



**NORWICH**  
City Council

# **Norwich Economic Barometer**

## **August 2016**

---

# Contents

<b>BUSINESS NEWS.....</b>	<b>2</b>
ECONOMY .....	2
BUSINESS: .....	6
EDUCATION .....	9
<b>JSA CLAIMANT COUNT UNEMPLOYMENT .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>WARD LEVEL JSA CLAIMANT COUNT UNEMPLOYMENT .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>JSA CLAIMANT COUNT UNEMPLOYMENT: AGE AND DURATION.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>UNIVERSAL CREDIT .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOUSING BENEFIT .....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>YOUNG PEOPLE (16-18 YEARS) RECORDED AS NOT IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING (NEET).....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>AVERAGE HOUSE PRICES.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>APPENDIX .....</b>	<b>16</b>

# Business news

## Economy

- The average cost of everyday household goods and services went up by 0.5 per cent in the year to June. The UK inflation rate, as measured by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI), rose from 0.3 per cent in May, official figures show. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) attributed the rise to higher air fares, fuel and consumer spending. Much of that was the result of European air travel, possibly connected to the Euro 2016 football tournament. The inflation figures are based on data collected before the EU referendum vote on 23 June. The cost of flights jumped by a record 10.9 per cent between May and June.
- UK industrial output grew at the fastest rate for 17 years in the April-to-June quarter, official figures show. Industrial output grew 2.1 per cent compared with the first quarter of the year, the ONS said. Despite the quarterly figures there were signs that growth on a monthly basis was slowing during the three-month period.

Figure 1 Markit/CIPS UK Services PMI



- Growth of UK service sector activity weakened in June to match the 38-month low recorded in April, according to the latest PMI survey data from Markit and CIPS. Growth over the second quarter as a whole was the weakest since the first quarter of 2013 when the current upturn began. Moreover, the 12-month outlook was the darkest since December 2012. Companies often reported that uncertainty linked to the EU referendum had weighed on workloads and incoming new business. The volume of new business received by UK service providers rose at a slightly faster rate in June, but the increase was still the second-weakest seen since the upturn began three-and-a-half years ago. Firms commonly reported that uncertainty linked to the EU referendum had often led to postponed or cancelled orders from customers. The ongoing weakness of new business inflows led to a further decline in the level of outstanding work in the UK service sector in

June. Backlogs declined for the third month running, dropping at the fastest rate since February 2013. Service providers continued to expand their workforces, on average, in June. But with new business rising at a weak rate and backlogs of orders falling, the rate of job creation moderated to the slowest since August 2013.

- Figure 2 shows that June saw a modest improvement in the performance of the UK manufacturing sector. The seasonally adjusted Markit/CIPS Purchasing Managers' Index posted 52.1, up from a revised reading of 50.4 in May, its highest level since January. June data signalled a faster rate of increase in UK manufacturing production, underpinned by a solid acceleration in inflows of new work. New orders rose at the quickest pace since last October, reflecting the ongoing strength of the domestic market and a marginal uptick in new export business. Where an increase in new work from overseas was recorded, companies linked this to higher sales to the USA, mainland Europe (especially Germany, Italy, Spain and the Benelux nations), Russia and East Asia. Sector data pointed to a broad-based improvement in operating conditions during June. Output and new orders increased across the consumer, intermediate and investment goods industries, with only the latter failing to also see gains in new export business.

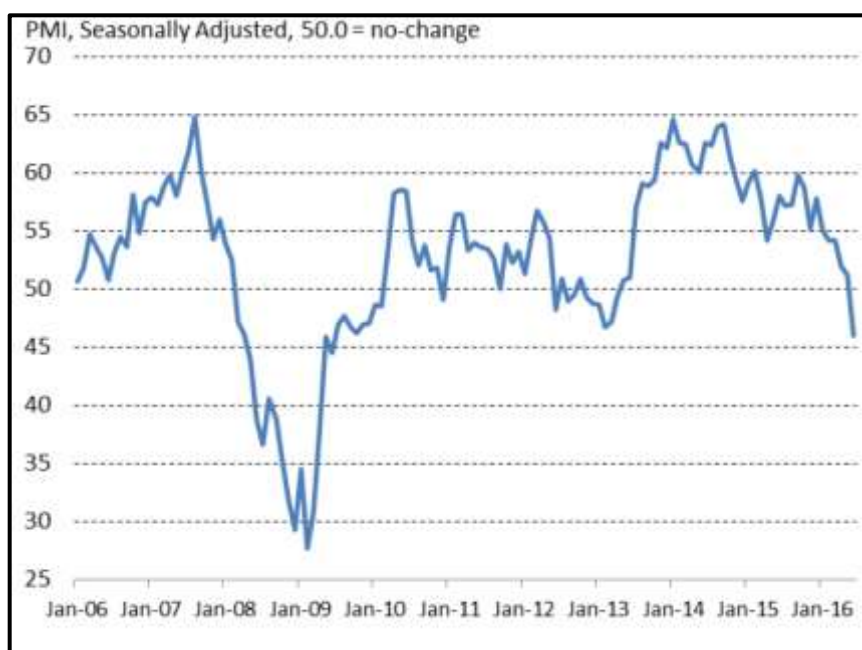
**Figure 2** Markit/CIPS UK Manufacturing PMI



- Figure 3 shows that June data signalled a return to falling output levels across the UK construction sector, led by a steep decline in residential building and a reduction in commercial work for the first time since May 2013. Reports from survey respondents widely linked the downturn in business activity to uncertainty ahead of the EU referendum. Heightened uncertainty also contributed to a further reduction in new invitations to tender, with the latest data pointing to the sharpest drop in new business volumes since December 2012. Meanwhile, softer demand conditions acted as a brake on staff recruitment in June and contributed to a drop in purchasing activity for the first time in just over three years. At 46.0 in June, down from 51.2 in May, the seasonally adjusted Markit/CIPS UK Construction Purchasing Managers' Index dropped below the neutral 50.0 threshold for the first time since April 2013. The latest reading pointed to the weakest overall performance for exactly seven years, but the rate of contraction was much slower than seen during the 2008/09 downturn. Residential construction was the

worst performing sub-category of activity, with activity falling at the fastest pace since December 2012. Civil engineering activity remained broadly stable in June, while commercial building work saw a sharp loss of momentum and posted one of its weakest readings for six-and-a-half years. Lower levels of activity were overwhelmingly linked to deteriorating order books and a corresponding lack of new work to replace completed projects.

**Figure 3**      **Markit/CIPS UK Construction PMI**



- The UK economy may face "severe loss of momentum" after the vote to leave the EU, according to the EY Item Club. The think tank's UK growth forecast for 2016 has been cut from 2.3 per cent to 1.9 per cent, and from 2.6 per cent to just 0.4 per cent for 2017. Meanwhile its forecast for GDP growth for 2018 was slashed from 2.4 per cent to 1.4 per cent. Its report said the Brexit vote would have "severe confidence effects on spending and business investment", which would lead to anaemic GDP growth over the next three years. However, the drop in the value of the pound could bolster exports by 3.4 per cent next year, the Item Club said, with imports falling by 0.3 per cent. Overall, the move would see net exports adding 1.1 per cent to GDP in 2017, it added.
- Figures from the export credit agency UK Export Finance show it supported the largest number of exporters in 25 years in 2015/16, up 23 per cent on the previous year. In the East of England, the agency, provided over £6 million to support over £40 million of exports. Most of the support involved SMEs taking advantage of the finance and insurance from UKEF.
- Employers have responded to the government's national living wage by raising prices or reducing profits rather than cutting jobs, according to a survey from the Resolution Foundation. The wage, which requires employers to pay staff aged 25 and over at least £7.20 an hour, was introduced in April. This report is the first snapshot of how firms have reacted to the national living wage. It comes after the Office for Budget Responsibility predicted it would lead to 60,000 job losses by 2020.

- Uncertainty around Brexit has dragged UK business output and optimism to three-year lows, a report suggests. The report on business trends from the accountancy and services group BDO said the UK economy was already showing signs of slowing ahead of the EU vote. Manufacturing had the gloomiest outlook and job creation in the economy slowed to a two-year low. BDO said uncertainty prompted by Brexit had also disrupted investment in the UK economy. The report shows business output, which reflects company orders for the next quarter, slipped to 99 last month, compared with 99.7 in May and 100.6 in April. Meanwhile, business optimism also slid, falling to 98.9 in June from 99.4 in May.
- A new report by the IFS, 'Living Standards, Poverty and Inequality in the UK: 2016', funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, has found half of middle-income families rent their homes and while poorer families have become less reliant on benefits as employment has risen, middle-income households with children now get almost a third of their earnings from benefits and tax credits, up from 22 per cent 20 years ago.
- Britain's leisure industry is expecting to reach new heights in 2016 as the falling pound makes the UK great value for overseas visitors, while making British holidaymakers more likely to partake in domestic trips. New figures from VisitBritain show strong growth from markets including the US, Germany, China and Australia in January to March 2016, making it the best ever first quarter for total inbound visits.
- Warmer weather helped Britain's retailers sell more in July than during the same period last year, defying predictions of a post-Brexit slump. Total sales increased by 1.9 per cent, according to the British Retail Consortium and KPMG's latest survey. A separate report, by Barclaycard, found spending in restaurants, pubs and cinemas continued to grow strongly in the month following the vote. However, Barclaycard said that growth in spending overall had slowed.
- Most retailers are looking to build more efficient supply chains and many are considering changing suppliers (30 per cent) and sourcing from different countries (28 per cent) following the EU vote, according to research from Barclays. A third of retailers predict that they will source more from the UK and 52 per cent expect to increase supply chain activity in India and 43 per cent in China. Consumers expect to buy more products with an African supply source. However less than a third expect cost changes to result in price increases for consumers, as retailers look to absorb these costs
- The deal market has proved to be "pleasingly robust" despite uncertainty surrounding Brexit, according to the latest *M & A* report from Experian, published in July. The report said: "While we have undoubtedly seen a more cautious stance take hold among the UK's larger corporates, privately held businesses have been looking to grow by acquisition in increasing numbers in the first six months of 2016, with several sectors actually returning substantial spikes in activity." Although the report says it does seem probable that there will be some reduction in deal flow in the short term as companies take stock of Brexit, "...the imperatives for UK businesses to make deals are still in place." The survey recorded 3,355 deals in the first half in the UK, a slight increase on the period last year and the busiest first six months since 2007. In the East of England there were 283 deals in the first half, virtually unchanged on last year, although deal values fell to £11.1 billion from £18.9 billion last time. The value of small deals (£0.5-10 million) rose slightly to £248 million, although the number of transactions in this bracket

fell to 69 from 79. Overall the East generated 8.3 per cent of the total UK deals in the first half and 12.3 per cent of their value. Three financial advisory firms, Grant Thornton, RSM and Larking Gowen worked on eight deals in the region during the first half. The highest legal adviser by volume was Mills & Reeve with 16 deals. The main sector involving deals in the region was manufacturing, accounting for a third of transactions with deals worth £9.3 billion.

- Business activity rose in the East of England in July and more jobs were created following the Brexit vote although new orders have slowed, according to an authoritative survey of purchasing managers. The East emerged as the top performing region in the UK with a Lloyds Bank Regional PMI of 51; above the 50 level which signifies growth. The survey pointed to an increase in private sector job creation in the region last month across both manufacturing and services. However the survey also pointed to falling client confidence since the 'leave' vote which had caused "new business orders to stall." The region's PMI of 51.0 in July compared to 54.5 in June. Weaker sterling also means companies' costs rose at the fastest rate in more than three-and-a-half years.

## Business:

- Norfolk's 100 largest companies have had a mixed 12 months with increases in turnover and employment but falling profits and lower investment says a study Norfolk Ltd by Grant Thornton. Tough times in the oil & gas sector, concerns on China and over Brexit and pressure on the retail sector all took their toll. Combined turnover for the top 100 rose by 2.1 per cent to £5.7bn – down from 11 per cent growth in the previous year - but profits before tax fell by 21 per cent to £161m. Capital investment rose by just 3 per cent. But employment across the top 100 rose by 6 per cent with most new jobs in services firms.
- Aviva has suspended trading in its £1.8 billion property fund as investors scramble to pull their money out of UK commercial property holdings following the Brexit vote. Investors are now restricted from buying or selling shares in the fund. Aviva said that it is acting in the interests of all investors, adding that it could not give a timeframe for when the suspension would be lifted.
- Annual awards aimed to raise the profile of women in technology are returning to East Anglia, with five new categories added this year. The DevelopHER Awards, led by Norwich developer Vickie Allen, hope to break the pattern which sees just one in five developer roles filled by women. Nominations are now open. For more information visit [www.developherawards.com](http://www.developherawards.com).
- Work has started on building a bespoke facility to house the newly created Leaf Systems bioscience business at Norwich Research Park. The venture will speed up the development and supply of new bio-products including vaccines and pharmaceuticals and is sited next to the John Innes Centre laboratory where the breakthrough was made. Leaf Systems will employ the patented Hypertrans technology which is already being used under license to manufacture flu vaccines for clinical trials in Canada and the US. Construction work should be completed within six months – and Leaf Systems expects to be operational by the end of March 2017. RG Carter is the contractor.

- A £500,000 investment in Norfolk and Norwich Hospital's first commercialised spinout, Ablatus Therapeutics has been made by Anglia Capital Group, an angel investor group with New Anglia LEP and the Low Carbon Innovation Fund. The proceeds will support development of the company's product for treating cancer patients; an advancement of radiofrequency ablation used to "burn away" tumours and other dysfunctional tissue. The technique was developed at the Norwich and Norfolk Hospital which retains a significant stake in the business.
- An interactive, digital database to help SMEs find funding opportunities in the low-carbon, cleantech and sustainability sectors has been launched. Shell Springboard's access to finance navigator features 84 low-carbon funding sources, worth £157 million. <http://www.shellspringboard.org/finance-navigator/>
- Namaste Village, a vegetarian Indian restaurant, on Queens Road, is the latest project of the Jetani family, who also run Namaste India on Opie Street. The restaurant is the latest instalment in the family's success story, following their move to Norwich in 2006. Like Namaste India, the restaurant will exclusively serve vegetarian food, with several vegan-friendly and gluten-free items on the menu.
- Insolvency experts have warned of the widening impact of the enduring oil and gas downturn on the region. It comes as another offshore services firm stopped trading, with the loss of six jobs, becoming the latest in a string of restaurant, hotels and support businesses to feel the ripple effect of "lower for longer" energy prices. The latest casualty was Norwich-based professional kitchen installer Catershop, which has gone into liquidation due to a "terminal" decline in business. The Bowthorpe-based company, which installed kitchens on oil and gas platforms, ceased trading two weeks ago with liabilities of £190,000 - including £70,000 owed to workers. Insolvency practitioners have reported scores of personal service companies – responsible for contract workers – have closed over the last 18 months.
- The founder of a mobile payment app which was piloted in the Norwich Lanes has said his priority is to return as much money as possible to investors, after he decided to withdraw the app from use. Steffan Aquarone said the cashless smartphone technology, which had 40,000 users nationally, including 7,000 in Norwich, had "never got to the scale" to be viable as a profit-making business. But he said the business had not failed and he remained "optimistic" he could raise money from the sale of its technology to return money to shareholders – who took stakes through two crowdfunding rounds which raised £1m. Mr Aquarone, who founded Droplet in 2011, said the company had been dependent on new investment for growth, but had suffered in the aftermath of the EU referendum.
- Law firm Mills & Reeve has reported a record turnover of £87.2m, an increase of more than £5.5m from last year. The firm employs more than 900 staff across six offices. As a result of the strong performance the firm also announced a staff bonus pool of £1.28m.
- A heritage building firm which has traded in Norwich for four generations and counts the Queen as one of its customers has gone into administration with the loss of 24 jobs. Staff at Royal Warrant-holder WS Lusher & Son were told on Friday that the firm's mounting losses had grown too steep for it to continue. An attempt to secure a lifeline for the business by selling its two-acre Sprowston site earlier this year has so far been fruitless



and more than half of its employees have been let go. The remaining employees at the firm, which has built a reputation for restoring churches, stately homes and historic buildings, will complete its final contracts.

- A Norwich-based tech company is aiming to introduce the next big thing as it aims to make objects interactive. Thyngs, based at co-working hub Whitespace at St James' Mill, Norwich, is a new app launched by Proxama founder Neil Garner which brings items to life digitally at the touch of a mobile phone. Using near field communication (NFC) technology, which is built into most phones not produced by Apple and QR codes the program will bring up a website with more information on a "thyng" when scanned. The technology, which went live on the App Store on Thursday, will also allow companies to put out messages via beacons to Thyngs-enabled phones.
- A lawyer with expertise in food, health and energy and employment will join the board of the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership in September. Jeanette Wheeler, partner at Birketts, heads up the regional law firm's employment team and is a member of its management team. She is a past president of the Norfolk and Norwich Law Society and former chair of the Norwich Business Women's Network. Ms. Wheeler also has experience of working with government being a member of the coalition government's Business Challenge Panel looking at rolling back employment law red tape on business.
- Abellio Greater Anglia is to run rail services in the region for the next nine years after being awarded a £1.4bn contract by the government. The new service for rail passengers across East Anglia promises to deliver more than 1,040 new state of the art carriages and cut journey times by an average of 10 per cent. It will also deliver one of the biggest orders for British-built trains – almost £1 billion for 660 carriages from the Bombardier factory in Derby – as part of a contract that will secure 1,000 jobs into the next decade. Key benefits of the new franchise include:
  - At least four 90 minute services (two in each direction) between London and Norwich each weekday and two 60 minute services per day between London and Ipswich;
  - Free Wi-Fi for all passengers on trains and at stations;
  - 1,043 new, state of the art carriages between January 2019 and September 2020 to support the faster timetable, with a full programme of refurbishment for the current fleet in the meantime;
  - By 2021, there will be more than 32,000 more seats on services arriving at London Liverpool Street in the morning peak, while the new franchise will introduce 1,144 additional weekday services– an increase of 13 per cent - to stations including Ipswich, Norwich, Stansted Airport, Lowestoft and London Liverpool Street.
- A city centre Post Office has opened its new branch after moving out of a shopping centre. The newly-named Norwich Crown Post Office opened in the WH Smith store, on St Stephens Street, after being in business for 20 years in the Castle Mall. All 14 staff from the old branch have moved to the new ground floor store and services offered by the business remain the same.
- Norwich has been ranked seventh in a table of cities with the slowest broadband speeds, suggesting it could be left behind in technological terms. The city was found to have an

average speed of 19.43MBps over a six month period, in a study by comparison site uSwitch.

## Education

- The Government's £600m free school meals scheme is failing to make children healthier or significantly boost their grades, new figures suggest. The initiative to provide nutritious hot lunches to all pupils in the first three years of primary school was launched two years ago, with supporters claiming that it could help cut obesity and raise academic standards. But an analysis of tens of thousands of children shows it has had little impact on either, and may even have resulted in children getting fatter.
- Nearly a million boys in England have been "lost" by the age of five because they have fallen behind girls in the communication skills they need to cope in class, according to a study. The research by the charity Save the Children and Bristol University found that five-year-old boys are twice as likely to have poor language skills than girls. By the time they join reception classes, test results show that boys are, on average, 11 percentage points behind girls. Last year alone, 80,000 boys starting school in England struggled to speak a full sentence or follow simple instructions. The gender gap is as high in some of the wealthiest areas of the country as in some of the poorest.
- Norwich is to have a new school after the government announced the creation of the St Clements Hill Primary Academy. It is set to become the city's seventh free school and will be for children aged 3-11 years, with 60 reception places, growing to a full capacity of 420 pupils. The school will be run by the Right for Success trust, which is based at Eaton Hall Specialist Academy, on Pettus Road. It currently has four other schools - Edith Cavell Primary, Tuckswood Academy, Stalham Academy and Sewell Park College - and is due to take on Sprowston High School when it becomes an academy in September.

## JSA Claimant Count Unemployment

Figure 4 shows the trend in JSA claimant count unemployment since 2012. Rates have fallen noticeably since the beginning of the period; this has been especially marked since spring 2013. The rate in the Norwich City Council area started the period significantly above the national, regional and New Anglia LEP rates. During the past year the gap narrowed and this month, the Norwich rate is equal to the national rate.

**Figure 4 Jobseeker's Allowance Unemployment 2012 to 2016**

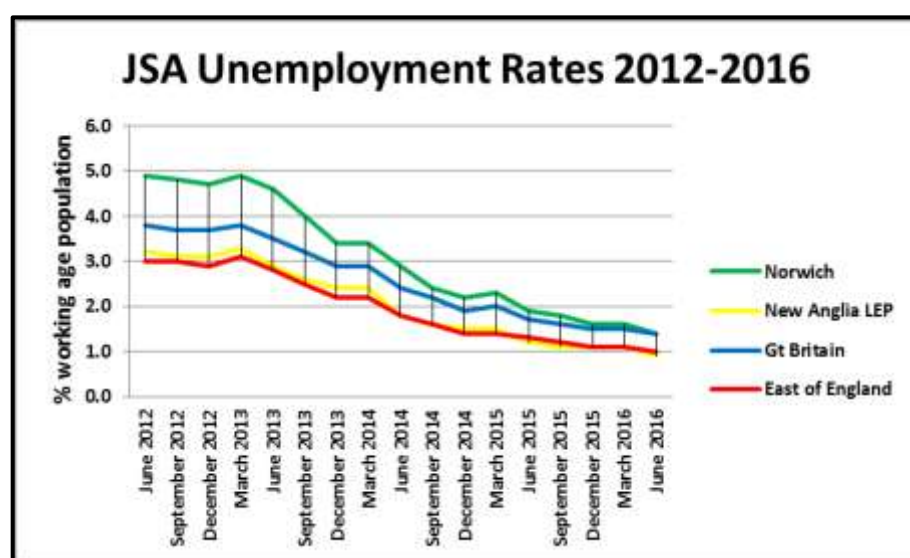


Table 1 indicates that each reported area saw reductions in JSA claimant count unemployment rates over the year. Compared to May, JSA rates remained unchanged nationally and regionally but fell slightly across each of the other reported areas.

Table 1 JSA Claimant Count Rate Unemployment								
	June 2015		May 2016		June 2016		Monthly change	Annual change
<b>Great Britain</b>	691,481	1.7%	562,365	1.4%	540,939	1.4%	0	- 0.3%
<b>East of England</b>	46,778	1.3%	38,005	1.0%	36,002	1.0%	0	- 0.3%
<b>New Anglia LEP</b>	11,874	1.2%	9,645	1.0%	8,998	0.9%	- 0.1%	- 0.3%
<b>Norwich City Council area<sup>i</sup></b>	1,786	1.9%	1,396	1.5%	1,313	1.4%	- 0.1%	- 0.4%
<b>Norwich urban area</b>	2,150	1.5%	1,713	1.2%	1,600	1.1%	- 0.1%	- 0.4%

## Ward Level JSA Claimant Count Unemployment

Table 2 JSA Claimant Count Unemployment								
	June 2015		May 2016		June 2016		Monthly change	Annual change
<b>Bowthorpe</b>	130	1.7%	<b>100</b>	<b>1.3%</b>	100	1.3%	0	- 0.4%
<b>Catton Grove</b>	170	2.4%	<b>138</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	129	1.8%	- 0.1%	- 0.6%
<b>Crome</b>	122	2.1%	<b>94</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	93	1.6%	0	- 0.5%
<b>Eaton</b>	47	0.9%	<b>36</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	34	0.7%	0	- 0.2%
<b>Lakenham</b>	131	2.3%	<b>92</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	91	1.6%	0	- 0.7%
<b>Mancroft</b>	247	3.4%	<b>183</b>	<b>2.5%</b>	167	2.3%	- 0.2%	- 1.1%
<b>Mile Cross</b>	259	3.7%	<b>201</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	182	2.6%	- 0.3%	- 1.1%
<b>Nelson</b>	42	0.6%	<b>37</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	35	0.5%	0	- 0.1%
<b>Sewell</b>	116	1.6%	<b>93</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	90	1.2%	0	- 0.4%
<b>Thorpe Hamlet</b>	165	2.0%	<b>146</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	138	1.7%	- 0.1%	- 0.3%
<b>Town Close</b>	108	1.4%	<b>75</b>	<b>1.0%</b>	66	0.9%	- 0.1%	- 0.5%
<b>University</b>	68	0.8%	<b>55</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	51	0.6%	- 0.1%	- 0.2%
<b>Wensum</b>	181	2.3%	<b>146</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	137	1.7%	- 0.2%	- 0.6%

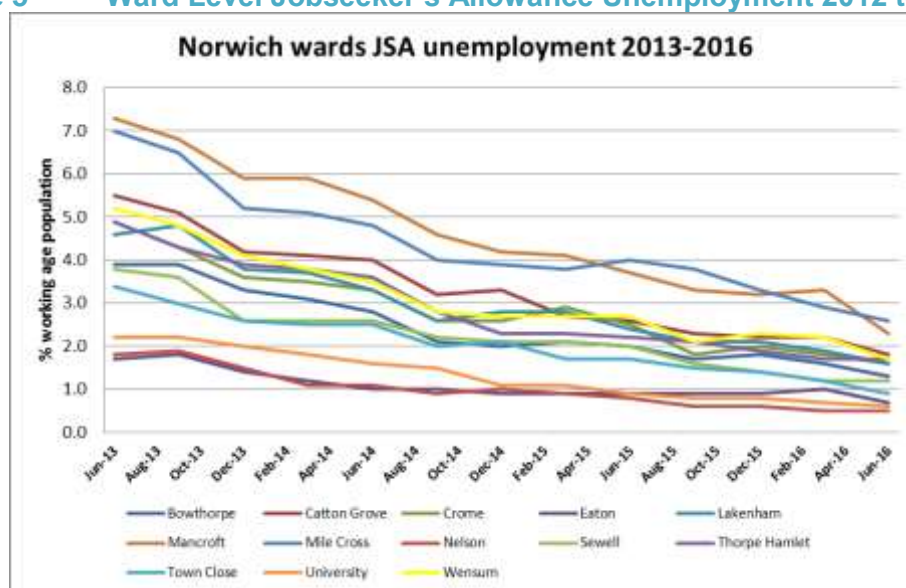
Compared to this time last year, JSA unemployment rates fell across all Norwich wards; rates in Mancroft and Mile Cross wards fell by more than one percentage point.

Over the month, rates in Bowthorpe, Crome, Eaton, Lakenham, Nelson and Sewell, wards were unchanged; the remaining wards saw a small reduction in rates.

Figure 5 on the following page, summarises the movement in JSA claimant count rates across Norwich wards since 2012.

The wide variation in ward rates across the city council area is clearly evident. The differential between the lowest (Nelson) and the highest (Mile Cross) rates currently stands at 2.1 percentage points.

**Figure 5 Ward Level Jobseeker's Allowance Unemployment 2012 to 2016**



## JSA Claimant Count Unemployment: Age and Duration

**Gender:** in the city council area, one in every three (30 per cent) JSA claimants is a woman. Female JSA rates have, for the third month running, remained the same across the region (0.9 per cent), the LEP area (0.8 per cent) and nationally (1.3 per cent); this month the rate was fell slightly across the Norwich area (1.0 per cent)

The male JSA unemployment rate is higher in Norwich (at 2.4 per cent of working age males) than in the LEP area (1.5 per cent), regionally (1.5 per cent) and nationally (2.3 per cent). Over the month, a marginal fall in rates took place across the LEP and Norwich areas; rates were unchanged regionally and nationally.

Norwich's male JSA rate has remained higher than rates in the LEP area and at the regional and national levels since records began in 1992. The current male JSA rate in Norwich is one of the lowest ever recorded and is now almost on par with the national rate.

It is likely that Norwich's relatively high levels of male unemployment can be attributed to the steady loss of manufacturing jobs and the dominance of the service sector in Norwich, which claims a higher proportion of employees (90 per cent) than in the LEP area (83 per cent), regionally and nationally (85 per cent and 86 per cent respectively).

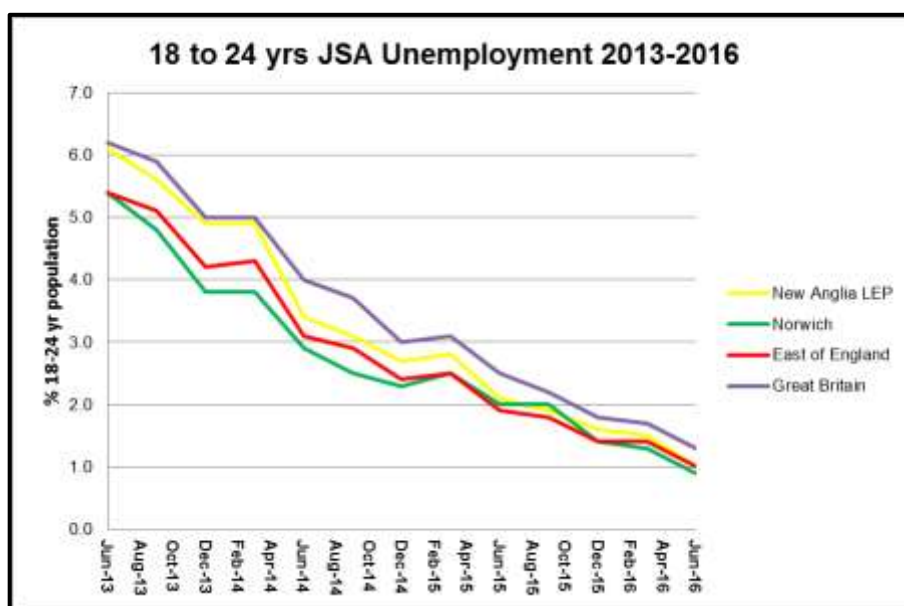
**Duration:** A certain amount of churn is expected within the labour market as people move between unemployment, welfare benefits and employment. Around 52.3 per cent of JSA unemployment claims in Norwich are for a period of less than six months, the same proportion as the LEP area but lower than the proportion seen nationally (55.7 per cent) and regionally (52.6 per cent).

The percentage of JSA claimants who are recorded as being unemployed for more than 12 months stands at 28.6 per cent in Norwich compared to 29 per cent in the LEP area, 24.3 per cent regionally and 26 per cent nationally. Relative to the previous

month, the percentage of long-term unemployed has increased slightly across each of the reported areas.

It is widely recognised that long periods of unemployment make it increasingly difficult for affected individuals to find work, particularly in a weak labour market. However, over the year, the number of people recorded as long-term unemployed in Norwich has fallen from 465 people in June 2015 to 375 currently.

**Figure 6 JSA Unemployment 2012 to 2016 for 18-24 Year Olds**



**Age:** In Norwich 15.3 per cent (200) of JSA claimants are aged 18 to 24 years, a higher proportion than that seen across the LEP area (14.8 per cent), regionally (14.1 per cent) and nationally (14. per cent). This month, the percentage of JSA claimants aged 18-24 years fell across each of the reported areas.

As a percentage of the 18-24 year old age group (rather than as a proportion of JSA claimants), the JSA unemployment rate stands at 0.9 per cent in Norwich; it is slightly higher across the LEP area and the region (1 per cent) and nationally (1.3 per cent). Movement in the JSA unemployment rate over the period 2013 to 2016 is summarised in Figure 6 which shows rates began to fall from 2012 onwards and this trend has continued.

Eaton, Wensum, Crome, Catton Grove, Sewell and Mancroft wards have proportions of claimants aged 18-24 years above that of the Norwich average. Mancroft ward has the highest number of claimants aged between 18-24 years (40).

At the other end of the age scale, Norwich has a lower proportion of JSA unemployment claimants aged 50 years and over (26.4 per cent, 345 people) compared to the LEP area (29.8 per cent) and regionally (29.4 per cent) and nationally (28.3 per cent). Against the previous month, the percentage of JSA claimants aged 50 years or more grew slightly across each of the reported areas except in Norwich which saw a marginal reduction.

## Universal Credit

Universal Credit is the new type of benefit for people who are on a low income or are unemployed. It merges income-based jobseekers allowance, income support, income-related employment and support allowance, child tax credits, working tax credits and housing benefit; it is currently being rolled out across the UK. Universal Credit went live in Norwich in December 2015. Initially it will only be claimed by single jobseekers with no dependent children.

Norwich Jobcentre Plus has recorded 1,135 Universal Credit claims to the end of June 2016; of these, 696 are within the Norwich LA postcode area.

## Housing Benefit

Many Housing Benefit claimants are pensioners, people with disabilities, carers or people who are in low-waged work. It should be noted that resident earnings in Norwich are relatively low and this will be a contributing factor to the number of people claiming Housing Benefit.

	<b>Number of claimants</b>	<b>Monthly change</b>
June 2015	18,173	+ 214 (+ 1.2%)
July 2015	18,308	+ 135 (+ 0.7%)
August 2015	18,144	- 164 (- 0.9%)
September 2015	18,114	- 30 (- 0.2%)
October 2015	18,101	- 13 (- 0.07)
November 2015	18,009	- 92 (- 0.6%)
December 2015	17,914	- 95 (- 0.5%)
January 2016	17,811	- 103 (- 0.6%)
February 2016	17,679	- 132 (- 0.7%)
March 2016	17,254	- 425 (- 2.4%)
April 2016	17,103	- 151 (- 0.9%)
May 2016	17,278	+ 175 (+ 1.0%)
June 2016	17,287	+ 9 (+ 0.05%)

Housing Benefit is an income-related benefit designed to help people on low incomes pay for rented accommodation whether in, or out, of work.

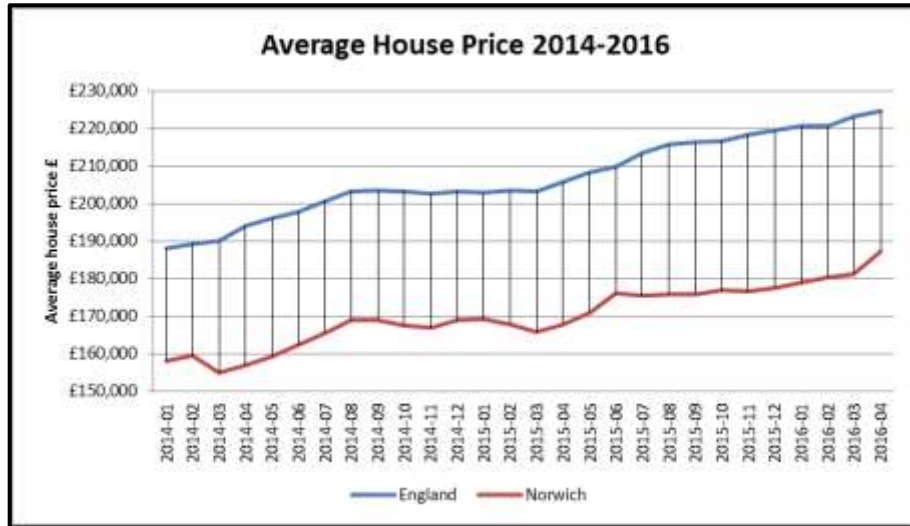
Table 3 shows that the number of Housing Benefit claimants in the Norwich local authority area grew by 9 claims during June. Over the year, Housing Benefit claims in Norwich have fallen by 5.4 per cent. Comparable national data is not available because of a time lag in data collection.

## Young People (16-18 years) recorded as Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

The latest update received from Norfolk County Council is that Norwich's NEET figure stands at 6.4 per cent compared to 3.7 per cent at the county level.

## Average House Prices

Figure 7 HM Land Registry Average House Prices 2014 to 2016



The House Price Index produced by HM Land Registry is the most accurate and independent house price index available for England. According to HM Land Registry's House Price Index (Crown copyright) over the year, average house prices increased by 7.4 per cent in Norwich and by 8.9 per cent across England. Figure 7 summarises average house price movements since January 2014.

During the month of May, average house prices grew by 1 per cent in England and dropped by 0.6 per cent in Norwich compared to the previous month. The average house price in Norwich currently stands at £183,853 against £226,807 for England.



## Appendix

### Contact details:

Sharon Quantrell,  
Economic Development  
Norwich City Council,  
e-mail:sharonquantrell@norwich.gov.uk

### Data Sources:

Figure 4 – JSA claimant count – NOMIS, Crown copyright  
Figure 5 – JSA claimant count wards – NOMIS, Crown copyright  
Figure 6 – JSA claimant count 18-24 year olds – NOMIS, Crown copyright  
Figure 7 – House Price Index, HM Land Registry, Crown copyright  
Tables 1 and 2 – JSA claimant count – NOMIS, Crown copyright  
Table 3 – Housing Benefit claimants - Norwich City Council

**News stories** from a variety of sources including EDP/Evening News; Business in East Anglia; Office of National Statistics; Reuters; BBC; Markit/CIPS PMI; Markit Monthly Economic Overview; University of East Anglia; Norwich University of the Arts, City College Norwich.

---

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 Housing benefit numbers include people who are claiming council tax benefit only