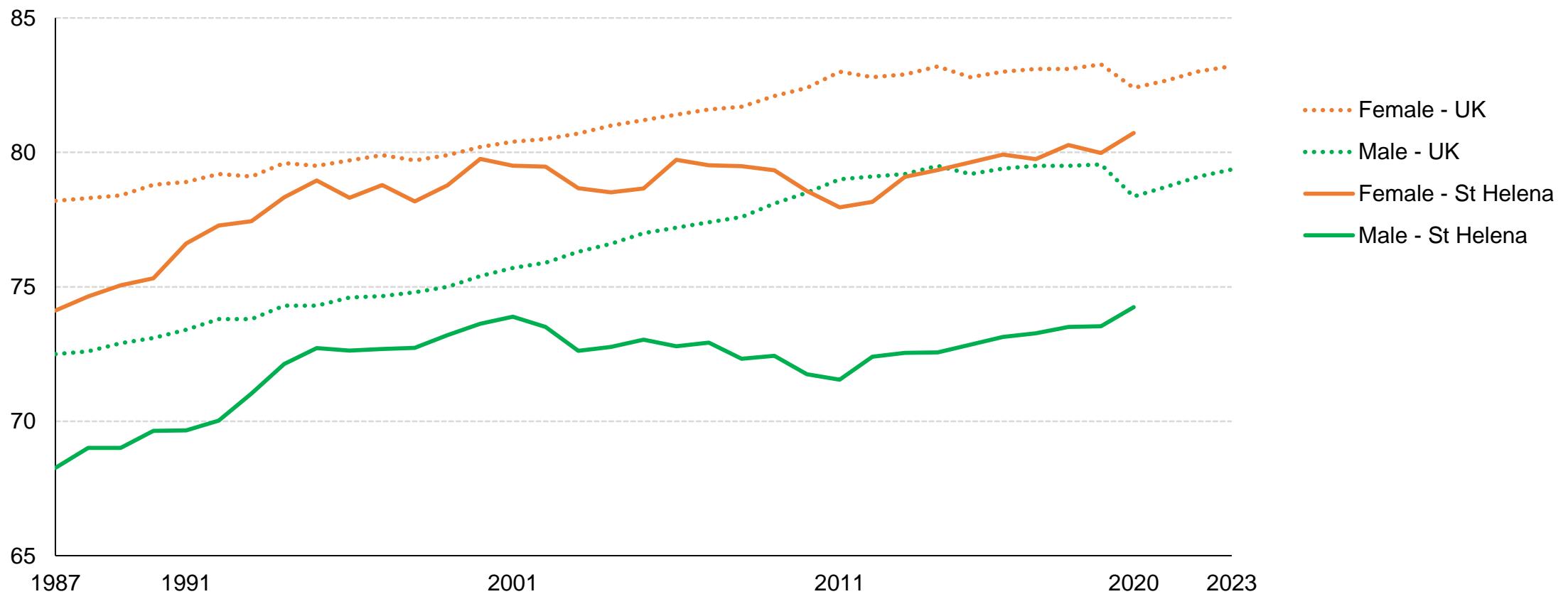


Deaths are classified using ICD-10 of the World Health Organisation, and groupings are based on those used in the WHO Global Health Estimates

7. Women live longer than men

Estimated life expectancy at birth for women on St Helena (81) is much higher than for men (74). For both sexes, life expectancy is lower than the UK - but particularly for men.

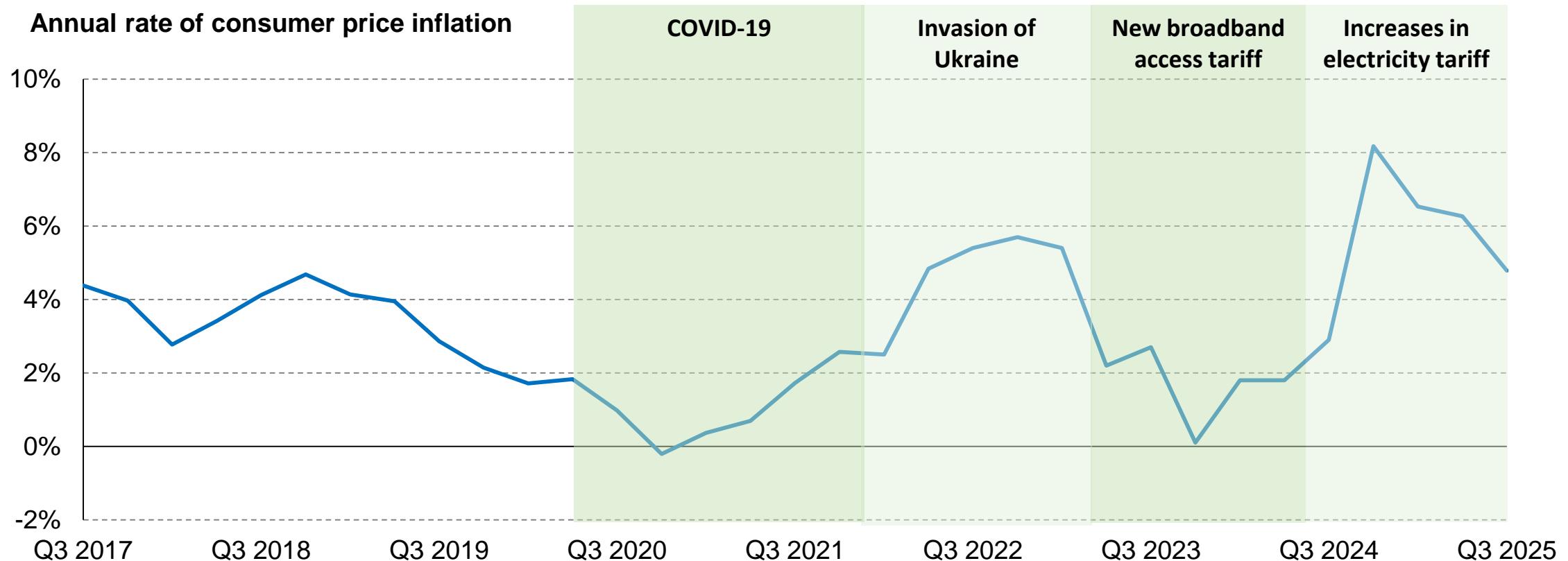
Life expectancy at birth, St Helena and UK



Life expectancies are based on moving averages; two years for the UK, and ten years for St Helena

8. Inflation is falling, but was high in 2025

In Q3 2025 the inflation rate was estimated to be 4.8%, higher than the rate for the previous year (2.9%). But it is much lower than the rate in Q2 (6.3%), Q1 (6.5%), and Q4 2024 (8.2%).

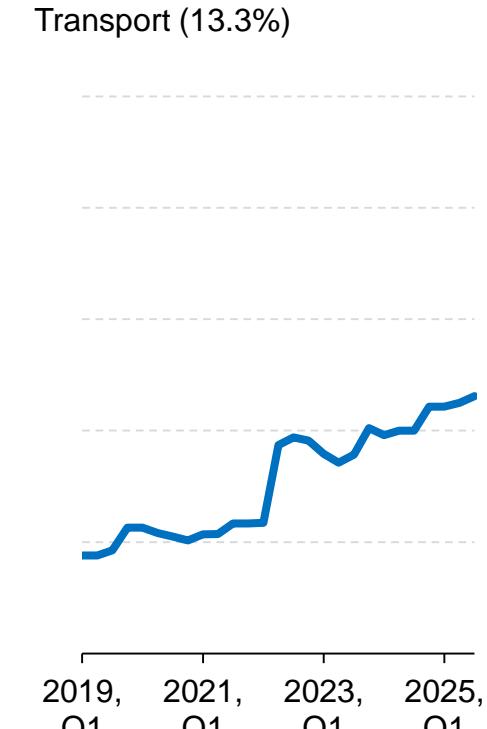
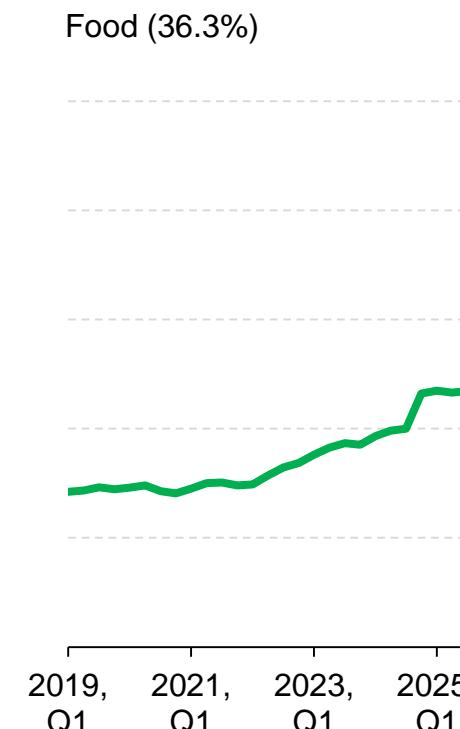
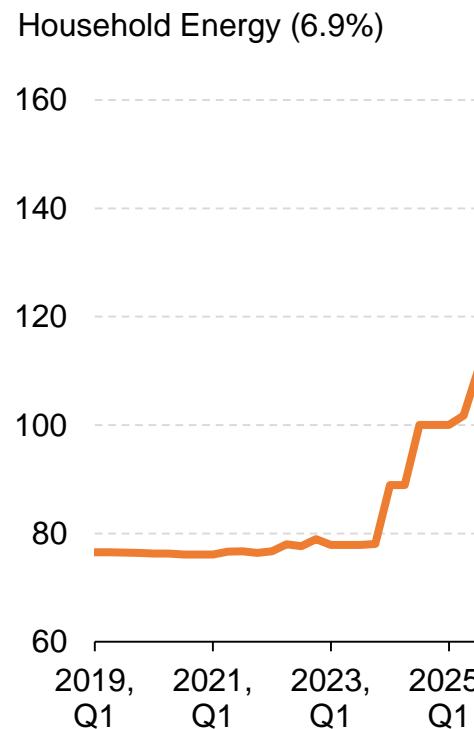


St Helena measures price inflation by collecting the prices of a fixed basket of goods and services each quarter.

9. Energy and food prices went up recently

Electricity prices rose again in July 2025, and some food items increased in price in late 2024, including locally produced bread and meat. There have been significant price changes previously, including increases in the price of transport fuel in 2022 and decreases in the price of telecommunication services in 2023 – but these did not impact the annual inflation rate in 2025.

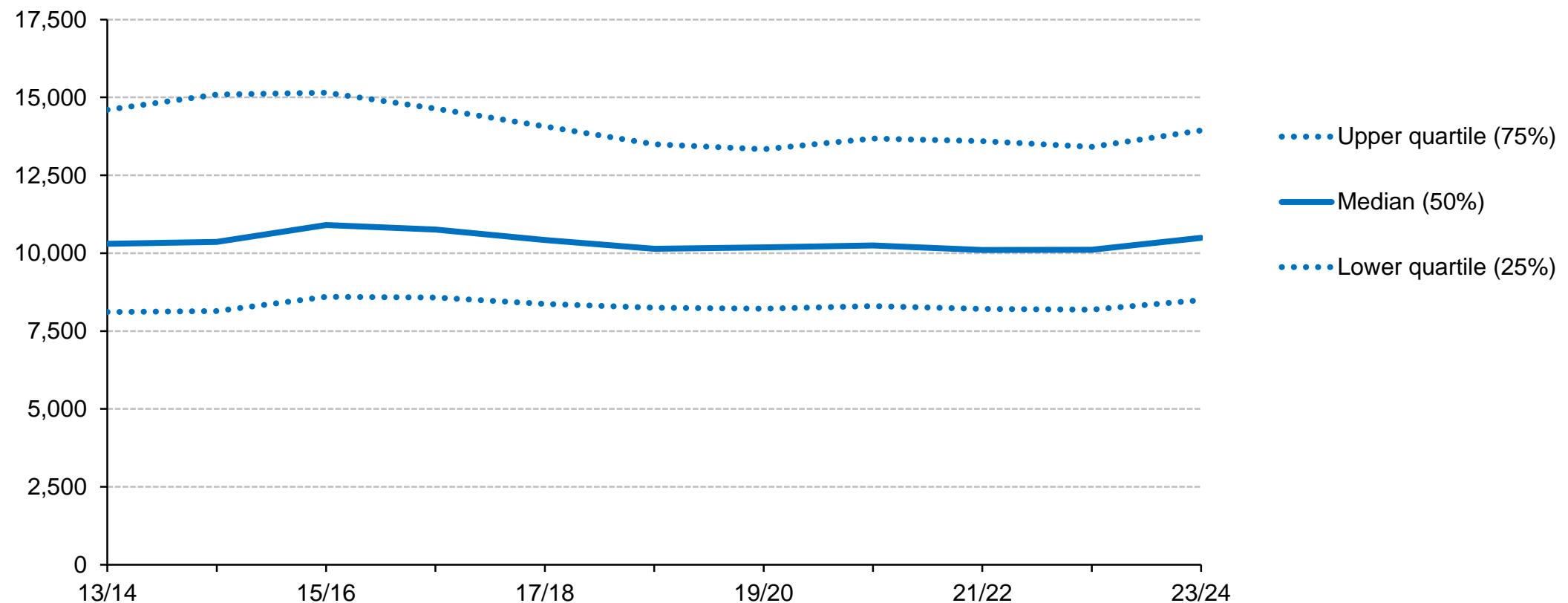
Selected components of the Consumer Price Index, Q3 2024 = 100 (weights in brackets)



10. Average wages grew in 2023/24

Adjusted for inflation, median wage levels grew by about 3.8% in 2023/24 compared to the previous year. In 2023/24, half of all full-time employees earned less than £10,490, or around £200 a week.

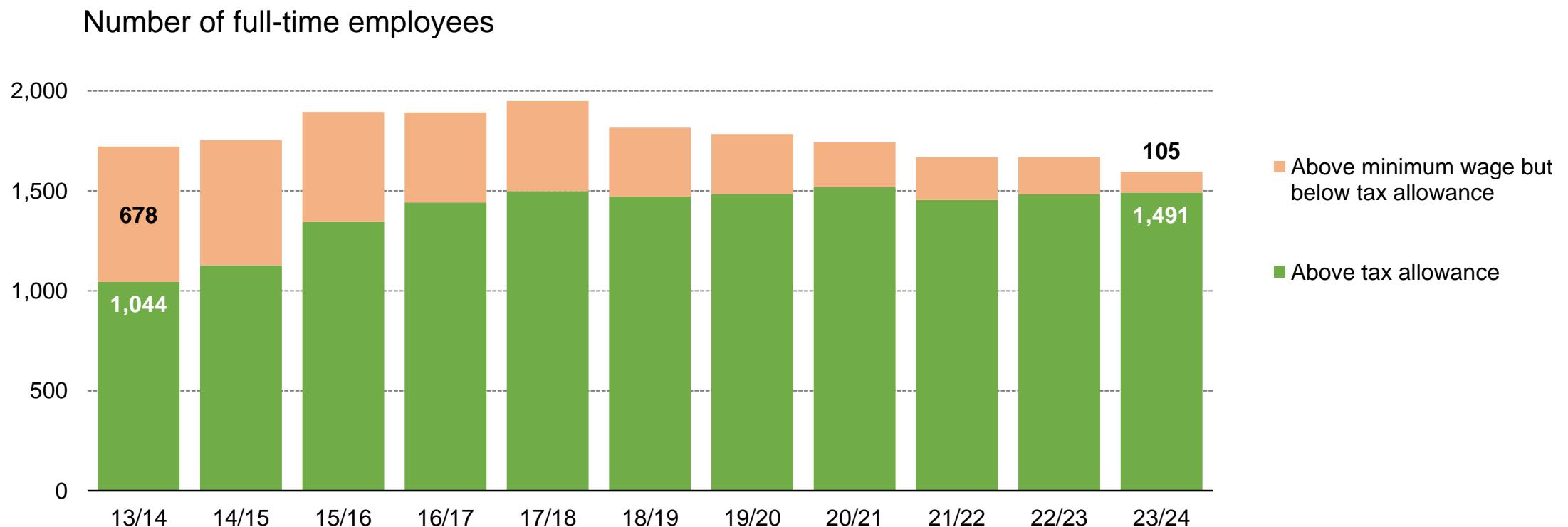
Median annual wage from full-time employment, 2023/24 prices



Excludes Technical Cooperation Officers of the St Helena Government, since they are usually recruited overseas

11. The number of income tax payers has been steady

The number of full-time employees has fallen since 2017/18 but the number above the income tax threshold of £7,000 per year has remained at around 1,500 people. Inflation has increased wages but the number of full-time employees earning less than the threshold has gradually fallen, due to increases in the minimum wage. In 2024 the minimum wage was increased to a level above the income tax threshold (£4 an hour).



Excludes Technical Cooperation Officers of the St Helena Government, since they are usually recruited overseas

12. GDP fell slightly in 2023/24

The latest estimate of Gross Domestic Product is £39.4 million for 2023/24, which was 3.7% lower than the estimate for 2022/23, after taking price inflation into account. In the last five years for which data are available, GDP increased in only one, 2020/21, due to the extra government spending caused by COVID-19.

GDP per capita, which accounts for the size of the population, also fell slightly in 2023/24, by 2.2%

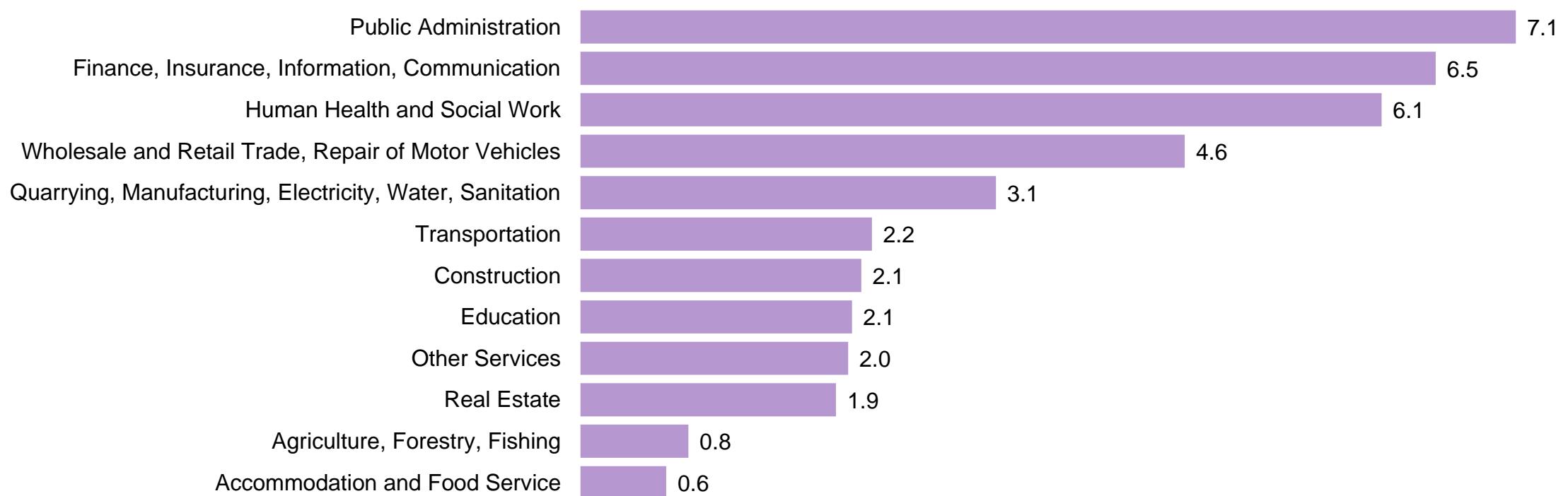
	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
GDP, £ million, constant 23/24 market prices	41.8	43.4	41.8	40.9	39.4
Annual GDP growth rate (%)	-4.8	3.8	-3.9	-2.1	-3.7
GDP per capita, £, constant 23/24 prices	9,170	9,590	9,440	9,420	9,210
Annual GDP per capita growth rate (%)	-2.1	4.6	-1.6	-0.2	-2.2

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is a measure of the size of economic output that is generated on St Helena over a year. St Helena's economy is very small, and timing and other classification issues can affect year-to-year comparisons, which should be used with caution.

13. Economic activity is dominated by services

A measurement improvement this year has been to allocate government service activities to their respective sectors in the published GDP estimates. Notably, the contribution of the Health and Social Work and Education sectors has been estimated for the first time, and together account for £8.2 million of Gross Value Added, or 21% of the total.

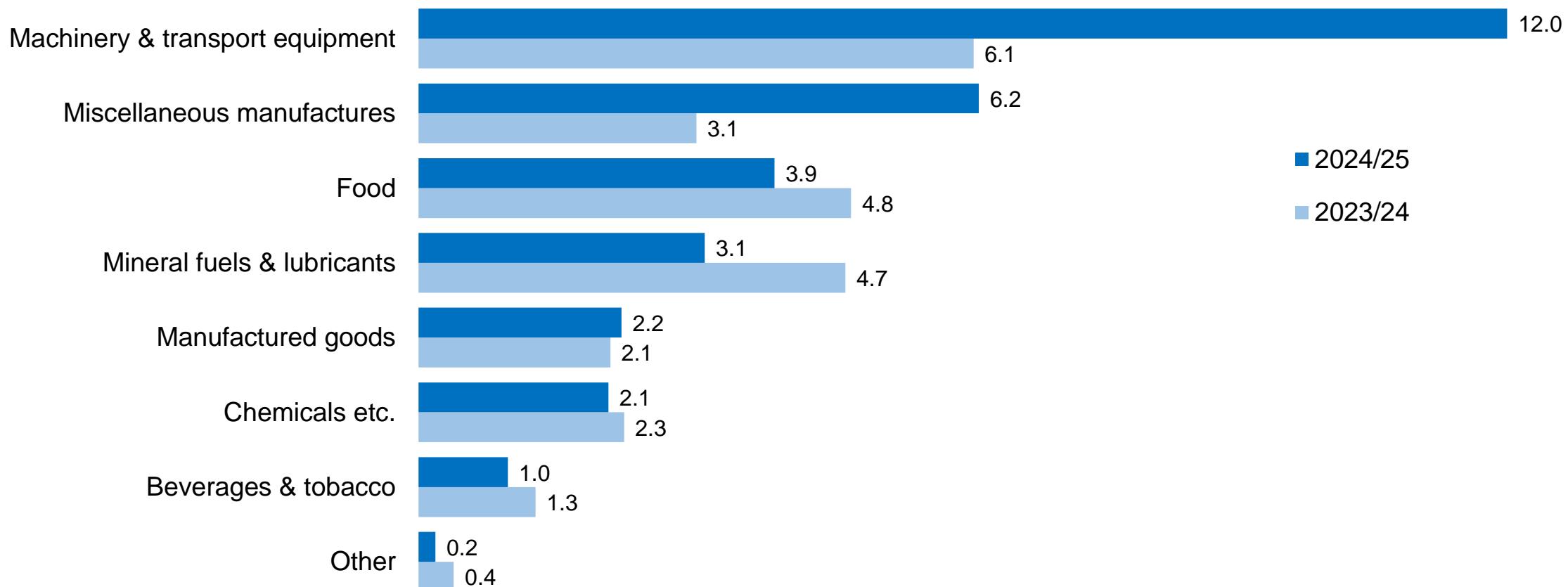
Gross Value Added by industrial sector, 2023/24, £ millions



14. Import values increased due to foreign investment

The value of imports in 2024/25 increased by £6 million compared to 2023/24. This increase includes price inflation, but is also partly due to foreign investment in the telecommunications sector. The value of petrol and diesel imports remains high due to the increase in the price of fuel following the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, but the total value fell in 2024/25 – this is likely due to the timing of shipments.

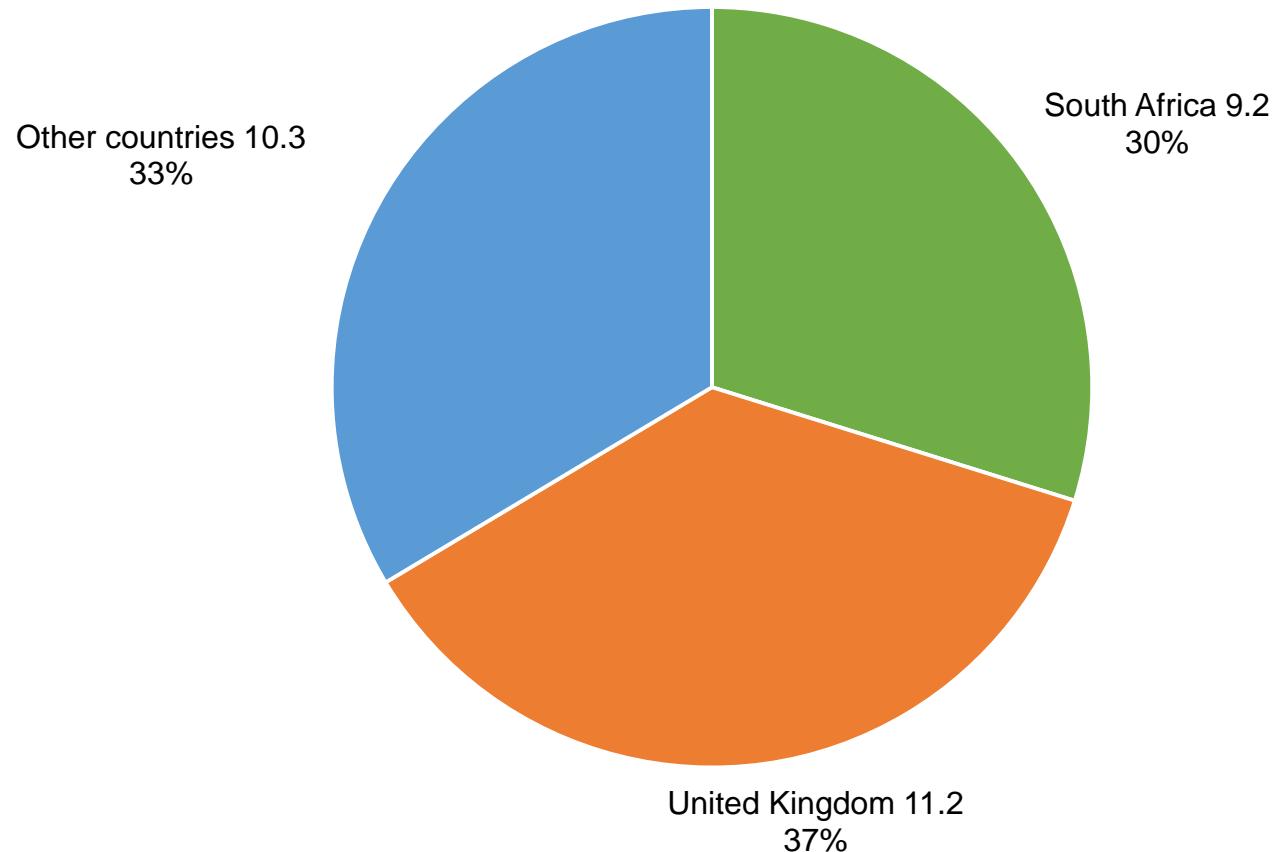
Value of imports by commodity, £ millions (current prices)



15. Goods imports are from UK and South Africa

Imported goods are mostly purchased from the United Kingdom or South Africa, with fuel the main commodity usually purchased elsewhere. In 2024/25, one-off imports of machinery and other manufactured items through foreign investment changed this pattern.

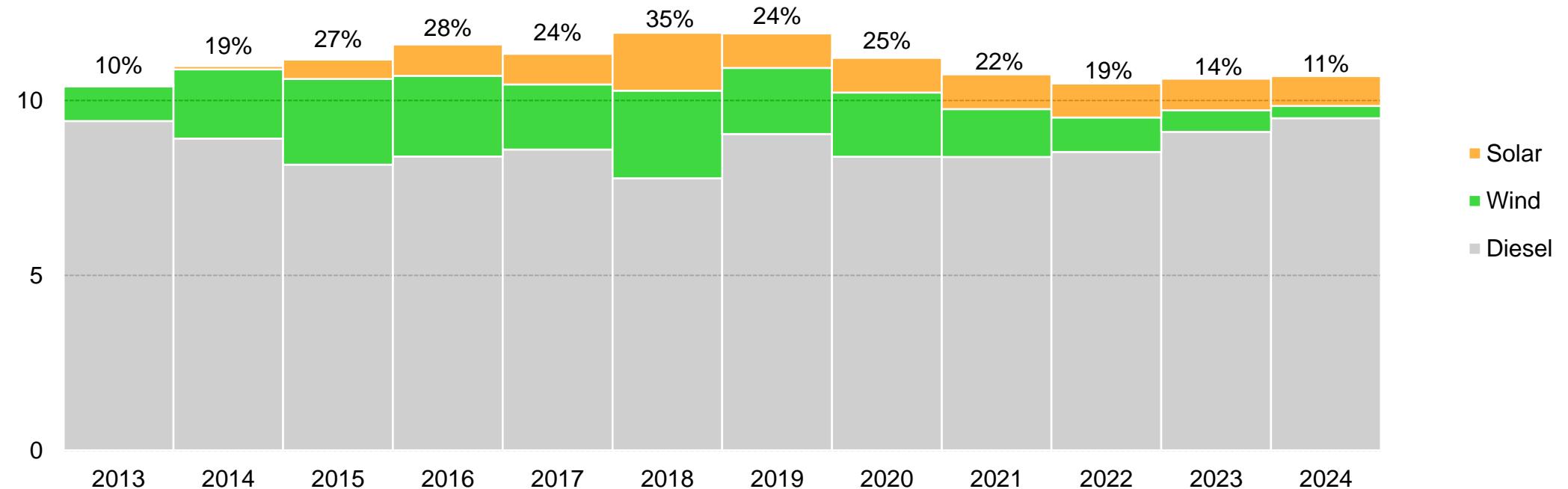
Imports by country of purchase, 2024/25, £ millions



16. On-grid renewable generation continues to fall

Connect Saint Helena Ltd (St Helena's utility company) generated around 10.7 gigawatt-hours of electricity in 2024, around the same as in 2021, 2022, and 2023. 11% of generation was from wind (3%) and solar (8%), with the rest generated by the diesel-powered power station in Rupert's Valley. The amount of electricity generated by wind in 2024 is the lowest since 2009, when the number of wind turbines on Deadwood Plain was increased from three to six.

Electricity generation per year, gigawatt-hours (percentages show renewable energy as % of total).

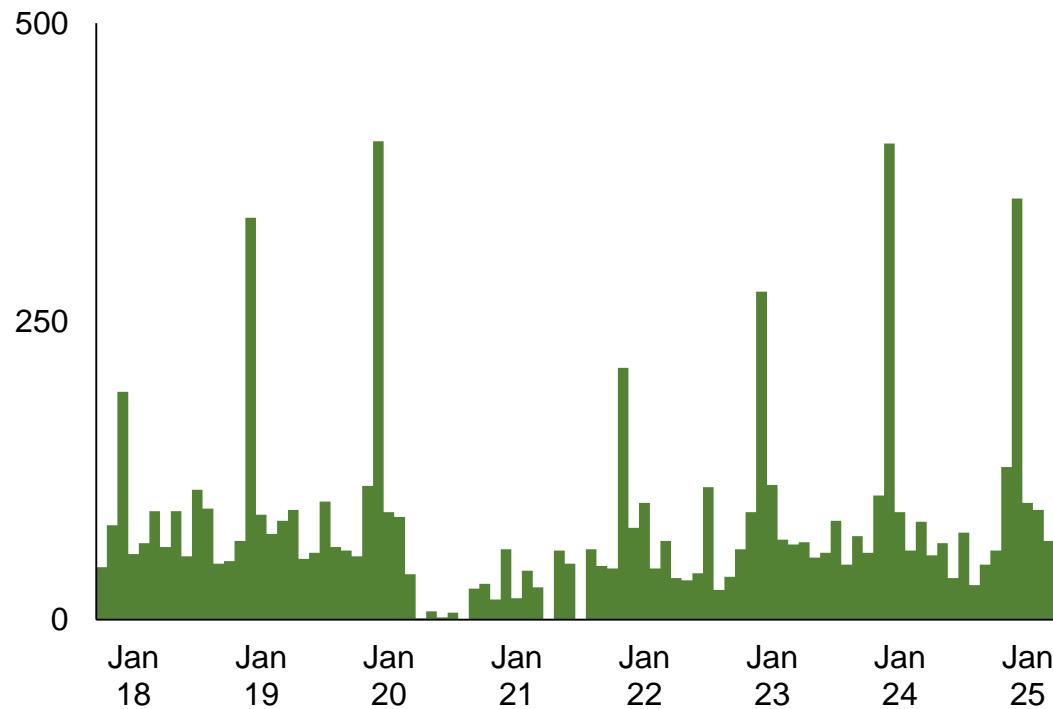


Off-grid solar generation is not included in these figures

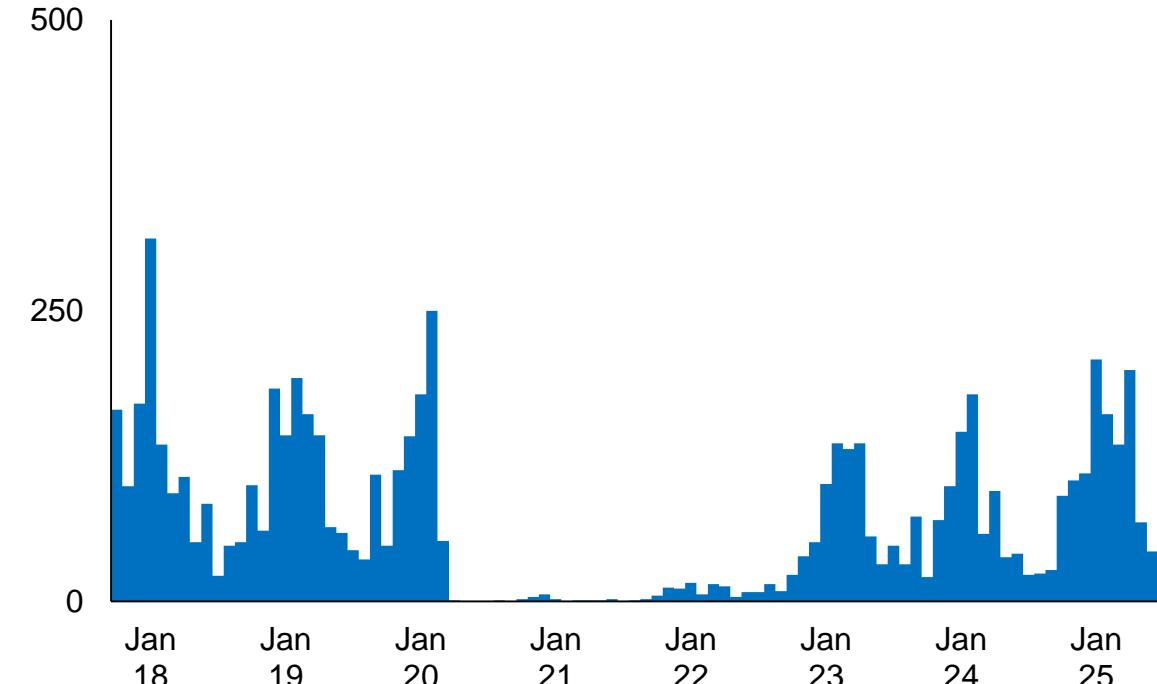
17. Visitor numbers have largely recovered

Arrivals by St Helenians for holiday visits and by non-St Helenians for tourism are close to pre-pandemic levels. Taken together, in 2024/25, they were at 94% of their 2018/19 level (2,207 compared to 2,352). The number of arrivals by St Helenians for holiday purposes was 96% of the 2018/19 level, and tourist arrivals was at 92%.

St Helenian holiday visits



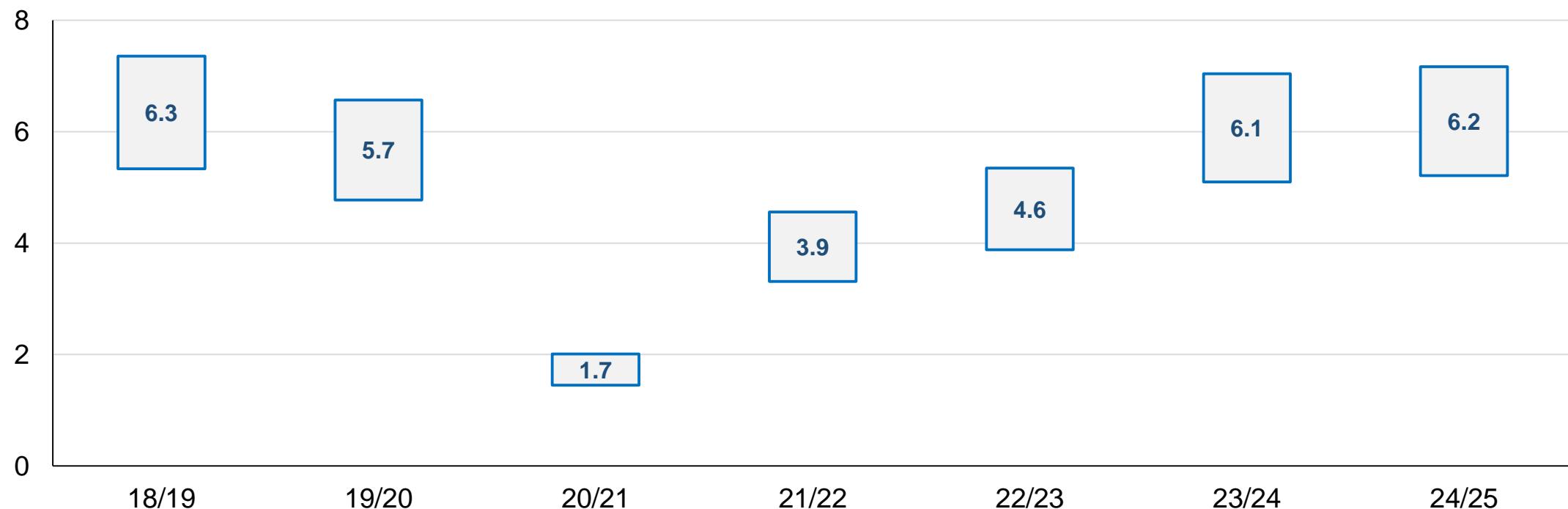
Tourism arrivals (non-St Helenian)



18. Exports of services are at pre-pandemic levels

People visiting the island are estimated to have spent between £5.2 and £7.2 million in the 2024/25 financial year, similar to the estimated spending of visitors in 2018/19 (the last full financial year before the COVID19 pandemic). The values of these exports of services are much higher than exports of goods (coffee and fish), which have averaged around £0.2 million per year since 2010.

Estimated spending of visitors, £million, range estimate



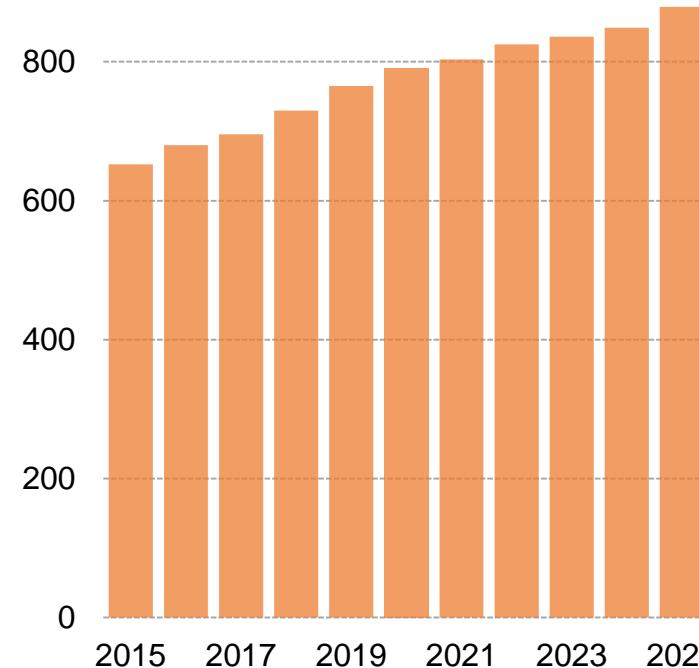
Numbers in the chart represent the mid-point of the range. Estimates are based on average daily expenditure figures from 2018 (and so are effectively adjusted for inflation), and are subject to revision due to the levels of uncertainty involved.

19. Increases in pensioners and registered unemployed

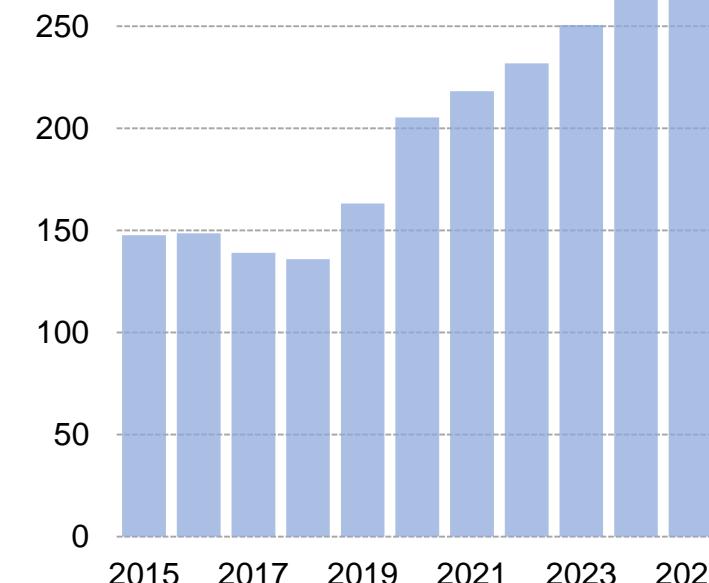
The number of recipients of the Basic Island Pension and the number of people registered as unemployed both increased in 2025, whilst the number of families receiving Income Related Benefits fell slightly.

Average number per month of

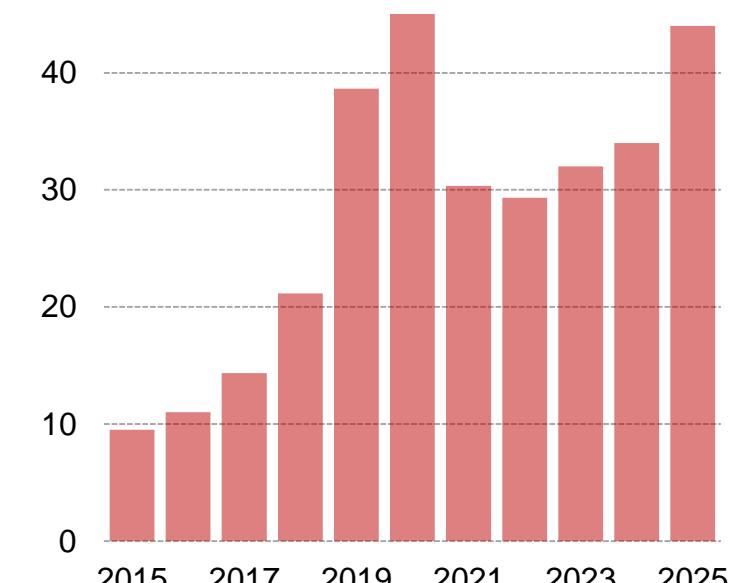
Basic Island Pension recipients



Income Related Benefits recipients:
households to Oct 21, and families thereafter



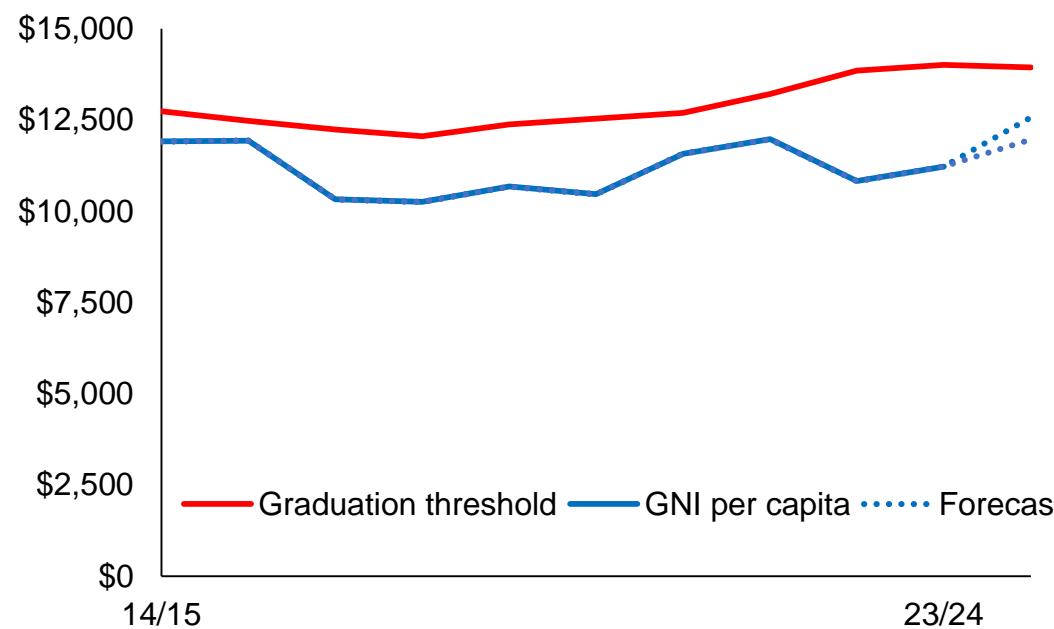
Persons unemployed: benefit recipients to Sept 21, and registered thereafter



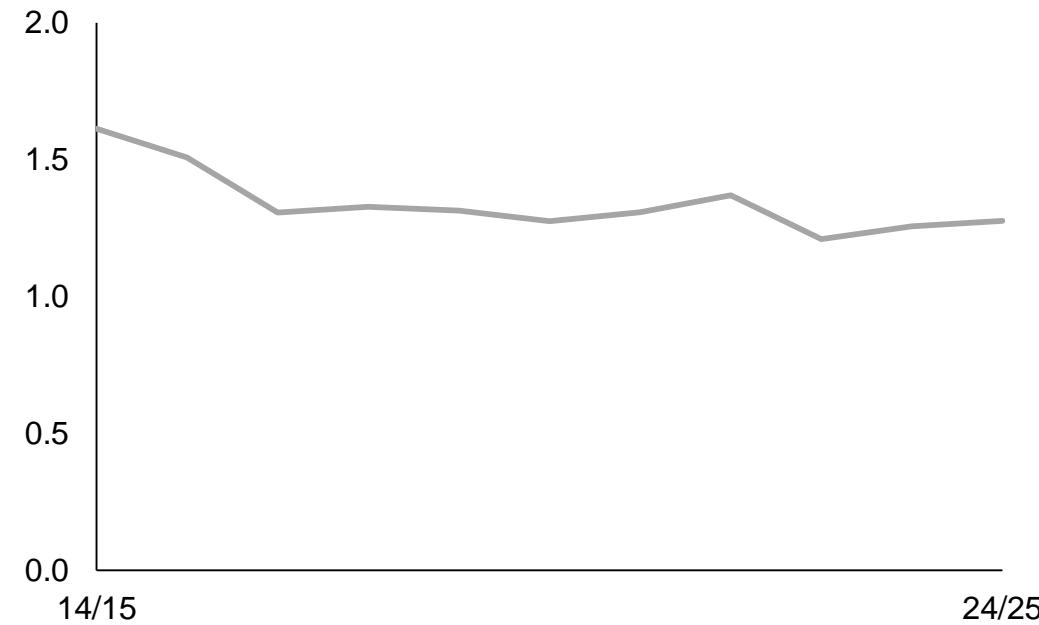
20. Official transfers to St Helena still count as aid (ODA)

St Helena's Gross National Income (GNI) per capita was estimated to be \$11,220 in 2023/24, below the 'graduation threshold' for Official Development Assistance (ODA) of \$14,005. The \$/£ exchange rate is a major factor in this, and is external to St Helena. The next reclassification exercise by OECD will be in 2026, when data for 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25 may be considered (graduation occurs if all three years are above the threshold).

GNI per capita and the 'aid' graduation threshold of OECD



US dollars per St Helena pound



The chart shows forecast 2024/25 GNI per capita for St Helena with high (5%) and low (0%) annual change in real values.