



Norfolk Economic Intelligence Report

This July to September 2022 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 30 September 2022.



0.8%

National Gross Domestic Product
(Q on Q % change Jan-Mar 2022)



1.75%

Interest Rates
(Sept 2022)



8.6%

Consumer Price Index
(annual % change to Aug 2022)



15.5%

UK House Prices
(annual % change to July 2022)

Source: ONS, Bank of England.

New Great Yarmouth Operations and Maintenance Campus moves a step closer



A new operations and maintenance campus for Great Yarmouth moves a step closer, as Tilbury Douglas is awarded the contract to construct the new facility, which is expected to provide a major boost to the region's offshore energy sector.

Commissioned by Norfolk County Council, the £21.4m partnership project

is a collaboration with Great Yarmouth Borough Council and the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and seeks to capitalise on the now well-established offshore renewables sector off the east coast, and the Enterprise Zone that covers sites in Great Yarmouth.

Initial demolition works on the South Denes Peninsula were carried out last year to prepare the site for development, and now, subject to final planning conditions being met, construction is set to start in December 2022. The build should take around 12 months to complete and will see 190m of river quay refurbished and upgraded, along with the creation of new vessel pontoons and delivery of a revised road layout and associated infrastructure to optimise the land available for future development.

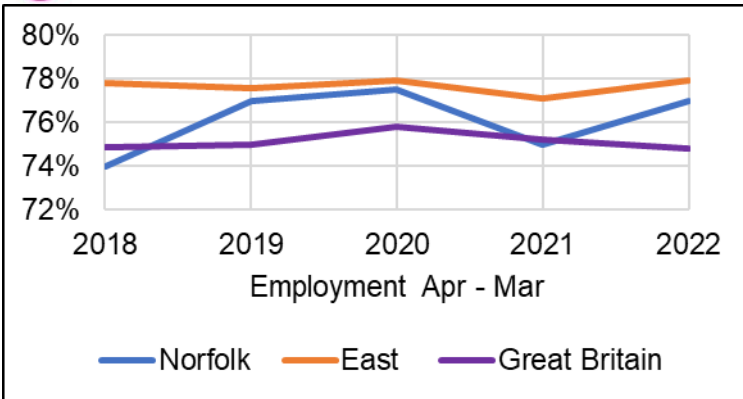
As a key investment opportunity under Great Yarmouth's Town Deal and the borough council's strategy for economic growth, its delivery is expected to provide a welcome boost to the local economy, supporting the delivery of employment growth in the area.



Norfolk Economic Snapshot

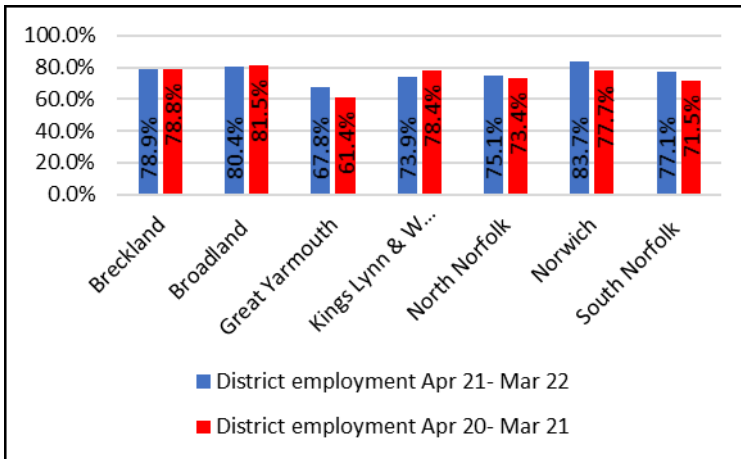


Employment



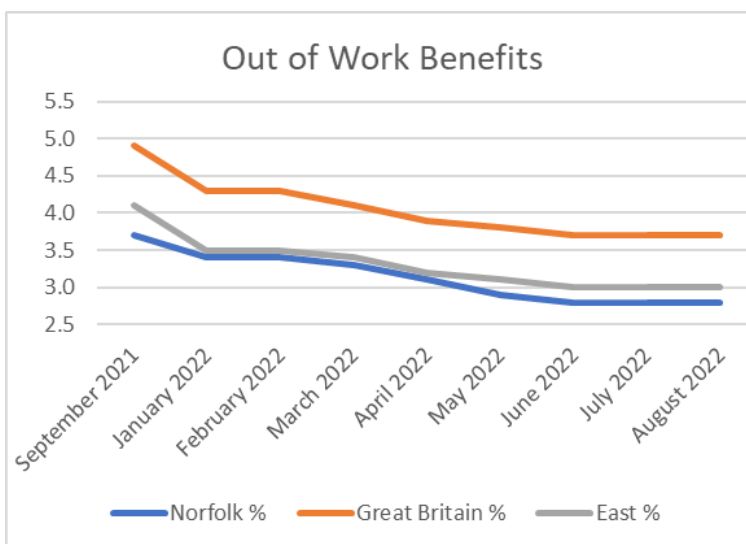
The employment level in Norfolk has increased by 2% from the same time last year.

At 77.3%, the County's performance is above the national level (75.2%) and slightly below the regional level (78%).



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

At 3.2%, Norfolk's unemployment level has performed well compared to the national average (4.1%) and the regional level (3.3%).



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 Sept 2021, the claimant rate in Norfolk has decreased from 3.7% to 2.8% in Aug 2022. Norfolk generally enjoys a lower than National and Eastern level of claimant rate.

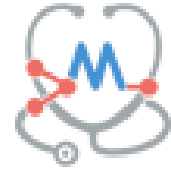
Source: NOMIS.



Business

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

Innovate UK Grant Success – MedAi Ltd



Congratulations to MedAi Ltd in Haverhill, Suffolk, who have been awarded an Innovate UK research and development grant. [MedAi](#) work in AI-driven digital healthcare and are one of the businesses on the **Innovation Grant Mentoring Project**. They were supported by project mentors in their bid to the Innovate UK 'Fast Start' Innovation Award. The call was for businesses new to Innovate UK to apply for up to £50,000 to develop highly innovative ideas, focusing on either achieving net zero or self-driven healthcare.

Innovate UK calls are extremely competitive, and the funding success rate in the region is low; Innovate UK awarded £12.24bn of funding between 2004 and 2021 to UK businesses, of which £60m, 0.5% of all funding, was awarded to projects in Norfolk and Suffolk. [Innovate UK Funding 2004-2021 - Innovate UK funded projects since 2004 – UKRI](#)

The Innovation Grant Mentoring project works with businesses across Norfolk and Suffolk, helping promote the route to innovation funding and support businesses in developing their innovation proposals, coaching on the bidding process, to improve success rates from the region.

Is your Business 'Bid' Ready?

The **Business Development team**, in partnership with the NCC Procurement team, North Norfolk District Council and the Norfolk Chambers of Commerce, held a free public sector procurement webinar on 7 September to prepare SMEs to access County Council and wider public sector supply chain opportunities.

Presentations provided guidance on the Council's tendering process, tips for writing a tender, the importance of social value and our net zero targets, as well as options for bidding.

Local SMEs that have successfully won contracts also spoke - and will hopefully inspire more Norfolk SMEs to explore public sector contract opportunities.

Feedback from attendees was very positive, with the majority of attendees feeling more confident to bid for public sector contract opportunities in the future. The webinar was recorded and can be found on the Norfolk Chambers Procurement Hub <https://www.norfolkchamber.co.uk/support-hubs/procurement-hub/>.

We will now begin exploring opportunities to hold a face-to-face event, potentially a 'meet the buyer' session, in the coming months.

Go Digital

The pandemic pushed many smaller Small and mid-size enterprises (SMEs) to rethink their marketing strategies and go online. **Go Digital** was developed based on SME feedback and offers bespoke digital advice and access to £500 in funding to Norfolk SMEs wishing to increase their digital capabilities. The project saw instant high demand, supporting over 600 Norfolk businesses. Through district and **France Channel England C-Care** funding, over 1,000 businesses will be supported (see page 6 for more details of the C-Care scheme).



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

Norfolk County Council adopted its new Local Transport Plan (LTP) in July. This sets out the Council's strategy and policy framework for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport. It is used as a guide for investment priorities as well as being taken into account by other agencies when determining their planning or delivery decisions. The plan sets out how transport can deliver the council's ambitions, including a growing economy, strong communities and reducing impact on the environment.

The County Council has now turned its attention to delivery so that we can meet our ambitious targets, including net zero carbon. We expect new government guidance on LTPs to be adopted during 2023 and have committed to giving this full consideration and taking any action necessary. Having an up-to-date plan means we can continue to be successful with delivery and funding bids.

Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) – Norfolk is currently hosting some 11 NSIPs at various stages in the planning process and these include:

(a) Consented Projects:

- Third River Crossing Great Yarmouth – under construction and completion expected early 2023.
- Blofield - decision to approve Development Consent Order (DCO) on 22/6/22 – but now subject to legal challenge.
- North Tuddenham – decision on DCO 12 August 2022.
- Norfolk Boreas (Vattenfall) - decision on DCO - December 2021.
- Norfolk Vanguard (Vattenfall) - decision on DCO – February 2022.
- Hornsea 3 (Orsted) – project consented in December 2020.



(b) Projects awaiting a decision

- Thickthorn – given the National Mourning Period, the original decision date of 20 September was postponed. A Statement to Parliament, setting a new deadline for a decision, will be made as soon as possible.

(c) Projects recently submitted to Planning Inspectorate

- Sheringham Shoal and Dudgeon Extension projects –submitted to Planning Inspectorate 2 September 2022; Consultation expected to run (28 days) from the beginning of October 2022.
- Medworth Waste to Energy submitted in July / August 2022 - bulk of the development is in Cambridgeshire.

(d) Pre-Application Projects (early stages)

- Norwich to Bramford 400 kv Power Line (National Grid (NG) Project) – a public engagement exercise took place in Spring 2022.
- Larkshall Mill Aggregate Manufacturing and Carbon Capture Facility – scoping report pre-application stage.

County Council officers are working closely with all the developers to ensure the Council's interests, and those of the wider community, are maximised.



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



The King's Lynn Youth Retraining Pledge has launched, working with organisations to develop a range of engagement and support activities for young people in the town to raise aspiration and improve work readiness and skill levels. Norfolk

County Council is working in partnership with the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk as well as the College of West Anglia, to deliver the project as part of the suite of Town Deal funded programmes in King's Lynn. The project aims to support more than 400 young people to engage in work-inspired activities and, for some, to go on to gain qualifications. The project also aims to engage 50 businesses in the area to offer opportunities to young people and to create 12 new courses over the duration of the project which closes by April 2024.

The project will be working with three groups of young people:

- 15-18-year-olds in full time education with a focus on those at risk of being NEET (Not in Employment Education or Training).
- 18–24-year-olds who are unemployed.
- 18–30-year-olds who are employed without training.

You can find out more about the project or get involved at the Vision King's Lynn website [Youth & Retraining Pledge – Vision King's Lynn \(visionkingslynn.co.uk\)](http://visionkingslynn.co.uk)

Green Sector Skills Development Programme (GSSD)

In this quarter, GSSD will incorporate a range of research, feasibility and partnership activities to support the development of the Norfolk Net-Zero Skills strategy (NNZSS). GSSD incorporates two key work themes:

Green Skills Market Analysis – Norfolk Roadmap - will engage intensively with developers, tier 1 organisations and SME employers in the net-zero and decarbonisation economies. This study will analyse the current scale of the retrofit and wider 'green skills' market, how this can be stimulated to support our net zero ambitions and assess the green skills workforce requirements necessary to achieve the Norfolk commitment of carbon neutrality.

Feasibility of Retrofit Academy, the development of Norfolk retrofit provision and associated Employer network - In developing an infrastructure to meet skill demands, the project will incorporate partnership with the Retrofit Academy, utilising the unique status of the organisation in developing provision, the available retrofit/PAS 2025 curriculum and record of successful local authority partnership in establishing local retrofit skills infrastructure.

Under this partnership, the project will determine the feasibility of establishing a dedicated retrofit training facility in the county and work closely with Norfolk further education and private training providers on a support programme to equip local providers in the development and delivery elements of these retrofit qualifications.

The project will make use of the evidence base in scope/available provision, industry engagement and feasibility recommendations to inform and develop the Norfolk Net-Zero Skills strategy and Net-Zero Portfolio, providing direction for stakeholders and the rationale for future potential investments, including the Norfolk Investment framework.



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

Norfolk Investment Framework update

The County Council, in junction with a wide range of public, private and voluntary sector partners has developed an [Investment Framework for Norfolk](#), that outlines the key economic challenges for the county and a set of investment priorities to address them over the next five years.

The Framework addresses our vision for Norfolk - to drive growth in Norfolk's economy and the wellbeing of all residents - and our ambition to build on strong and inclusive partner relationships to respond to Norfolk's challenges.

A number of workshops, focussed on the challenges Norfolk is facing related to Business, Skills, Climate Change and Public Services, are taking place with key stakeholders during October.

These sessions will:

- test initial concepts and thinking for a set of small-scale pilot projects
- explore what interventions might need to be commissioned
- lay the foundations for longer term projects and programmes

In parallel, a wide range of short, and longer term, funding sources are being explored, to fund the interventions proposed, or to be commissioned.

If you have any questions about the Norfolk Investment Framework, feel free to email: NIF@norfolk.gov.uk.

Providing Targeted Support in Norfolk

Project C-Care (Covid Channel Area Response Exchange) was set up in August 2020 with the purpose of targeting support to SMEs and individuals in response to some of the biggest socio-economic impacts of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Norfolk County Council is one of the project's principal partners and has a budget of €1.06 million (100% funded by the ERDF).

As part of the project, the Council launched its **Access to Apprenticeships (A2A) Scheme**, with the aim to improve the opportunity for young people aged 16-24 and living in Norfolk to be able to start an apprenticeship with an SME. A2A awards grants of up to £500, which, for example, can be used to help purchase digital equipment to enable completion of online learning or e-portfolios.

Throughout 2022, C-Care has been engaging with businesses and potential apprentices to sign people up for the programme, with the project continuing at pace over the last six months. In its most recent report, A2A advised that it has provided support to a further 67 young people, with the majority taking up the offer of digital vouchers, whilst others have used the grant for non-digital equipment or to fund travel expenses.