



Norfolk Economic Intelligence Report

This report brings together key business, economic and labour market intelligence to provide a regular insight into the current state of the Norfolk economy. Data is correct to 31 March 2021.



16.0%

National Gross Domestic Product
(QoQ% change Jul-Sept 2020)



0.1%

Interest Rates
(Mar 2021)



0.7%

Consumer Price Index
(annual % change to Feb 2021)



7.5%

UK House Prices
(annual % change to Jan 2021)

Source: ONS, Bank of England.

Great Yarmouth Operations and Maintenance Campus

On the 8 March Norfolk County Council’s Cabinet agreed to work in partnership with Great Yarmouth Borough Council and New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership to deliver an Operations and Maintenance Campus at the southern tip of the South Denes peninsula in Great Yarmouth.



The project will enhance facilities through three work packages:

- 170m of river quay refurbishment and upgrading
- New pontoons
- Revised road layout to optimise the land for development, with associated infrastructure

Norfolk County Council and Great Yarmouth Borough Council will form a joint venture agreement to deliver the **£18 million** project.

The project will deliver a first-class campus in Great Yarmouth, with excellent quayside facilities, with enough space on the currently underutilised land to accommodate offices, technical areas and storage.

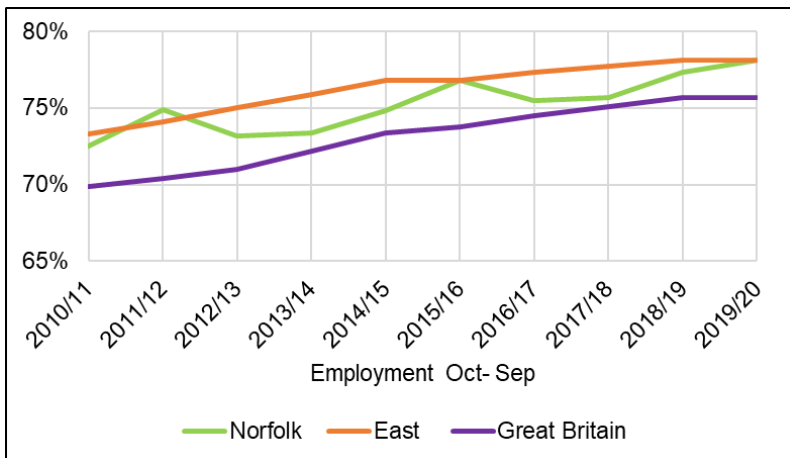
The investment will act as a catalyst to attract investment in the offshore wind sector, supporting clean growth and will create **650 jobs**; enabling Great Yarmouth to compete nationally to exploit the well-established offshore renewables sector opportunities lying off our east coast.



Norfolk Economic Snapshot



Employment



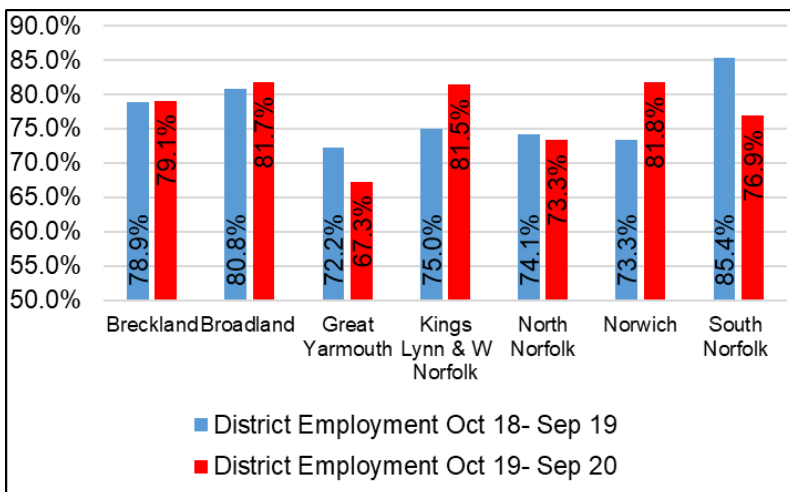
The employment level in Norfolk has increased by **0.8%** from the same time last year.

At **78.1%**, the County's performance is above both the national level (**75.7%**), and equal to the regional level (**78.1%**). Year on year comparison shows a more mixed picture for Districts.

At **4.3%**, Norfolk's unemployment level has not performed so well when compared to both national average (**4.2%**), and regional level (**3.6%**).

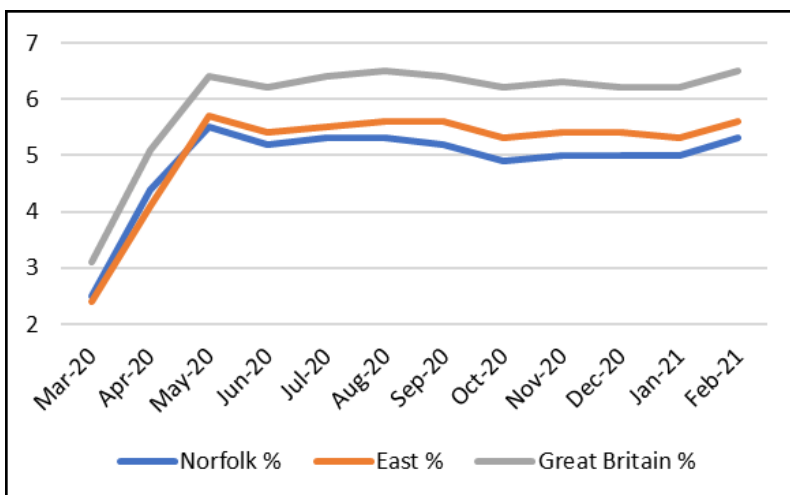
However, it is important to note these are annual figures with delayed reporting and have not included the impact of the current ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, as furloughed staff are still classified as employed.

Out of work claimant rates have been included below to give another representation of the current jobless level.



Source: NOMIS.

Out of Work Claimants Rate



Source: ONS claimant Count

This data represents the percentage of the working age population who are claiming universal credit principally for the reason of being unemployed.

This can be used as a proxy to the level of unemployment in the local area.

From March 2020, the claimant rate in Norfolk has risen from **2.5%** to the peak of **5.5%** in May 2020. The most recent data shows Norfolk at a claimant rate of **5.3%**, which is lower than the regional and national level.



Business

Business Development Team: leads and supports inward investment, business growth and business support in Norfolk. **Business team email:** econdev@norfolk.gov.uk

Public Sector Procurement Programme extended

In 2020, Norfolk County Council and partners launched a [Procurement Hub](#) including a business diagnostic tool to assist in making NCC and wider public sector procurement opportunities more accessible to local SMEs. In 2021 a further series of workshops are planned with a wider focus on other areas of the public sector. The webinars will:

- Provide guidance on the tendering process – how NCC and other public sector organisations procure / why / how to access
 - Show where opportunities are published
 - Explain the advantages of working as part of a consortium and becoming a subcontractor
 - Highlight the importance of a web presence – for procurement opportunities that don't go to tender
 - Provide relevant local case studies of SMEs successfully winning public sector contracts
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Innovation Grant Mentoring

This programme supports small to medium sized businesses in Norfolk and Suffolk to apply for innovation grants. It is progressing well with registrations from a wide range of business sectors and the project has begun granting mentoring support and bid writing coaching to companies working towards innovation funding applications.

The project also offers webinars on innovation funding. The first of these, held in March, on R&D Grant Funding Support, had guest speaker Chris Woodward from Innovate UK EDGE discussing how to develop a successful R&D Grant funding application. More webinars are planned. Innovate UK invited the project to join their virtual event Innovate East as an exhibitor in March, we hosted a booth at the 2 day event, promoting the programme to innovative businesses in the region and met with organisations to spread the word of the programme.

If you want to find out more about this project, go to the Norfolk County Council webpage [Innovation grant mentoring project - Norfolk County Council](#)

Go Digital – project extension

Go Digital aims to support digital transformation in Norfolk SMEs, offering 9 hours dedicated support, a digital audit and a voucher towards implementation of the recommendations made. The original plan to support **43** Norfolk businesses with bespoke digital advice to allow business expansion, increased efficiency or a more effective online presence has blossomed. The project has been expanded to include additional businesses from six of our seven districts due to additional top-up funding by district authorities. In addition, in March a successful France Channel England bid means we will be gearing up to support further businesses from August, sustaining the project over the next 2 years, as digital skills for businesses is prioritised to aid economic recovery.



Infrastructure

Infrastructure Development and Greater Norwich Teams support growth and help remove infrastructure constraints in key areas such as transport, housing and planning.

Infrastructure team email: infrastructure@norfolk.gov.uk

Greater Norwich Growth Board

The Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB) have agreed to fund five infrastructure projects that will give Greater Norwich communities greater access to sports facilities and improve green spaces. The funding is pooled Community Infrastructure Levy and is being allocated to these projects through the GNGB's 21/22 Annual Growth Programme. The Greater Norwich Growth Board is a partnership between Norfolk County Council, Norwich City Council, South Norfolk District Council, Broadland District Council and the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership. The GNGB are recognised nationally for their work and are seen as an exemplar model of working by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS). The GNGB won the partnership working category at the 2020 national Planning Awards.

Two of the projects will see the creation of 3G artificial pitches at the Brundall Sports Hub and the Football Development Centre in Bowthorpe.

Kett's Heights – a community supported green space in Thorpe Hamlet with remarkable views over Norwich- will see over **£300k** in investment which will significantly improve access to the site with the creation of a new habitat to improve biodiversity.

The Bure Valley Path will also see improved access with a new crossing over the A140 to deliver safe passage for cyclists and pedestrians. A further **£2 million** will also support the expansion works at Ormiston Victory Academy Costessey.

Norfolk Water Strategy Programme

The Eastern region, and specifically Norfolk, is experiencing growing pressures on water resources, with residents and businesses already experiencing the effects of a changing climate with increasing flooding incidents and potential water shortages. Collaboration will help ensure we have enough water to meet the growing population, support recovery, the growth of the local economy post-covid and enable the local natural environment to recover.

The [Norfolk Water Strategy Programme](#) is funded through the Norfolk Strategic Fund with additional funding from Anglian Water and The Nature Conservancy. The Strategy partnership consists of organisations including the County Council, Water Resources East, Anglian Water and The Nature Conservancy. This partnership is leading the preparation of the Norfolk Sustainable Water Management Plan. The Programme will develop a county-wide sustainable water management plan for Norfolk which aims to secure access to good quality, long-term water resources for all water users while delivering environmental improvement at scale.

A Water Fund will also be established, the first of its kind in the UK. A Water Fund is a governance solution to local water challenges. Water Funds enhance financial and governance mechanisms which unite public, private and society stakeholders around a common goal to contribute to water security through nature-based solutions e.g. creation of wetlands and woodlands.



Skills

Employment and Skills Team comprises the LIFT, CHANCES and Apprenticeships Teams, and the Skills Development Partnership. The focus is on raising skills levels within Norfolk for the benefit of both the individual and the economy.

**BRINGING
EMPLOYMENT &
SKILLS
TOGETHER**

CHANCES



European Union
European
Social Fund

The £5m Chances project aims to help people to get back into work and to provide support in the workplace to overcome health related barriers. Delivery is set to start in April 2021. Norfolk County Council lead the project while delivery is being run by partners Voluntary Norfolk, Citizens Advice Norfolk, Citizens Advice Diss, Thetford and District, and Future Projects. There will be local advocates based in each of the seven Norfolk district areas and these advocates will be using their local knowledge and expertise to provide one to one wide ranging support. The project has a total budget of **£4.9 million** (of which **£2.5m** is funded by the European Social Fund) and will end in September 2023.

Ben Sampson Head of Employment Services, Voluntary Norfolk, said: "The arrival of Chances is particularly timely, and we are proud to be involved with this important project. It will help us to better support people furthest from the labour market, while giving a much-needed boost to residents left out of work by Covid-19."

Our full team of advocate is up and running as of mid-April 2021 which means the frontline work to support people across the county can now begin. For more information visit the project webpage: www.norfolk.gov.uk/chances

Recruit | Retain | Reward

Since launching this scheme, on 1 August 2020, the Apprenticeship team has received **134 successful applications** (as at 30.03.21).

- **96%** supporting the recruitment of new apprentices, and **4%** of applications supporting redundant apprentices.
- **70%** of applications have been for apprentices aged 16-18, with the remaining **30%** supporting apprentices aged 19-24.
- Applications have been received from businesses across all Norfolk districts
- Construction and Business sectors have seen the largest number of applications.

71% of employer evaluations cite the RRR and Government incentives were either 'somewhat important' or 'extremely important' in their decision to take on a young apprentice.

Employer Feedback:

"Happy with the young person we have taken on and the raised level of government support influenced our decision to go ahead with the scheme."

"The RRR Grant has most definitely been the easiest to navigate with regular reminders to ensure the funding comes through, thank you..."

"The apprenticeship grant will significantly help us to provide this person with a proper career and helped give him a job that he may not have otherwise had during this pandemic."



Funding

External Funding Team- provides support to the Council and other partners to access external funding, with the aim of increasing funds spent in Norfolk. **External Funding Team email:** funding@norfolk.gov.uk

Kickstart Scheme

Norfolk County Council continues to act as a Kickstart Gateway organisation, engaging with local businesses with the aim of securing 6-month work placements for young people. The Kickstart scheme provides funding to employers to create high-quality job placements for 16 to 24-year olds currently in receipt of Universal Credit who are at risk of long-term unemployment. To further improve the individual's employability, employers are required to offer training and guidance on basic working skills and key employability practices such as interview preparation and CV writing.

We are pleased to have over **35** placement vacancies live across Norfolk with many of the local businesses participating already having received applications from interested young people. This marks a great success for the team with high-quality work placement opportunities for young people being established. As a Kickstart gateway, we have now submitted over **220** placements to central government for approval representing **60** businesses across Norfolk. With many more local businesses interested in applying for Kickstart via Norfolk County Council, we expect these numbers to grow in the coming weeks and months.

To support business in providing high quality placements, we are also engaging with local training providers to leverage the relevant employability skills resources available. This is something we encourage businesses to take advantage of to help develop the young people that they recruit through Kickstart.

Employers of all sizes can receive funding which covers:

- **100%** of the National Minimum Wage/ National Living Wage for 25 hours per week for a total of 6 months
- associated employer National Insurance contributions
- employer minimum automatic enrolment contributions.

If you or an employer you know might be interested in the scheme, please visit www.norfolk.gov.uk/kickstart

