



# Norfolk Economic Intelligence Report

## Welcome

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 30 June 2020.



2.2%

National Gross Domestic Product  
(QoQ% change Jan-Mar 2020)



0.1%

Interest Rates  
(June 2020)



0.7%

Consumer Price Index  
(annual % change May 2020)



2.1%

UK House Prices  
(annual % change to Mar 2020)

Source: ONS, Bank of England.

## Growth and Development Department COVID-19 immediate response

Growth and Development colleagues supported the County Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic in a number of ways.

### Personal Protective Equipment

Colleagues across three teams did an amazing job engaging with business to both source and manufacture PPE equipment such as gloves, masks and hand sanitiser. Once the social media call was out, Norfolk companies rallied round even further, with gin companies manufacturing hand sanitiser and local 3D printing firms and plastic manufacturers helping design and produce face visors. McDonalds, with 7 franchises across Norfolk, donated 500 aprons, 3,000 gloves and 3 large boxes of hand sanitiser.

### Customer Contact Centre

Staff were redeployed to help the Customer Contact Centre respond to the letters issued

to residents by our district council colleagues, asking them to get in touch if they were vulnerable and in need of support. Some staff also came in on Saturday and Sunday to provide additional cover.

### Food and Medicine

Colleagues were also involved in ensuring that essential supplies were delivered to our most vulnerable residents throughout the shielding period. This included sourcing a donation of 2,600 boxes and parcel tape from ABC, a local packaging company for the first food deliveries. Norfolk Libraries also allowed us to re-purpose boxes from books to food. We worked with colleagues from across NCC and the district councils to develop a ongoing plan for those in need.

Other C19 support included: supporting the Mental Health team, working on the bed monitoring/capacity project, making calls to vulnerable residents, supporting Voluntary Norfolk in the screening of volunteers who have offered their help during the crisis and coordinating vital supplies received into and despatched from County Hall.

## Quick Links

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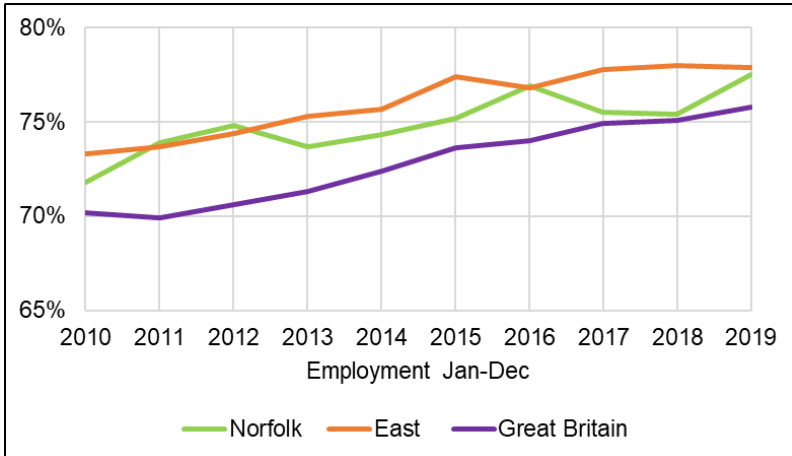
# Norfolk Economic Intelligence Report



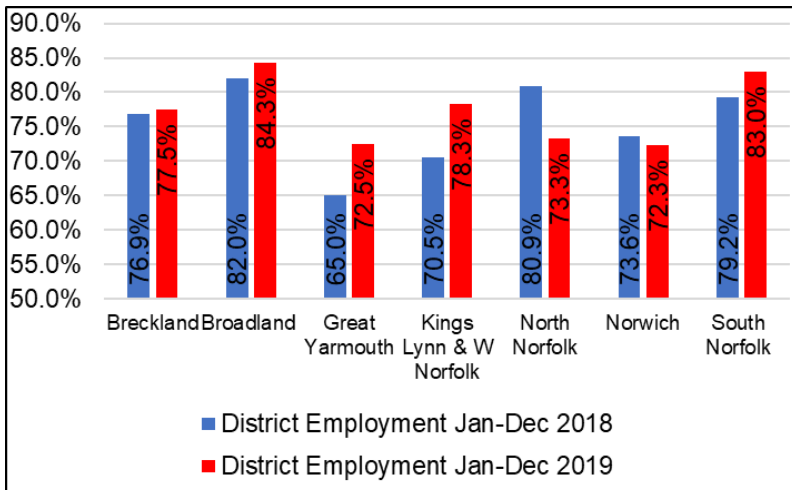
## Norfolk Economic Snapshot



### Employment



Source: NOMIS.



Source: NOMIS.

The employment level in Norfolk has increased by **2.1%** from the same time last year.

At **77.5%**, the County's performance is above the national level (**75.8%**), and marginally below the regional level (**77.9%**).

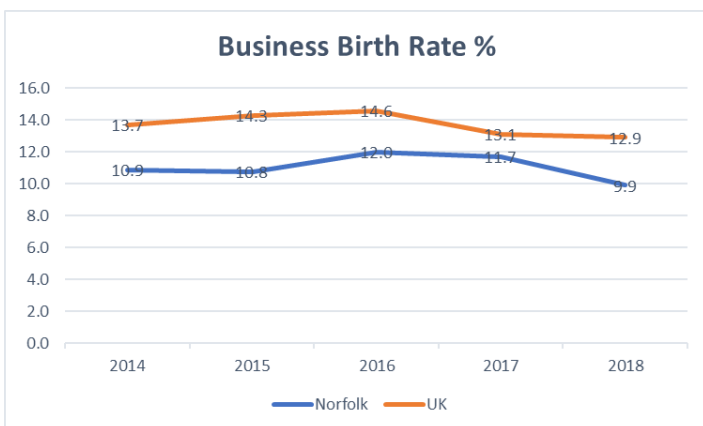
Year on year comparison shows most districts have experienced an increase in employment level.

At **3.9%**, Norfolk's unemployment level is level with national average (**3.9%**), but slightly worse than the regional level (**3.2%**).

Figures above suggest Norfolk has maintained a healthy labour market.

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

### Business Birth Rate



The business birth rate for Norfolk has decreased steadily from **10.9%** to **9.9%** in the 5 year period between 2014 and 2018.

The rate of decrease between 2017 to 2018 is sharper in Norfolk than the national level. The County generally has a lower business birth rate than the UK average.

However, new businesses in Norfolk enjoy a better chance of survival in the first 5 years than nationally.

This shows that the County provides a more stable business climate that promotes longevity.

Source: Business Demography

# Norfolk Economic Intelligence Report



## 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)

### Tourism + Tech webinar event

In partnership with Tech East, New Anglia LEP and Norfolk Chambers of Commerce we held a webinar for the tourism sector on 18 June. Topics covered by the expert speakers included an overview of the visitor economy, support for recovery, digital marketing, property management systems and innovating and reacting to market changes using digital tech. Information was also shared about business support and grants available.

Over 150 delegates attended the conference. A very positive 97% satisfaction rate was recorded. The audience requested further deep dive sessions, the first date for which will be confirmed shortly. [Find out more here.](#)



### Norfolk's Ambition: to make Norfolk the Safest Place to Trade Online

NCC's IMT and Business Development teams have asked the National Cyber Security Centre to work with us and partners: New Anglia LEP, police, etc to develop a number of webinars on cyber security and the most basic hygiene actions which can be taken quickly, with limited or no costs by our small business community. We are looking at using sector groups and business organisations to roll out the training, once the initial package of information is developed. We will be promoting via networks to maximise business impact as a stepping stone to NCC's ambition—stated in this article's title.

### Innovation Grants Mentoring Project (IGMP)

We have successfully secured funding for a 2-year pilot project designed to increase applications to innovation funding streams. The IGFP project will work with existing business advice partners (EEN, Growth Hub, HIL, KTN, ORE Catapult, UEA and OuS) to address longstanding, low application rates from Norfolk and Suffolk based organisations to Innovate UK and other national innovation funds.

IGFP will support business applications by providing promotional resources to raise awareness and interest in the IUK programme; offer bespoke, tailored mentoring from CEOs who have delivered IUK funded projects and deliver bid writing coaching in group and one to one formats. This project will be launched in summer 2020.

Key outputs will include:

- 50 Norfolk and Suffolk businesses aware of UKRI value
- 20 additional Innovate UK bids
- 18 additional successful outcomes
- Over £600,000 of additional innovation funding into the area

We are currently preparing to advertise for company strategic leads who have successfully won innovation grants and bid writing experts in developing bids, so would be pleased to receive leads / advice / contacts ahead of the recruitment phase!

# Norfolk Economic Intelligence Report

## Business

### Agri Food Intelligence & Feasibility Project

In partnership with NALEP and Suffolk County Council, we have commissioned research into the Agri-food sector in Norfolk and Suffolk to provide greater understanding and evidence of areas of specialism, gaps or weak points, relationships and opportunities. This research will help us develop projects and programmes to support and grow the sector and help us to present key messages to attract and retain inward investment.

This report will help us to enable the sector to capitalise on:

- Opportunities from new food trends, for growers and processors
- Opportunities to develop new routes to market for local and specialist foods, especially capitalising on online sales, and considering new distribution and marketing models
- The strengths already existing in the sector, so they can be better promoted, sharing of best practice can be enhanced, and connectivity between businesses can be improved
- Opportunities to develop new products or attract investment informed by the expertise in the region's outstanding food research organisations
- Opportunities to add more value to what we grow

The final report will be available in September 2020.



### Norfolk Film Assets – Feasibility Study looking at growth potential

In partnership with NALEP and our Norfolk district council colleagues, we have successfully bid for funding to undertake research into the Norfolk film sector. The project will:

- Increase our understanding of income generation opportunities for local authorities from film, television or stills shooting days in Norfolk
- Increase our understanding of the value that filming currently brings to the wider economy
- Give us options for the creation of a Norfolk Film Office which will encourage Norfolk as an “easy to film in” location
- Provide options for promoting Norfolk as a film location to the national and international market.



The steering group will meet in August to commence discussion on procurement of the various elements of the project. We will use the opportunity to seek the views of the film sector on how they have been impacted by C19.

The project will provide the evidence base to allow further targeted activity to support the film sector. It will also allow us to consider ways to potentially provide a small, ongoing income for local authorities by marketing assets to the film sector.

# Norfolk Economic Intelligence Report



## Infrastructure

### Offshore Windfarms

The Business Secretary (Alok Sharma) published his long awaited decision on the Norfolk Vanguard Offshore Wind Farm on 1 July 2020, issuing a development consent order (DCO) for the offshore project and the onshore grid connection works/infrastructure. The project for over 150 wind turbines lies some 47 km – 70km off the North Norfolk Coast and will cover two distinct areas – Norfolk Vanguard East and Norfolk Vanguard West.

The project has the potential to generate 1.8 GW of electricity capable of supplying around 2 million households with electricity. The project will provide a significant economic benefit for Norfolk.

The County Council's Strategic Planning team has led on the corporate response to this and other Wind Farm applications and has worked closely alongside other teams, in over-coming a number of the onshore grid connection issues. The County Council has also successfully negotiated socio-economic benefits for Norfolk through securing requirements for a Skills and Employment Strategy to be prepared by the applicant (Vattenfall).

The Business Secretary has postponed his decision on the Hornsea Project Three offshore Wind farm proposal until the end of the year.

The County Council continues its involvement on both these projects through:

Working with the developers on their Skills and Employment Strategies;

Ensuring that all Highway matters are satisfactorily dealt

Working with other planning authorities on the detailed planning requirements covering archaeology and drainage matters.

**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)



### Housing Monitoring Report

The 2020 Norfolk Housing Monitoring Report is due to be published, key point below:

4,826 houses were built in Norfolk in 2018/19, an increase of 1,282 houses since the previous year, 1,092 of these were affordable homes.

Five district councils recorded increased housing completions since the previous year. The largest increase was recorded by Norwich City Council with 927 dwellings completed.

Four district councils, Breckland, Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk delivered more houses in 2018/19 than the Local Housing Need figure, which is the minimum number of houses required to be built each year.

# Norfolk Economic Intelligence Report

## Infrastructure

### Supporting economic recovery on the transport network

Norfolk County Council (NCC) has been supporting the restart and recovery of the county's economy as we emerge from lockdown via various transport initiatives. When lockdown was imposed, traffic levels in the urban centres dropped by over 50%. More people started to walk or cycle as part of their daily exercise. Currently traffic levels are 15% below previous levels.

Working with district councils and other local partners, NCC secured £300,000 from government's Emergency Active Travel Fund for a range of measures from signage and lining to remind people to social distance to providing priority space on the highway for hospitality outlets to put out tables. NCC has now received bidding guidance for the next tranche of money and is working up the details of its bid.

Air quality has improved in our towns since lockdown began and carbon emissions from transport have reduced. We are keen to make sure that these benefits can be captured in the longer term and have embarked on detailed work to ensure this, including through our ongoing review of the Local Transport Plan.

### Business As Usual

Throughout lockdown it's been business as usual with our major programmes and projects supporting long-term economic sustainability. Some highlights include:

In May the Norwich Western Link business case was approved by government, giving conditional entry into the 'Large Local Majors' funding programme. As well as providing more than £1 million of development funding for the project, the announcement gives the council the green light to proceed to the next stage of the national process. Consultation is planned to start in July. At the end of March significant additional funding of just over £22m was made available by government for maintenance of our roads, footways and cycleways

The Transforming Cities Fund application for Norwich was resubmitted on 29 May 2020.

The detailed examination period of our application for the Third River Crossing in Great Yarmouth has now closed. We hope to hear by late summer 2020 whether we have been granted a Development Consent Order, which would give us permission from the Secretary of State to construct the bridge, in late 2020.



# Norfolk Economic Intelligence Report



## 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.

**Employment and Skills team email:** [skills@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:skills@norfolk.gov.uk)

### Apprenticeships Norfolk - New Team, New look

A new team is now in place to support apprenticeships across Norfolk. Sophie Allport and Simon Kenny (Apprenticeships Officers) joined in December 2019 with Katy Dorman (Strategy Manager) joining in February 2020.

Their aim is to increase the number, level, range and quality of Apprenticeships in Norfolk; ensuring they are simple to access and meet the needs of local residents and businesses. The initial focus has been on building relationships with colleges, training providers and stakeholders; developing a refreshed brand and online presence; and attendance at events including the Norfolk Skills & Careers Festival. COVID-19 has brought a set of unique challenges but work continues with a new website in development, new branding and logo and the launch of new social media sites. It would be great if you could help spread the word by liking or sharing the following pages:

**LinkedIn** – Apprenticeships Norfolk

[www.linkedin.com/company/68335095/admin/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/68335095/admin/)

**Facebook** - @ApprenticeshipsNorfolk

[www.facebook.com/ApprenticeshipsNorfolk](https://www.facebook.com/ApprenticeshipsNorfolk)

**Twitter** - @AppsNorfolk

[www.twitter.com/AppsNorfolk](https://www.twitter.com/AppsNorfolk)

**Instagram** - @AppsNorfolk

[www.instagram.com/appsnorfolk/](https://www.instagram.com/appsnorfolk/)

4,210 apprentices were recruited in Norfolk between August 2019 and April 2020 and whilst there has been a drop in starts since lockdown, the recovery phase now underway will provide added impetus to highlighting the benefits that apprenticeships can bring in supporting businesses and individuals to rebuild.

### Skills Deals Phase 2 – Offshore Wind Skills Centre

More local people will be able to train and upskill to enable them to enter or progress within the offshore wind industry as part of a second phase of the East of England Offshore Wind Skills Centre project. This has been made possible as part of an extension of the New Anglia Skills Deal programme funded by Norfolk County Council, Suffolk Local Authorities and the Education and Skills Funding Agency and delivered in partnership with New Anglia Local Economic Partnership.

The £250,000 project will be delivered in partnership by East Coast College and Scottish Power Renewables. The centre will deliver several courses matched to local industry need as part of a wider coherent and coordinated offer for the energy sector. Successful candidates will complete core Global Wind Organisation training, employers can then sponsor candidates to undertake further training to enable them to enter their employment.

**For further information:**

[www.offshorewindskills.co.uk/](https://www.offshorewindskills.co.uk/)

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**Skills**

## **CHANCES Funding Agreed on £5m Project**

The Skills Team are pleased to announce that funding has been agreed on a new project that aims to deliver personalised support to 2,600 unemployed and inactive people in Norfolk.

The CHANCES projects are designed around the concept of an Integrated Health and Employment Service for Norfolk. The primary aim is to support those who are out of work due to a health diagnosis. This programme aims to offer support that allows people to explore their potential to work, boost their skills levels and ultimately move into a work environment which recognises and supports their health needs.

Norfolk County Council is the Accountable Body for this programme, but direct delivery will take place via the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSE) local to Norfolk. Each contracted delivery partner will employ Advocates who are funded by this programme. These Advocates will provide personalised and targeted 1-1 support to enable vulnerable people to embark on a journey back to work. The support will be wide ranging and will be augmented by a range of skills and health interventions. The partnership will also have access to a Flexible Fund to help to overcome any unexpected barriers to training or work.

This programme represents a new approach to delivering employment support in Norfolk and will be funded for delivery of 2.75 years. £2.5m funding has been allocated via Department for Work & Pensions through the European Social Fund (ESF) with

match funding from within Norfolk. Contracts are currently being reviewed and the aim is to launch the programme autumn 2020.

For further information contact Andy Thorpe (CHANCES Project Manager) [Andrew.thorpe@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:Andrew.thorpe@norfolk.gov.uk)

## **New Anglia LEP Jobs Portal**

New Anglia LEP is working with partners, including the Department for Work and Pensions, to support businesses during COVID-19 and to help them find the staff they need to continue to operate at this challenging time.

A jobs portal has been created for employers to advertise job vacancies throughout the pandemic on its website: [www.newanglia.co.uk/employment-opportunities/](http://www.newanglia.co.uk/employment-opportunities/) there are over 120 companies on the portal mostly offering more than one role. The LEP plans to further develop the platform using existing networks to include a redundancy triage service to help connect people to new training and employment opportunities.

### **Staffing Contact:**

Natasha Waller on 07384 253355 or [Natasha.waller@newanglia.co.uk](mailto:Natasha.waller@newanglia.co.uk)

### **Business Support:**

New Anglia Growth Hub 0300 333 6536 or [growthhub@newanglia.co.uk](mailto:growthhub@newanglia.co.uk)



# Norfolk Economic Intelligence Report



## 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)

### LIFT Community Grants

The New Anglia LEP LIFT Community Grants Fund has already awarded 70% of its grant pot. Giving £550k in ESF grants to 30 smaller community-based organisations for their unique, attractive and accessible learning projects with places available for over 1,000 people. The fund has encouraged a range of project ideas, as long as it was clear they would enable those furthest from the workplace to develop new skills, confidence and motivation. The aim is to progress at least some participants into work (14%) or onto more formal, accredited courses (17%).

Activities funded include computer game-building, printing, film-making, event planning, horticulture, online selling skills and even running a hair salon. Some are offering ESOL, numeracy; literacy and or IT skills. All projects offer 1-1 support to explore and take up options going forward.

The pandemic restrictions have inevitably led to some disruption but projects are beginning to start (or re-start) in a safe way. The LIFT Team has kept the programme open to new applications throughout and has a very strong pipeline of new project ideas.

See [www.liftprogramme.co.uk/communitygrants](http://www.liftprogramme.co.uk/communitygrants) for more details.

### Business Rates Pool status

The latest round of Business Rates Pool funding (2018/19 pool year) was approved by Norfolk Leaders in June 2020, later than the planned date of March 2020 due to COVID-19 delays. Once again, the funding is aimed at supporting projects that actively promote, and invest in, economic development projects for the support and creation of new economic growth to benefit Norfolk.

This year, a total of 25 projects were funded across a range of sectors in areas such as infrastructure, business growth, housing growth, skills and employment. Including funds pre-allocated from the 2019-20 pool, almost £9 million was allocated from this round of the Business Rates Pool. All 8 Local Authorities in Norfolk, including Norfolk County Council have projects funded via the scheme this year. Notable projects with strategic implications across the whole of Norfolk include the Norwich Western Link Road, the redevelopment of Great Yarmouth Seafront and the construction of the Morston Parkway Bridge and Road in King's Lynn.

In addition, Norfolk Leaders recently agreed to the creation of a Norfolk Strategic Fund. This fund is to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and to support economic recovery in Norfolk through targeted activity and by bringing forward strategic projects.

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## Funding

### Bid Writing Workshops

Each year the External Funding team at Norfolk County Council offer a schedule of bid writing workshops for both our internal colleagues, and external organisations who would appreciate some support in writing applications for funding. The changes brought about by the impact of COVID -19 have meant we needed to explore new ways of offering these workshops. Starting in the autumn 2020 the External Funding Team will now offer a schedule of MS Teams Based online 45 minute targeted workshops to provide colleagues and organisations with the essentials of how to write successful applications for funding. Over the course of 6 weeks Delegates on our workshops will learn:

- How to evidence need and demand (and what is the difference)?
- How to describe your project so that funders understand your aims?
- How to show the what, where and why of your project?
- Why you need to consider strategic leadership and manage procurement issues?
- How to use and explain match funding?
- How to make your application stand out?
- And much more.

We also offer bespoke workshops, both for internal teams, and for Norfolk organisations who feel they will benefit from this support.

The Workshops are not a stand up and lecture format, we aim to provide an informative roundtable discussion exploring some of the issues around writing bids, and resolving your key questions.

If you would like further information, to be put onto our information mailing list, or have any questions, please contact [funding@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:funding@norfolk.gov.uk)

