



Norfolk Economic Intelligence Report

This October to December 2022 report brings together key business, economic and labour market intelligence to provide a regular insight into the current state of the Norfolk economy.



Source: ONS, Bank of England.

The chart from ONS and the Bank of England shows:

- 0.2% increase of National Gross Domestic Product which is a quarterly-on-quarterly percentage change since April to June 2022
- 3% Interest rates (November 2022)
- 9.6% increase of consumer price index (annual percentage change to October 2022).
- 9.5% increase to UK house prices (annual percentage change to September 2022)



The County Council and the government have, in principle, agreed on a [county deal for Norfolk](#). This would see funding and powers transferred from government, to determine best how to address local issues.

The deal provides guaranteed income of £20m a year for the next 30 years, as well as specific funding for integrated transport, brownfield development (£7m), adult education, and infrastructure (£5.9m for housing, regeneration and development).

There is still a long way to go - the consultation and sign off process will take the whole of 2023 - but this is good news for Norfolk, at a time when dedicated EU funding has ceased, and most other funding is available on a national competitive bidding basis – which can result in time and money being wasted on unsuccessful bids.

In the coming months we will be engaging with the businesses, community groups and partners, about what the deal could mean, in practice, for Norfolk.

This Deal links well to the work we have been doing on the [Norfolk Investment Framework](#) and the collaborative approach to developing strategic projects that can really begin to deliver a shift in jobs, productivity and skills - and produce significant benefits for our communities and businesses.

The County Council commissioned the Framework in response to a number of factors, including the Government’s Levelling Up White Paper, which aims to boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector and improving public services, especially in those places where they are weakest.

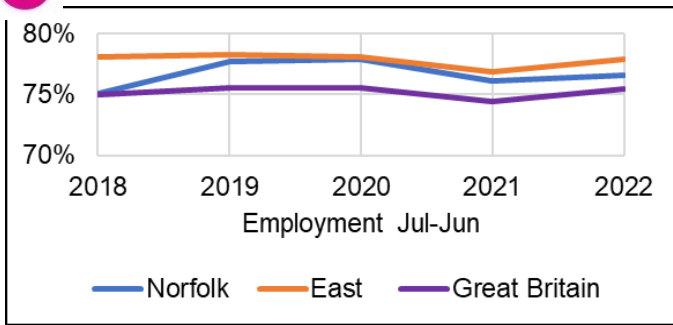
See page 3 for a further update on Framework activity.



Norfolk Economic Snapshot

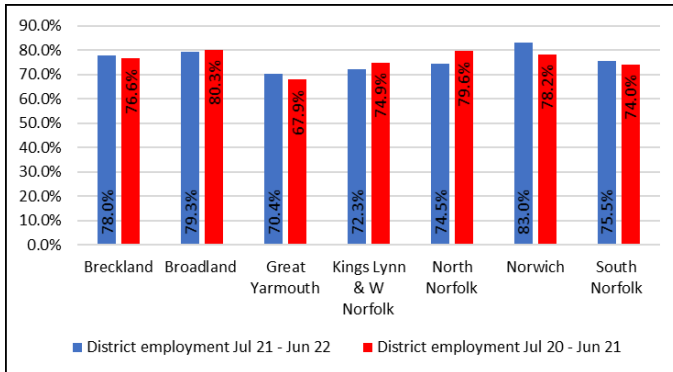


Employment



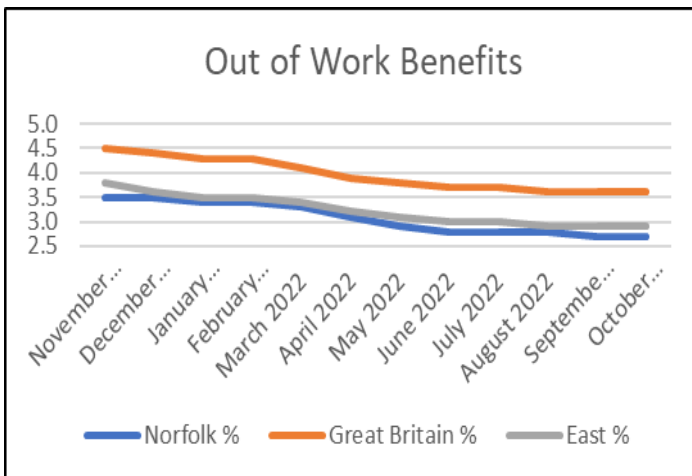
The employment level in Norfolk has increased by 1% from the same time last year.

At 76.6%, the County's performance is above the national level (75.5%) and slightly below the regional level (77.9%).



A year-on-year comparison shows a more mixed picture for Districts. There is a small percentage of increase and decrease amongst them.

At 3.9%, Norfolk's unemployment level has performed slightly worse than the national average (3.8%) and the regional level (3.0%).



Out Of Work Claimant Rate

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 for the level of unemployment in the local area

From Nov 2021, the claimant rate in Norfolk has decreased from 3.5% to 2.7% in Oct 2022. Norfolk generally enjoys a lower than National and Eastern level of claimant rate.



Business

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

Norfolk & Suffolk Innovation Grant Mentoring



The **Innovation Grant Mentoring project** works with businesses across Norfolk and Suffolk, helping promote the route to innovation funding and supporting businesses in developing their innovation proposals, coaching on the bidding process, to improve success rates from the region. The pilot phase of this project is now in its final quarter. The project has increased awareness around innovation funding through webinars and identified there is an interest from businesses in the region to work towards innovation funding. The project has supported businesses in developing their innovation proposals and assisted some in achieving grant success. The next project phase is planned to start in January 2023. If you are interested, [visit the innovation grant mentoring webpage for more information and to register](#).

Sync the City 2022 was supported by the County Council, and over 130 people took part in the start-up entrepreneur ‘hackathon’ event, which took place over 54 hours. East Coast College joined for the first time this year. The teams included software developers, designers, business finance and marketing experts, who were supported by 15 mentors from local businesses. The 32 pitches were whittled down to 10 projects. The winning teams were: Judges Choice: Trust M3, a CV validating concept: People’s choice: Recycle Junkie, which educates people on what to recycle. Polygon’s Non-Fungible Token aware prize went to Dicecaster (board game development platform). Cllr Graham Plant attended the opening event, and Cllr Tom Fitzpatrick the Saturday night award ceremony. Our congratulations to all involved.

Go Digital offers free digital business support for small and medium-sized businesses in Norfolk. The project helps businesses grow by identifying opportunities with digital tools. Following the success of the Go Digital project since its launch during the pandemic, we are looking ahead to the next phase. The team have now supported nearly 1000 Norfolk businesses. A recent evaluation of the C-Care project for Go Digital has indicated a high level of satisfaction following survey feedback from businesses. A number of Norfolk’s district councils have chosen to contribute their UKSPF funding to the continuation of Go Digital, which is great news for Norfolk businesses. Video case studies will follow in the new year.

Norfolk Investment Framework (NIF). We held a number of workshops in the Autumn, which brought stakeholders together to start to discuss the NIF grand challenges and design interventions. We received a high level of response to pilot project funding opportunity - 64 expression of interest forms and 30 full business cases from this process. Having assessed all of these, the shortlist of projects recommended for approval was endorsed by the NIF Steering Group on 24 January and will now go through the County Council’s Cabinet for financial approval in March, before the projects start in April 2023.

Looking to the future, we are now starting to develop a longer-term pipeline of larger scale strategic interventions to address the Framework’s four grand challenges which will, once again, involve the engagement of a wide range of stakeholders in its development.



Infrastructure

Infrastructure Development and the Greater Norwich Project Team 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 Annual Growth Programme 23/24



Nine projects benefiting communities in Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk, have been earmarked to receive more than £10 million in funding from the Greater Norwich Growth Board.

They include a new 3G pitch in Aylsham, a cycle route between Hethersett and Norwich Research Park, access improvements to the Roman town at Venta Icenorum, two new country parks – one in Queens Hills and one in Cringleford, work to regenerate Sloughbottom Park and Guildhall and Exchange Street and

improved access to Hethel Technology Park. Investment in these projects will attract match funding that will boost the total amount of money being invested to just under £27 million.

Alongside these projects, a further £2.5 million is proposed to deliver the school's capital programme and £4m to be set aside as match to support the delivery of future major infrastructure projects that secure funding from central government.

Together these make up the Greater Norwich Annual Growth Programme 23/24 and are being put forward for funding through the Greater Norwich Growth Board (GNGB). This is a unique partnership, designed to accelerate growth made up of Broadland, Norwich, South Norfolk, Norfolk County Council, together with the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership. This award-winning partnership pools Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) income from development in each area to invest in infrastructure and improvements for all.

Since 2014, the GNGB has allocated funding to nearly 100 projects. A recently completed project is Norwich Parks tennis, which delivers quality tennis across five parks in Norwich, at an affordable price that attracts a broader demographic of new players. The project has been so successful that it has won national recognition as one of the most successful community tennis programmes in the country and is used as a case study of best practice by the Lawn Tennis Association.

Having been agreed by the GNGB, the nine new projects are now proceeding to each District Cabinet, seeking their agreement before returning to the GNGB for formal confirmation of funding in March.



Skills

Employment and Skills Team comprises the LIFT, CHANCES, 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. **Employment and Skills team email:** skills@norfolk.gov.uk

BRINGING
EMPLOYMENT &
SKILLS
TOGETHER

Within Norfolk & Suffolk Skills Hub arrangements, NCC Skills have supported the development of the Norfolk/Suffolk Local Skills Improvement Plan Implementation Plan (LSIP). A national DfE programme, led locally by the Norfolk Chambers of Commerce, the LSIP will develop a comprehensive analysis of workforce needs within the Digital, Agri-food and Net-Zero themes, evidencing skills requirements on which to establish future training provision. The Norfolk and Suffolk programme includes significant digital media and engagement events with employers to maximise access for SMEs, the creation of a live employer portal to record immediate skills needs, a curriculum development forum with FE colleges and a skills translation function, interpreting industry needs into specific curriculum requirements. The Norfolk and Suffolk LSIP will submit the skills priorities on the focussed sectors to the DfE in March 2023, with submission of full report later in May 2023.

The **#MadelnNorfolk** campaign was delivered in October, through a SKY TV advert and four case studies which formed part of a digital campaign which aimed to increase awareness of apprenticeships for SME business owners in Norfolk.

Building on the success of the 2021 campaign, we highlighted local businesses that Apprenticeships Norfolk have supported in 2022 to navigate the apprenticeships world and successfully take on new apprentices. The objectives of this campaign were to inspire business owners who may not previously have thought about implementing an apprenticeship scheme (new starters or existing staff), by highlighting the benefits apprentices can bring and the pride and passion employers and employees develop when they implement an apprenticeship scheme in their organisation.



As well as the TV advert, we produced four individual case-study films that look to answer the question, "What could an apprentice do for you?"

The organisations featured have all said that without [Apprenticeships Norfolk](#) they may never have taken on an apprentice. They may have thought that it was a good idea, but not known where to start. Now they have all reaped the benefits of having an apprentice! [Watch the #MadelnNorfolk TV advert and short films online](#) or scan the QR codes.



European Union

European
Social Fund



The **Insight Apprentice project**, part-funded by the European Social Fund, Norfolk County Council, and delivery partners, aims to increase the number of small and medium businesses that are engaged with apprenticeships. It focuses on some of Norfolk's key growth sectors, including Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering, Agri-tech, Clean Energy, Digital/ICT and the Social Economy and has also supported businesses across all sectors impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Launched in October 2021, the project has received 83 referrals in its first year of delivery, with 41 organisations receiving direct support through the programme's Business Development Officers.

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

Following a rigorous application and appraisal process, in June 2021, we submitted bids to the **Community Renewal Fund (CRF)** on behalf of 26 projects from across the county.

We were delighted that Norfolk achieved more than half of our ask of government, being the most successful English local authority in terms of projects approved (14) and being awarded the fourth largest amount of funding for any lead authority (£6m).

The successful projects have been delivered by us, along with Norwich City Council, Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk and a range of charity and non-profit organisations. They have had a wide-reaching impact across the county on skills, employment, communities and place, business and net zero goals.

On 18 November, ATQ consultants and Norfolk County Council hosted the final CRF event at Hethel Innovation Centre. This session gathered members from the 14 approved projects and discussed the learnings from the CRF programme. It was a successful event, with great discussions and engagement from all who attended. The team worked hard to get the final claims reviewed before the programme ended on 31 December.

Reversible dementia project set to transform the lives of often misdiagnosed patients



A project funded by the Norfolk County Council-managed Interreg France (Channel) England Programme is set to transform the treatment of patients with an often misdiagnosed condition known as normal pressure hydrocephalus (NPH).

The €3.6million project Reversible Dementia (REVERT) is a cross-border collaboration of eight partners, three from the UK and five from France.

Led by the University of Cambridge.

REVERT recently launched a pioneering one-stop, multidisciplinary clinic at Addenbrooke's Hospital to help identify and treat people with NPH, which is often misdiagnosed as Alzheimer's disease.

Unlike Alzheimer's, NPH can potentially be reversed by surgically implanting a shunt, (a small valve connected to a tube inserted into the brain which diverts fluid elsewhere in the body). This is significant, as an estimated 5 to 15% of dementia patients (the equivalent of about 65,000 - 200,000 people in the UK and France) are misdiagnosed with Alzheimer's each year.

The clinic provides patients with an initial assessment by a specialist multidisciplinary team, and if NPH appears a possibility, more advanced diagnostics will take place. Not only can early treatment be transformational for NPH patients, but there are potentially huge health care savings as the average annual costs of dementia care per affected person in the UK is estimated at £32,250, and €22,099 in France.