

Norwich Monthly Economic Barometer – August 2009

Table 1 Claimant Count Unemployment								
	August 2008		July 2009		August 2009		Change on last month's rate	Change on previous year
United Kingdom	923,876	2.4%	1,573,139	4.2%	1,602,189	4.2%	0	+ 1.8%
East of England	64,132	1.9%	118,930	3.4%	120,894	3.5%	+ 0.1%	+ 1.6%
Norwich City Council areaⁱ	2,843	3.2%	4,311	4.8%	4,385	4.9%	+ 0.1%	+ 1.7%
Norwich Urban Areaⁱⁱ	3,410	2.6%	5,383	4.0%	5,514	4.1%	+ 0.1%	+ 1.5%
Bowthorpe	251	3.3%	351	4.6%	371	4.9%	+ 0.3%	+ 1.6%
Catton Grove	297	4.4%	451	6.6%	452	6.7%	+ 0.1%	+ 2.3%
Crome	181	3.2%	305	5.3%	300	5.3%	0	+ 2.1%
Eaton	73	1.4%	91	1.8%	96	1.9%	+ 0.1%	+ 0.5%
Lakenham	183	3.2%	292	5.0%	309	5.3%	+ 0.3%	+ 2.1%
Mancroft	375	5.8%	534	8.2%	538	8.3%	+ 0.1%	+ 2.5%
Mile Cross	369	5.4%	490	7.2%	507	7.4%	+ 0.2%	+ 2.0%
Nelson	125	1.7%	195	2.7%	186	2.5%	- 0.2%	+ 0.8%
Sewell	170	2.3%	334	4.4%	331	4.4%	0	+ 2.1%
Thorpe Hamlet	242	3.7%	388	5.9%	372	5.7%	- 0.2%	+ 2.0%
Town Close	168	2.4%	302	4.3%	328	4.7%	+ 0.4%	+ 2.3%
University	133	1.9%	169	2.4%	176	2.5%	+ 0.1%	+ 0.6%
Wensum	276	3.8%	409	5.6%	419	5.8%	+ 0.2%	+ 2.0%

Norwich has seen a slower increase in unemployment over the last year compared to the national rate. However, unemployment in Catton Grove, Crome, Lakenham, Mancroft, Mile Cross, Sewell, Thorpe Hamlet, Town Close and Wensum wards grew at a faster rate than the Norwich average. Eaton and Nelson wards have had the smallest increase in unemployment since January on a month by month basis.

Over the last month, unemployment in the Norwich City Council and urban areas has risen slightly, in line with the national and regional rates. At ward level, unemployment fell marginally in Nelson and Thorpe Hamlet - there was no change on the previous month's rate in Catton Grove and Wensum. The remaining wards saw slight increases in unemployment, the highest increase occurred in Town Close.

One-third of unemployment claimants in the Norwich City Council are aged between 18 to 24 years – approximately 2% of these have been registered as unemployed for more than 12 months. At ward level, Eaton and University have the highest percentage of claimants aged 18-24 years.

Around one-quarter of unemployment claimants in the Norwich City Council are women, giving a female unemployment rate of around 2.5% compared to a male rate of 7.1%.

	August 2008	July 2009	August 2009	<i>Change on last month</i>	<i>Change on last year</i>
Great Britain	405,470	266,020	341,538	+28%	-16%
East of England	32,431	25,999	31,132	+20%	- 4%
Norwich City Council	1,522	1,011	1,490	+47%	- 2%
Norwich Urban Area	1,865	1,403	1,847	+32%	- 0.9%

The figures given in Table 2 show that the number of vacancies notified to Jobcentre Plus increased markedly across both Norwich areas compared to the previous month and the increase was larger than at the regional and national levels. The number of vacancies notified to Jobcentre Plus has fallen only marginally across both Norwich areas compared to this time last year.

Number made redundant	Sector	Occupations Affected
30	Boat Builders	Boat Building Trades
18	Business services	Architects
21	Car sales	Sales staff
318	Construction	Building Trades and Admin
42	Distribution	HGV drivers
39	Education	Admin
27	Engineering	Electricians
717	Finance	Admin/IT technicians
40	Food processing	Operatives/ Café & Food Service
40	Health and Life Science	Scientists
44	Fruit wholesaler	Sales, Admin, Drivers & Warehouse staff
156	Manufacturing	Operatives and joiners
78	Media	Admin and production staff
233	Print and publishing	Print and sales staff
159	Transport	Catering, Admin and Sales
225	Retail	Sales
65	Service Industry	Designers, Sales staff and others
137	Tourism & Leisure	Admin, Pilots, Cabin Crew, Engineers

Notified redundancy data should be viewed as indicative and not inclusive of all cases. It captures data which has been reported officially to Jobcentre Plus by companies and organisations or otherwise identified by Jobcentre Plus locally. The data excludes those employees affected by short-time working or temporary stoppages.

Jobcentre Plus is notified when any company in the area intends to make 20 or more redundancies, therefore smaller-scale redundancies may not be picked up. Anecdotal evidence suggests that a number of redundancies have taken place in the business and professional services sector that have not been picked up by Jobcentre Plus. Overall the number of redundancies notified to Jobcentre Plus appears to be slowing.

Table 4 Norwich City Council Housing Benefit Claimants		
	Number of claimants	Change on previous month
February 2009	16,417	+ 312 (+1.9%)
March 2009	16,531	+114 (+ 0.6%)
April 2009	16,831	+ 300 (+ 1.8%)
May 2009	16,924	+ 93 (+ 0.5%)
June 2009	17,029	+ 105 (+ 0.6%)
July 2009	17,085	+ 56 (+ 0.3%)
August 2009	17,163	+ 78 (+.4%)

Housing Benefit is an income-related benefit designed to help people on low incomes pay for rented accommodation whether in or out of work. The number of Housing Benefit claimants in Norwich has again risen slightly over the month. The biggest increases occurred at the beginning of the year and now appear to be slowing. Comparable national data is not available because of a time lag in data collection.

Table 5 Shop Vacancy Rate		
	Norwich	National average
% of vacant shops	5.6%	12%

According to a recent national survey undertaken by the Local Data Company, Norwich's city centre retail sector is continuing to perform well and there are fewer than average empty shop premises.

Table 6 Footfall Monitor 2009					
Week beginning:	3rd August	10th August	17th August	24th August	31st August
Gentleman's Walk	281,668	285,003	335,312	302,906	273,656
Rampant Horse St Crossing	219,494	230,234	238,648	235,057	212,843
St Andrew's Street	20,261	24,298	23,934	23,947	21,884

Accurately measuring the footfall within the city centre is one of the key ways in which its health can be monitored, as well as measuring the impact of any events or promotions that are carried out by the Council or its partners.

Table 7 Average House Prices – Quarter 2, 2009				
	Average Price	Change on previous quarter	Change on previous year	Sales this quarter
Norwich	£148,218	- 3.8%	-13.5%	392
Broadland	£176,467	3.7%	-12.6%	407
South Norfolk	£192,831	- 11.1%	- 6.6%	482
UK	£224,064	2.2%	- 2.8%	138,487

Norwich house prices fell slightly in the second quarter 2009 against the previous quarter. However, a large drop was recorded in Norwich house prices against the same quarter last year.

Good News Stories

- The Money Centre, based near Norwich International Airport, which experienced two rounds of redundancies last year, is recruiting staff for the second time this year. It intends to recruit a further 20 consultants each quarter for the next year.
- Over 400 businesses questioned recently by the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) confirmed they are feeling positive in the face of economic adversity. Reflecting this confident mood, over 30 per cent said they are expecting to grow by approximately 25 per cent in the next three years; with nearly 20 per cent expecting a 50 per cent growth increase in the same period.
- Norwich City Council and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) have signed a ground-breaking partnership which will see £8 million invested in the city. The collaboration and investment agreement establishes a joint venture partnership between the two organizations and makes the regeneration of a number of community and public realm projects possible as well as creating local employment, new homes and affordable housing.
- Business supplies company Office2Office has announced a 9.5 per cent increase in revenue in the first half of the year after securing two major contracts. The firm, which employs 250 people in Norwich, reported turnover of £96m for the six months to June 30 - up from £84m in the same period last year
- The University of East Anglia has been shortlisted for a prestigious national award for its outstanding contribution to sustainable development. The winners of the Times Higher Education Awards 2009 will be announced on October 15 at a special ceremony in London
- Hethel-based Lotus Group has increased its manufacturing workforce by 30 per cent and has allocated more than £20m for product investment in 2009/10, a total investment of approximately £60m over the last two years. To cope with this demand, Lotus has recruited 150 extra staff over the last six months. The Lotus brand's return to Formula One will also enable up to 250 new jobs to be created in the next six months at Racing Technologies Norfolk (RTN), Hingham Norfolk.
- Norfolk County Council and Shaping Norfolk's Future have launched a 7-month "World Class Business: Normal for Norfolk" marketing campaign aimed at attracting business investment. A 3-week TV campaign is currently taking place in London and the East of England.
- The Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP) Economic Development Group has arranged the local media launch of the Greater Norwich Economic Strategy Summary and 10 Top Key Actions that will drive delivery of the Economic Strategy.
- Swinton Insurance has announced plans for 30 new jobs at its Norwich call centre. Swinton, the UK's third largest insurer, is recruiting call centre agents and team managers at its Rosary Road offices to support the company's continuing growth.
- Norwich-based PPI Engineering Ltd has been awarded a Queens award for Enterprise in the International Trade category. The company has won the award for the first time as a result of the large increase in overseas earnings over the past three years - the main growth markets are the USA and the Middle East.

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Appendix

- i The Norwich City Council area comprises the following wards: Bowthorpe, Catton Grove, Crome, Eaton, Lakenham, Mancroft, Mile Cross, Nelson, Sewell, Thorpe Hamlet, Town Close, University, Wensum

- ii The Norwich Urban Area covers the built-up area and comprises the following wards: Drayton North, Drayton South, Hellesdon North West, Hellesdon South East, Old Catton and Sprowston West, Sprowston Central, Sprowston East, Taverham North, Taverham South, Thorpe St Andrew North West, Thorpe St Andrew South East, Bowthorpe, Catton Grove, Crome, Eaton, Lakenham, Mancroft, Mile Cross, Nelson, Sewell, Thorpe Hamlet, Town Close, University, Wensum, Cringleford, New Costessey, Old Costessey, Stoke Holy Cross

Data sources:

- Table 1 – Claimant count – NOMIS, Crown copyright
- Table 2 – Jobcentre Plus notified vacancies - NOMIS, Crown copyright
- Table 3 - Jobcentre Plus
- Table 4 – Norwich City Council
- Table 5 – Norwich City Council
- Table 6 - Norwich City Centre Partnership
- Table 7 - Land Registry of England and Wales, Crown copyright