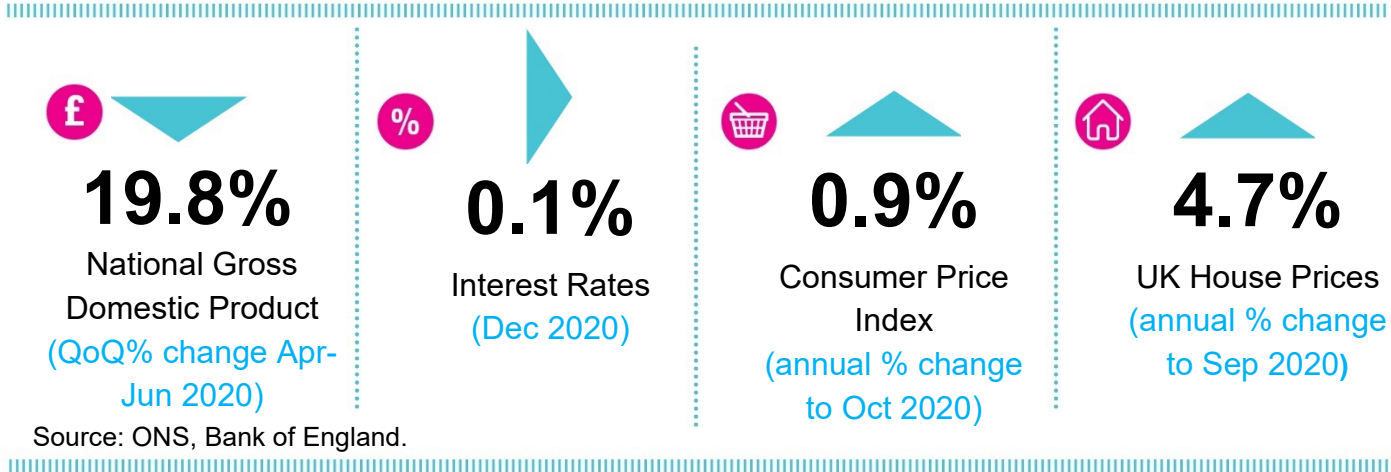




# Norfolk Economic Intelligence Report

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 December 2020.



## Go Digital



Go Digital launched in early December and enables micro, small and medium-sized businesses to make better use of digital technology through funding and one to one support. Successful Go Digital applicants will be assigned an experienced business advisor who will conduct a 'digital audit' and provide a comprehensive report to identify digital opportunities. The advisor will help the business put together an action plan and then businesses will have the opportunity to apply for a grant of up to **£500** to help them deliver projects using this plan. The programme is currently oversubscribed, but we are partnering with district councils to extend the project to support more businesses. To find out more go to [www.norfolk.gov.uk/godigital](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/godigital)

## Norfolk & Suffolk Innovation Grant Mentoring

A new programme to help owners of small to medium sized businesses apply for innovation grants launched on 26 November, with **120** registered for the 6pm webinar. Sitting within an established innovation support landscape, this flexible scheme offers both mentoring support, bid writing coaching, plus broad appeal workshops provided by the project and by expert partners.

## Norfolk & Suffolk Innovation Grant Mentoring

Whilst the project will support all innovation grant funding schemes, the heart of the project is to support businesses with applications to Innovate UK and other UKRI funding streams. Norfolk and Suffolk businesses obtain just **7.2%** of the available funding each year, and the project aims to help local businesses grab a bigger slice of the innovation grants.

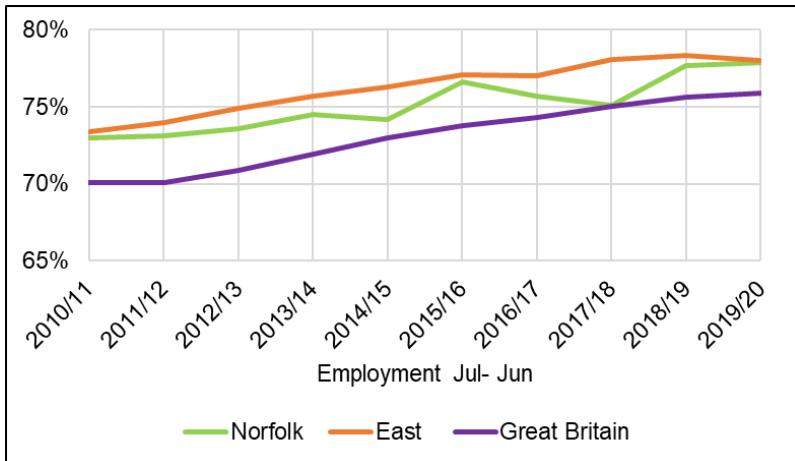
If you want to find out more about this project, check out the Norfolk County Council webpage [www.norfolk.gov.uk/IGMP](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/IGMP)



# Norfolk Economic Snapshot



## Employment

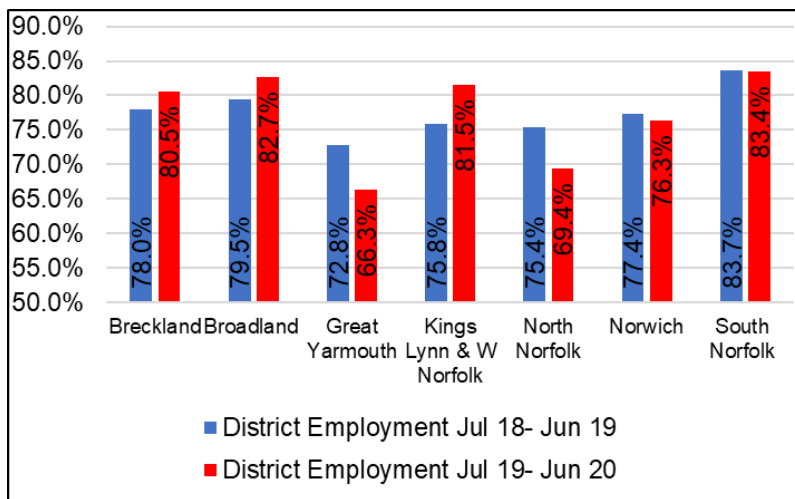


The employment level in Norfolk has increased by **0.2%** from the same time last year.

At **77.9%**, the County's performance is above both the national level (**75.9%**), and marginally below the regional level (**78%**). Year on year comparison shows a more mixed picture for Districts.

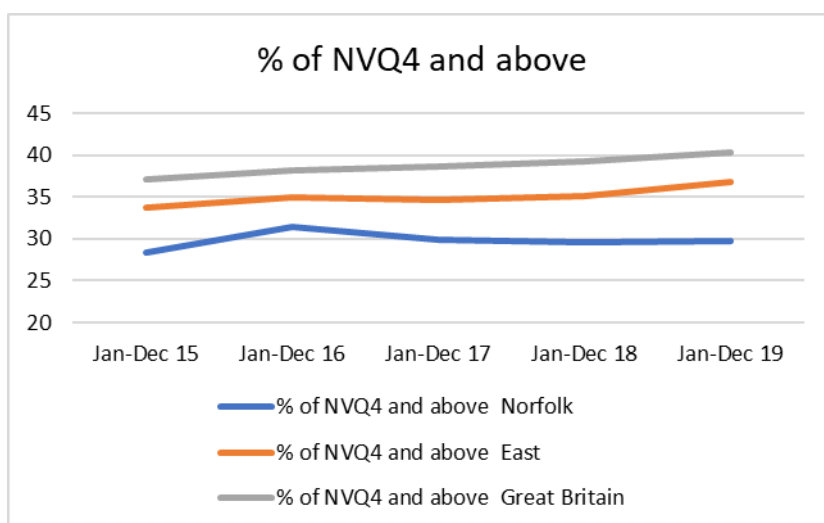
At **4.4%**, Norfolk's unemployment level has not performed so well when compared to both national average (**3.9%**), and regional level (**3.5%**).

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



Source: NOMIS.

## Qualifications



Source: NOMIS

NVQ4 level represents Higher National Diploma, degree and higher degree level qualifications or equivalent.

At **29.7%**, Norfolk generally has a lower proportion of its working age population obtaining higher level qualifications than the Eastern region (**36.8%**) and Great Britain (**40.3%**).

A lower level skilled workforce contributes to the lower than national average earning level economy in the County.



## Business

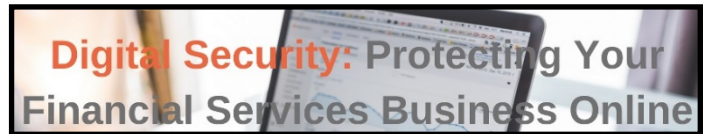
**Business Development Team:** leads and supports inward investment, business growth and business support in Norfolk. **Business team email:** [econdev@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:econdev@norfolk.gov.uk)

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### Cyber Security: Making Norfolk the safest place in the UK to trade online

It's a big ask, and will need multiple actions over time — but as a step in the right direction — Norfolk County Council have teamed up with the National Cyber Security Centre, Norfolk and Suffolk Constabularies, and partners NALEP and TechEast to run an initial series of four online webinars, all aimed at keeping businesses safe online.

Following a Restart Festival taster session, the second event — specifically aimed at the Financial Services sector — was hosted by the Financial Industries Group on 9 December.



**51** businesses enrolled for the 90-minute workshop, which provided clear advice and handy tips, most of which could be implemented free of charge and with limited technological know-how.

The next event is planned for the 13 January. Non sector specific, we will be asking sector groups and partners to help promote the event to our local business communities.

A final event in this first series will be aimed at the manufacturing sector. The spring date for this event is yet to be set.

Longer term, we are looking to develop some “deep dives” into specific technologies to support businesses to the next level of security coverage. In the meantime, check out:

[CyberProtect@Norfolk.police.uk](mailto:CyberProtect@Norfolk.police.uk) and/or <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/cyberessentials/overview>

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### Is your business 'Bid Ready'?



A Norfolk County Council Procurement webinar took place in November for micro and SME businesses from across Norfolk. The event provided guidance on our tendering process, tips on how to write a tender, options for bidding and the importance of having a web presence.

Organised by NCC in partnership with the Norfolk Chambers of Commerce the event was opened by Councillor Graham Plant with speakers including Annie Southgate from the NCC Procurement team and Jason Middleton from the New Anglia LEP highlighting some of the local grants and support that is available during these challenging times. Some of the local organisations that have worked for NCC were also show cased including Uniotec, the Benjamin Foundation, Business Writers Ltd and Action Community Enterprises.

Our business diagnostic tool to help local businesses win more work from the local public sector was also launched at the event and can be found on the Norfolk Chambers new 'Procurement Hub' page: <http://www.norfolkchamber.co.uk/procurement-hub>

A recording of the presentations from the event, case studies and other useful information have also been uploaded to the Procurement Hub. Building on this successful event further Procurement sessions are being planned for 2021.



## 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](mailto:infrastructure@norfolk.gov.uk)

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### Offshore Coordination Project consultation

National Grid ESO have published for consultation (October 2020) proposals for a coordinated approach to connecting the electricity generated from offshore wind farms to the grid. This is a non-statutory consultation, which is largely technical and aimed at the electricity companies; offshore renewable energy businesses; and other stakeholders, including local authorities involved in any new transmission networks. The consultation forms part of a wider Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR) exercise being led by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

The consultation sets out a comprehensive and integrated option for a future offshore and onshore electricity transmission network designed to manage the growth of the offshore wind energy sector, which is expected to deliver 83 GW of the UK's electricity by 2050 compared to current levels of just over 10 GW. While there are clear and demonstrable benefits to an integrated approach as set out in the consultation documents, there is a need for further detailed assessments to be carried out covering, for example:

- Consideration of the wider onshore environmental implications of any new transmission network/s, including any drainage and/or flood risk;
- Consideration of the economic opportunities for those coastal areas affected; and
- Consideration of enhanced community engagement in the decision-making process as well opportunities for those local communities to benefit from any new onshore infrastructure.

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### Offshore Transmission Network Review

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy are currently overseeing an Offshore Transmission Network Review (OTNR). This comprises various "studies/projects" being undertaken looking into the wider issue of grid connection associated with the offshore wind energy sector, which include:

1. National Grid (Electricity System Operator - ESO) – Assessing the grid connection options associated with an expanded offshore wind energy sector (see below – Offshore Coordination Project);
2. Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) –BEIS are currently assessing the **regulatory regime** in respect of grid connection to facilitate a more sustainable and efficient electricity distribution network. This is complementary to the above technical work being carried out by the NGESO; and
3. Crown Estates as part of the Fourth-Round licensing are undertaking strategic studies around onshore environmental and community sensitivities to support the Round 4 pre-application discussions.





## 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.

**B**RINGING  
**E**MPLOYMENT &  
**S**KILLS  
**T**OGETHER

### Recruit | Retain | Reward

Apprenticeships Norfolk launched the **Recruit | Retain | Reward** incentive on 1 August 2020.

The scheme provides an additional **£1,000** for small/medium businesses in Norfolk, recruiting apprentices aged 16-24, when recruiting new apprentices or taking on apprentices made redundant due to COVID-19, to complete their apprenticeships.

Since launching the scheme, we have received **84** successful applications (as at 09.12.20)

- **93%** supporting the recruitment of new apprentices, and **7%** of applications supporting redundant apprentices.
- **73%** of applications have been for apprentices aged 16-18, with the remaining **27%** 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.



### Employer Training Incentive (ETIP)

A delegated grant scheme funded by NSF and NCC as part of the 'BEST' Project to be launched early 2021.

For Norfolk SMEs in sectors that have been most effected by COVID-19, the Visitor Economy, Retail, Food & Drink, Agricultural & IT Sectors specifically. It will enable employers to increase their employee's skills levels, support their diversification or growth, and help with job retention. It will fund:

- **75%** of training costs, up to **£1,500** per business
- Accredited training up to Level 3
- Non-accredited training
- Mandatory training
- Online-only/Digital training

The onus is on the employer to identify their requirements, so the team have been working closely with training providers to collate a demonstrative portfolio of options.

The team will also be briefing its networks over the coming weeks, ensuring consistent promotion of the scheme across the County.





## 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](mailto:funding@norfolk.gov.uk)

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### **KICKSTART SCHEME**

Norfolk County Council (NCC) will be acting as a representative body for the Governments' Kickstart Scheme and administering applications on behalf of Norfolk employers wishing to take part.

The Kickstart Scheme provides funding from DWP to create new job placements for 16-24-year olds currently in receipt of Universal Credit. It is particularly aimed at those who are at risk of long-term unemployment, providing them with a job at a local employer with a minimum of 25 hours per week for 6 months.

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. 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](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/kickstart)

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### **Bid Writing Workshop Programme**

The External Funding Team (EFT) converted their popular bid writing workshops from an in-person format to a virtual programme. The team broke the workshop down into five 45-minute sessions, with each session focusing on a specific aspect of writing an application for funding.

Following completion of **15** workshops across 3 programmes, feedback was universally positive. Delegates have also suggested other workshops they would like to see as part of the programme.

As a result of this we have decided to offer a full series of workshop for both internal and external organisations, starting in February 2021. We will be running three programmes in each quarter, with each programme consisting of five one-hour workshops. In order to allow as much flexibility as possible each programme of workshops will follow the same curriculum and each session is mirrored in all programmes. Delegates may, if their diaries require, switch between programmes to complete the whole course, or select the element / session required.

These workshops are for individuals who have not much bid writing experience, or who need a refresher course and all workshops are limited to 10 people each and we will publish a full calendar of workshops with dates and times, early in January

For further information, or information of bespoke workshops for your organisation or department, please contact the External Funding Team: [funding@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:funding@norfolk.gov.uk)

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