

# Impact Assessment for Huntingdonshire District 2021

Version control:

Version	Author/Updates	Date	Amends
Version 0.1	Dan Buckridge Emma Charter James Clayton Declan Rice Liz Smith	August 2021	Data analysis and content
Version 0.2	Claudia Deeth Neil Sloper Jayne Wisely Pamela Scott Jon Collen	22 <sup>nd</sup> & 23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2021	Commentary Scoring and Moderation for Good Start, Good Health, Good Place
Version 0.3	Nykki Rogers Paul Gibbons James Clayton	13 <sup>th</sup> October 2021	Commentary Scoring and Moderation for Good Work
Version 1.0	Jon Collen Nykki Rogers Neil Sloper Jayne Wisely Claudia Deeth Liz Smith	25 <sup>th</sup> October 2021	Theme Owner sign-off for respective sections  Assistant Director (Recovery) sign-off

## Foreword

The COVID-19 pandemic is one of the greatest challenges of our times. We have seen the impact of COVID-19 in Huntingdonshire over the last year, on our services, on our people and on our businesses. We have collectively achieved the unimaginable by stepping out of our normal lives in the face of the crisis, and individually taking responsibility to ensure ourselves, our families and our communities are safe and protected from this virus. This new and energised community focus has been overwhelming and humbling to witness and has helped in some way to offset the damaging impact of extended lockdown periods for our health, our High Streets and other local economies.

Back in June 2020 we recognised the impact of COVID was going to be significant and we undertook a Community Impact Assessment to identify what the early impacts of the pandemic would be. This assessment was invaluable in allowing us to plan activities to support our residents and businesses over the proceeding months. We have been able to support communities with Food Banks and Community Fridges, provide subsidised exercise classes, proactively contact and support the most vulnerable in our community, develop employability skills through job clubs and the Government's Kickstart scheme and provide essential support for our local businesses via online digital platforms (Click It Local) whilst re-energising the High Streets in our four market towns. These are just a few examples of the work we have undertaken with our partners to help during this difficult time, all the while maintaining our core services to residents and businesses to ensure life can try to continue as normal.

Eighteen months on from the first lockdown the world, and our local environment, is a different place. We see headlines emerging every day about the new legacy the pandemic has created and are bombarded with statistics that suggest we will have a long recovery journey back from COVID. This recent Impact Assessment works to address those headlines and put some objective analysis behind the statements so we can assess whether they are fact or fiction. The approach for the Impact Assessment 2021 looks at whether the national headlines are substantiated and then goes on further to see if those headlines directly apply to Huntingdonshire. By taking this approach we can accurately assess not only the state of our district since the pandemic started, but also identify those impacts that are significant and therefore need to be addressed immediately.

The Impact Assessment 2021 is a thorough and evidence-based analysis of our district, based on the latest data available at September 2021, but our journey doesn't stop there. Things change, situations improve, challenges emerge that we didn't expect, and we need to respond to all of these pressures. This report is the beginning of an ongoing commitment to regularly assess what our district is like for residents and businesses. It will form the basis of ongoing analysis for key indicators that will provide us with the 'early warning signs' with enough time to prevent significant impacts. The work undertaken to create this report creates the foundation stones to understand our district better and constantly improve the lives of our residents and businesses into the future, irrespective of the challenges.

*Cllr Ryan Fuller*

Executive Leader of Huntingdonshire District Council



## Table of Contents

Foreword .....	2
Introduction.....	6
Structure of the Impact Assessment .....	8
Methodology .....	8
How to use this document .....	9
Information on the instances of COVID-19 .....	10
About Huntingdonshire .....	11
About our residents; Good Start, Good Health .....	12
GOOD START.....	12
Topic: Education & Training (apprenticeships, getting into work).....	12
Subject: Uptake of university places .....	12
Subject: GCSE and A Level results .....	13
Subject: Apprenticeships.....	18
Topic: Personal Safety .....	23
Subject: Domestic abuse .....	23
Subject: Social Services – Children’s.....	24
Subject: Court services and offender management.....	27
Topic: Support Network .....	29
Subject: Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations.....	29
Subject: Volunteering rates.....	31
Subject: Local Authority support for vulnerable residents affected by COVID-19.....	34
Subject: Loneliness and social isolation .....	35
Topic: Financial Hardship.....	38
Subject: Benefits.....	38
Subject: Free School Meals (FSM) .....	44
Subject: Food bank use.....	44
Subject: Requests for advice and support regarding debt and low income .....	45
GOOD HEALTH .....	46
Topic: Health.....	46
Subject: Life expectancy .....	48
Subject: Obesity - adults.....	50
Subject: Obesity - children.....	53
Subject: Physical activity - adults.....	54
Subject: Physical activity – older people .....	56
Subject: Physical activity – children and young people.....	57
Subject: Mental health .....	58

Subject: Impact on other health conditions.....	61
Subject: Behavioural risk factors (alcohol and smoking).....	62
Subject: Adult Social Care.....	64
About our district; Good Place, Good Work.....	66
GOOD PLACE.....	66
Topic: Waste Services.....	66
Subject: Household waste (all types) .....	66
Subject: Food waste .....	67
Topic: Housing Demand.....	68
Subject: Housing repossessions.....	70
Subject: Local Authority housing waiting lists.....	73
Subject: Homelessness .....	75
Subject: House prices .....	76
Subject: Housing rental market.....	78
Subject: Housing affordability (house purchases).....	79
Subject: Housing supply .....	81
Topic: Environment .....	85
Subject: Climate change .....	85
Subject: Air quality .....	86
Topic: Public Open Spaces.....	88
Subject: Use of public parks and spaces.....	88
Topic: High Streets.....	90
Subject: Local shopping .....	90
Subject: Parking.....	94
Subject: Markets.....	96
Topic: Crime and Justice .....	98
Subject: Crime and anti-social behaviour offences/reports.....	98
Topic: Transport and Infrastructure .....	100
Subject: Taxi and private hire vehicle usage .....	101
Subject: Rail usage.....	102
Subject: Road usage – motor vehicles.....	103
Subject: Road usage – cycling.....	105
Subject: Bus usage .....	107
Subject: Broadband connections.....	108
GOOD WORK .....	113
Topic: Economic Growth .....	113
Subject: Economic productivity.....	114

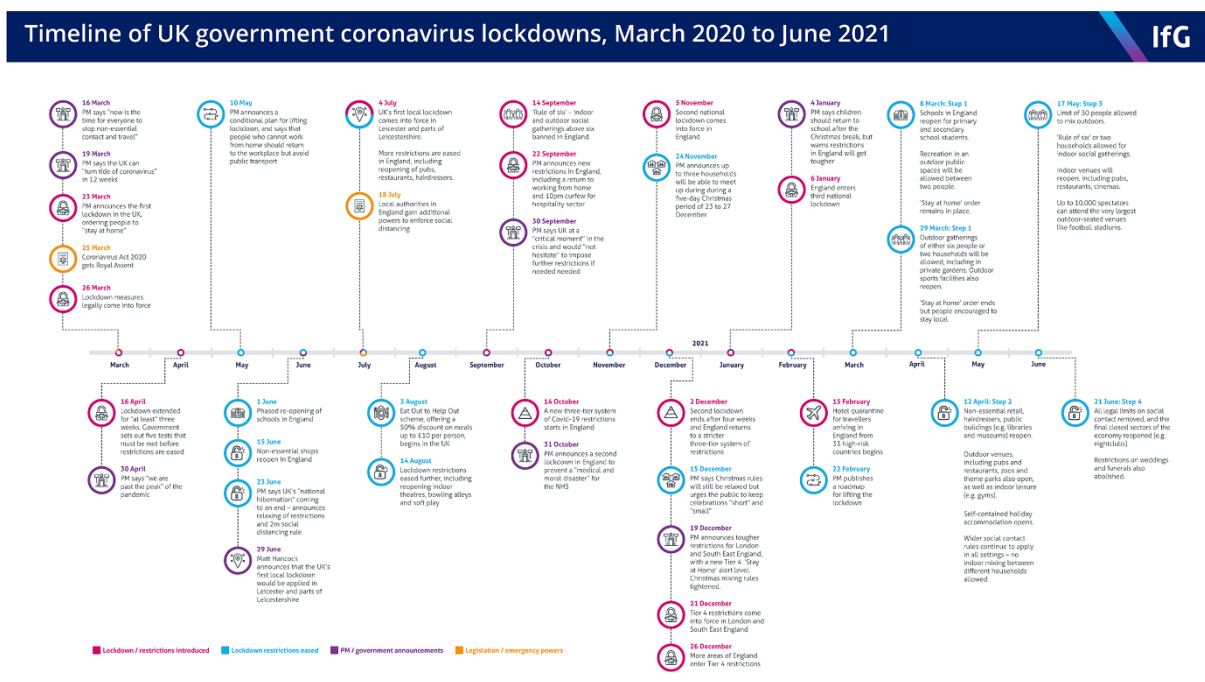
Subject: Economic support through business grants .....	117
Subject: Key business sectors - Retail.....	118
Subject: Key business sectors - Construction .....	121
Subject: Key business sectors - Manufacturing.....	122
Subject: Business activity.....	124
Subject: Wages .....	127
Topic: Employment.....	130
Subject: Job vacancies .....	131
Subject: Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (aka Furlough) .....	134
Subject: Redundancy .....	137
Subject: Unemployment.....	141
Subject: Self-employment .....	148
Subject: Support for self-employed residents.....	150

# Introduction

Since the beginning of 2020 the Coronavirus (COVID-19) has dominated headlines and lives across the world. It has caused the worst pandemic in a century due to the severity of the respiratory conditions it can initiate and, due to the absence of pre-existing immunity, is extremely transferrable. As a response to the emerging pandemic the UK Government introduced unprecedented measures to reduce the population's risk of contracting the virus. These were:

1. Restriction of movement
2. Restriction of social interaction
3. Increase in hygiene control measures
4. Introduction of a vaccination programme

Since March 2020 a number of enforcement activities have been introduced, and subsequently removed, to support the measures above. These activities are set out in the timeline below



Source: Institute for Government analysis.



With national policy changing on almost a monthly basis, the nation has had to adopt a very different way of life for work/education and social interaction. The effects on both people and place has been profound, as individuals try to continue with their 'normal' lives. This has been even more challenging for individuals and families who have had to help and care for loved ones contracting the COVID-19 virus.

As a public sector organisation, Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) provides services for both residents and businesses to support them to thrive. The direct impact of contracting the virus along with the control measures introduced by the Government has had a significant impact on the whole district. As a result, HDC commissioned a comprehensive assessment of the district in June 2020, to better understand the emerging risks and impacts of the pandemic. A year we have carried out a similar assessment to see whether the emerging risks and impacts were realised and whether the scale of the impacts has been as significant as predicted.

The Impact Assessment 2021 assessed national and local data to identify trends for both residents and businesses. These trends have been analysed to better understand the general changes to behaviour and

environment along with identifying any specific cohorts that have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. As a result of this data-driven evaluation, HDC and wider partners can speculate on the expected level of need for residents and businesses and therefore work proactively to ensure service provision can meet those needs for the short and longer term.

Given the significant level of change since the pandemic started the intention is to conduct an Impact Assessment on an annual basis to provide an ongoing review of impacts and trends. This will support public sector organisations to meet the emerging and changing needs of the district as the impact of COVID, and other contributing factors eg: Brexit, becomes embedded into the new way we live our lives.

## Structure of the Impact Assessment

To structure the analytical approach, and ensure the conclusion would be meaningful to a range of internal and external colleagues, the assessment follows the framework of the already adopted Grand Challenges, implemented by the County’s public sector service providers (and detailed within [Huntingdonshire District Council’s Corporate Plan](#).) These are set out as follows:

### People (Good Start/Good Health):

We want to make our district a better place to live, to improve health and well-being and support people to be the best they can be

### Place (Good Place/Good Work):

We want to make Huntingdonshire a better place to work and invest and we want to deliver new and appropriate housing.

## Methodology

The methodology for the Impact Assessment 2021 was derived by acknowledging an increasing number of headlines on the impact of COVID-19 that emerged in the media. This is a different situation compared to the previous Community Impact Assessment in June 2020, when very little was known about the impacts and even less could be validated through robust datasets.

To establish the relevance of the published national trends relating to COVID-19 on the four Grand Challenges the approach was to:

1. Identify national trends for specific subject areas within a Topic
2. Identify national datasets to validate the national trend – are these trends correct and robust or just hype?
3. Identify if there was County data to support this national trend – are these trends apparent in our County?
4. Identify if there was District data to support this national trend – are these trends apparent in our District?

This approach allowed us to construct a **confidence rating** based on whether the national trend has been able to be validated at a national, county or district level. The approach also allows us to construct an **impact rating** based on the objective analysis of the data, along with the subjective knowledge of Subject Matter Experts within the organisation. A robust process of scoring and moderation was undertaken to ensure the confidence and impact ratings reflected the current and expected impacts across these subject areas.

NB: where there is an assumed impact that has not yet been realised eg: through the removal of Furlough, commentary is included to substantiate the impact rating.

### Confidence rating scores:

5	<b>HIGH</b>	Sub-district level data available
4	<b>MEDIUM/HIGH</b>	Validated at District level
3	<b>MEDIUM</b>	Validated at County Level
2	<b>LOW/MEDIUM</b>	Validated at national level only
1	<b>LOW</b>	Lack of good quality data






Impact rating scores:

5	<b>HIGH</b>	Catastrophic impact to affect residents/ businesses in Huntingdonshire
4	<b>MEDIUM/HIGH</b>	Major impact to affect residents/ businesses in Huntingdonshire
3	<b>MEDIUM</b>	Moderate impact to affect residents/ businesses in Huntingdonshire
2	<b>LOW/MEDIUM</b>	Minor impact to affect residents/ businesses in Huntingdonshire
1	<b>LOW</b>	Negligible impact to affect residents/ businesses in Huntingdonshire

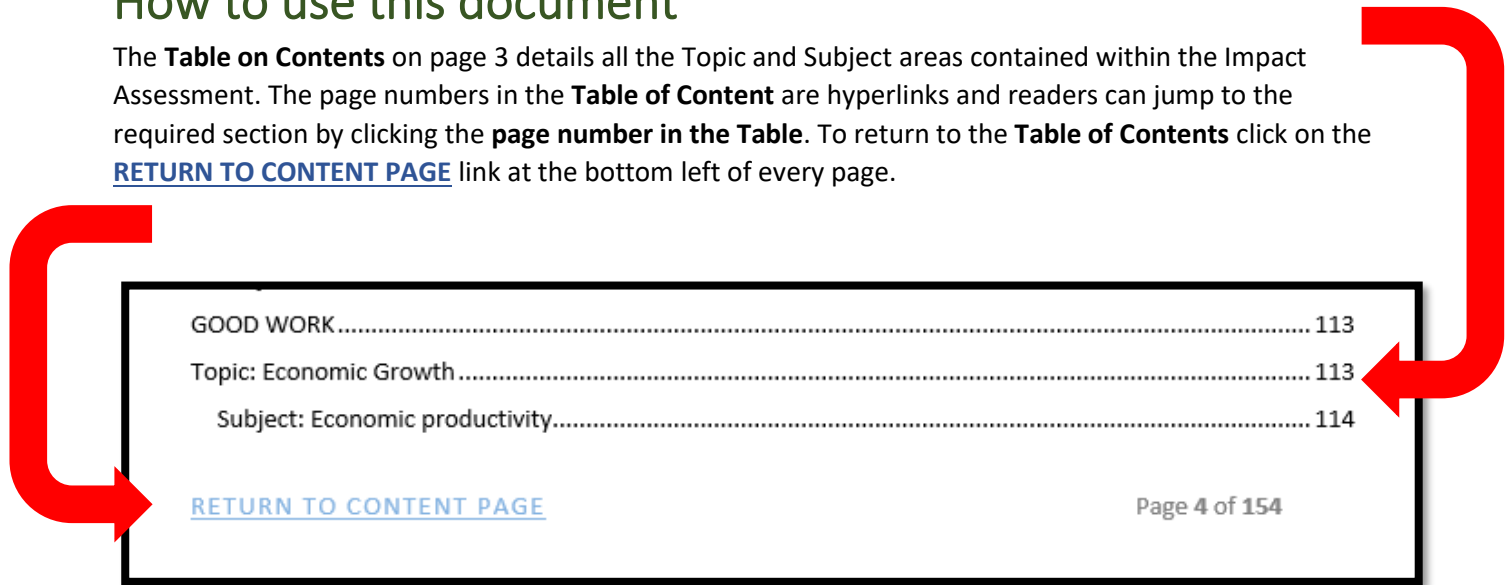
Each Topic area contains an overview table at the start of the section, setting out the national trend that was identified, the confidence rating and the impact score. Example overview table below:

**Topic: Waste services**

	<b>NATIONAL TREND</b> 	<b>CONFIDENCE RATING</b> 	<b>IMPACT RATING</b> 
Household waste (all types)	Collected household waste has increased since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Minimal impact as although level of waste fluctuated demand has continued to be met)</i>
Food waste	Food waste volumes temporarily decreased at the beginning of the pandemic/ first lockdown restrictions	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(National data available)</i>	<b>1 = LOW</b> <i>(Negligible <u>POSITIVE</u> impact as the change noted was only short term)</i>

**How to use this document**

The **Table on Contents** on page 3 details all the Topic and Subject areas contained within the Impact Assessment. The page numbers in the **Table of Content** are hyperlinks and readers can jump to the required section by clicking the **page number in the Table**. To return to the **Table of Contents** click on the [RETURN TO CONTENT PAGE](#) link at the bottom left of every page.

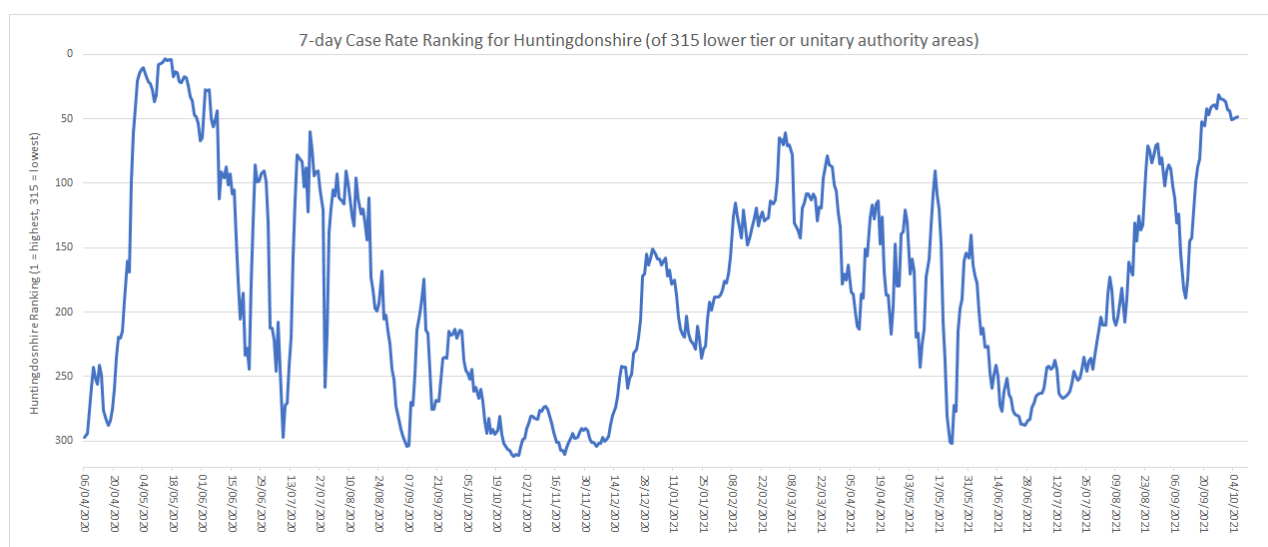


GOOD WORK.....	113
Topic: Economic Growth.....	113
Subject: Economic productivity.....	114
<a href="#">RETURN TO CONTENT PAGE</a>	Page 4 of 154

## Information on the instances of COVID-19

Over 16,000 [positive Covid-19 cases](#) have been reported for Huntingdonshire residents from 13<sup>th</sup> March 2020 to 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2021. This is equivalent to a cumulative rate of 8,946 per 100,000 residents (or 8.95% of residents). Ranking all lower tier or unitary local authority areas by their rates per 100,000 shows that Huntingdonshire had the 256<sup>th</sup> highest cumulative case rate of all 315 areas in England. The national average rate to 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2021 is 11,934 per 100,000 residents so Huntingdonshire’s rate is 25% below average.

However, infection rates can change rapidly with rankings based on the headline 7-day case rate showing that Huntingdonshire has at times had one of the highest infection rates in the country (peaking at third highest in England on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2020) as well as having one of the lowest infection rates at other times (falling as low as 4<sup>th</sup> lowest in England on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2020). This can be seen in the graph below. At the time of writing, infection rates for Huntingdonshire are relatively high and rank among the top 50 areas.



Data is also reported on [deaths linked to Covid-19](#), with two different measures used for this. The first is deaths within 28 days of a positive test for Covid-19. On this measure, 266 deaths of Huntingdonshire residents have been reported to 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021. This is equivalent to a rate per 100,000 population of 148.6, which is the 257<sup>th</sup> highest rate of all 315 lower tier and unitary areas in England. The national average rate to 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 is 213.2 per 100,000 so Huntingdonshire’s rate is 30% below average.

The other measure of deaths linked to Covid-19 is deaths where Covid-19 is mentioned on the death certificate as one of the causes. There have been 313 of these relating to Huntingdonshire residents up to the week ending 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021. This is equivalent to a rate per 100,000 population of 174.9, which is the 271<sup>st</sup> highest rate of all 315 lower tier and unitary areas in England. The national average rate to 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 is 243.7 per 100,000 so Huntingdonshire’s rate is 28% below average.

It should be noted that both death rates referred to here are crude rates per 100,000 population and have not been age-standardised or otherwise weighted to account for age structure or other differences in population characteristics. Cambridgeshire County Council/Peterborough City Council’s Public Health Intelligence/Business Intelligence and CCG Intelligence teams are working together on a collaborative programme of intelligence work on the impacts of Covid-19 and emerging needs in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Their initial [“COVID-19: Review of emerging evidence of Needs and Impacts on Cambridgeshire & Peterborough”](#) includes a first suite of information which focusses on the immediate health impacts of Covid-19 as well as some economic, transport and air quality impacts. Their report states that, when standardised for the ages of the population, “Deaths from all-causes and from COVID-19 are statistically significantly lower in Cambridgeshire compared to the England average” for the 14 months to

April 2021. Their Executive Summary states that, taking the age of the population into account, all Cambridgeshire districts except Fenland (which is statistically similar to England) “have a statistically significantly low cumulative mortality rate with regard to deaths within 28 days of a positive test compared to England”.

The Covid-19 vaccination programme has been a key element in the Government’s roadmap to lifting restrictions and [data is published on a daily basis](#) which shows the number of people vaccinated in Huntingdonshire. At 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021, 139,607 Huntingdonshire residents had received their first dose of a Covid-19 vaccine. Vaccinations are currently being made available to those aged 12-15 so vaccination rates show the proportion of all those aged 12 and over who have been vaccinated. At 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021, Huntingdonshire had a first dose vaccination rate of 82.9% and a second dose vaccination rate of 77.1%. These rates are higher than the national averages of 75.5% for first doses and 69.6% for second doses.

## About Huntingdonshire

*Huntingdonshire is the largest district in Cambridgeshire, with a [population at mid-2020](#) of 178,985 and a land area of over 900 square km (350 square miles). The district is predominately rural in nature, but the settlement pattern gives a close to 50/50 urban/rural split in terms of population distribution. In addition to the market towns of Huntingdon, Ramsey, St Ives and St Neots, Huntingdonshire contains one other town, Godmanchester, and a large number of villages of varying sizes, hamlets and isolated dwellings in the countryside across 80 parishes.*

### **Demography**

*Huntingdonshire has a slightly older than average population, with 15% of the district’s residents aged 70 or over compared to 13.6% nationally. Health and life expectancy are better than average, with 84.5% describing their health as ‘Very Good’/ ‘Good’ in the 2011 Census, although an above average proportion are overweight (64.8%). Residents are predominantly “White British” but there are over 8,000 BAME residents.*

### **Towns and Villages**

*Outside the towns, the larger settlements have a range of services such as a primary school, a range of shops, public transport services, a community meeting place, a general practitioner’s surgery and a range of employment opportunities. These settlements often play a role in providing services for residents of nearby smaller villages and countryside areas.*

### **Community Involvement**

*There are currently 71 Town/Parish Councils and 9 Parish Meetings listed on the District Council website. Huntingdonshire has a well-established community and voluntary sector, well supported by Hunts Forum.*

### **Economy**

*Residents are more likely to be economically active and more likely to be in employment than average, with average wages for those living in the district (regardless of where they work) also above average. However, local jobs tend to pay lower wages as reflected in commuting patterns with over a third of employed residents travelling outside the district to work in 2011. A high proportion of local employment is linked to the manufacturing industry at nearly 15% compared to a national average of just over 8%.*

*Beyond the physical geography, Huntingdonshire is part of three economic geographies - Greater Cambridge, Greater Peterborough and the Fens - as stated in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Review, which was developed by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Economic Commission.*




## About our residents; Good Start, Good Health

Numerous sources suggest that the last 18 months of living with the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated some of the pre-existing inequalities that existed across several key domains of life including employment and ability to earn, family life and health.

The following sections of the Impact Assessment seeks to use local data to analyse whether these national trends are reflected in the Huntingdonshire district and whether there are unique impacts for our residents that do not follow the national trends.

### GOOD START

#### Topic: Education & Training (apprenticeships, getting into work)

	NATIONAL TREND 	CONFIDENCE RATING 	IMPACT RATING 
Uptake of University Places	More applications to Universities have been deferred since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate impact as other further education offers are available)</i>
GCSE Results	GCSE examination grade results have improved since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major impact as most employers require maths and English GCSEs)</i>
A Level Results	A Level examination grade results have improved since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate impact as other further education offers are available)</i>
Apprenticeships	Fewer apprenticeships have started since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(National data available down to district level)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major impact due to workplace access, furlough and redundancy)</i>

#### Subject: Uptake of university places

**National data:** [London Economics](#) commissioned YouthSight to administer a survey of higher education applicants to better understand the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on prospective enrolment behaviour regarding the academic year September 2020. A small sample of respondents (516) took part across five days in May 2020, of which 87% were domiciled within the UK and 3% of those were in the Eastern Region. Their analysis of the national results suggested that approximately 17% of UK respondents who were

preparing to attend university that year would not enrol if higher education institutions were not operating as normal because of the pandemic.

Data published by [UCAS](#) in July 2021 shows that nearly 700,000 applications were made for a university place in the UK (at the June 2021 deadline), an increase of 4% compared to the number of applications in 2020. Applications from the East of England totalled 46,740, an increase of 8% compared to the previous year. The number of applications deferred compared to 2020 increased by 19% nationally, from 79,590 to 94,480 which is the highest levels seen over the previous 10-year period.

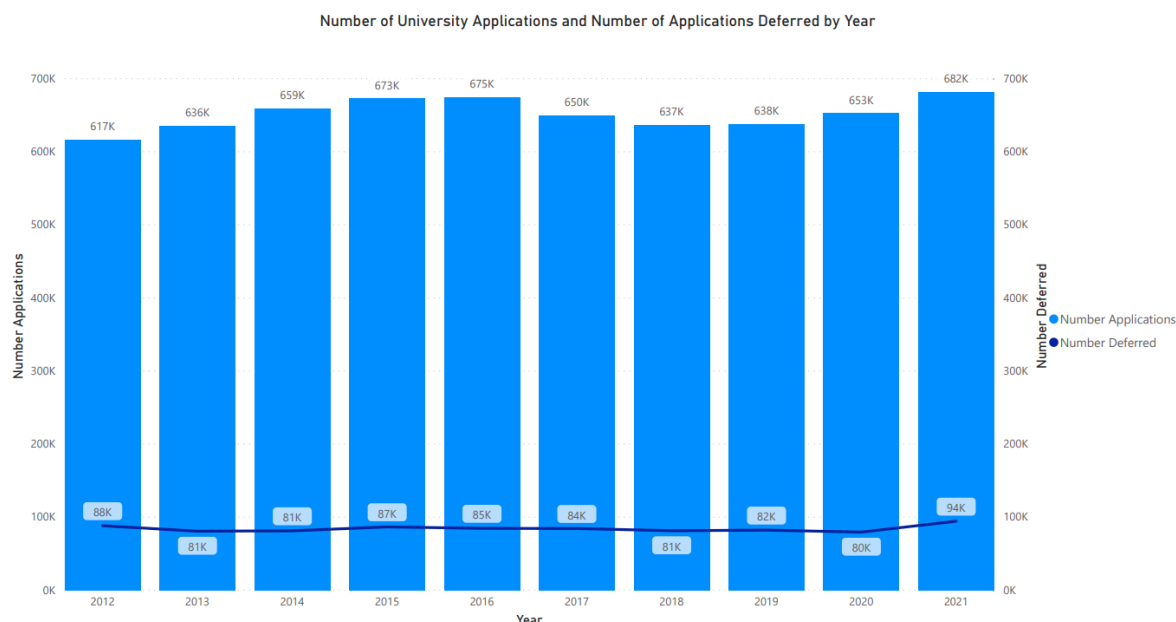


Figure 1: University Applications and Deferrals Per Year, UK. Source: UCAS

**Local data:** There is no data at local level that provides statistics on the number of applications (or the number deferred) made by students from within the Cambridgeshire County or Huntingdonshire District.

## Subject: GCSE and A Level results

**National data:** Due to the pandemic, GCSE and A/AS Level exams that were due to take place in 2020 were cancelled because of the disruption caused to students by way of school closures and interruption of learning for periods of time. Instead, the results were based on either teacher prediction (of what the student would have been capable of achieving had the exams been completed) or an algorithm developed by Ofqual – whichever of the two were the highest. Because the results calculated were inconsistent with previous years processes, the UK government suggests that this set of data is incomparable with historic results.

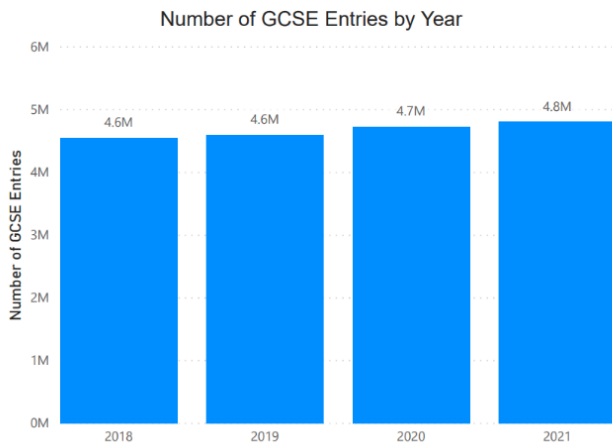
Source: [Key stage 4 performance, Academic Year 2019/20 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk)

Based on the disclaimer above that results from 2020 should not be directly compared to previous years historic data has been included for information purposes only and any comparisons made should be treated with caution.

### Key Stage 4 (GSCE Results)

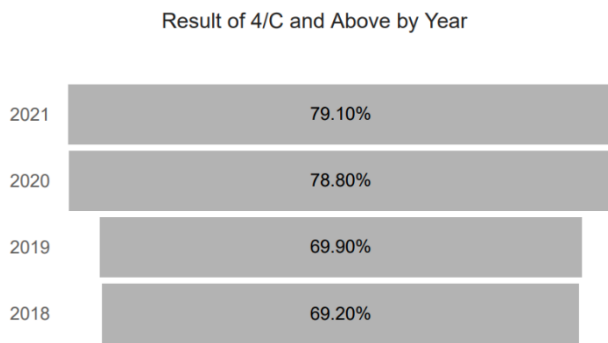
The [UK government](#) advises that in 2020, the proportion of pupils in state-funded schools who achieved a grade 5 or above in English and Maths increased from 43.2% in 2019 to 49.9%. The increase seen in 2020

contrasts against a decrease of 0.1% from 2017 to 2018. The article acknowledges the increase is a consequence of the way GCSE grades were awarded in 2020 and the higher proportion of entries graded at 5 and above.



This graph shows the number of GCSE entries per year since 2018, in England by students age 16.

Figure 2: GCSE Entries Per Year. Source: [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

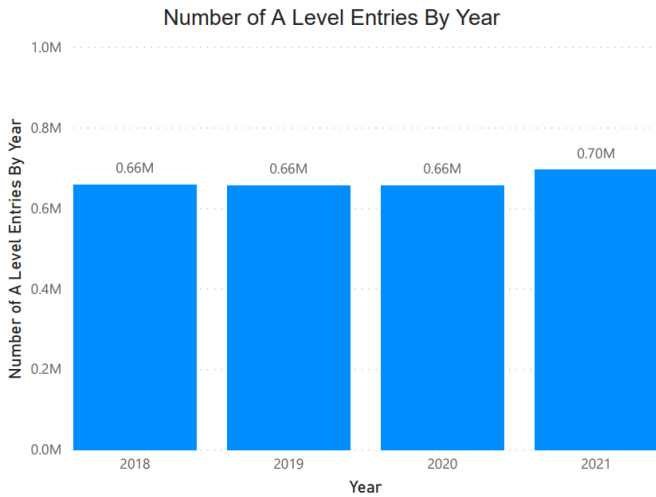


The proportion of students (aged 16) in England who achieved a result of 4 and above (historically grade C) across all subjects since 2018.

Figure 3: GCSE Result Above 4 Per Year. Source: [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

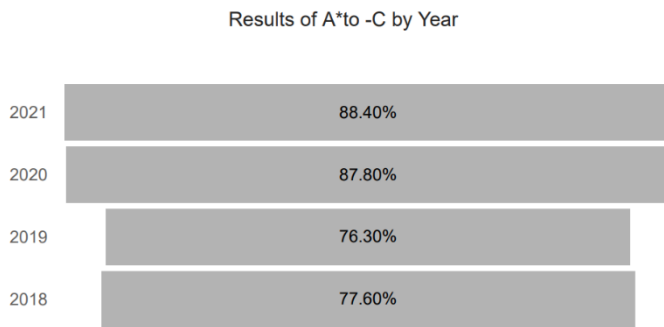
**Key Stage 5 (A Level Results)**

In 2021, published results by [Ofqual](https://www.ofqual.gov.uk) show an increase across all A-Level subjects and the proportion of A or A\* increased to 44.3% from 38.1% in 2020. The percentage of students aged 18 who achieved a result above C also increased to 88%, an increase of over 10% compared to results in 2018. As per the caveat, these year-on-year changes might be caused by the different process for awarding qualifications in 2020 rather than reflecting a change in underlying performance.



This graph shows the number of A Level entries by year since 2018, in England by students age 18.

Figure 4: A Level Entries Per Year. Source: [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)



The proportion of students (aged 18) in England who achieved a result of A\* to C (across all subjects since 2018).

Figure 5: A Level Results Per Year. Source: [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

The number of appeals against GCSE and A-level exam grades increased in 2020 however [Ofqual](https://www.ofqual.gov.uk) cautioned against comparing with previous years due to the appeals process in place as a result of Covid-19.

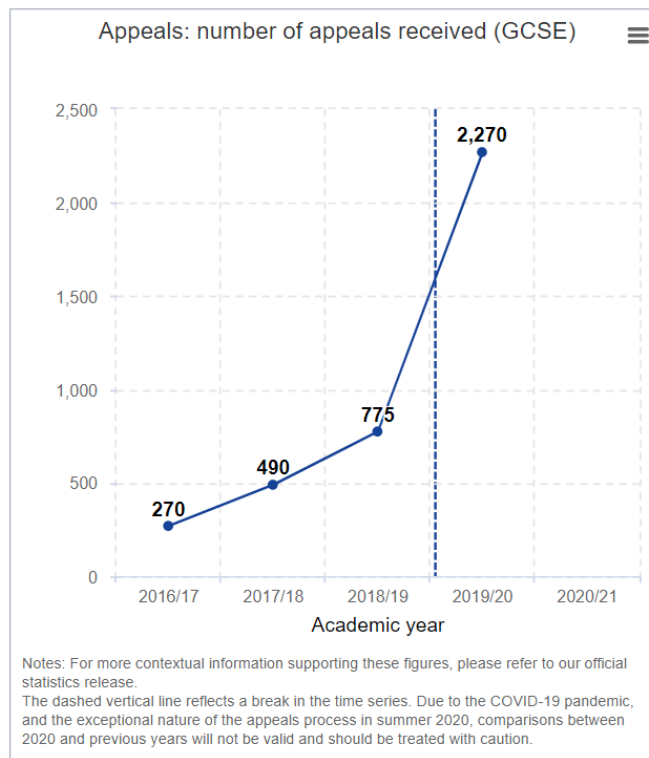


Figure 6: GCSE Appeals Per Year. Source: [Ofqual](#).

At GCSE level, there were 2,270 appeals received (up from 775 in 2019) and of the appeals received 84% were upheld. Over 24,000 individual grades were challenged via the appeals process and 3,470 individual grades were changed as a result.



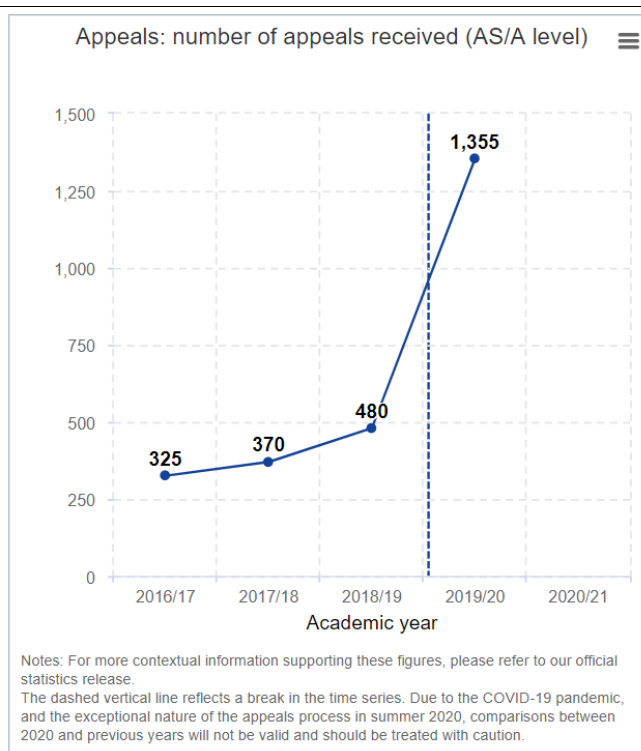


Figure 7: A Level Appeals Per Year. Source: [Ofqual](#).

At A/As Level, there were 1,355 appeals received (up from 480 in 2019) and of the appeals received 80% were upheld. Over 3,500 individual grades were challenged via the appeals process and 1,420 individual grades were changed as a result.

The table below provides year on year data on the average number of GCSE and A Level Qualifications each student attained in England (aged 16 and 18).

Year	Average Number Of GCSE Qualifications Per Student	Average Number Of A Level Qualifications Per Student
2018	8.09	2.68
2019	7.90	2.66
2020	7.84	2.67
2021	7.85	2.67

Source: [Infographics for GCSE results, 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Source: [Infographics for A level results, 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

**Local data:** Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, most exams and assessments did not take place in 2019/20 or 2020/21. As a result of this, the [UK government](#) announced that it would not publish school or college level results data in autumn 2020 or autumn 2021. Therefore, as lower-level grades have not been made public, results are only available down to County level for analysis. The 2019/20 results showed that 51.2% of pupils achieved a grade 5 or above in English and Maths, up from 48% in 2018/19. The average points score across the 'best 3' A Levels for each pupil was 39.05, up from 34.46 in 2018/19 and 33.24 in 2017/18.

A [report](#) on Education to the Children and Young People Committee in June 2021 by Cambridgeshire County Council stated that the impact of Covid-19 on pupil's learning is "not yet fully understood and will not be established nationally until next year with the first set of published performance data". According to the report the intention is to collect information from schools "to understand where children are against national expectations to help schools to plan".

Subject: Apprenticeships

**National data:** In the [August 2021](#) update published by the UK government, the headline facts and figures state that Apprenticeship starts in the UK were down in the academic year 2020/21 by 6.9% to 253,100, compared to 271,800 reported for the same period in the previous year.

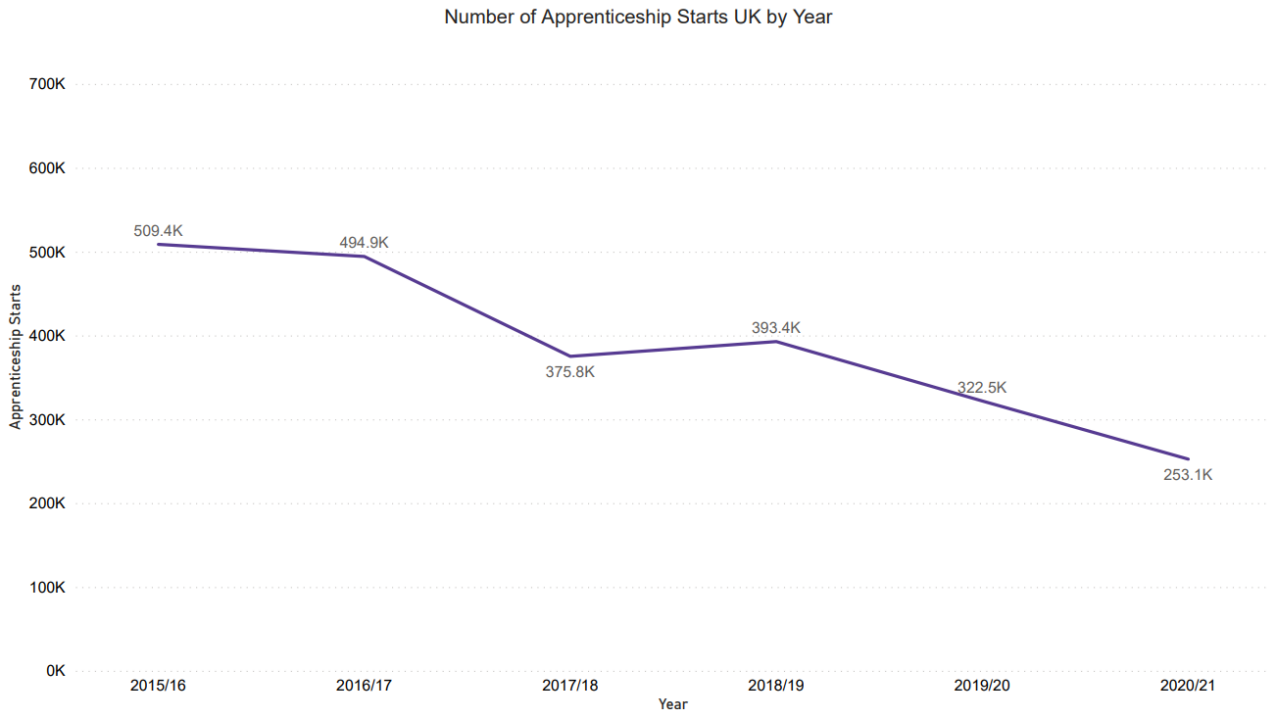


Figure 8: Number of Apprenticeship Starts UK Per Year. Source: [GOV.UK](#).

Nearly half of all apprenticeships (49.6%) started in the academic year 20/21 were by those aged over 25, whilst the number of students under 19 starting apprenticeships fell to 21% from 25.7% the previous year.

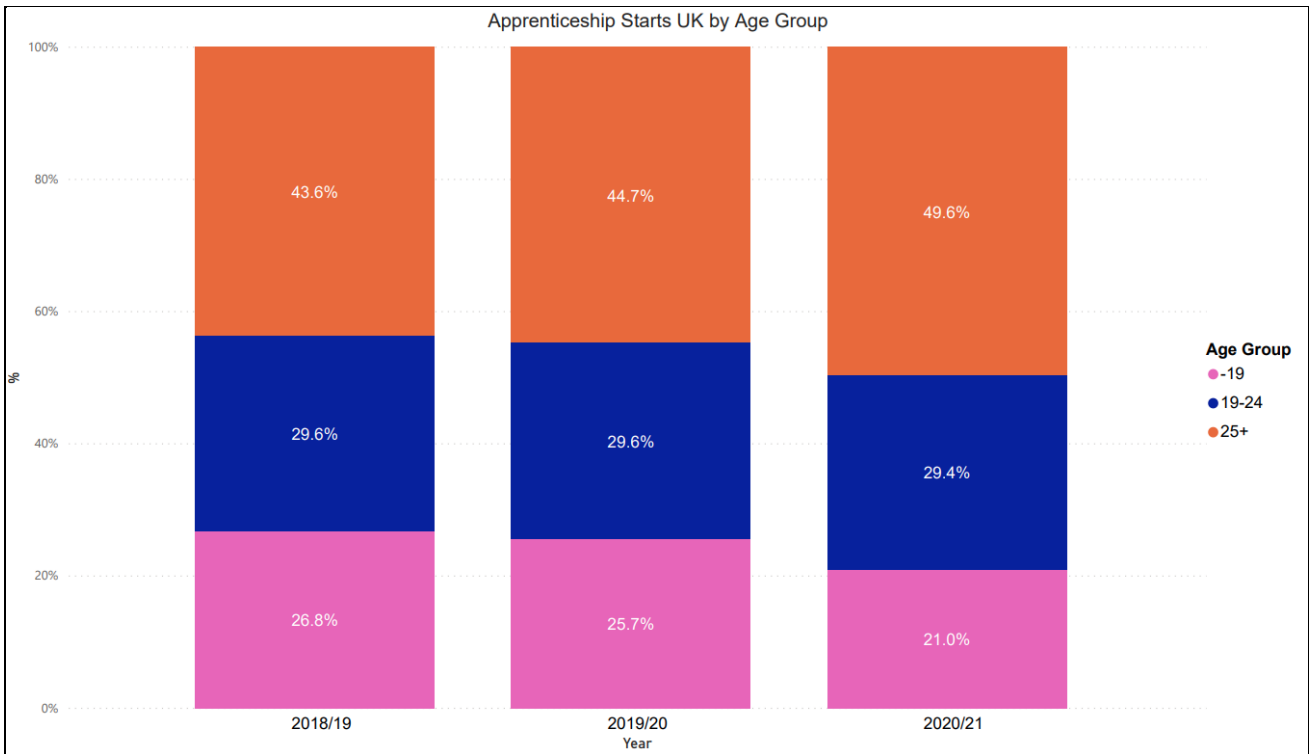


Figure 9: Apprenticeship Starts UK by Age Group. Source: GOV.UK.

The [Sutton Trust](#) published a Covid-19 research brief impact report in May 2020 based on the findings from a survey they undertook the previous month, with an aim to understand the impact of the pandemic on Apprenticeships. The sample size was small (at only approximately 150 Companies taking part) however this has been included for information purposes. They found that (on average) only two in five apprentices had no disruption to their studies. From the respondents that took part on average, 36% had furloughed or were currently furloughing their apprentices and 8% reported that they were making their apprentices redundant. Due to the impact of Covid-19 on the education sector delivering the training under the scheme, an average of 17% of apprentices were also affected in some cases by the employer closing the site during lockdown and had no access to remote learning. The graph below ([Sutton Trust, COVID-19 and Social Mobility Impact Brief 3: Apprenticeships, page 2](#)) shows the average proportion of apprentices reported in each category by employers, along with the distribution of reported percentages.

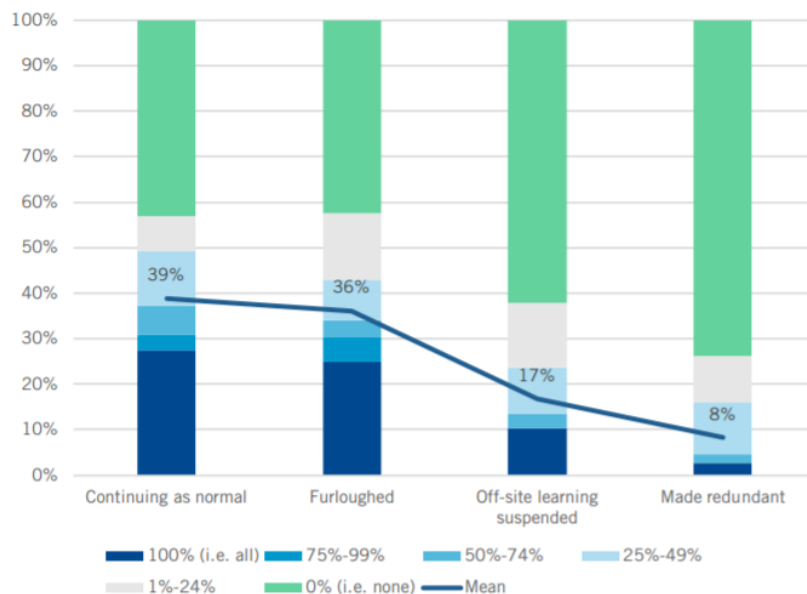


Figure 10: Apprentice Category Survey Responses. Source: Sutton Trust.

For example, it shows that on average employers reported 39% of their apprentices were continuing as normal but it was noted there was substantial variation in the responses. For example, 43% of employers said none of their apprentices were continuing as normal and 28% saying all of their apprentices were able to do so.

Source: <https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Covid-19-Impacts-Apprenticeships.pdf>

**Local data:** There were 24,930 apprenticeship starts within the East Of England in the academic year 2020/21. Data at Local Authority level will not be available until November 2021 this means we are comparing against national data for previous full years, so they are not a like for like comparison. However, the data recorded for the months of May June and July seem to be lower than earlier in the academic year. Therefore, figures for 2020/21 are provisional and cover the first three quarters (Aug 2020 to Apr 2021). All other years are final, full-year figures.

The number of apprenticeships started in Huntingdonshire has been decreasing yearly from 2015/16 aside from an increase in 2018/19, which is a similar picture to the national trend. There were 780 apprenticeships commenced in Huntingdonshire in the academic year 2020/21, a drop of 16% compared to the previous year, which is a larger fall than national figures for the same period at 6.9%. The table below shows the year-on-year change as a percentage for Huntingdonshire and our geographical neighbours.

Apprenticeship Starts Percentage Change Year on Year						
Year	Peterborough	Huntingdonshire	South Cambs	Fenland	East Cambs	Cambridge
2015/16 To 2016/17	+3.5%	+4.7%	-3.4%	+1.1%	-4.5%	-18.1%
2016/17 To 2017/18	-26.4%	-32.1%	-20.2%	-28.4%	-23.8%	-20.3%
2017/18 To 2018/19	+10.9%	+21.0%	+14.9%	+15.8%	+14.5%	+6.9%
2018/19 To 2019/20	-19.7%	-19.1%	-7.7%	-21.9%	-12.7%	+2.1%
2019/20 To 2020/21	-28.9%	-16.1%	-15.4%	-26.3%	-14.5%	-19.1%

The graph below shows how the number of apprenticeships starts in our geographical area has changed over time. Huntingdonshire had the second highest number of apprentices starting in 2020/21 when comparing with other authorities local to us in the region.

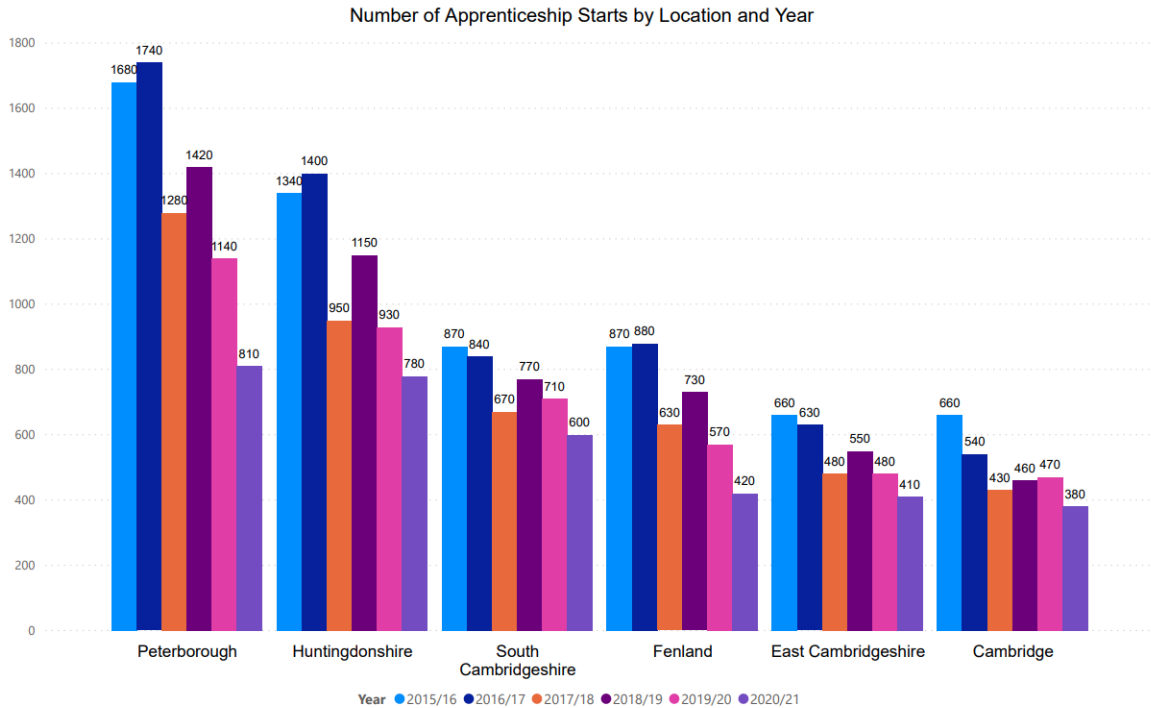


Figure 11: Number of Apprenticeship Starts Per Year, by Location. Source: GOV.UK

Just over half of all apprenticeships started in the academic year 20/21 in Huntingdonshire were by those aged over 25, which is in line with the national trend. The number of students under 19 starting apprenticeships in Huntingdonshire fell to 19% from 22% in the previous year, a reduction was also reflected in the UK figures.

The vocational training centre (iMET) based within the district at Alconbury Weald has recently announced that it is to close after two years. The facility was created as a venue to deliver training and innovation for apprenticeships in advanced manufacturing.

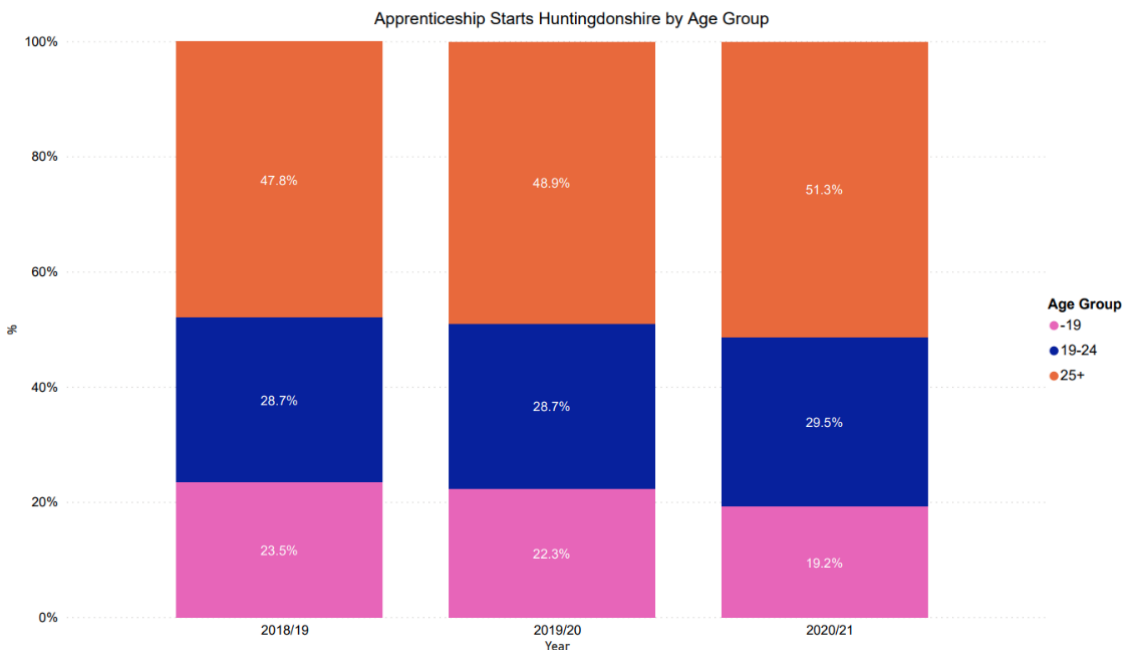





Figure 12: Proportion of Apprenticeship Starts By Age. Source: GOV.UK.

Source: [Apprenticeships and traineeships, Academic Year 2020/21 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK \(explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk\)](https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk)

## Topic: Personal Safety

	NATIONAL TREND 	CONFIDENCE RATING 	IMPACT RATING 
Domestic abuse	N/a - it is not possible to confirm whether there has been an increase in victims nationally since the start of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(County level data on incidents reported does indicate an increase in incidents and victims)</i>	<b>5 = HIGH</b> <i>(Catastrophic impact as effects impact all family member, education and community for many years)</i>
Social Services – Children’s	The number of serious incidents involving children has increased since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(County level data on work with vulnerable children and referrals to them)</i>	<b>5 = HIGH</b> <i>(Catastrophic impact as effects impact all family member, education and community for many years)</i>
Court services and offender management	There has been a reduction in first receptions, and an increase in those on remand, since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major impact as backlog has meant more people awaiting trial before sentencing and a greater risk to victims if people on remand break bail conditions)</i>

### Subject: Domestic abuse

<p><b>National data:</b> The <a href="#">ONS reports</a> that they cannot conclude, even at the national level, whether there has been an increase in the number of victims of domestic abuse. However, data from victim services suggests that experiences of domestic abuse may have intensified during periods of national lockdown and that victims faced difficulties in safely seeking support under these conditions.</p>
<p><b>Local data:</b> Cambridgeshire headline figures from Cambridgeshire County Council’s <a href="#">Safe Accommodation Strategy October 2021 – March 2024</a> show that from April 2020 to March 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police Incidents with a domestic abuse flag were up 5.7% on 2019/20 to 9,299</li> <li>• Cases referred to the Independent Domestic Abuse Adviser Service were up 9.7% on 2019/20 to 1,462</li> <li>• The number using the four refuge services (across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough) was 90 adults and 112 children, with all but 5 victims came from outside Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, mainly from the East and South East of England – an increase of 17.7% on 2019-20</li> <li>• The number using the local Sanctuary Scheme (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough) to increase the security of their home, in conjunction with domestic abuse support was 331 and 526 children, compared with 293 in 2019/20.</li> </ul> <p>Data from Huntingdonshire District Council’s Housing Needs &amp; Resources Team shows there were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 80 people approaching the Council for housing assistance because of domestic abuse in 2020/21 compared to 88 the previous year. This compares to 45 people so far in 2021/22 (April to August).</li> </ul>

There were also 1,779 referrals for Outreach Support (up 58% year-on-year) and 621 Domestic Abuse victims supported by the Victim and Witness Hub across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

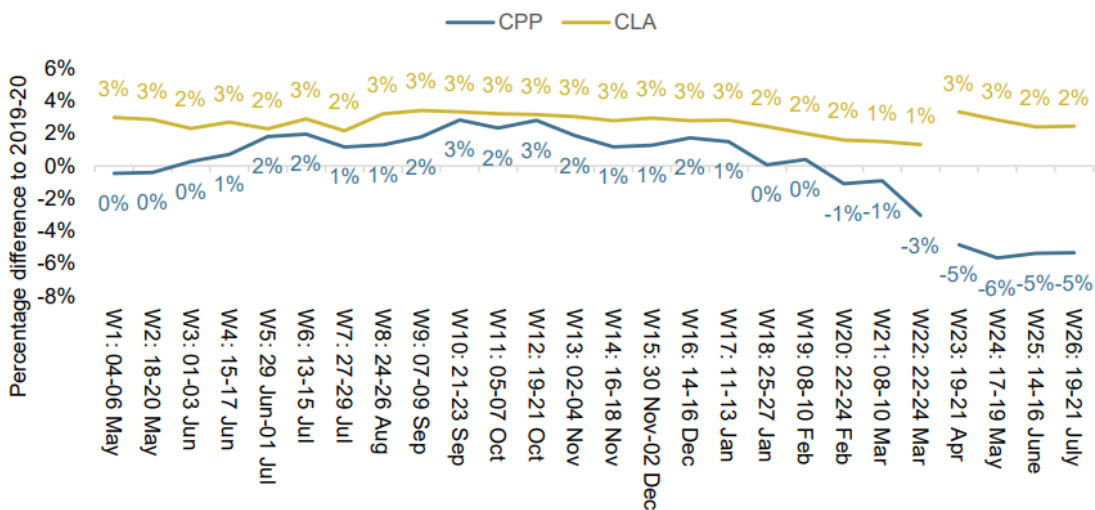
## Subject: Social Services – Children’s

**National data:** [Experimental statistics](#) on serious incidents involving children that English local authorities have notified the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel about show that 2020/21 saw 536 serious incident notifications, up 19% on 2019/20 and higher than previously published figures (from 2014/15). Notifiable serious incidents are those that involve death or serious harm to a child where abuse or neglect is known or suspected, and any death of a looked after child.

A [Department for Education survey](#) of local authorities in England on the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on Children’s Social Care asks local authorities to report in regular ‘waves’ on the following areas:

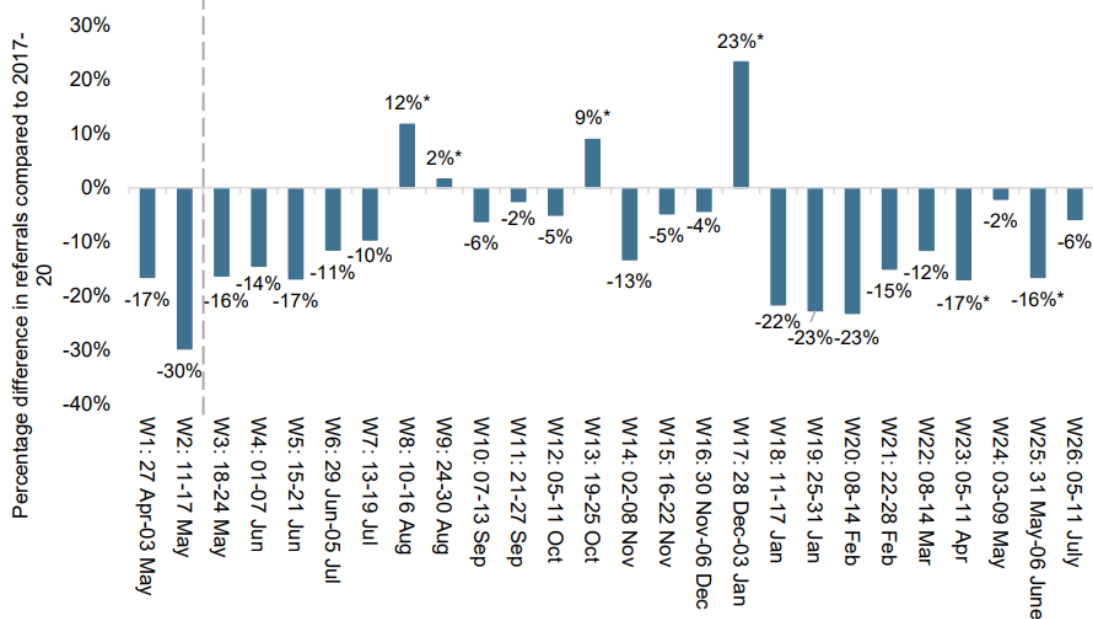
- Contact with children supported by the local authority Children’s Social Care
- Children’s Social Care workforce
- System pressures

Analysis of data collected on the number of Children Looked After (CLA) and the number of children on a Child Protection Plan (CPP) is shown in the graph below. This shows that numbers were higher than reported in 2019/20 for much of the period up to February 2021 but numbers with a Child Protection Plan are lower from then onwards. The total number of CLA has been gradually increasing and the total number of CPP has been gradually decreasing over recent years, so the data received in the survey may be a continuation of those trends.



The survey asks about the number of referrals to children’s social care services, with a total of 263,150 reported in waves 1 to 26 of the survey, which is around 10% lower than an average of the same weeks during 2017-20. It is estimated that there have been around 72,000 fewer referrals since May 2020 compared to 2017-20 (this estimate takes into account local authorities that did not respond and weeks not covered by the survey). The graph below shows how the number of referrals reported in each wave compares with the three-year average number for the same period in 2017-2020.



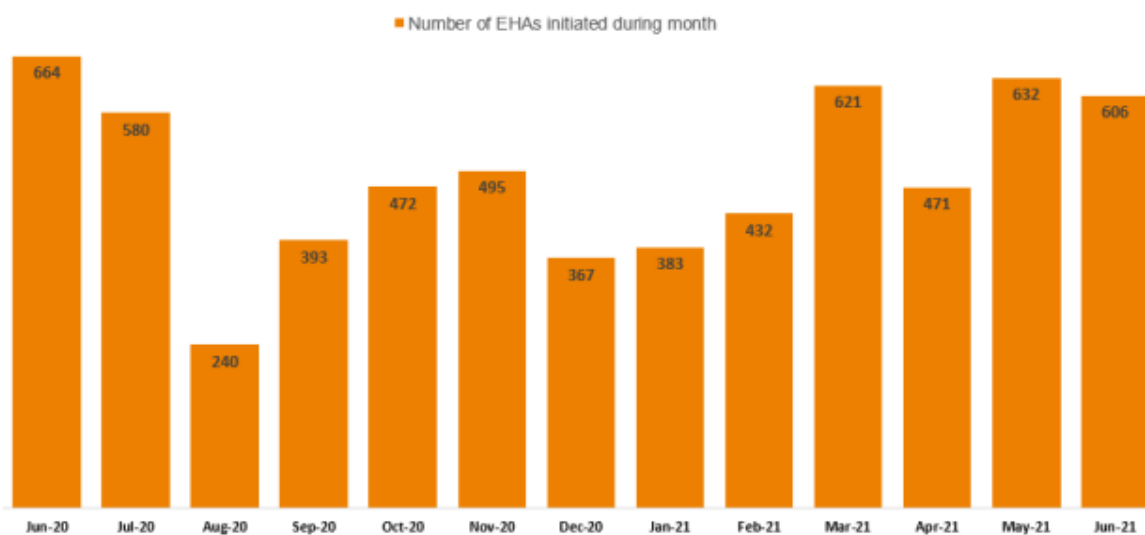


The survey also asks about the number of children that have started to be looked after. The number reported is approx. 29% lower than the three-year average for 2017-20 and it's estimated that there have been roughly 10,600 fewer looked after children starting since May 2020 compared to 2017-20 (this estimate takes into account local authorities that did not respond and weeks not covered by the survey). However, there was already a downward trend in the number of children starting to be looked after in recent years prior to the Covid-19 pandemic.

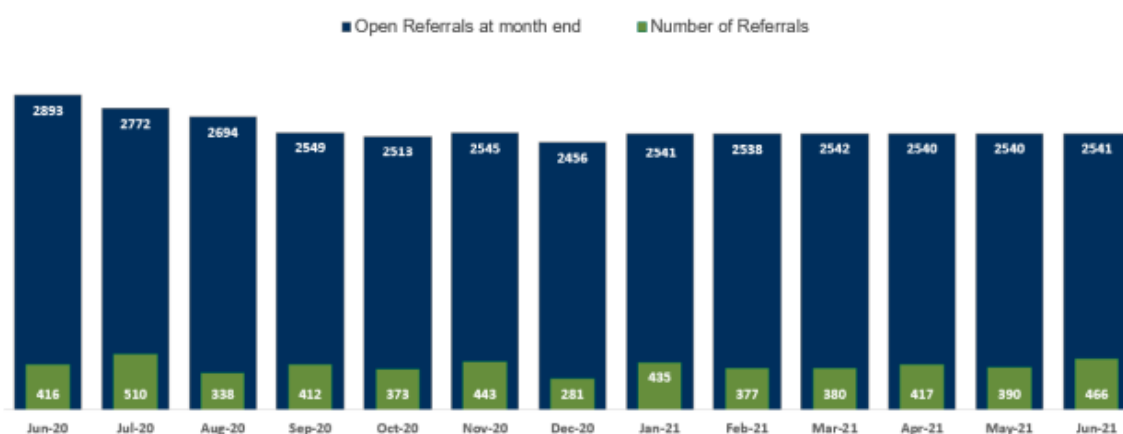
**Local data:** Cambridgeshire County Council's [Service Director's Report: Children and Safeguarding](#) for the 14 September 2021 meeting of their Children and Young People Committee includes data on performance indicators related to their work with vulnerable children. They report they are continuing to see high levels of demand for many services, with the number of requests for support for children, young people and their families remaining high on entering the school holidays (a time of year when they would normally expect to see significant reductions in such requests), although the overall picture in terms of simple volume is not entirely clear as yet.

They advise that it has become clear that "there has been an increase in the complexity of need among those children and young people who are open to children's social care services". Overall numbers open to the statutory children's social care service have remained relatively stable but there has been a significant increase in the number of children subject to child protection plans. Part of the reason for this increase has been children coming to the attention of services later than they might otherwise have been as they have been less visible during lockdown periods. There have also been some recent staffing challenges, which they are working to address.

Their graph on Early Help Assessments appears to show an immediate fall in assessments coinciding with the first lockdown in April 2020 but they [reported in March 2021](#) that numbers since had "remained at higher levels" which indicated that need "continues to be identified". Their latest report now advises that "Actual numbers remain slightly lower than the position 12 months ago, although it should be noted that schools have always taken a very pro-active approach to identifying and supporting vulnerable pupils, even during times when they were offering largely virtual engagement". They had previously reported that managers within early help were "reporting indications of increasing complexity of need alongside higher numbers of referrals", with particular areas of increased need relating to challenging behaviour within the home and mental and emotional health and wellbeing among young people.



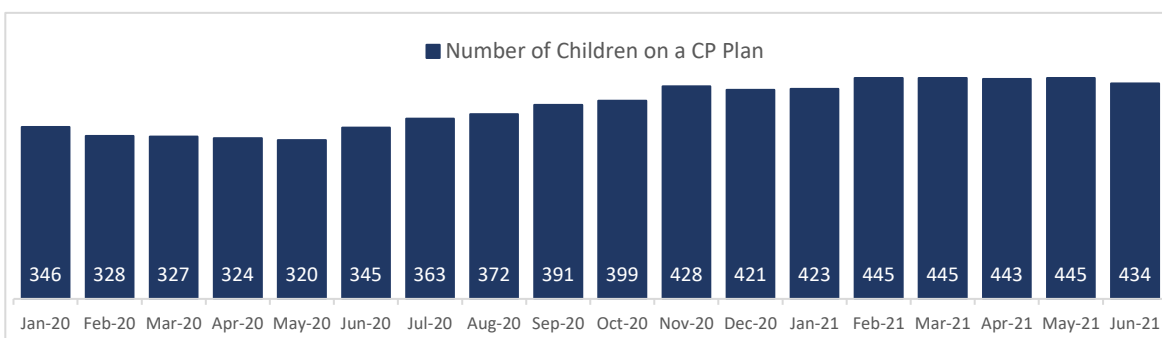
Referrals to January 2021 were reported to have remained broadly similar to the position in January 2020, with “a reversal of a longer-term trend of a reduction in overall numbers of children and young people open to the service” beginning to be seen. There was an increase in the number of children and young people accepted as referrals into the service in June 2021, however there are often peaks in referrals at the beginning and ending of school terms and the number of referrals in the chart below “can be seen to be broadly following this pattern”.



The overall number of children and young people open to the service has “remained broadly steady” since the beginning of the 2020 academic year. However, “it should be noted that the complexity of needs being referred into the service has increased”.

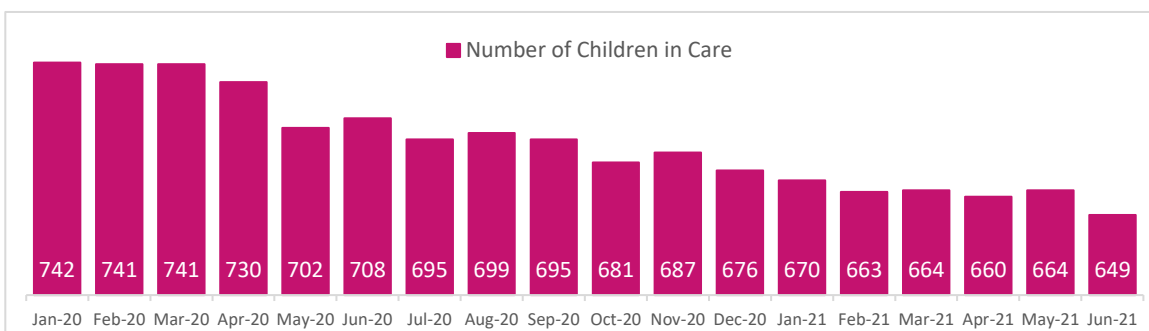
Where it is considered after further limited enquiries that children referred may be in need or in need of protection under the Children Act 1989, an assessment must be completed within 45 working days of the referral. The current year to date completion rate is that 78.5% were completed within this time frame. This is below performance by statistical neighbours (84%) and considerably below the stretch target of 90%.

Numbers of children subject to child protection plans had been steadily declining until around May 2020, with the May 2020 figure of 320 children subject to child protection plans described in March 2021 as being around the long-term level that they “would want to see as a service”. They said that “all things being equal” they would have expected numbers to have remained at or around this level. However, over the course of the pandemic, they have seen a “steady increase” in the number of children subject to child protection plans. The latest figure of 434 at June 2021 is more than 25% higher than the numbers recorded between January 2020 and June 2020.



Part of the reason for this increase has been children coming to the attention of services later than they might otherwise have been as they have been less visible during lockdown periods. Another reason behind the increase is related to fewer children being brought into care, as they work proactively with more families where risks are high through the Family Safeguarding approach. An increase in the level of risk being managed in the community in this way would be expected to result in an increase in the number of children subject to child protection plans.

The number of children and young people in care has seen a continuing reduction in overall numbers since the summer of 2019, with data from January 2020 onwards shown below:



As stated in the March 2021 report, “All things being equal, a reduction in care proceedings is often accompanied by an initial increase in child protection numbers”. However, it is worth noting that “in usual times, around 30-40% of children subject to child protection plans will come into care”. While the County Council has yet to see an increase in children in care numbers, they state that “there are clear risks that such an increase may follow”.

In addition to pressures on the service through increased numbers subject to a child protection plan, more complex needs and staffing challenges, escalating costs of provision are also resulting in a “clear budget pressure” estimated as £1.25m on the external placement budget.

## Subject: Court services and offender management

**National data:** At 30 June 2021, England and Wales’s [prison population](#) was 1% lower than at the same point in the previous year. The remand population (those held in prison awaiting trial, and those held in prison between trial and sentencing) has increased by 12% over the past year to the highest ‘annual; as at 30 June’ remand population figure since 2010. Conversely, the sentenced prison population as at 30 June 2021 has fallen by 4% over the past year, which is the lowest ‘annual; as at 30 June’ figure since 2006.

The Ministry of Justice/HM Prisons Service [reports](#) that this is in line with the effects of COVID-19 on the Criminal Justice System – in particular, delays in court hearings (evidenced by court caseload and timeliness figures reported in the latest [Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly release](#)). The effect of this on the prison population is that the normal system flow of individuals from the remand to the sentenced

population (after sentencing at court) has been disrupted; resulting in more people held on remand, and fewer sentenced prisoners.

In addition to more people being held on remand, it is likely that delays in court hearings will also have resulted in more people accused on crimes being held on bail, with or without conditions, and being on bail for longer. This may increase the likelihood of some victims of crime experiencing or fearing further victimisation before cases are heard.

Over the past ten years, there has been a steady falling trend in the number of prisoner first receptions each year but over the past year (as a result of COVID-19 disruption to court processes) there has been a sharp 17% decrease. However, on a quarterly basis, the number of prisoner first receptions over the past three quarters (July to September 2020, October to December 2020, and January to March 2021) show a rebound effect compared to the April to June 2020 quarter. This shows the impact of courts reopening (and associated increase in court activity) following the COVID-19 lockdown in Spring 2020.

There has also been a large fall in the number of prisoner releases in the latest quarter, particularly for those released from very short sentences. This tallies with the prioritisation of 'more serious' cases at courts (in response to COVID-19 court impacts) – which results in fewer people entering prison on short sentences, and [a few months later] we see the corresponding impact on the number of 'short sentence' releases.

**Local data:** No data is published on where those sentenced to prison terms, or held on remand, lived prior to arrest/conviction. Therefore, this section will look at the [population of local prisons](#), although it should be noted that it HMP Littlehey in particular is a specialist prison for those convicted of a sexual offence rather than a more general combination of offence types or a mix of those on remand and convicted.




The latest sentenced population figure for HMP Littlehey is 6.2% lower than at 30 June 2020, which is slightly higher than the 4% national reduction in sentenced prison population.

The latest sentenced population figure for HMP Peterborough (both males and females) is 25.9% lower than at 30 June 2020, with the number of people on remand 70% higher. These figures follow the same pattern as nationally (fewer sentenced prisoners, more people held on remand).

While this data suggests the local prison population has followed the national trend, the impact on Huntingdonshire residents is not known. However, we can assume that both those accused of a crime and victims of crime are likely to have experienced delays in justice system processes as this is a known outcome of the pandemic on courts across the country.

Such delays are also likely to have impacted on non-criminal civil court activities, particularly housing evictions (see housing repossession topic).

## Topic: Support Network

	NATIONAL TREND 	CONFIDENCE RATING 	IMPACT RATING 
Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations	More voluntary/ community groups have experienced financial pressures since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(County level data available)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate impact, mitigated due to responsiveness of funders to allow activities to be adapted to address COVID impacts)</i>
Volunteering rates	The numbers of formal volunteers has decreased and informal volunteers has increased since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>1 = LOW</b> <i>(No robust national data available)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate impact as data hard to find and when data is available the findings are inconsistent. Need to identify if this is a temporary or continued trend and in which direction)</i>
Local authority support for vulnerable/ needy residents affected by the pandemic	The most vulnerable members of society required support to meet basic needs (e.g. food, medication) as a result of COVID	<b>5 = HIGH</b> <i>(Data available on people and communities supported)</i>	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Minimal impact due to mitigation through swift and significant local and community/informal response so impact was considerably lower than expected)</i>
Loneliness and social isolation	Feelings of loneliness and isolation have increased since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions, particularly during lockdown periods	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Minimal impact locally, likely to be due to the district being a largely rural area, with relatively fewer young people and relatively low unemployment levels)</i>

## Subject: Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations

**National data:** In [written evidence](#) submitted in April 2021 to the Public Accounts Committee’s ‘Covid-19: Government support for charities’ inquiry, the Charity Commission reported that they had “not yet seen significant numbers of charities closing, nor has there been an abundance of requests to consider charities merging with other organisations or a sudden increase in the number of charities being removed from the Register”.

However, they had seen indicators of “financial shocks in the system” and that the sector’s “financial resilience is weakening”. They noted that in the period April 2020 to February 2021 there was a 25% increase on the previous year in ‘Matters of Material Significance’ reported. The main issue reported was insolvency or financial difficulties, with the rise partly attributed to the impact of Covid-19 on the sector.

They had also received 425 Serious Incident Reports specifically related to Covid-19, with concern about long-term financial sustainability the most common issue.

With regards to new charitable organisations formed during the pandemic, the proportion directly related to the pandemic is low. Of the 7,491 registration applications received by the Charity Commission in 2020, 138 were directly related to the pandemic (77 of which were registered). It should be noted that only 60% of applications result in successful registrations, having met the test Parliament has set down for what properly constitutes a charity. It is likely that many smaller and more informal organisations helping people would not apply for charity registrations.

Groundwork's research into the impact of the pandemic on community groups showed the following key findings, as [reported in November 2020](#):

- Most community groups had decreased or closed services
- Four in five community groups had lost income
- Most community groups had fewer active volunteers during lockdown
- Most said there was more need for their services in their communities than there was before lockdown

However, these findings are based on limited data: a survey of 2,658 community groups conducted in June 2020, in-depth telephone interviews with representatives of 103 community groups, and analysis of data about activities supported through the Tesco Bags of Help Covid-19 Community Fund between April and September 2020.

**Local data:** Very limited local data is available on impacts on local VCS organisations. We are unable to access data on the number of registered charities located within, or providing services to, the Huntingdonshire area to help understand how this has changed since March 2020. Even if we had this data, we know that many VCS organisations, including some which formed to support their communities through the pandemic, are not charities or otherwise registered officially so there is no single list of all such organisations operating in the area.

The Hunts Forum of Voluntary Organisations is the 'umbrella' group for local VCS groups and may be to share some data on how their membership has changed recently. However, again we know that many VCS organisations in the area do not have paid membership or other formal affiliation with Hunts Forum so this would not show us a full picture of the sector.

Despite this, it is worth noting that Hunts Forum has continued to actively engage with local groups throughout the pandemic, including offering support to newly formed organisations, and that they have strong connections with other VCS support organisations across Cambridgeshire. This includes Support Cambridgeshire, whose report on research they were commissioned to undertake in September 2020 is [published](#) on the Hunts Forum website. Their [research](#) involved 19 groups made up from a range of countywide, small and newly formed community groups and charities, representatives from 6 district/city hubs and the county hub, a survey of over 100 local charities plus desk research. Their findings indicate that "on the whole" organisations in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough had "faired reasonably well" and that although organisations had lost funding, seen demand increase and had issues with volunteers not being available, they had "not seen the large-scale issues reported by Groundwork in their national research". Both CCVS and Hunts Forum had to help organisations find solutions to difficult problems brought on by loss of funding or other areas, but they had "not seen large numbers of closures" and large-scale redundancies had been avoided.

The survey results showed an average £12,500 loss of income per organisation – equivalent to an estimated £34.5m across 2,775 registered charities in Cambridgeshire (higher if unregistered charities and community groups are included). Responses from Huntingdonshire groups showed that nearly 80% had continued to deliver at least some activity linked to their main mission statement and 75% said they were carrying out new activity linked to Covid-19.

## Subject: Volunteering rates

**National data:** There are several online reports available that measure the number of volunteers who provide support to national, local and community groups in the UK. However, sources are limited that include data from pre and during pandemic time periods. There is also a range of categorisation that has taken place within reports for example 'informal' and 'formal volunteering' in the [Community Life COVID-19 Re-contact Survey \(CLRS\)](#) and 'Social action volunteering' and 'neighbourhood volunteering' in the [Covid 19 Social Study by University College of London](#) (UCL) which makes comparisons more difficult.

Although low in respondents (2,812) the CLRS (an annual survey of adults aged 16+) commissioned by The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has been selected for the purpose of this evaluating this topic as it includes data from the periods before and during the pandemic. However, it should be noted this relates to respondents from within England and lower-level data (such as Local Authority) is not available.

The [CLRS](#) report shows that across England approximately 21% of people formally volunteered <sup>1</sup> at the beginning of the pandemic. It is noted that when taking into consideration the total respondents to the survey, this equates to just below 600 people as a sample size. 9% were new to volunteering and about 6% had previous experience but increased the amount of time given. A further 9% volunteered at similar levels and 53% didn't volunteer at all. Approximately 20% of people lapsed or paused their volunteering and 3% reduced their volunteering frequency.

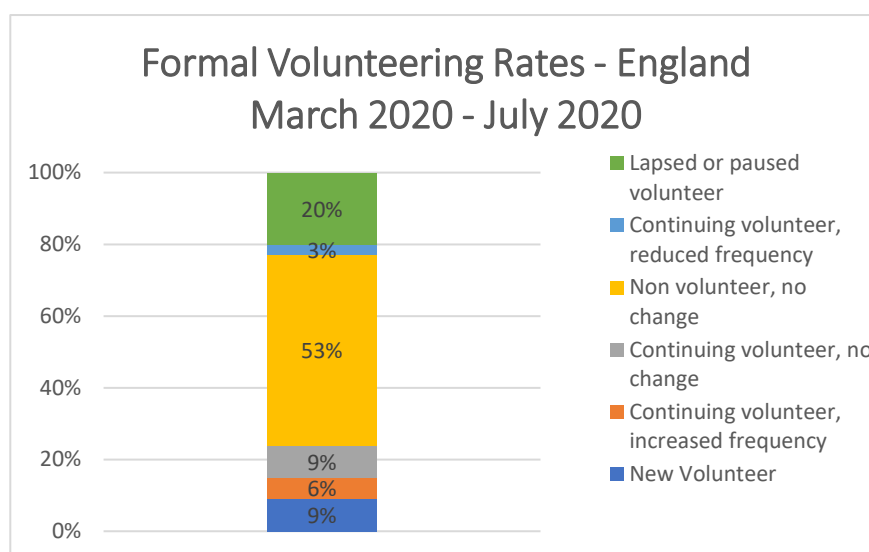


Figure 13: Graph showing the rates of formal volunteering in England Between March and July 2020

47% of people informally volunteered <sup>2</sup> during the pandemic (compared to 28% in the pre-pandemic period) and 52% of those were helping people affected by COVID-19. 58% who were regularly informally volunteering were more likely to support others with certain tasks such as making regular contact with someone who has mobility issues than in the pre pandemic period, an increase from 43%. Carrying out activities such as shopping or collecting prescriptions also rose to 49% compared to 23% pre-pandemic.

Another key point raised in the report is that Covid appears to have impacted who is volunteering and when. For instance, of the 20% of respondents who stopped volunteering in the time period, 22% of female respondents said they volunteered less, compared with 18% of male respondents.



28% of those aged 16-24 volunteered less and 26% of respondents with a limiting long-term illness or disability also said they volunteered less. Respondents noted the main barriers to volunteering included childcare issues, work and lack of spare time.

The Covid-19 Social Study run by the UCL is a weekly survey available to adults (18+) in the UK, which during lockdown in April/May 2020 had over 30,000 respondents take part in a one-off module which included volunteering questions, the module was then repeated once restrictions had lifted in June and July 2020. When comparing volunteering levels of respondents during and before the pandemic, 12% said that they had volunteered more during lockdown compared to pre-pandemic, 65% volunteered around the same before and during the pandemic, and 23% decreased their volunteering level. When re-measuring in June/July, 7% of people who reported increasing their volunteering during lockdown had spent more time volunteering. Whilst 6% of the respondents who said they had volunteered less during lockdown had further decreased the time they spent volunteering.

[The Covid-19 Voluntary Sector Impact Barometer](#) as at August 2021 states that 22.5% of organisations in the East of England (who answered a question about volunteers) noted a decrease in the number of people formally volunteering over the last month, which is slightly higher than the national trend. 47.5% of organisations in the region questioned said that their numbers stayed the same, which is lower than the national rate of 53%. 30% of respondents benefited from an increase in volunteers which is slightly higher than the national figure (27%). This study only includes data from a small sample of the voluntary sector (314 in total) which is made up from only 36 organisations who responded in the East of England for the wave in August this year. According to national data from the barometer, the graph below shows more organisations have seen an increase in the number of volunteers in recent months. The proportion of organisations that stated they had seen a decrease in the number of volunteers was at its highest between October 2020 and March 2021 with an average of 27% per month. This suggests that volunteer numbers may be affected by factors such as lockdown restrictions and then their consequent easing. However, in the last five months the average fell to only 20% of organisations nationally that had fewer volunteers than the previous month.

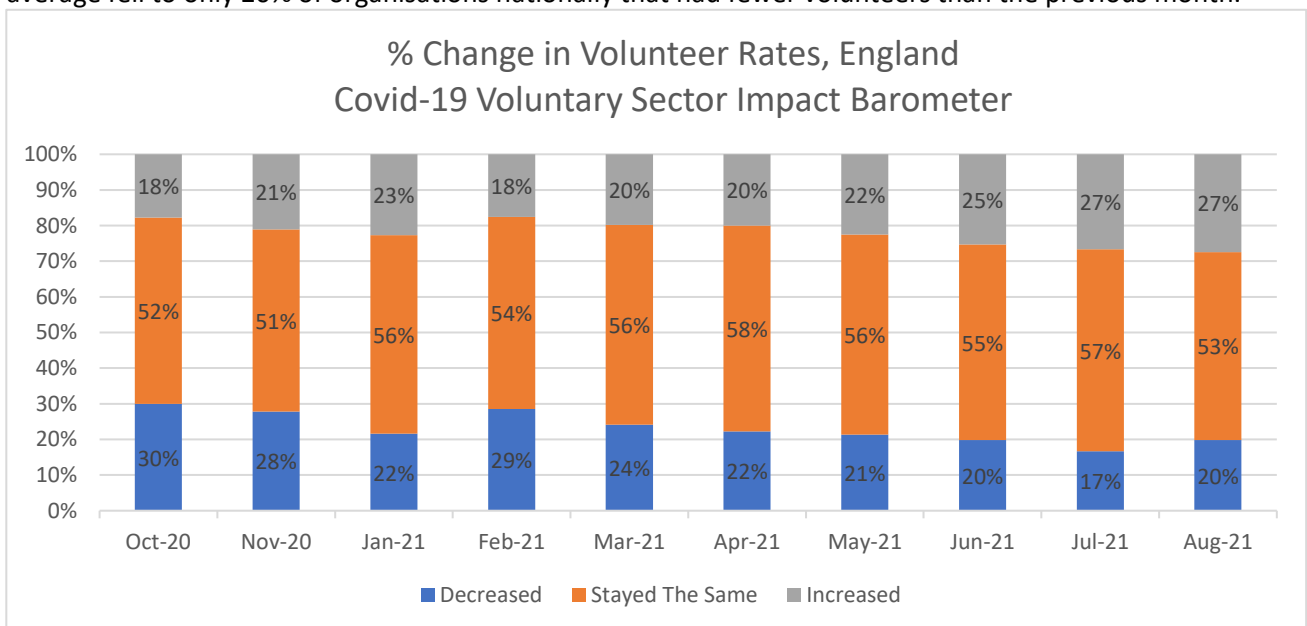


Figure 14: Percentage Change in England of Volunteer Rates – using the Covid-19 Voluntary Sector Impact Barometer

<sup>1</sup> Formal volunteering is defined as giving unpaid help to formally organised groups or clubs; regular formal volunteering is defined as volunteering at least once a month.

<sup>2</sup> Informal volunteering is defined as giving unpaid help as an individual to people who are not a relative; regular informal volunteering is defined as volunteering at least once a month.



**Local data:** In April 2021, Sport England published results from its Active Lives Survey based on the number of adults aged 16+ who have volunteered to support sport and physical activity in the last 12 months ([link to spreadsheet](#)). The data gives an overview of the levels of volunteering in sport and physical activity in England. One in five adults volunteered in support of sport and physical activity at some time between November 2019 and November 2020. A [blog](#) about their findings by the organisation acknowledges that for some, volunteering was not possible due to the need to shield from the pandemic, however there was an increase in the number of new volunteers who gave up their time to support local communities. In Cambridgeshire, 5.7% of those surveyed had volunteered to support sport and physical activity at least once a week throughout the year compared to a national average of 4.9%. The county also had higher proportions volunteering at least once a month or every few months. However, due to small sample sizes, the county's rates are not statistically significantly different from the national average.

The use of local volunteers that support HDC services during the pandemic was impacted as activities were stopped due to restrictions and the need for safe measures during the pandemic.

The [Coronavirus vaccine studies volunteer's dashboard](#) created by NHS Digital shows the number of people signed up for the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine studies volunteer service across the United Kingdom. At the 26<sup>th</sup> August 2021, there were 1,750 residents volunteering in Huntingdonshire for this purpose, which is 0.3% of total volunteers across the UK. The table below illustrates how the level of volunteering in Huntingdonshire compares with our geographical neighbours.

Local Authority	Number Volunteers Signed Up	% Total Volunteers Across UK	% of mid-2020 18+ Population in Area
South Cambridgeshire	2,605	0.5%	2.1%
Cambridge City	2,420	0.5%	2.4%
Huntingdonshire	1,750	0.3%	1.2%
Peterborough	1,250	0.2%	0.8%
East Cambridgeshire	1,000	0.2%	1.4%
Fenland	645	0.1%	0.8%

*Table 1: Number of coronavirus vaccine studies volunteers in neighbouring Authorities*

## Subject: Local Authority support for vulnerable residents affected by

### COVID-19

**National data:** While all local authorities were tasked with supporting vulnerable people, this was approached in very different ways even across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Some data on people supported had to be reported to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government but it only related to specific types of support linked to funding (support for the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable and practical self-isolation support linked to Test and Trace) and no statistical reports on more general support provided have been published to date.

As the support provided was specifically aimed at mitigating the impacts of a global pandemic and associated lockdown restrictions, it cannot be compared directly with any previous support – many of the services were not operating previously or were aimed at a narrower cohort of people. Take-up is therefore likely to be closely linked to lockdown restrictions.

[Data from the ONS' COVID High Risk Group Insights Study](#) shows take-up of key types of support among Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) people over the period from January to June 2021 (during the third UK lockdown, with advice for CEV people to shield paused from 1 April 2021). The table below shows the proportions of survey respondents who said that type of support helped them follow CEV guidance in each survey wave. The results do not change significantly over time but do appear to broadly indicate reducing levels of need for the support types listed as the lockdown restrictions eased.

Support type	18/1/21-30/1/21	22/2/21-27/2/21	22/3/21-31/3/21	26/4/21-1/5/21	17/5/21-22/5/21	21/6/21-26/6/21
Priority supermarket delivery slots	26	29	25	25	28	22
Other support from local authority to access food	3	2	2	2	2	2
Support from volunteers and/or charities delivering food	3	3	3	2	2	2
Prescription deliveries	36	37	34	30	34	30
Support from volunteers and/or charities delivering medicines	3	3	3	2	3	2
Financial support	13	11	11	7	8	7

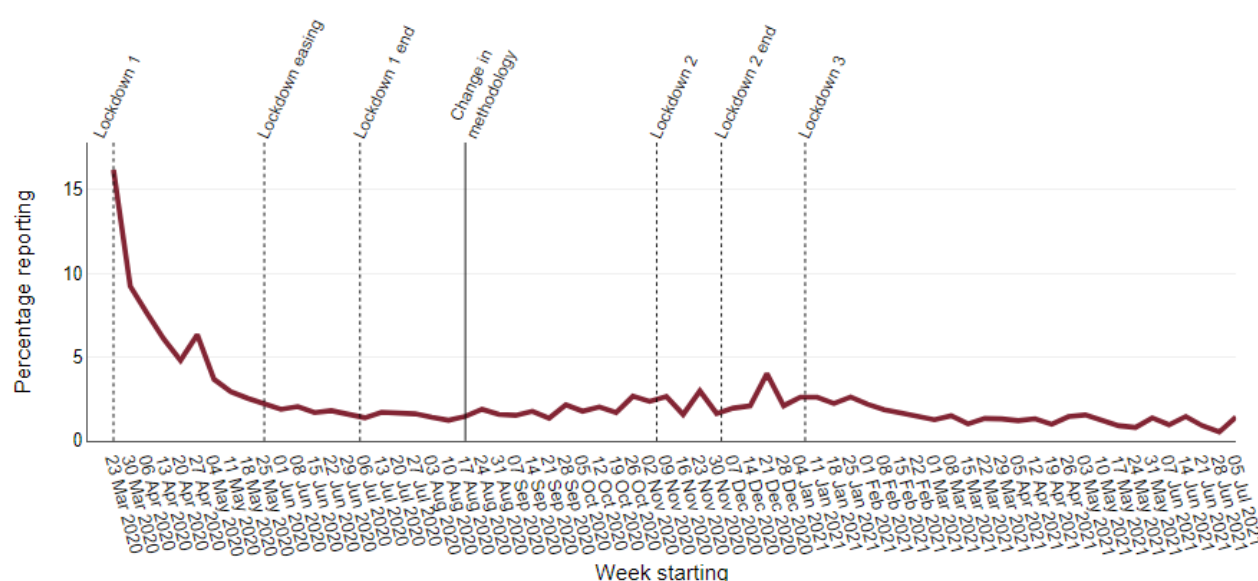
**Local data:** Since July 2020, Huntingdonshire District Council's Covid-19 resident advice team has made nearly 5,000 further successful calls to over 3,600 households. Around a sixth of these had previously been contacted between March and June 2020 but the majority were contacted for the first time.

Of all those contacted, 624 households (17% of those contacted) were provided with any type of support. Over 30% of those previously contacted were given support compared to just 14% of those contacted for the first time from July 2020 onwards, suggesting a combination of both long-term and short-term needs. 90 households (2.5%) requested help with food (5% among those previously contacted, 2% among those contacted for the first time).

As noted in our July 2020 Community Impact Assessment, there has been a change in the types of people contacted over time. We initially focused on those most vulnerable due to early lockdown restrictions (those aged over 70, those known to be disabled or in receipt of our assisted bin collection service, but not those who were officially Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV) as they were being supported by the County Council). As needs linked to difficulties accessing food and other essential items abated (largely through local and informal support networks such as family and friends), our focus switched to those more at risk from financial pressures. The reduction in need for support with accessing food we identified

appears to correspond with the pattern nationally, as indicated by results from a UCL COVID-19 Social Study on people reporting major stress relating to food over time shown in the graph below (as [presented by PHE](#)).

**Trend in percentage (weighted) of respondents reporting major stress relating to food in United Kingdom**



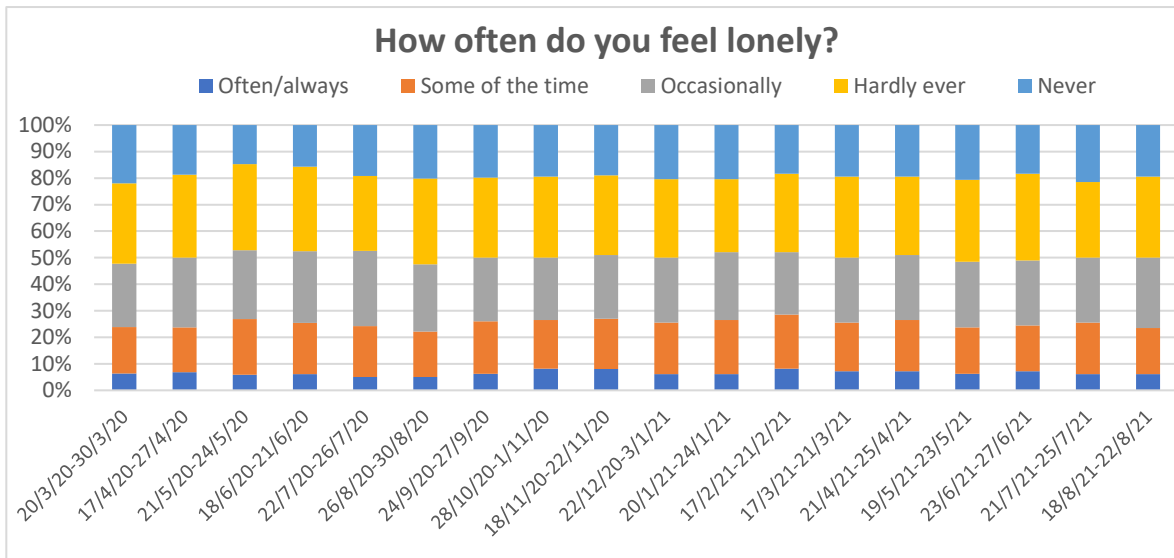
As the second national lockdown began in early November, it was agreed that Huntingdonshire District Council would take responsibility for supporting CEV residents. While there was no requirement for CEV residents to shield again as they had been asked to in lockdown 1, our focus shifted to focus on this group and others who might be affected by new lockdown restrictions. Letters were sent to all CEV residents on the shielding list and outbound phone calls were scheduled for those who had previously needed support from either the district or county council, including non-CEV residents who the district council had supported during lockdown 1. While we did find some people needing support as they were unable to access essential goods/services, and some CEV residents needed help registering for supermarket priority status, the level of need for this was lower than seen at the beginning of the first lockdown the previous March.

However, we did identify increased needs for financial support or for food due to affordability issues rather than access issues. Around this time, we also provided support to the county council who needed help contacting those enquiring about their Winter Support Grant vouchers (later the Covid Local Support Grant), so more calls were being made to financially vulnerable residents. This is likely to have skewed the types of support requested and it appears that the financial need then being identified was less likely to be linked to the impacts of the pandemic/lockdown restrictions than we had seen earlier. Feedback from the resident advice team was that fewer of those with financial issues at this stage had been affected by loss of income/employment due to furlough or redundancy and that many were in receipt of benefits or on low income prior to the pandemic.

## Subject: Loneliness and social isolation

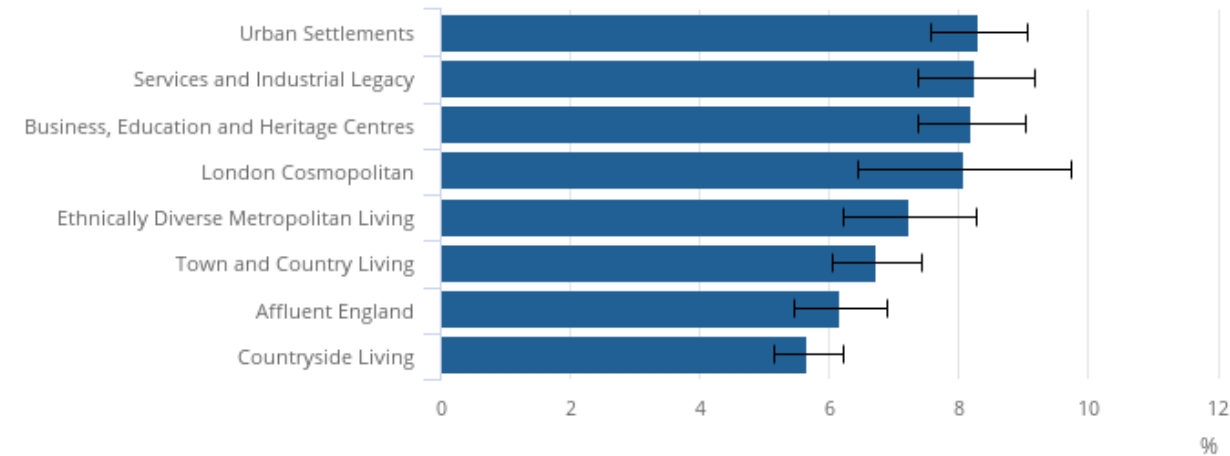
**National data:** The Office for National Statistics has been [regularly publishing indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey](#) to understand the impact of the pandemic on people, households and communities in Great Britain. As well as asking about activities and steps taken to help stop the spread of Covid-19, those surveyed have also been asked about their own wellbeing. This includes asking how often respondents feel lonely, with results for each wave allowing us to track how this has changed over the course of the

pandemic. The graph below shows how those giving an answer responded between March 2020 and August 2021.



This appears to show that lockdowns had some impact on loneliness, as expected, with the proportion who said they were ‘never’ lonely reducing during the first UK lockdown in particular. The ONS have [reported](#) that “After a year of lockdowns, social distancing, and restrictions on travel and gatherings, some groups of people have reported high rates of loneliness and poorer well-being in recent months”. Before the pandemic around 5% of people in Great Britain reported that they felt lonely "often" or "always" compared to 7.2% of the adult population in the period from October 2020 to February 2021.

Analysis of the survey data by area type indicates that countryside areas reported lower rates of loneliness in general, as shown in the graph below.

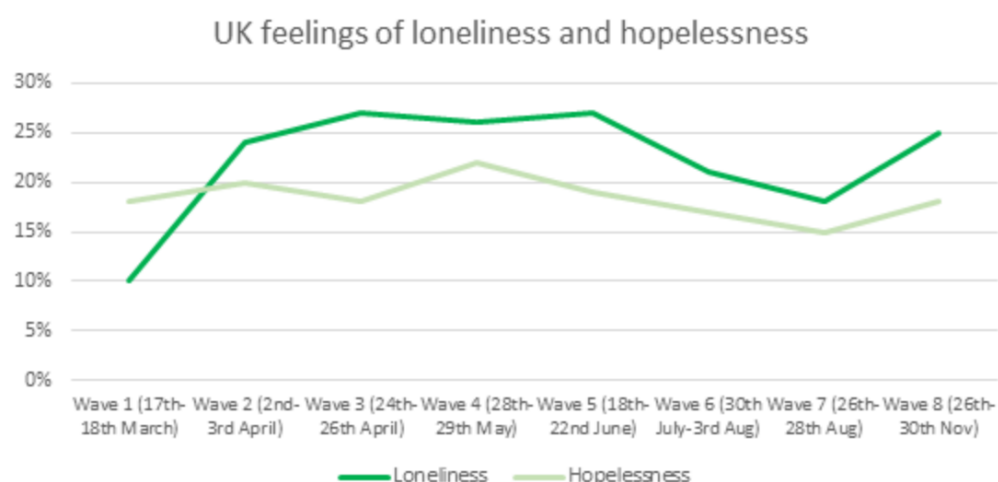


The ONS also found that places with a lower average (median) age generally experienced higher rates of loneliness during the pandemic, with higher rates of loneliness among young people particularly associated with urban areas outside London.

Another finding was that unemployment was closely tied to loneliness levels during the pandemic, with local authority areas with a higher unemployment rate having higher proportions of residents who said they were often or always lonely. Additionally, in areas where residents earn more on average per week, loneliness rates tend to be lower.

In addition to the ONS Opinions and Lifestyle Survey data, [YouGov survey data shared by the Mental Health Foundation](#) also suggests a link between loneliness and lockdowns/restrictions. The following graph

shows results for eight survey waves up to November 2020, with reported loneliness highest during the first and second lockdown periods.





In line with the ONS’ findings, the Mental Health Foundation also reports links between loneliness and age (“Feelings of loneliness were higher in younger people too, with 38% and 34% of people aged 18-24 and 25-34 respectively, which has been consistently higher across all waves than the general population”) and between loneliness and unemployment (“levels were also higher in people who are unemployed”).

**Local data:** Local authority level estimates of loneliness were not available prior to the pandemic. It is therefore not possible to measure how loneliness levels may have changed in Huntingdonshire. However, an [estimate for the period 14 October 2020 to 22 February 2021](#) is available. As Huntingdonshire is in ONS’ “Town and Country Living” local authority classification supergroup, is estimated to have a higher median age (43.6 years at mid-2020) than the national average (40.2 years) and has below average unemployment, we would expect this estimate to indicate a below average loneliness rate.

This is confirmed by the estimate which indicates that 5.4% of Huntingdonshire adults “often or always” felt lonely in the October 2020-February 2021 period, below the 7.2% average for Great Britain. However, this should be treated with some caution due to small sample sizes and large confidence intervals, with the ONS cautioning that local authorities should not be ranked against each other.

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport have [said](#) they will commission research from the Office for National Statistics and Centre for Thriving Places in early 2021 which will begin to explore variations in levels of loneliness in local areas. This will be supported by the Active Lives Survey, which will allow robust estimates of the levels of loneliness within local authority areas.

## Topic: Financial Hardship

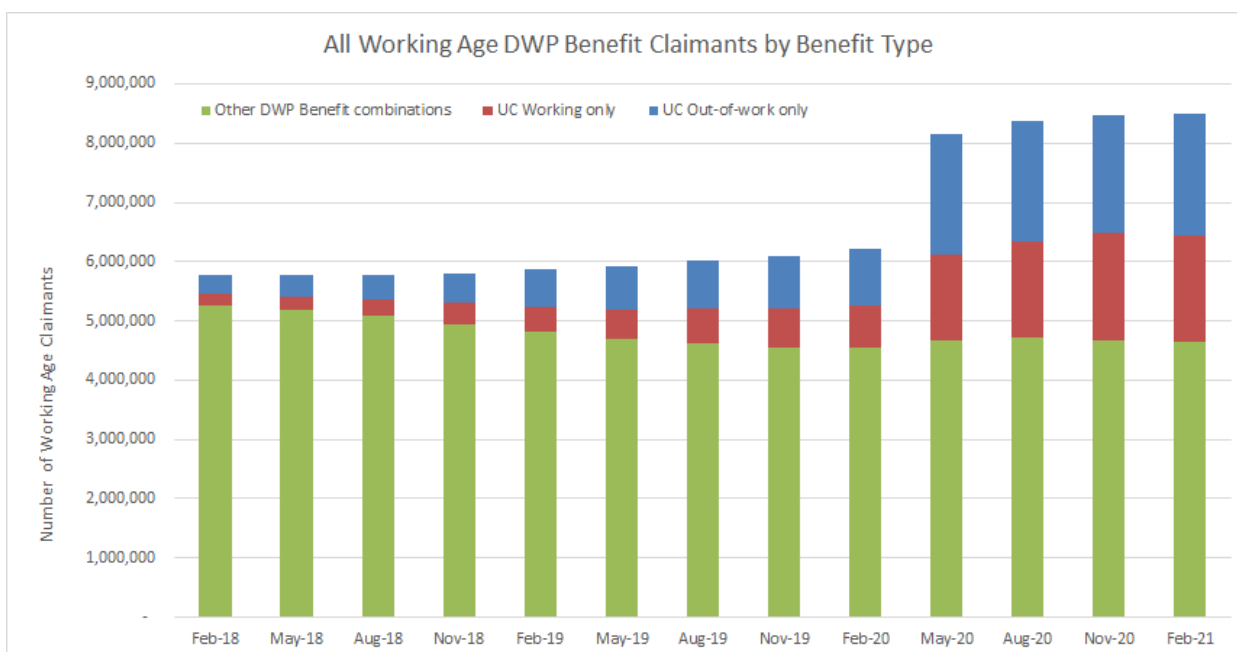
	NATIONAL TREND 	CONFIDENCE RATING 	IMPACT RATING 
Benefits	There has been an increase in benefit claimants/ claimant households since the start of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major impact due to a rise of more than 40%, with rates remaining significantly higher than pre-pandemic levels)</i>
Free School Meals	The number of children eligible for and taking up Free School Meals has increased since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(County level data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major impact in terms of an increase in children who are eligible and also in numbers that access Free School Meals)</i>
Food bank use	There has been an increase in food parcels distributed since the start of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available – reflects 6 distribution centres based in the district in each year)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate impact as although food bank use was already rising, this has increased further due to significant awareness raising and promotion of the provision throughout the pandemic, as seen through our own work with vulnerable people)</i>
Requests for advice/support re debt/low income	There has been a reduction in the number of people helped, and the number of issues helped with, by Citizens Advice services since the start of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Data available for Citizens Advice Rural Cambs - covering Fenland, East Cambridgeshire and Fenland)</i>	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Minimal impact due to a reduction in clients and issues dealt with, linked to restricted access to services during the pandemic but likely to have been mitigated by new support available from local groups - see sections on Support Network and Volunteering)</i>

### Subject: Benefits

**National data:** Most of the impact of the pandemic on those in receipt of benefits, and on those needing support from the benefit system as a result of impacts on employment, has been among those of working age. [DWP data](#) on those of State Pension Age does not show an increase in benefit claimants since February 2020, with numbers in receipt of any DWP benefit including the State Pension fairly static at around 9.8 million and the number in receipt of any combination of benefits except the State Pension alone falling by 3.8% (over 122,000 people) from February 2020 to the latest count at February 2021.



The number of working age people in England in receipt of various benefits paid by the Department for Work and Pensions is shown in the following graph for every quarter from February 2018. This shows a large increase in claims between February 2020 and May 2020 as the first national lockdown began, with an additional 1.93 million claimants over that period (a 31% rise). The majority (over 93%) of the increase was due to claims for Universal Credit (UC) only, with large rises in the numbers receiving UC only while working and receiving UC only while out of work. It should be noted that some of the increase in UC claims would have been due to people moving onto UC from other DWP benefits but there were only small reductions in non-UC benefit recipients between February 2020 and May 2020.



With regards to who the new UC claimants are, data is available on claimants by age and gender and whether they were in employment while claiming or not. Data is also available on the households in receipt of UC by family type, number of children and payment amount. It should be noted that UC claimant and household numbers since the beginning of the pandemic have included higher numbers of people with an open claim on Universal Credit that are not “in payment” as a result of a temporary administrative policy change allowing claims not in payment to be kept open for longer than before - claims reduced to £0 because earnings are too high now remain open for up to 6 assessment periods of £0 awards rather than being closed at this point. Data relating to individual claimants below includes those not in payment, but the household data referred to has been filtered to only report on claims in payment at the time. “Couple, no children” family types have been most likely to be not “in payment”, while nearly all “Single, with children” family types have been “in payment” throughout (96-98% of claims each month have been in payment).

Comparing numbers at February 2020 and August 2021 shows claimant numbers nationally have roughly doubled in every age group, except for those aged 16-19 (up by only 60% but, as few are at the younger end of this age band, a higher proportion than in most age bands are likely to have moved up to the next age band over the period) and those aged 65+ (a very small group which remained much smaller than any other age band at August 2021 despite a near sixfold increase in size). Similarly, both the number of males and females claiming have both roughly doubled from February 2020 to August 2021, with a 93% increase in female claimants and a 119% increase in male claimants over the period.

Both the number of claimants in employment and the number not in employment increased significantly between February 2020 and July 2021. However, there was a sharper rise in those in employment (up by 132%) than those not in employment (up by 87%). At February 2020, claimants in employment made up 35% of all claimants and by July 2021 this share had increased to 40%. Those in employment will be under a range of conditionality regimes – from those with very low earnings who are required to take action to

secure more/better paid work to those with individual or household earnings over the level at which conditionality applies (these people are not required to look for different work but must advise the DWP of changes of circumstances, particularly if at risk of decreasing earnings or losing jobs). Some not in employment will be required to search for work but others are not expected to work at present (e.g. those with health or caring responsibilities which prevent them from working or preparing for work).

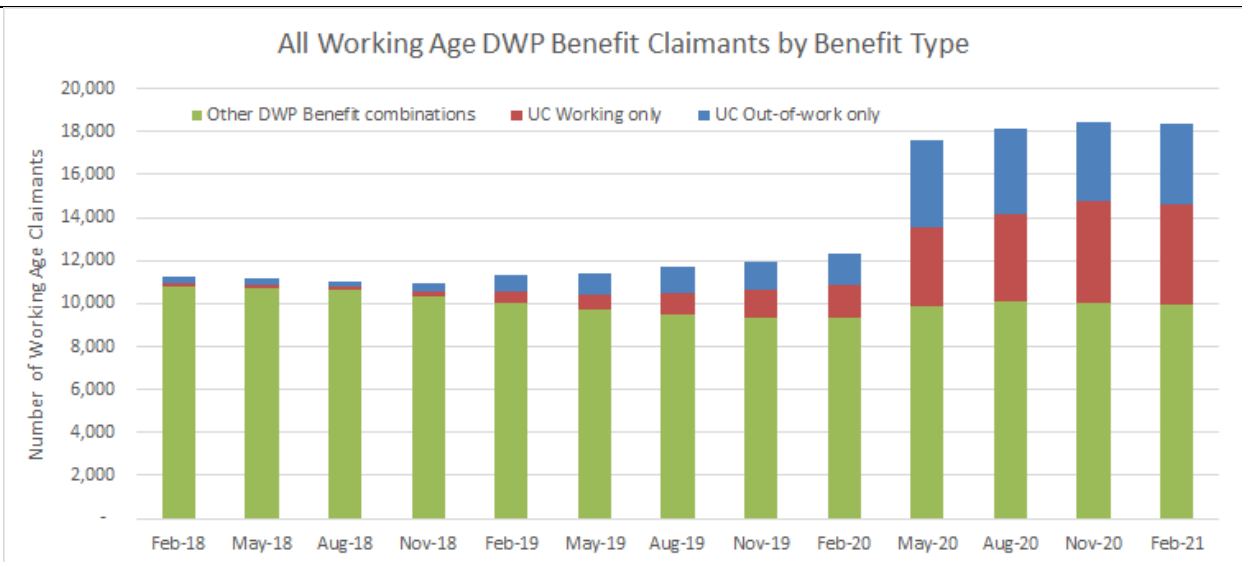
The number of households in receipt of UC payments was 77% higher at May 2021 than at February 2020, with the largest increase among the “single, no children” family type. However, all family types have seen large increases over this period. Similarly, households with no children saw the largest rise in claims with UC payments but there were also large increases for households with 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 or more children. The average monthly payment for households in receipt of UC payments initially rose by over £100 from £743 in February 2020 to £847 in April 2020 but then fell back to around £780 by June 2020. The average monthly payment remained around that level until February 2021 but has since increased to £803 at May 2021. This latest average is 8% higher than the pre-pandemic average at February 2020.

In addition to benefits paid by DWP, local authorities across the country administer Housing Benefits (switching to UC over time) and also provide Council Tax Support (CTS) schemes to help low-income council taxpayers. While local discretion means that eligibility criteria and the amount of discount varies between councils, changes in the [number of households in receipt of CTS](#) provide an indication of changes in the number of low income households in an area. Nationally, there was a 4.5% increase in the number of claimants between Q4 2019/20 (January to March 2020) and Q1 2020/21 (April to June 2020), followed by further small increases to Q4 2020/21. The most recent data shows that from Q4 2020/21 to Q1 2021/22, there was a fall of 0.7%. The level at Q1 2021/22 remains 4.4% higher than an Q4 2019/20.

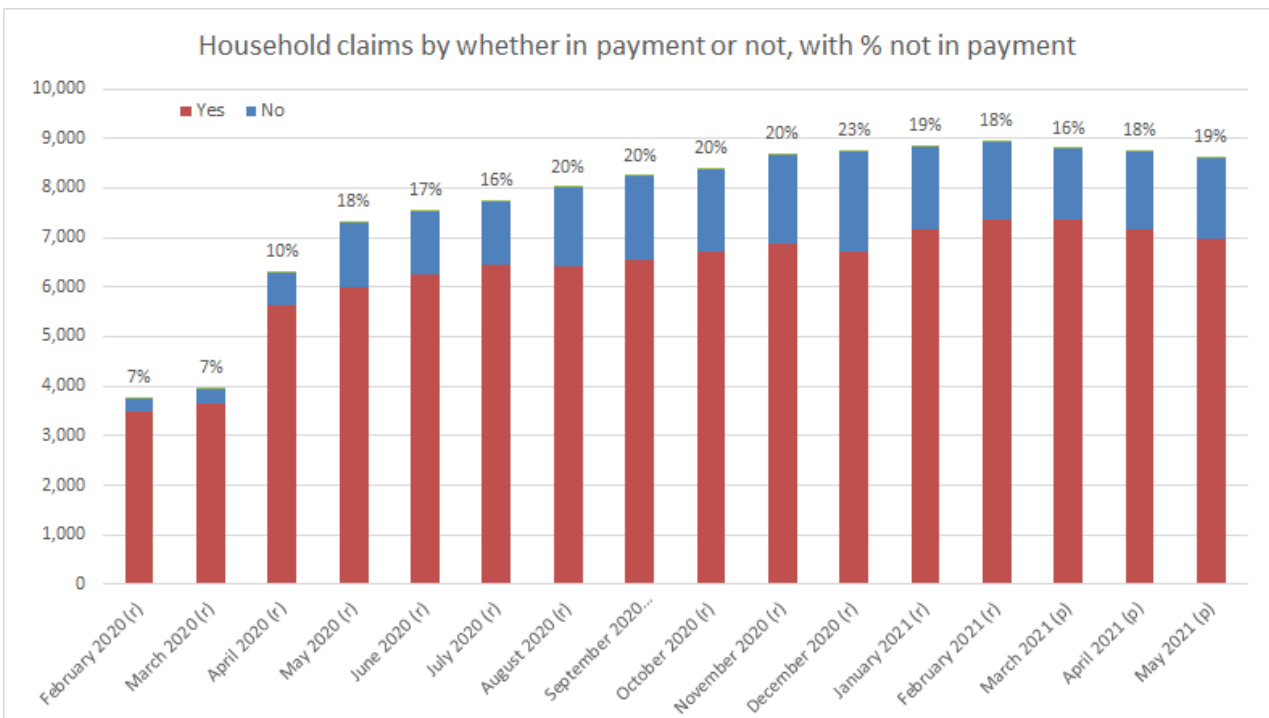
**Local data:** As seen nationally, most of the impact of the pandemic on those in receipt of benefits, and on those needing support from the benefit system as a result of impacts on employment, has been among those of working age. [DWP data](#) on those of State Pension Age does not show an increase in benefit claimants since February 2020, with numbers in receipt of any DWP benefit including the State Pension fairly static at around 34,000 and the number in receipt of any combination of benefits except the State Pension alone falling by 3.5% (277 people) from February 2020 to the latest count at February 2021.

The number of working age people in Huntingdonshire in receipt of various benefits paid by the Department for Work and Pensions is shown in the following graph for every quarter from February 2018. This shows a large increase in claims between February 2020 and May 2020 as the first national lockdown began, with more than 5,000 additional claimants over that period (a 43% rise, so higher than average). The majority (over 89%) of the increase was due to claims for Universal Credit (UC) only, with large rises in the numbers receiving UC only while working and receiving UC only while out of work. It should be noted that some of the increase in UC claims would have been due to people moving onto UC from other DWP benefits but there were only small reductions in non-UC benefit recipients between February 2020 and May 2020.





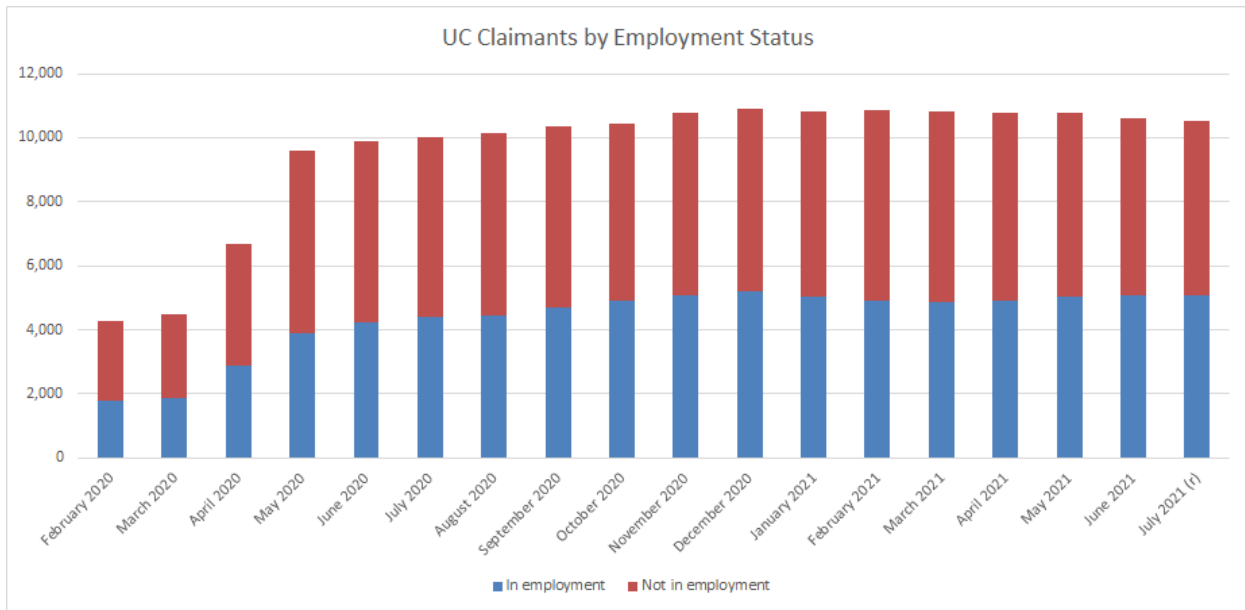
The DWP’s decision to allow UC claims reduced to £0 because earnings are too high to remain open for up to 6 assessment periods of £0 awards rather than being closed has also affected total claim numbers for Huntingdonshire. The graph below shows the numbers of household claims in payment and not in payment (e.g. £0 awards) for each month since February 2020. Around a fifth of claims each month over this period were not in receipt of any payment. Data relating to individual claimants below includes those not in payment, but household data referred to has been filtered to only report on claims in payment at the time.



As seen nationally, comparing data for February 2020 and August 2021 shows claimant numbers locally have increased significantly in every age group (more than doubling in every age group except 16–19-year-olds, which was up 95%). Similarly, both the number of males and females claiming have increased significantly from February 2020 to August 2021 in Huntingdonshire, with a 130% increase in female claimants and a 176% increase in male claimants over the period.

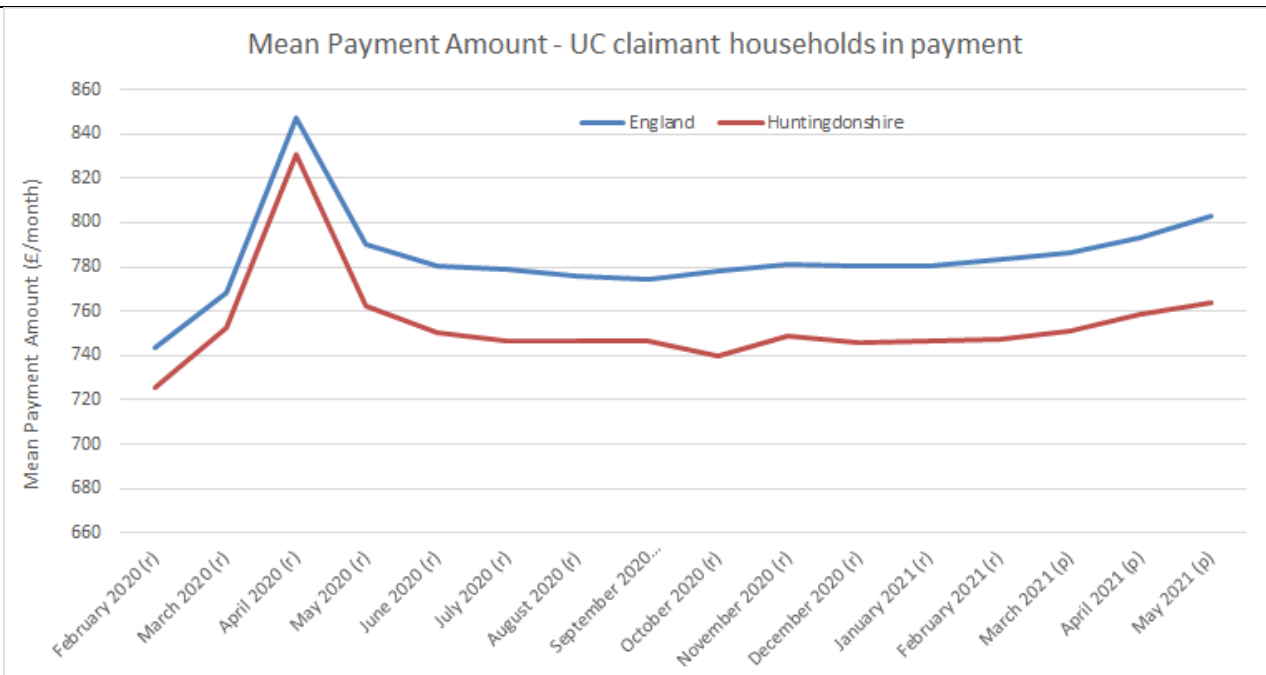
Huntingdonshire’s claimants have also followed the national direction with a sharper rise in the number of claimants in employment (up 184%) than the number not in employment (up 118%) between February 2020

and July 2021, as shown in the graph below. From 42% in February 2020, the share of claimants who are in employment has increased to nearly half (48%) at July 2021.

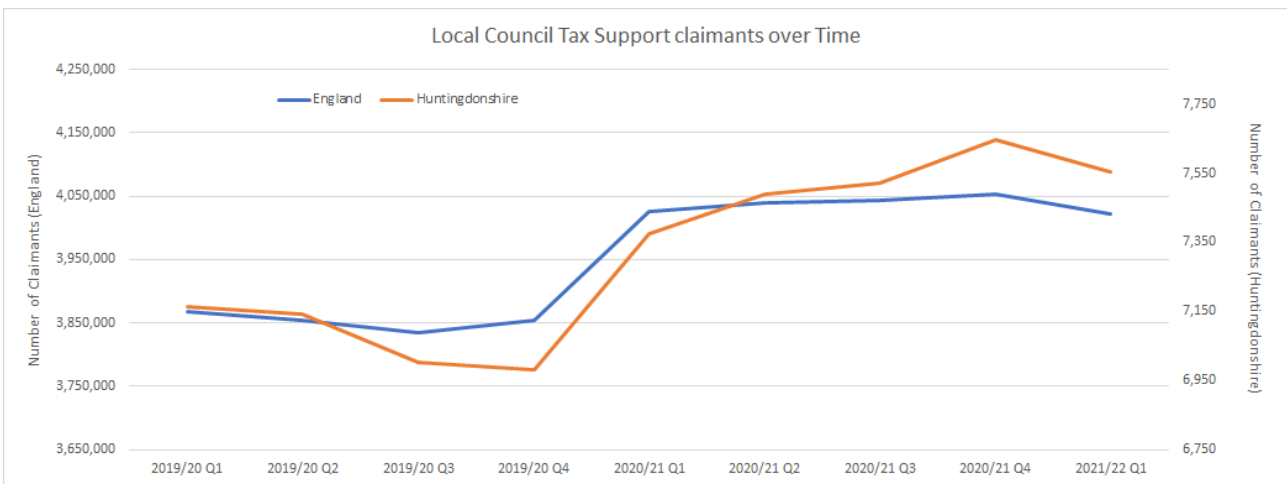


The number of households in receipt of UC payments was twice as high (+100%) at May 2021 than at February 2020, with large increases seen for all family types over this period but the largest increase among the “single, no children” family type. Similarly, households with no children saw the largest rise in claims with UC payments but there were also large increases for households with 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 or more children.

As shown in the graph below, the average monthly payment for Huntingdonshire households in receipt of UC payments initially rose by over £100 from £725 in February 2020 to £831 in April 2020 but then fell back to around £750 by June 2020. The average monthly payment remained around that level until March 2021 but has since increased to £764 at May 2021. This latest average is 5% higher than the pre-pandemic average at February 2020. When compared to the changes in the national mean payment amount, Huntingdonshire has seen a smaller increase and the difference between the national average and the local average has doubled from being 2.4% below average in February 2020 to 4.8% lower in May 2021.



The number of [Local Council Tax Support claimants](#) in Huntingdonshire increased significantly between Q4 2019/20 and Q1 2020/21 (April to June 2020). This increase was higher than the increase nationally in that period (up 5.6% compared to an England average of 4.5%) and Huntingdonshire also saw larger increases over the second, third and fourth quarters of 2020/21. At Q4 2020/21, there had been a 9.5% increase locally compared to the number of claimants at Q4 2019/20 while the national total had risen by just 5.2% overall over the same period. There have been no changes to eligibility criteria for the Council Tax Support scheme in Huntingdonshire so the increase in claimants is due to a rise in demand.



More recently, Huntingdonshire saw a 1.2% reduction in claimant numbers from Q4 2020/21 to Q1 2021/22 while the England total fell by 0.7%. However, the number of claimants in Huntingdonshire at Q1 2021/22 remained 8.2% higher than at Q4 2019/20 while the national total had only risen by 4.4% over this time.

## Subject: Free School Meals (FSM)

**National data:** The [latest data](#), combining information from the school census, school level annual school census, general hospital school census and alternative provision census, shows that there were 1.74m pupils eligible for FSM at January 2021, up from 1.44million in January 2020 (a rise of 21%). 20.8% of all pupils were eligible for free school meals in 2021, which is an increase from 17.3% in January 2020. Over 420,000 have become eligible for free school meals since the first national Covid-19 lockdown was announced, compared to just 292,000 over the same period (March 2019 to January 2020) prior to the pandemic. This is an increase of over 40% and, when combined with the increase in the proportion of pupils who are eligible, this suggests the increase is likely to be linked to the pandemic. Free School Meals eligibility is based on whether parents/carers are in receipt of a range of benefits, including Universal Credit, so it does seem likely that the increase is linked to the increase in benefit take-up nationally.

**Local data:** Figures for Cambridgeshire show the overall number of pupils eligible for free school meals in January 2021 was 15,803, up from 12,235 in January 2020 (a rise of 29%). 17.8% of all pupils were eligible for free school meals in 2021, which is an increase from 13.9% in January 2020. The overall proportion eligible is below the national average overall and for all school types except state-funded special schools (where 43.8% of pupils were eligible for FSM compared to an England average of 43.2%). Cambridgeshire has seen over 4,500 become eligible for free school meals since the first national Covid-19 lockdown was announced. While figures for the same period in 2019-2020 are not available, this represents 28.5% of all those eligible at January 2021 – a slightly higher proportion than the 24.6% of those eligible nationally at January 2021 who had become eligible since the first national lockdown.

Cambridgeshire County Council's Service Director – Education advised in June 2021 that increasing the take up for free school meal entitlement, especially for families who are low income, following Covid-19 was one of their current priorities. They also want to increase the take up of 2-year-old funded places and the early years pupil premium (3- and 4-year-olds) as they "know settings are losing out on financial support which is vital to support catch up in these establishments".

## Subject: Food bank use

**National data:** The Trussell Trust has [reported](#) that between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021, food banks in their network within England distributed 2.1 million emergency food parcels to people in crisis, a 40.5% increase on the previous year. 818k of these went to children, with the number of parcels for children up by 43% compared to 2019/20.

The Trussell Trust's [data briefing](#) states that during this period, food banks across the country have seen historic levels of need, with many new food banks opening to support people through the crisis. They note that alternative providers such as councils, community groups and schools also began distributing emergency food parcels to support people shielding in their communities, and those who cannot afford or access food.

In addition to the increase in parcels, there was also a 53% increase in total weight of food distributed compared to 2019/20. The Trussell Trust says some food banks gave out larger parcels during the crisis which may have reduced the total number of parcels given out, while increasing the average weight. Because some food banks distributed a higher proportion of seven-day parcels than others, this may skew some statistics at a local or regional level.

**Local data:** The Trussell Trust has also reported data at the local authority level ([link to spreadsheet](#)). However, they note that comparisons in the growth in food parcel distribution between areas should be made with caution as there are many different factors that may influence the number of parcels distributed

within a local area. These include prevalence of other food banks, changes to unemployment rates and food banks opening or closing distribution centres. Food parcels are linked to the local authority based on where the distribution centre is based, rather than where the person needing support is living. For example, if a person living in Bromley receives a parcel from a food bank in Lambeth the parcel is recorded in these statistics under Lambeth.

The 2019/20 and 2020/21 figures for Huntingdonshire are both based on six distribution centres in the district. They show a 35% increase in the total number of parcels distributed, from 5,775 in 2019/20 to 7,776 in 2020/21. The figures also show how many parcels were for adults and how many were for children. Parcels for adults increased from 3,411 to 4,355 (+28%) and parcels for children increased from 2,364 to 3,421 (+45%).

## Subject: Requests for advice and support regarding debt and low income

**National data:** Citizens Advice publish data on trends in advice and support given here: [Advice Trends September 2021 | Tableau Public](#). This is based on advice and support from over 600 offices and ,1800 outreach locations throughout the UK. The data shows there was a 6.7% reduction in the number of clients supported (1,447,188 down from 1,550,716) and a 12.5% reduction in the number of issues dealt with in the municipal year 2020/21 compared to 2019/20 (4,120,427 down from 4,711,499).

**Local data:** [Citizens Advice Rural Cambs](#) supported 9,201 unique clients across their rural Cambridgeshire area (those accessed their service for the first time in 12 months) in 2020/21. This is 9.7% lower than the number supported in [2019/20](#). It should be noted that these figures don't include many more thousands of clients returning within the same year (due to funding requirements these people are not double counted).

They dealt with 41,804 issues (down 9% on the previous year), with the top five as listed below similar to the top five in 2019/20. 'Relationships' was fifth highest in 2019/20 but not in the top five in 2020/21, while the 'Financial Services & Capabilities' category was a new entry in the top five in 2020/21.

1. Benefits – Universal Credit
2. Benefits & Tax Credits
3. Financial Services & Capabilities
4. Debt
5. Employment

There have been increases in services accessed via advice, email, telephone and webchat but a significant fall in the number of services accessed in person as lockdown restrictions led to offices closing and staff and volunteers working from home.

Despite the reduction in people and issues supported, the service helped clients gain significantly more income in 2020/21. The £8.4m gained for service users in rural Cambridgeshire was nearly double (+96%) the income gained for service users in 2019/20 (£4.3m).

It should be noted that the figures above relate to the whole rural Cambridgeshire area (Fenland, East Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire) rather than Huntingdonshire alone.




## GOOD HEALTH




Cambridgeshire County Council/Peterborough City Council’s Public Health Intelligence/Business Intelligence and CCG Intelligence teams are also working together on a collaborative programme of intelligence work on the impacts of Covid-19 and emerging needs in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Their initial “[COVID-19: Review of emerging evidence of Needs and Impacts on Cambridgeshire & Peterborough](#)” includes a first suite of information which focusses on the immediate health impacts of Covid-19 as well as some economic, transport and air quality impacts.

The second and third suites will include information on indirect health impacts of Covid-19 including impacts on prevention and control of long-term conditions and the impact on mental health and wellbeing. They will also include wider impacts on children and education, crime and vulnerabilities. These will be released as data becomes available in November-December 2021.




Huntingdonshire District Council’s Impact Assessment 2021 has attempted to cover many of these topics now using data sources currently available to give as early an indication as possible of the impacts nationally and locally. However, to avoid duplication we have not included detailed analysis on the immediate health impacts of Covid-19 such as infections, hospitalisations and mortality. The Public Health teams have greater access to health data, including restricted data allowing them to undertake further analysis than we could, so we would encourage those interested to read their current and future reports via the link above.

### Topic: Health

	<b>NATIONAL TREND</b> 	<b>CONFIDENCE RATING</b> 	<b>IMPACT RATING</b> 
Life expectancy	Life expectancy for both males and females has decreased since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate impact as it is unclear how the pandemic will affect life expectancy in future due to reduced hospital admissions and limited health care services)</i>
Obesity - adults	There has been an increase in adults who are overweight or obese since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major impact due to a number of factors e.g. behaviour change, working from home, leisure facilities closed)</i>
Obesity - children	There has been an increase in children with excess weight and who are obese since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major impact due to a number of factors e.g. behaviour change, home-schooling and unavailability of sports and leisure facilities/clubs)</i>

	<b>NATIONAL TREND</b> 	<b>CONFIDENCE RATING</b> 	<b>IMPACT RATING</b> 
Physical activity – adults	Physical activity has decreased in adults and a greater number of adults have become inactive since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate impact as there is an identified inequality i.e. more affluent people become more active but less affluent became less active. Further analysis at sub-district level required to target support)</i>
Physical activity – older people	Older people have become more inactive since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major impact due to the reduction in strength and balance activities for older people to prevent falls)</i>
Physical activity – children and young people	Physical activity has decreased in children and young people since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate impact due to being restricted to the home and access to physical activities more limited)</i>
Mental health	The number of people in contact with mental health services has increased (for both diagnosed and self-diagnosed mental health conditions) since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(County level data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major impact which is typical in an economic downturn period but also increased due to reduced access to mental health services)</i>
Impact on other health conditions	There has been a decrease in some non-COVID mortalities but an increase in others, along with a decrease in diagnoses since the beginning of the pandemic/lockdown restrictions	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate impact as it is unclear how the pandemic will affect people due to reduced hospital admissions and limited health care services)</i>
Behavioural risk factors (alcohol and smoking)	There has been an increase in alcohol consumption among heavy drinkers and an increase in smoking among young people since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate impact due to small increases in both areas but unclear whether this is a temporary or continued trend)</i>



	<b>NATIONAL TREND</b> 	<b>CONFIDENCE RATING</b> 	<b>IMPACT RATING</b> 
Adult Social Care	There has been a decrease in people needing local authority long-term support but an increase in demand for short-term support since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(County level data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major impact due to reduction in hospital referrals but an increase in community referrals along with a considerable backlog)</i>

## Subject: Life expectancy

<p><b>National data:</b> Public Health England (PHE)’s weekly <a href="#">excess mortality reports</a> show that between the start of the pandemic in March 2020 and the end of 2020, there were almost 70,000 ‘excess’ deaths in England. They state that “Given the very high level of excess deaths last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is no surprise that life expectancy fell in 2020”. The falls “exceed any previous year-on-year changes seen since 1981” (the first year for which data has been calculated in a comparable way to these latest estimates), although estimates for the first six months of 2020, covering most of the first wave of the pandemic, show bigger falls in life expectancy with the estimates for the second half of the year “closer to those in 2019”.</p> <p>Provisional “Period life expectancy” data for 2020 <a href="#">published by PHE</a> estimated the average number of years a newborn baby would live if he or she experienced the age-specific mortality rates of the area for that time period throughout his or her life. These reflect current mortality rates and are not the number of years a baby born in the area could actually expect to live, because mortality rates will change in the future. These life expectancy estimates are therefore an alternative way of presenting mortality rates, in order to show the impact of COVID-19 on levels of mortality in 2020. They indicated that there had been falls in life expectancy for both males and females in 2020 compared with 2019 and other recent years.</p> <p>The 2020 figures were also recently published in PHE’s <a href="#">Health Profile for England 2021</a>, which states that the “very high level of excess deaths due to the pandemic caused life expectancy in England to fall in 2020, by 1.3 years for males and 0.9 years for females”. The full-year estimate for males in 2020 was 78.7 years and the full-year estimate for females in 2020 was 82.7 years. This was the lowest life expectancy since 2011 for males and females. The report also states that “Spain, Italy and Poland experienced similar decreases in 2020, while France had a smaller decrease”.</p> <p>The report also highlighted that inequality in life expectancy (as measured by the gaps in male and female life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas in England) was larger than all previous years we have data for, which is the last two decades. They advise that this “demonstrates that the pandemic has exacerbated existing inequalities in life expectancy by deprivation”, with COVID-19 “the cause of death that contributed most to the gap in 2020” but higher mortality from heart disease, lung cancer, and chronic lower respiratory diseases in deprived areas also remaining important contributors.</p> <p>Official data is based on the population estimates and deaths by date of registration data for consecutive 3-year periods and therefore will not be directly comparable with the Public Health England data above (single-year life tables are volatile and a less robust indicator of mortality trends than three-year life tables). New three-year data for the latest period 2018-2020 has just been published by the ONS <a href="#">here</a>. This shows that life expectancy at birth in the UK in 2018-2020 was 79.0 years for males and 82.9 years for females;</p>
--



with a fall of 7.0 weeks for males and almost no change for females (a slight increase of 0.5 weeks) compared to the latest non-overlapping period of 2015-2017. Figures for England were higher at 79.3 years for males and 83.1 years for females.

The ONS state that the coronavirus pandemic “led to a greater number of deaths than normal in 2020” and consequently, in the latest estimates, they see “virtually no improvement” in life expectancy for females, while for males, life expectancy has “fallen back” to levels reported for 2012 to 2014. This is the first time they have seen a decline when comparing non-overlapping time periods since the series began in the early 1980s.

They note that these estimates rely on the assumption that current levels of mortality, which are “unusually high”, will continue for the rest of someone’s life. They advise that “Once the coronavirus pandemic has ended and its consequences for future mortality are known, it is possible that life expectancy will return to an improving trend in the future”.

2018-2020 life expectancy figures at age 65 years were 18.5 years for males and 21.0 years for females; these estimates are very similar to those for 2015 to 2017 with a slight decline of 1.0 weeks for males and an increase of 3.1 weeks for females. In England, life expectancy at age 65 years was slightly higher at 18.7 years for males and 21.1 years for females.

**Local data:** Public Health England have not published their provisional, single-year data below the regional level. However, [data on excess mortality](#) is published to upper tier local authority level, with figures for Cambridgeshire showing a total of 444 excess deaths compared to expected deaths for the period from the week ending 27 March 2020 to the week ending 1 January 2021. Total deaths were 10.8% higher than expected, with a total of 493 deaths with Covid-19 on the Death Certificate. Nationally, the 71,774 excess deaths compared to expected deaths for the same period meant total deaths were 19.2% higher than expected, suggesting that Cambridgeshire has fared better. As in Cambridgeshire, the number of deaths with Covid-19 on the Death Certificate was higher than the number of excess deaths at 76,646.

While excess death data is not published at the lower tier authority level, data published on [deaths related to Covid](#) includes the number with Covid-19 on the Death Certificate. For the period from week ending 27 March 2020 to the week ending 1 January 2021, there were 153 in Huntingdonshire. We are also able to review provisional data on [monthly death registrations by usual area of residence](#). This gives a total number of deaths from April to December 2020 of 1,206, which is 100 more deaths than shown in the final data for the same period in 2019 and over 170 more than for the same period in both 2018 and 2017. The combination of the Covid-19 deaths and the increase over previous years does suggest there were ‘excess deaths’ in Huntingdonshire in 2020 which are likely to have had a negative impact on life expectancy.

Huntingdonshire has seen a further 151 deaths with Covid-19 on the Death Certificate from the week ending 8 January 2021 to the week ending 30 July 2021. Provisional data indicates that there have been 983 deaths registered in total from January to July 2021, which is 88 lower than the same period in 2020 but 64 higher than for the same period in 2019, 9 higher than in 2018 and 122 higher than in 2017. With less difference between these figures and those for previous years, it is not yet clear whether 2021 will show “excess deaths” overall and, if so, whether this would have a significant impact on life expectancy.

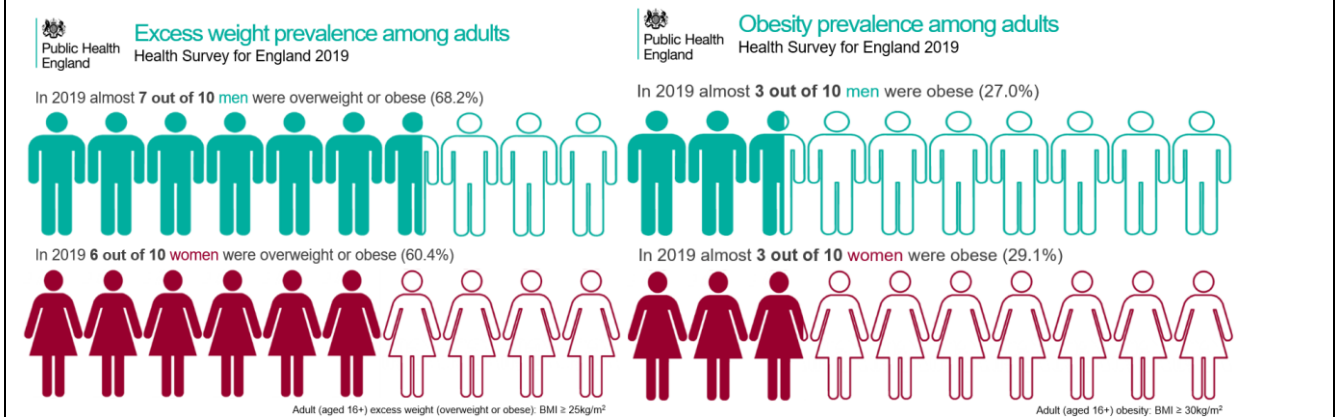
New [three-year life expectancy data for the latest period 2018-2020](#) has just been published by the ONS for local areas and this shows that life expectancy at birth in Huntingdonshire in 2018-2020 was 81.0 years for males and 84.1 years for females. Both of these figures are slightly lower than the estimates for the latest non-overlapping three-year period of 2015-2017, when they were 81.3 years for males and 84.6 years for females.

Life expectancy at age 65 years was 19.5 years for males and 21.6 years for females for the 2018-2020 period. Again, both of these figures are slightly lower than for 2015-2017, when the estimates were 19.6 years for males and 21.8 years for females.

The ONS data shows that there were falls in male life expectancy at birth in more than 62% of all local areas and falls in female life expectancy at birth in more than 46% of all local areas.

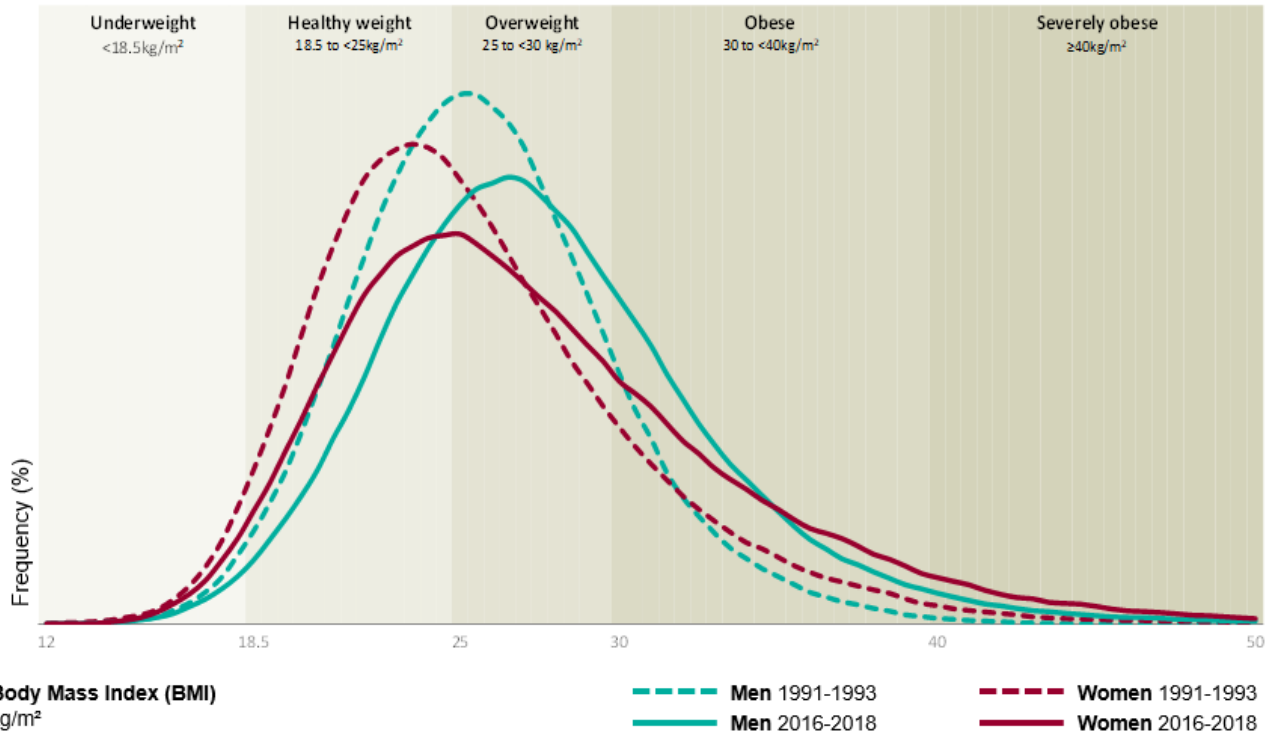
## Subject: Obesity - adults

**National data:** [Public Health England \(PHE\) report](#) that the proportion of adults in England living with obesity has “seen large increases in the last four decades”. Analysis of data from the 1980 National Heights and Weights Survey estimates that the prevalence of obesity in England stood at 6% of men and 9% of women aged 16 and over with 0.1% of men and 0.4% of women living with severe obesity. In 1993 the Health Survey for England reported that the prevalence of obesity among men and women in this age group was 13% and 16% respectively which “has increased to 27% of men and 29% of women” in 2019.



## Change in the distribution of adult BMI

Health Survey for England 1991 to 1993 and 2016 to 2018



Public Health England  
**Adult mean waist circumference**  
 Health Survey for England 2019



PHE advise that there are well documented links between high levels of central adiposity in adults (as measured by waist circumference, waist-to-height or waist-to-hip ratio) and risk of obesity-related conditions including type 2 diabetes, hypertension and heart disease. These links remain even once BMI is adjusted for, demonstrating that measures of central adiposity are independent predictors of future obesity-related ill health.

Both sexes have seen a large rise in very high waist circumference levels since 1993.

PHE state that “the most recently available data is from the 2019 Health Survey for England and was published in December 2020”. The data shared above includes data taken from there. However, for a more recent snapshot, and to allow comparisons with local estimates, we can refer to England figures for the percentage of adults (aged 18+) classified as overweight or obese used in PHE’s [Obesity Profile](#). These estimates are based on Sport England’s Active Lives Survey, with the latest 2019/20 data containing the first eight months of coronavirus (Covid-19) restrictions, from mid-March to mid-November 2020. This estimates that 62.8% of adults were overweight or obese, up from 62.3% in 2018/19.

While this data highlights the proportion with unhealthy weight prior to/early in the pandemic, PHE recently commissioned a nationwide survey of over 5,000 adults that has revealed that 41% of adults nationally, and

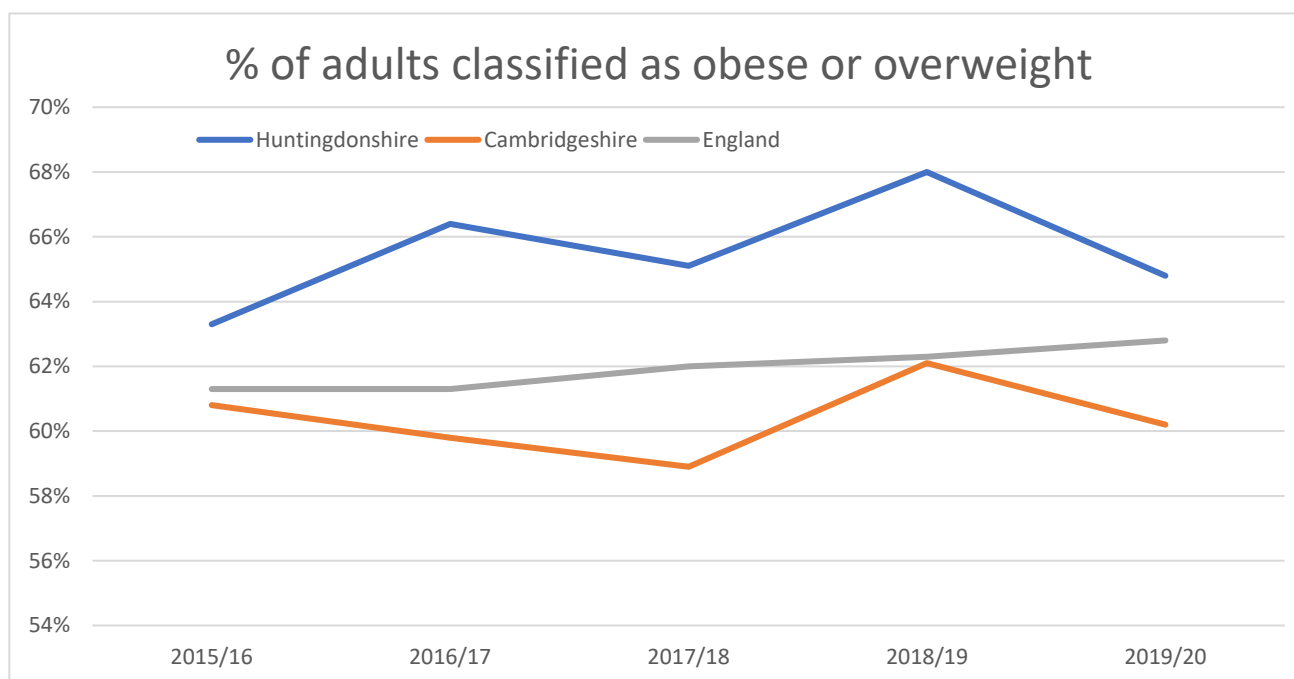
over one in three adults in the East of England, say they have put on weight since the first lockdown in March 2020. Source: [PHE press release](#), plus PHE East of England press release issued 26 July 2021.

In our region, almost 9.5lbs was gained on average by adults who put on weight, with 23% reporting putting on a stone or more. In adults aged 35-65 years old, the average weight gain rises to over 10lbs nationally.

PHE report that new insights show the extent that lockdowns have impacted people’s eating and physical activity habits, with unhealthy eating habits, such as snacking and comfort eating, the main contributor to weight gain during the pandemic for 48% of those who reported gaining weight in the East.

A high proportion (84%) of adults in the region who said they gained weight since March 2020 said it was important for them to introduce new healthy habits this summer, with nearly 56% saying they would like to have a healthier diet. Nearly half (46%) of adults feel optimistic about making the changes they desire, and again, half of them would welcome more advice on eating more healthily, ideas for doing so on a budget (52%) and ideas for exercise routines (50%).

**Local data:** While Health Survey for England data is not available at local authority level, we can review local figures for the percentage of adults (aged 18+) classified as overweight or obese used in PHE’s [Obesity Profile](#). These estimates are based on Sport England’s Active Lives Survey, with the latest 2019/20 data containing the first eight months of coronavirus (Covid-19) restrictions, from mid-March to mid-November 2020. Results for England, Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire from 2015/16 are shown below.



This suggests greater fluctuation in the proportions of people classified as obese or overweight at district and county levels, which is likely to be linked to the small sample sizes and reliability of the data. However, even after allowing for large confidence intervals, we can be confident that the proportion of people who are obese or overweight in Huntingdonshire is higher than average, with both 2016/17 and 2018/19 results reported to be ‘significantly worse’ than the England average. In contrast, both the 2017/18 and 2019/20 results for Cambridgeshire were reported as ‘significantly better’ than the England average.

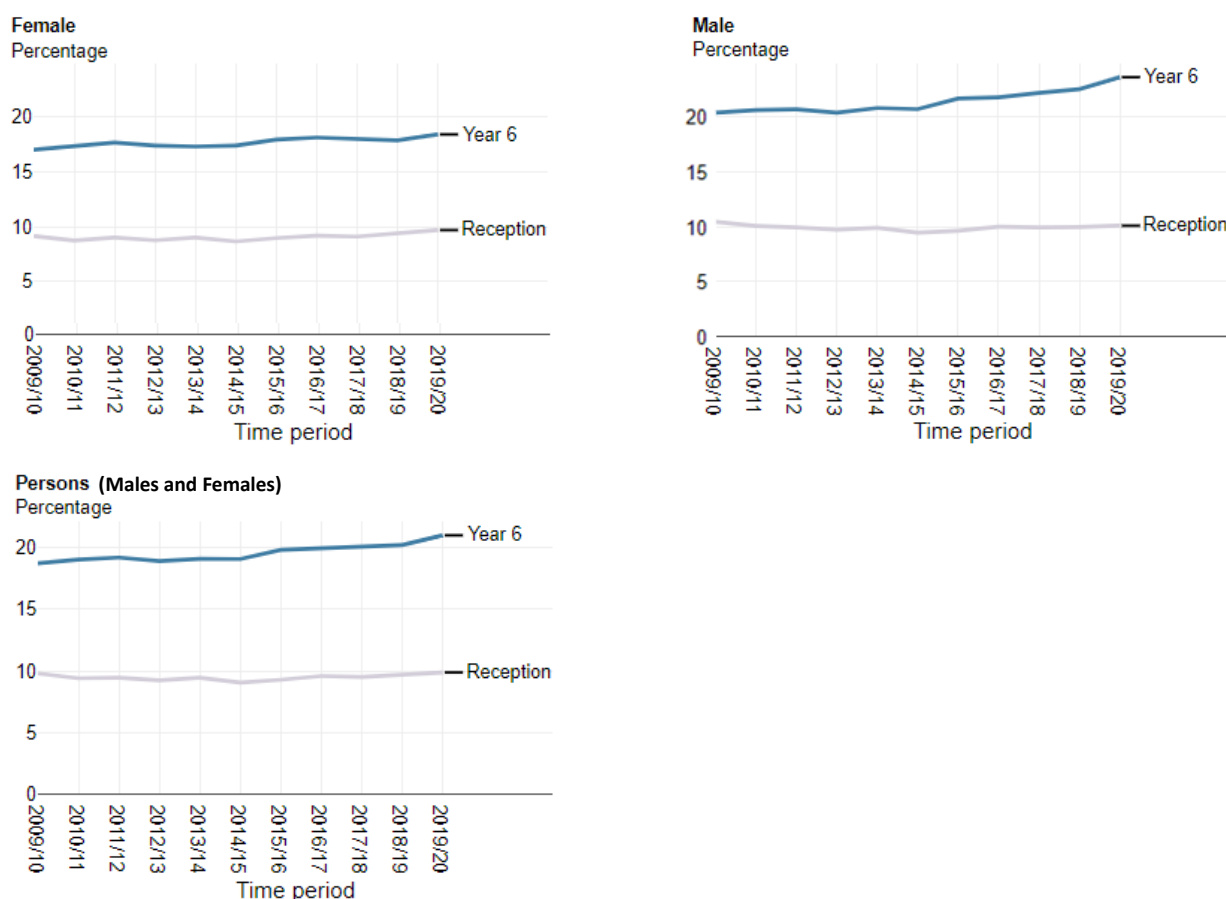
Given the issues with the data, we cannot state that there is any clear trend in levels of people with an unhealthy weight at either county or district level. There is also no district or county level data available on whether residents have put on weight or changed their eating habits since the start of the first lockdown.

## Subject: Obesity - children

**National data:** Analysis of long-term [National Child Measurement Programme \(NCMP\) trends in children's BMI between 2006 to 2007 and 2019 to 2020](#) shows downward trends in obesity and excess weight in reception boys and upward trends in obesity, severe obesity and excess weight in reception girls and year 6 boys and girls. The latest data for 2019-20 shows slight increases in excess weight and obesity in reception boys (not statistically significant) compared to the 2018-19 data. There was a 0.5 percentage point increase in excess weight in reception girls (statistically significant) and a small increase in obesity in reception girls (not statistically significant). For Year 6 boys, there were statistically significant increases in both excess weight (up 1 percentage point) and obesity (up 1.1 percentage points). Year 6 girls also saw statistically significant increases in both excess weight (up 0.7 percentage points) and obesity (up 0.6 percentage points).

On average in 2019-20, for both sexes combined, the proportion of Reception age children with excess weight was 23% and the proportion who were obese was 9.9%. At Year 6, 35.2% of all children had excess weight and 21% were obese in 2019-20. The graphs below show obesity rates for both age groups.

Prevalence of obesity in children aged 4 to 5 years (reception) and 10 to 11 years (Year 6), England, academic years 2019 to 2010, to 2019 to 2020



Source: [Health Profile for England 2021 \(phe.org.uk\)](#)

**Local data:** School closures, in March 2020, due to the Covid-19 pandemic meant that in 2019/20 the number of children measured in the NCMP was around 75% of previous years. Analysis by NHS Digital shows that national and regional level data is reliable and comparable to previous years. The data at local authority level and below is not as robust and should therefore be treated with caution.

However, NCMP data for Huntingdonshire published in the [Obesity Profile](#) shows that there has been a small reduction in excess weight at Reception age (from 19.4% in 2018/19 to 17.8% in 2019/20) and no

change in obesity (6.8% in both years). This is in contrast to the statistically significant increase in excess weight recorded nationally (up from 22.6% to 23%) and the not significant increase in obesity (up from 9.7% to 9.9%) for this age group.

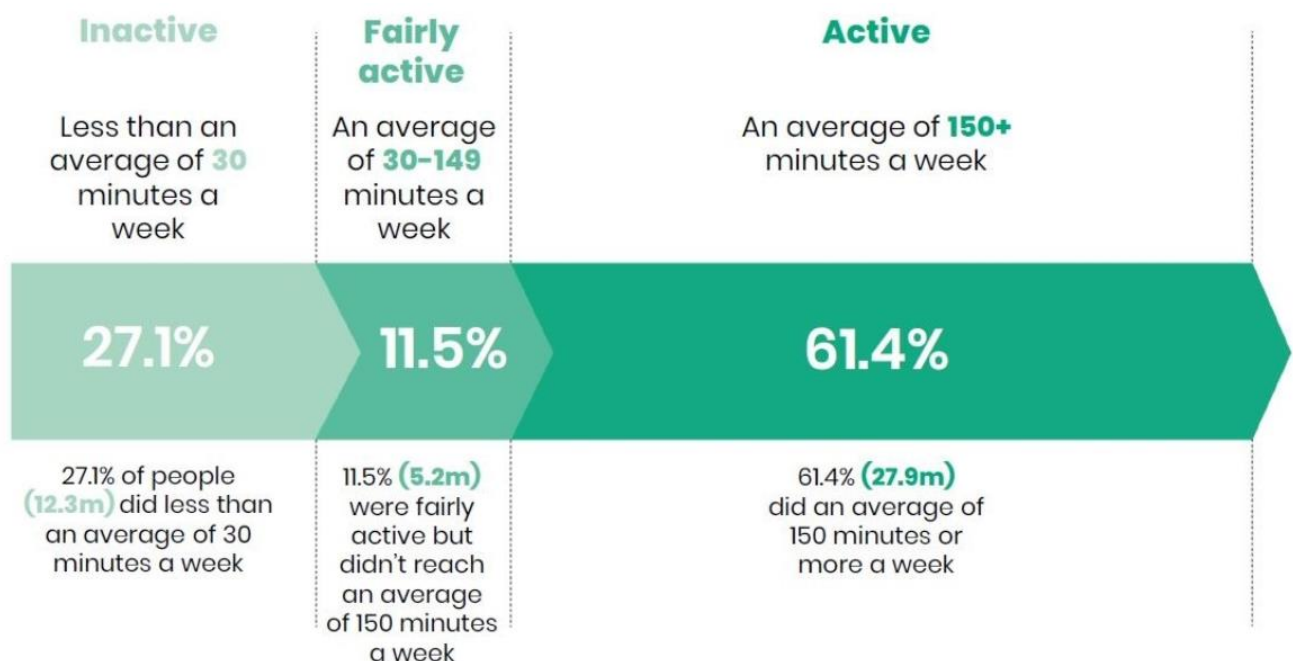
For the Year 6 age group, Huntingdonshire saw a statistically significant 7.5% increase in those with excess weight (up from 27.5% to 35%) and a statistically significant 4.9% increase in obesity (up from 14.7% to 19.6%) in 2019-20 compared to 2018-19. While the national excess weight and obesity rates for this age group also had statistically significant increases, these were considerably lower at just 0.9% and 0.8% respectively. Despite this, the Huntingdonshire rates remained below the national averages, although the Huntingdonshire’s rates were not statistically significantly lower.

While the latest figures for Reception age look positive, and the large increases seen at Year 6 look concerning, these results are based on much lower numbers of children measured than in previous years and we have also noted that Huntingdonshire’s changes are not mirrored in other Cambridgeshire districts. It is therefore suggested that close attention should be paid to future results to help identify clear trends and where additional actions may be required.

## Subject: Physical activity - adults

**National data:** Sports England have said that “With the implementation of guidance in England limiting people to one outdoor activity a day and only with members of their own household, the majority of sports and exercise activities became impossible overnight”.

However, a [Sports England report](#) in April 2021 stated that the majority of physically active adults in England “managed to maintain their habits despite the challenges of the pandemic”, according to the latest Active Lives Adult Survey, with just 710,000 fewer active adults between November 2019 and November 2020 compared to the same period 12 months previously. The headline results of the survey are below.



The first eight months of coronavirus restrictions, as well as the storms that had a huge impact on outdoor activity in early 2020, were said to have led to a “worrying increase” in the number of people who were inactive – doing less than 30 minutes of activity a week or nothing at all. They advise that not all groups or demographics were affected equally, with women, young people aged 16-24, over 75s, disabled people and



people with long-term health conditions, and those from Black, Asian, and other minority ethnic backgrounds most negatively impacted beyond the initial lockdown period.

The pandemic led to unprecedented decreases in activity levels during the initial restrictions and, as a result, the latest annual results show the following changes compared to 12 months earlier:

- 710,000 (-1.9%) fewer active adults meeting the Chief Medical Officer’s guidelines of taking part in 150 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity a week, taking the total number of active adults to 27.9 million (61.4% of the population)
- 1.2m (+2.6%) more inactive adults taking part in less than an average of 30 minutes a week, taking the total number of inactive adults in England to 12.3m (27.1% of the population)

This, however, masks the scale of the changes seen during the impacted months.

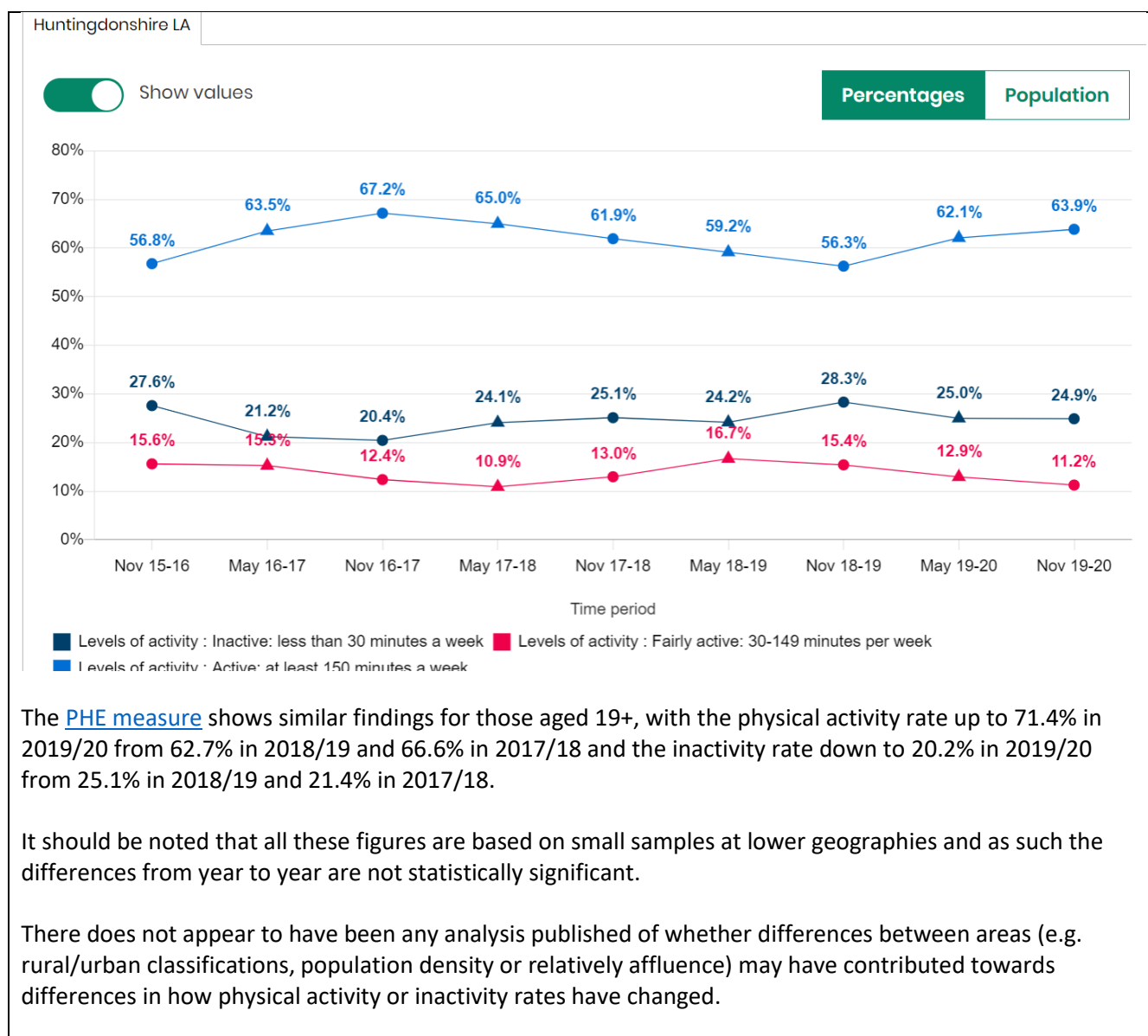
Activity levels were hit hardest during the initial phase of the pandemic (the national lockdown between mid-March and mid-May) and the proportion of the population classed as active dropped by 7.1% – or by just over 3m fewer active adults – compared to the 12 months before. During the second phase, as restrictions were eased, activity levels were still down compared to the previous 12 months, but the reductions were smaller, with 4.4%/2.0m fewer active adults across mid-May to mid-July and 3.1%/1.4m fewer active adults across mid-July to mid-September. In the third phase of the pandemic, as new restrictions were imposed but before the full impact of the new national lockdown in November was felt, activity levels decreased by 1.8% and there were 810,000 fewer active adults. Comparable data for the third national lockdown from January 2021 is not yet available.

Whilst the restrictions severely limited the ability to take part in some activities such as walking for travel (a reduction of 4.2m over the 12 months in those reporting taking part at least twice in the last 28 days), swimming (-1.8m) and team sports (-940k), we can also see the significant attempts of the population to find alternatives through increases in activities like walking for leisure (+1.3m), running (+470k) and cycling for leisure and sport (+1.2m). Although at home exercise was encouraged, and the numbers of people working out at home increased significantly, it was not enough to offset the lost gym environment (-1.9m) and drop in those taking part in team sports (-940k).

Public Health England also [measure physical activity](#) via the Active Lives Survey, although they use a slightly different measure to Sports England, with Sports England counting all those aged 16+, with gardening excluded, while PHE count those aged 19+ only and do include gardening as an eligible physical activity. The PHE measure puts the percentage of physically active adults at 66.4% in 2019/20, slightly down from 67.2% in 2018/19 but slightly higher than for other recent years. However, the level of physical inactivity among adults has increased slightly to 22.9%, up from 21.4% in 2019/20 and 22.2% from 2016/17 to 2017/18.

Sports England produced a [summary report](#) in April 2021 to help understand the impact of coronavirus for both consumers and the sport and physical activity sector, looking at how people might behave as restrictions ease and what they will be looking for as they return to activities. Among other findings, this suggests that “The vaccine rollout is having a progressively positive impact on attitudes towards taking part in physical activity”. However, they also note that “Accurately predicting the impact of such a complex, fast moving, unprecedented situation is almost impossible”.

**Local data:** On the [Sports England measure](#), the proportion of those aged 16+ in Huntingdonshire who were physically active was 63.9% in 2019/20, up from 56.3% in 2018/19 and 61.9% in 2017/18. The physical inactivity rate was 24.9% in 2019/20 compared to 28.3% in 2018/19 and 25.1% in 2017/18.



## Subject: Physical activity – older people

**National data:** A [Public Health England study](#) on the wider impacts of COVID-19 on physical activity, deconditioning and falls among older people (over 65 year olds), reviewed data from Sport England’s Active Lives Adult Survey and Projecting Older People Population Information datasets. Key findings were:

- 32% of older people were inactive (did either no activity or less than 30 minutes of moderate activity per week) between March to May 2020. This has increased from 27% in the corresponding period in 2019
- average duration of strength and balance activity decreased from 126 to 77 minutes per week in March to May 2020 compared to the corresponding period in 2019
- inequalities in physical activity have persisted, older people in the most deprived group (defined by Index of Multiple Deprivation) were more likely to be inactive than those in the least deprived group in both 2019 and 2020
- older people experienced a considerable reduction in strength and balance activity between March to May 2020, with the greatest change in the 70 to 74 age group with a 45% (males) and 49% (females) decrease observed in activity



Without mitigation, their modelling predicts that:

- 110,000 more older people (an increase of 3.9%) are projected to have at least one fall per year as a result of reduced strength and balance activity during the pandemic
- the total number of falls could increase by 124,000 for males (an increase of 6.3%) and 130,000 for females (an increase of 4.4%)
- for each year that the lower levels of strength and balance activity observed during the pandemic persist, there is projected to be an additional cost to the health and social care system as a result of the change in predicted related falls of £211 million (incurred over a 2 and half year period)

**Local data:** Limited data is available on physical activity among older people at the county and district level. Figures for those aged 55-74 and 75+ from the [Active Lives survey](#) are available, although they should be treated with caution due to very small sample sizes for individual age groups.

Latest figures for November 2019-November 2020 suggest that physical inactivity rates for those aged 55-74 were 29% in Cambridgeshire as a whole and 26% in Huntingdonshire, while 46% of Cambridgeshire residents aged 75+ and 53% of Huntingdonshire residents aged 75+ were inactive. Nationally 28.7% of 55-74-year-olds and 50.2% of 75+ year olds were inactive.

By comparison, November 2018-November 2019 data showed similar levels of inactivity among Cambridgeshire residents aged 55-74 (26%) and 75+ (48%), with Huntingdonshire data only published for those aged 55-74 and showing a slightly higher level than the latest figure at 32%. Differences between the two datasets and between areas are unlikely to be statistically significant.

## Subject: Physical activity – children and young people

**National data:** [National and regional level estimates](#) from Sport England's Active Lives Children and Young People Survey are available up to the academic year 2019 to 2020. They show that in 2019 to 2020, 44.9% of children and young people in England met the Chief Medical Officers' (CMOs) guidelines of taking part in sport and physical activity for an average of 60 minutes or more every day.

In 2019 to 2020, a statistically significant decrease in physical activity was reported compared with 2018 to 2019 (46.8%), but physical activity levels remain higher than 2017 to 2018 (43.3%). All regions, except the North East, reported a decrease in physical activity levels compared with 2018 to 2019, although only the East Midlands reported a statistically significant decrease.

Boys (47.1%) continue to be more likely to report achieving recommended physical activity levels than girls (42.7%), although the gap narrowed by 3.2 percentage points (p.p.) in 2019 to 2020, with boys reporting a more notable decrease from 2018 to 2019 (50.6%).

Significant differences in activity levels remain among ethnic groups, with those that identified as White British still most likely to be physically active (47.2%), and those that identified as Black (35.5%) or Other (38.5%) least likely to be active.

In 2019 to 2020, Black or Mixed ethnic groups reported a significant decrease in the percentage of physically active children compared with 2018 to 2019, while the activity levels in other ethnic groups remained similar.

The proportion of children achieving the recommended levels of physical activity differed across school year groups, with those in year 3 to 6 less likely to be active (41.4%) than those in year 1 to 2 (45.7%) and year 7 to 11 (47.6%).

Compared with 2018 to 2019, the overall decrease in the percentage of children meeting the CMOs' recommendations was driven by those in year 1 to 2 and year 3 to 6 while activity for those in year 7 to 11 has increased.

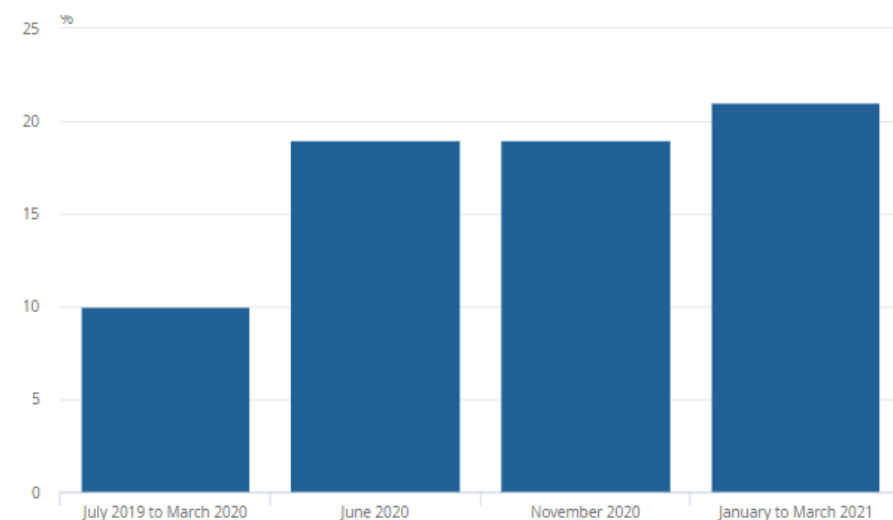
**Local data:** Sport England has not published local authority level estimates due to the impact of COVID-19 on data collection. Due to school closures, Sport England was unable to collect any data from late March until mid-May, when they switched survey mode to at home completion for the summer term. To reduce the burden on schools, and to help ensure a national sample was achieved, a reduced number of surveys were issued during the summer term. This resulted in many local authorities not having sufficient responses into the summer term to make results comparable with the previous survey years.

## Subject: Mental health

**National data:** The Health Foundation's [COVID-19 impact inquiry report](#) states that the mental health impacts of the pandemic have been mixed. They say that, for many, initial declines in mental health during periods of lockdown subsequently improved and that a "significant cohort" have experienced a reduction in mental health, "posing a potential longer-term risk to the nation's health". Some of the data sources referred to in the report are covered below.

[Analysis from the ONS](#) showed that around 21% of adults experienced some form of depression in early 2021 (27 January to 7 March), more than double that observed before the COVID-19 pandemic (10%).

**Percentage of adults with depressive symptoms, Great Britain, July 2019 to March 2021**

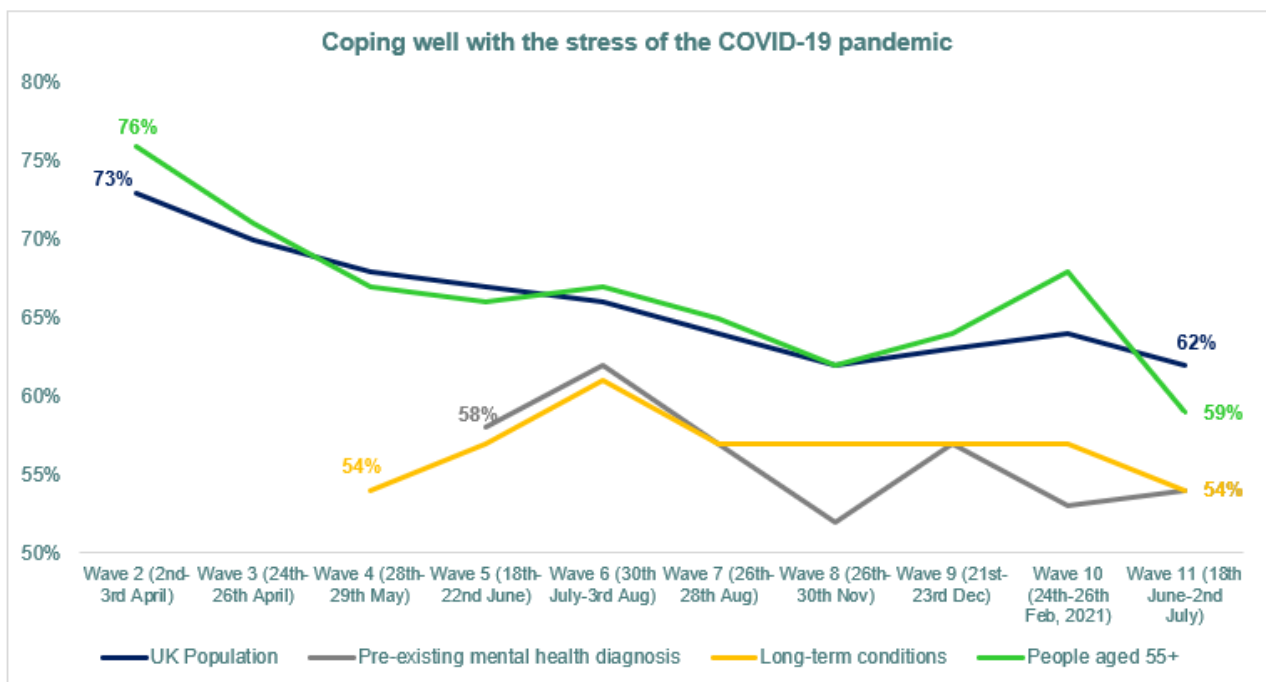


The [Mental health and the COVID-19 pandemic](#) chapter of the World Happiness Report 2021 includes analysis based on responses to the UK Household Longitudinal Study, which suggests that by September 2020 there had been a sustained deterioration in mental health for a fifth of the UK population. By reviewing responses from those participating in both April and September, they noted that a substantial fraction of the population (22.5%) was "severely affected" in both waves, with this group experiencing a sustained period of poor mental health relative to their previous levels. On the other hand, there was also evidence of "improving trajectories", with almost half of those who were badly affected in April "no longer 'badly' affected" in September. Whilst a non-negligible fraction of the population (13.6%) had entered the badly affected group, the overall effect was still a reduction in the size of the badly affected group by September.

A National Institute for Health Research and Medical Research Council-funded population-based cohort study on the effects of the pandemic on primary care-recorded mental illness and self-harm episodes in the UK is summarised [here](#). Their analysis of health records from GP practices found that diagnoses of self-harm,

depression and anxiety and first anti-depressant prescribing decreased substantially across the UK in April 2020. Compared with expected rates, the incidence of primary care-recorded depression had reduced by 43%, anxiety disorders by 47.8% and first antidepressant prescribing by 36.4% in English general practices. Reductions in first diagnoses of depression and anxiety disorders were largest for adults of working age and for patients registered at practices in more deprived areas. The incidence of self-harm was 37.6% lower than expected in April 2020, and the reduction was greatest for women and those younger than 45 years old. In April 2020, the rate of referral to mental health services was less than a quarter of the expected rate for the time of year (75.3% reduction). The evidence suggests that access to mental health care declined, which could have implications for individuals, health care services and for society as a whole. However, the same report notes that by September 2020, rates of incident depression, anxiety disorder, and self-harm in England were similar to expected levels. It should be noted that reductions in recorded cases may be linked to missed opportunities for care (e.g. due to difficulties accessing GP surgeries) rather than a reduction in healthcare needs, with another population-based study on the [indirect acute effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on physical and mental health in the UK](#) showing similar findings but referring to the need for further research on the reasons for reductions in their interpretation notes.

Working with the University of Cambridge, Swansea University, the University of Strathclyde and Queen’s University Belfast, the Mental Health Foundation has led an ongoing, UK-wide, repeated cross-sectional [study of how the pandemic is affecting people’s mental health](#). The latest wave of their study (June/July 2021) found that the proportion of people reporting that they feel worried about being able to cope with the uncertainty of the pandemic has fallen (down to 37% from 53% in March 2020) and young people aged 18-24 are coping better with the stress of the pandemic (62% coping well, up from 50% in February 2021). However, since the first lockdown in March 2020, UK adults in general have slowly become less able to cope with the stress of the pandemic, with the proportion of people reporting they were coping well falling slowly and steadily, from 73% in April 2020 to 62% in June/July 2021. Those with a pre-existing mental health condition were less likely than UK adults generally to be coping well (34%) and 31% of those with a long-term physical health condition are still reporting that they are not coping well with the stress of the pandemic. The graph below shows how levels of coping have changed over time.



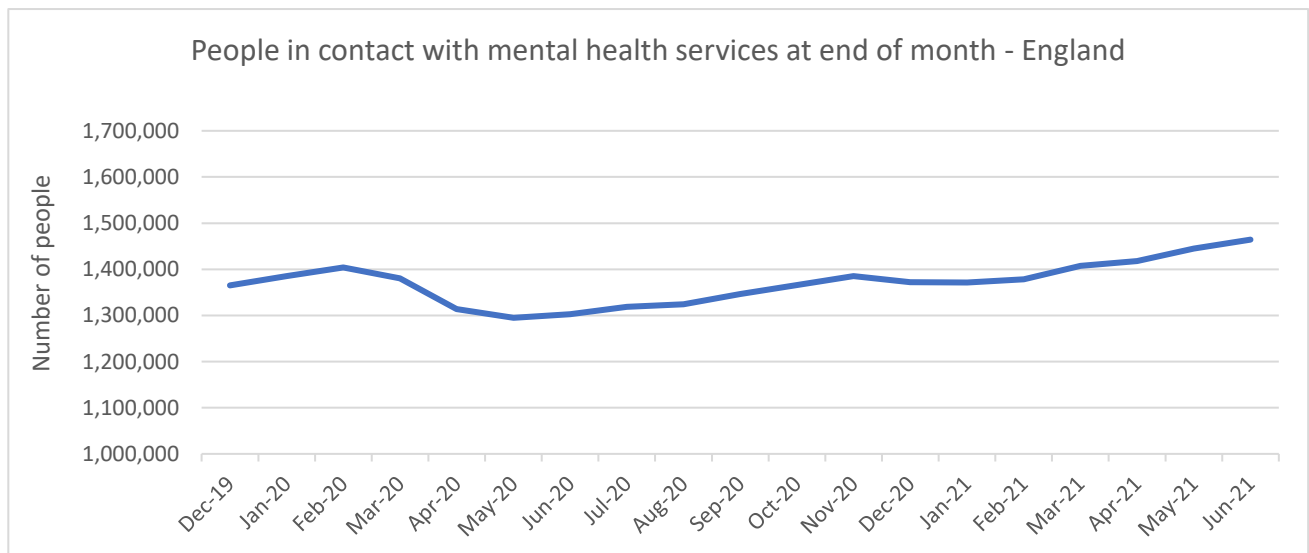
[Suicide in England in the COVID-19 pandemic: Early observational data from real time surveillance](#), a research paper on the analysis of data from established systems of "real time surveillance" (RTS) of suspected suicides, tested the hypothesis that the suicide rate rose after the first national lockdown began in England. With the RTS covering 10 Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships across areas with a total

population of around 13 million (including Cambridgeshire and Peterborough), they did not find a rise in suicide rates in England in the months after the first national lockdown began in 2020, despite evidence of greater distress. The number of suicides in April-October 2020, after the first lockdown began, was 121.3 per month, compared to 125.7 per month in January-March 2020. They found that incidence rate ratios did not show a significant rise in individual months after lockdown began and were not raised during the 2-month lockdown period April-May 2020 or the 5-month period after the easing of lockdown, June-October 2020. Comparison of the suicide rates after lockdown began in 2020 for the same months in selected areas in 2019 showed no difference. However, caveats apply with data used being early figures that may change and the use of RTS in this way being new and with further development needed before it can provide full national data. They note that any effect of the pandemic may vary by population group or geographical area.

A July 2021 Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology research briefing on [Mental health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on adults](#) also suggests it may be too early to know the effect on suicide rates, stating that “There is a well-documented link between recession and suicide but this can take place over years and thus requires a prolonged follow-up period”.

The same briefing note also looks at demand for, and pressures on, mental health services. Data from several sources reports how the demand on services changed over the course of the pandemic, with fewer people accessing services initially but this quickly returning closer to normal and at the same time pressure on psychiatric beds increasing. The briefing note states that the most recent data (April 2021) shows “the number of people contacting the NHS seeking help for mental health problems is now at a record high”.

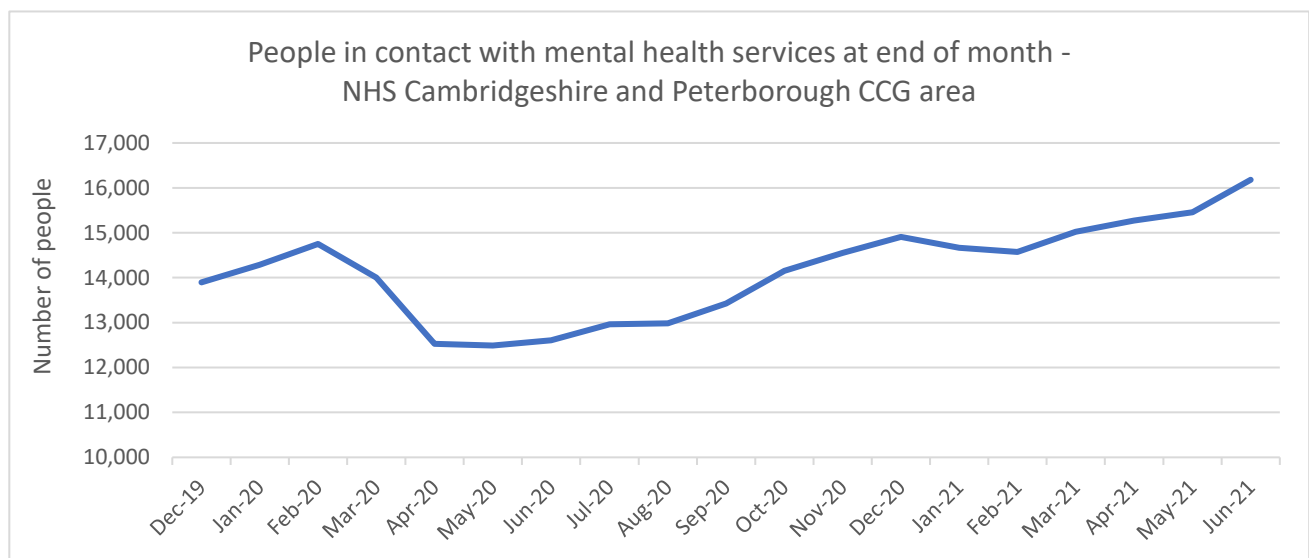
The graph below plots the number of people in contact with NHS funded secondary mental health, learning disabilities and autism services over time (data from [Mental Health Services Monthly Statistics](#), rounded to the nearest 10,000 people), showing that the number has continued to increase since April 2021 (note: recent data is subject to revision when ‘end of year’ figures are published later). At the end of June 2021, the number of people in contact with mental health services was 6.1% higher than at the end of March 2020.



A 30 August 2021 blog post from NHS Providers - [Millions waiting for care as COVID-19 lays bare the challenges facing mental health services](#) - states that around 1.6 million people are “officially waiting for care”, with private estimates from the sector suggesting “around 8 million more are not meeting the threshold to access the services they need to help them, even though they would benefit from treatment”. They advise that services, including those for eating disorders and support for children and young people, were “overstretched” before the pandemic and that Covid-19 has “given rise to new need and exacerbated existing challenges, meaning that demand is significantly outstripping supply”.

**Local data:** While results from surveys and longitudinal studies are not available at the district or county level (and would have very small sample sizes if they were broken down to smaller geographies), data on

contact with mental health services in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group area is [published as part of the national dataset](#). This shows a similar pattern to the national figures, with an immediate fall in contacts in March 2020 continuing until May 2020. Numbers then increased steadily until December, with a further fall in contacts over January and February before numbers began increasing again. At the end of June 2021, the number of people in contact with mental health services was 15.5% higher than at the end of March 2020 (a much greater increase than the 6.1% rise nationally over the same period). While the local CCG area still has a lower rate of people in contact with mental health services than average, such a large increase seems likely to mean significant pressures on local mental health services.



## Subject: Impact on other health conditions

**National data:** It is too early to know the full extent of the impact of the pandemic on other health conditions/diseases such as cancer, heart disease or strokes, with changes to behaviours and access to health services for both diagnosis and treatment potentially having a range of impacts as direct and indirect determinants of health. Current data is limited but does include mortality data for 2020 for a range of illnesses. The [Wider Impacts of COVID-19 \(phe.gov.uk\)](http://phe.gov.uk) website from PHE provides the data without accompanying analysis and findings but the graphs available currently suggest the provisional directly standardised mortality rates per 100,000 population for the following conditions in 2020 were lower than for the baseline period 2015-2019 for England (fewer deaths than expected):

- Cancer
- Circulatory disease
- Digestive diseases
- Heart disease
- Respiratory disease
- Stroke

The graphs suggest the provisional directly standardised mortality rates per 100,000 population for the following conditions in 2020 were higher than for the baseline period 2015-2019 for England (more deaths than expected):

- Dementia and Alzheimer’s disease
- Mental and behavioural conditions
- Other causes of death (not including Covid-19)

These findings are provisional, and differences noted may not be statistically significant.

[PHE's Health Profile for England 2021](#) states that “changes in service provision and patterns of health seeking behaviour has meant that there is a consistent pattern of reduced contact with health services over the pandemic period”. New cancer diagnoses between April and December 2020 were 16% lower than in the same months in 2019. Since March 2020, the percentage of people with dementia in receipt of a care plan review declined each month to 39.4% in January 2021, compared with more than 70% in previous years. They advise that reductions in contact “may result in missed opportunities to provide preventative treatment and support, long-term health complications or an increase in deaths in the future”. In particular, they say that the Rapid Cancer Registration Dataset provides a quick, indicative source of cancer data which demonstrates that “measures to control the spread of COVID-19 in England have had a significant impact on the number of new cancer diagnoses”. They advise that this “may result in more people being diagnosed at later stages, when curative treatments are less likely to be effective” and that it is “possible that we may see the impact of these reductions in new diagnoses through an increase in deaths in future years”.

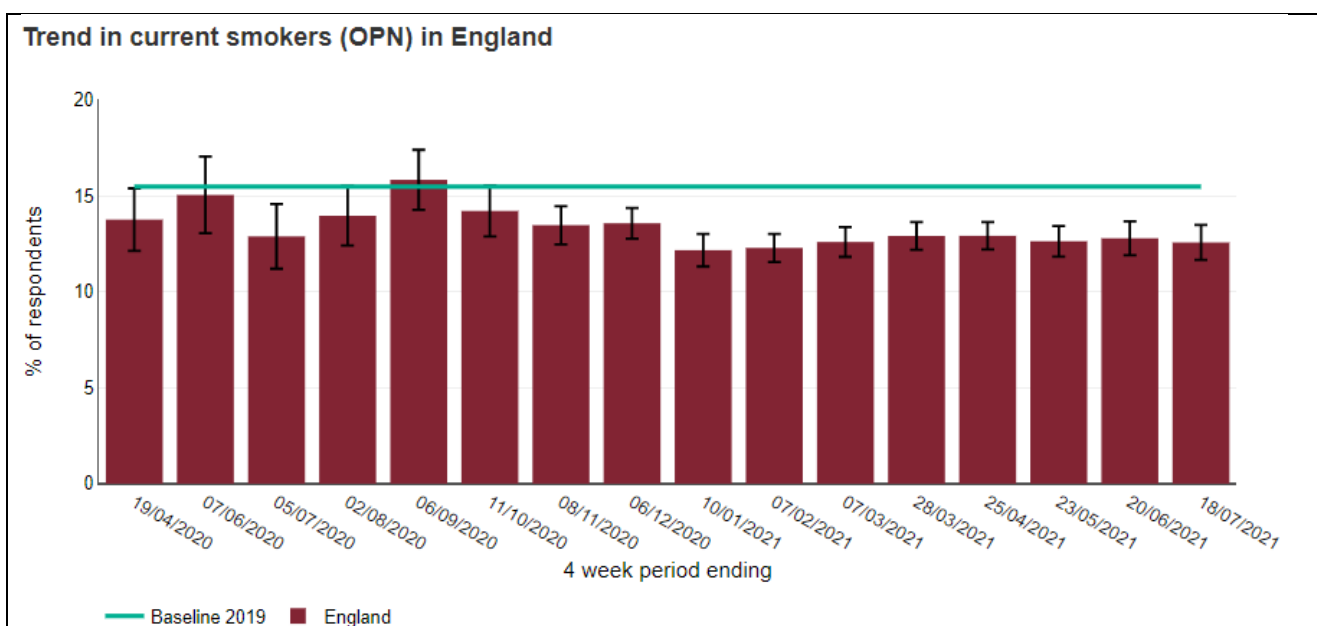
PHE's report also states that rates of hospital admissions for falls and hip fractures among older adults aged 65 and over from April to September 2020 were below or similar to the average rates for 2018 and 2019 for equivalent months. Rates from October to December 2020 were below the 2018 and 2019 levels. They state that this is “likely to reflect the fact that fewer people were going out at the start of the second wave of the pandemic”.

**Local data:** No current data available. [Quality and Outcomes Framework, Achievement, prevalence and exceptions data for 2020-21](#) is due to be released on 30 September 2021 so is expected to provide local and national data relating to prevalence and ‘achievements’ expected of General Practices in 2020/21, with regards to diseases including coronary heart disease, stroke/transient ischaemic attack, asthma, cancer, diabetes mellitus and dementia. Cambridgeshire County Council are planning to report on indirect health impacts of Covid-19 in the December release of their “[COVID-19: Review of emerging evidence of Needs and Impacts on Cambridgeshire & Peterborough](#)”.

## Subject: Behavioural risk factors (alcohol and smoking)

**National data:** PHE's [Health Profile for England 2021](#) advises that the impact of the pandemic on overall smoking prevalence is not fully clear yet. Data from the ONS Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) indicates that the proportion smoking between November 2020 and June 2021 was consistently lower than the average for 2019, as shown in the graph below. However, data from the [Smoking Toolkit Study](#) suggests smoking prevalence has remained stable, with some evidence of increases among young adults in the first national lockdown and during 2021.





Source: PHE analysis of Opinions and Lifestyle Survey data from Office for National Statistics, 2021

Findings from a [research report](#) on a series of representative cross-sectional surveys of adults (Smoking and Alcohol Toolkit Studies), collected monthly between August 2018 and July 2020 in England, also show that, relative to changes during the same time period in 2018/19, lockdown was associated with significant increases in smoking prevalence among 18–34-year-olds (+24.7% in 2019/20 versus 0.0% in 2018/19), although not for older groups. There was little difference in smoking prevalence across the whole population (+0.3 percentage points).

PHE’s Health Profile reports that “alcohol-specific mortality increased by around 20% between 2019 and 2020, driven chiefly by increases in mortality from alcoholic liver disease”. They advise that alcohol-specific mortality rates had been increasing prior to the pandemic, but this represented a significant acceleration in the upward trend and that the increase in alcoholic liver disease mortality during 2020 “has been linked to increased alcohol consumption among heavy drinkers who were already at risk of liver failure”.

Data on alcohol consumption since March 2021 is reviewed in PHE’s [Monitoring alcohol consumption and harm during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) report. Their findings include a significant increase in off-trade volume sales of alcohol, with data from a consumer purchasing panel showing that between 2019 and 2020 (before and during the pandemic), volume sales increased by 25.0% and that this increase was consistent and sustained for most of 2020. They found that the total volume of duty-paid alcohol for the year of the pandemic (2020 to 2021) was only 1.2% less than the year before the pandemic (2019 to 2020) despite the closure of on-trade premises during national lockdowns.

The PHE report says that generally surveys and polls on alcohol consumption were low quality and reporting of methods varied but, taken together, all survey data measuring self-reported alcohol consumption suggests a polarisation in drinking. Most respondents reported drinking the same volume and the same frequency as they did before the pandemic. Roughly similar proportions of respondents reported drinking more or more frequently and drinking less or less frequently. Where surveys measured a respondent’s drinking before the pandemic, they suggest that people who reported drinking more during the pandemic than before tended to be heavier drinkers.

The [research report](#) reviewing Smoking and Alcohol Toolkit Studies results over time found lockdown was associated with a significant increase in high-risk drinking prevalence among all socio-demographic groups (+39.5% versus –7.8%), with particularly high increases among women and social grades C2DE. Alcohol reduction attempts increased significantly among high-risk drinkers from social grades ABC1 but not C2DE.

There were few significant changes in use of support for smoking cessation or alcohol reduction, although samples were small.

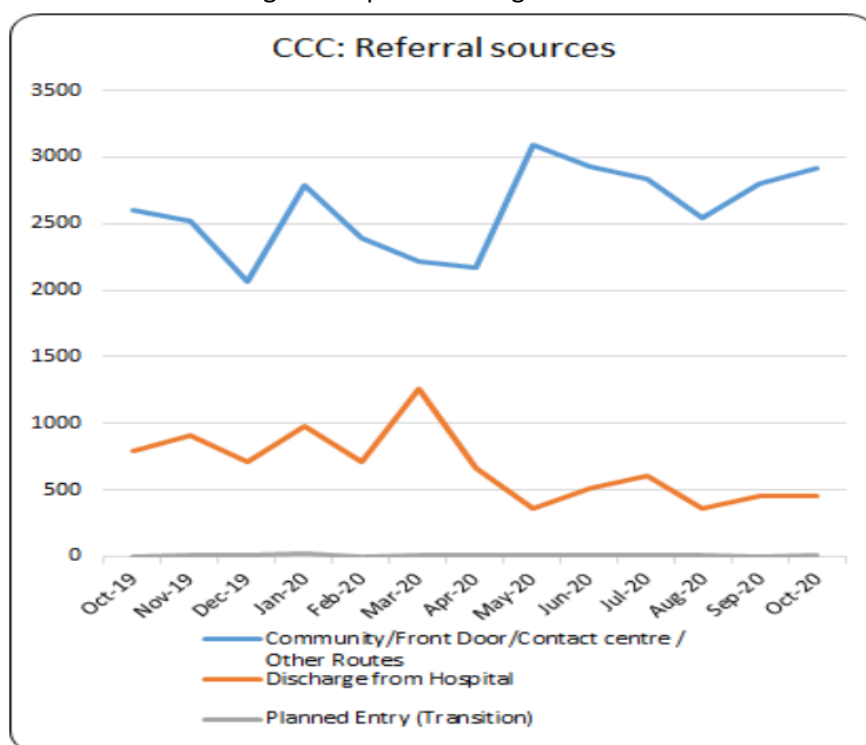
Note: Publication of ONS data on adult smoking habits in the UK in 2020 is scheduled for November 2021.

**Local data:** Data on smoking prevalence and alcohol-related hospital admissions is not yet available for 2020/21. National survey data is not available at district or county level and would have very small samples if available at that level.

## Subject: Adult Social Care

**National data:** Limited data is currently available nationally. An [overview of Adult Social Care Statistics in England in 2020](#) reports that there is growing demand on local authorities for social care support, with expenditure on social care continuing to rise. While the number of older adults receiving local authority long-term support has decreased, short-term support offered has increased. Figures as at 30 September 2020 show a 1.4% reduction in the number of 18–64-year-olds receiving long-term support and a 5.9% reduction in the number of people aged 65+ receiving long-term support compared to 31 March 2019.

**Local data:** A [report](#) to Cambridgeshire County Council’s Adults Committee in January 2021 stated that “Other than in April - August, where there was a dip in contacts to Adult Social Care, levels of contacts have overall remained similar to pre-COVID-19 levels. However, the source of contacts has changed, with an increased number coming through the Council’s customer services and the Adult Early Help team and a smaller number coming via hospital discharge referrals”. This can be seen in the graph below.



While this does not allow us to compare referral volumes for the March 2020 to September 2020 period against volumes for the same period in 2019, the figures for October can be compared. These show that overall in October 2019 there were 3,401 contacts, while October 2020 was similar at 3,382. However, the number of community referrals increased by 12% compared to October 2019 and the number of hospital referrals decreased by 43%.

The County Council also reported a back log of Continuing Health Care (CHC) assessments due to a “pause in decision making during the first lockdown” and reductions in referrals from hospitals for both reablement



(55% of referrals since April 2020 have been from the community) and technology enabled care. With regards to supporting people with long term care and support needs, they have reported that there has been “a return to a level of demand closer to the usual level we would expect, as opposed to the higher proportion of crisis response driven work during the first lockdown”.

As seen nationally, the County Council is reporting that the number of people receiving long term packages of care and support funded in whole or in part by the Council has fallen overall since May 2020. They advise that the main reductions have been in residential care and nursing home care, and other community packages, which includes day care. There has also been a slight decrease in home care packages from 2,272 in May 2020 to 2,227 in October 2020.

Huntingdonshire District Council has successfully contacted thousands of households with potentially vulnerable residents during the pandemic. Our conversations with them have highlighted some issues with accessing care services, particularly early in the pandemic when the issues mostly related to non-attendance by carers who were self-isolating or shielding themselves. Some of these cases involved informal arrangements organised by the residents themselves but there were also cases where residents receiving support via formal care packages organised through the County Council found their care disrupted. While we are aware of many cases where individual carers provided additional support to their clients during lockdowns such as buying food or collecting medications, we also heard from vulnerable residents who required our help in accessing the basics despite being in receipt of care packages and Adult Social Care having regular contact with them. While Adult Social Care told us that they remained the lead agency responsible for care support, any ‘Covid 19’ response needed should be dealt with by the district hub. This meant there were multiple cases where, despite frequent home visits from carers, the District Council had to make arrangements to supply food parcels or deliver medication.




Although demand for support with food and collecting medicines was mostly at the start of the first lockdown, we have continued to receive new requests for help with care from those contacted throughout the pandemic. While some of this relates to healthcare or mental health support rather than Adult Social Care services, the District Council has been referring greater numbers of people to Adult Social Care and flagging up safeguarding concerns regarding vulnerable residents more often than before the first lockdown. This will have contributed partially to the increase in community/customer service referrals noted in the County Council’s report.

## About our district; Good Place, Good Work

The following sections of the Impact Assessment use local data to analyse whether economic and environmental national trends are reflected in the Huntingdonshire district and whether there are unique impacts for our local area that do not follow the national trends.

### GOOD PLACE

#### Topic: Waste Services

	NATIONAL TREND 	CONFIDENCE RATING 	IMPACT RATING 
Household waste (all types)	Collected household waste has increased since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Minimal impact as although level of waste fluctuated demand has continued to be met)</i>
Food waste	Food waste volumes temporarily decreased at the beginning of the pandemic/ first lockdown restrictions	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(National data available)</i>	<b>1 = LOW</b> <i>(Negligible <u>POSITIVE</u> impact as the change noted was only short term)</i>

#### Subject: Household waste (all types)

**National data:** With 2020/21 collection data not due to be reported until November/December 2021, the only national data currently available relates to Q1 (April to June 2020) only, is provisional and has not been subject to the full quality assurance process that Defra carry out for their annual statistical release. The [Statistics on waste managed by local authorities in England for April to June 2020](#) report explains that the period covered by these statistics was affected by the Covid-19 epidemic and the first national lockdown, which had varied effects on local authorities but generally resulted in disruptions, cancellations of kerbside collections of recycling and garden waste and widespread closures of Household Waste Recycling Centres.

The data available is therefore not reflective of the waste generated from all households and is not directly comparable to data from previous years. Any trends shown for the period April to June 2020 are unlikely to be indicative of the year as a whole as relaxing of the lockdown rules during the summer of 2020 and the return to a full national lockdown during the winter months are likely to have different impacts.

Given these caveats, the decreases (3.3% for total 'waste from households', 10.1% for waste recycled, 14.3% for 'other organic' waste) and increase (12.2% for food waste collected) reported compared to the same period in 2019/20 should be treated with considerable caution. Quarterly recycling rates vary considerably under normal circumstances, mainly due to tonnages of organics and the effect of the weather upon growing conditions in any given year or season.

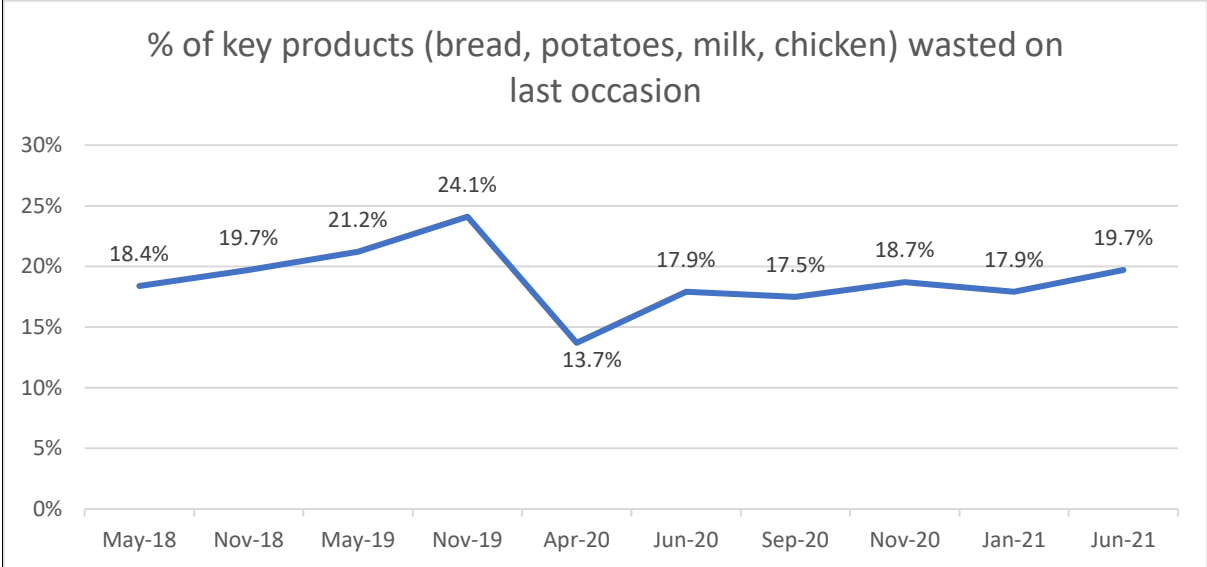
**Local data:** Huntingdonshire District Council's data for Q1 2020/21 shows an 11% increase in collected household waste per person compared to 2019/20, and a small reduction in the proportion of waste recycled/reused/ composted (59.6% compared to 60.1% the previous year). The locally reported proportion

of waste recycled/reused/composted for all of 2020/21 was 58%, below the Council’s target and the previous year’s result (both 60%). Final figures reported by Defra may differ slightly.

Subject: Food waste

**National data:** Results from surveys undertaken by WRAP ([latest results](#) based on a sample of 4,172 UK adults) indicate that, thanks in part to the food management behaviours adopted during lockdown, there was a sharp decrease in reported levels of food waste during the first lockdown – from almost a quarter (24.1%) of four key products (bread, chicken, milk, potatoes) in November 2019 to 13.7% in April 2020 - a fall of 43%. Levels of food waste then rebounded to some degree but remained consistently below pre-lockdown levels across 2020. However, the latest findings demonstrate that food waste is now back in line with the levels recorded in 2018. It remains below the results for 2019 but is nonetheless indicative of a rebound back to pre-pandemic levels.




*Q. Thinking about the last time you bought [food type], approximately what percentage ended up being uneaten and thrown away (whether in a compost bin, ordinary bin, council food waste collection, or down the sink)?*








Natural England’s [People and Nature Survey](#) suggests that levels of people reducing food waste have increased over the course of the pandemic, perhaps due to people reverting back to past behaviours as indicated by the WRAP survey. The proportion of those surveyed answering that they had reduced the amount of food their household throws away since the coronavirus restrictions began was 41% in May 2020, but this had reduced to only 36% in March 2021.

**Local data:** No data available. Food waste is collected with garden waste in Huntingdonshire, so it is not possible to measure changes in volume from this. There are two relevant questions in Huntingdonshire District Council’s Food Behaviours Survey, but this consultation has only just started, and the questions are not directly comparable with either the WRAP survey or the Natural England survey.

## Topic: Housing Demand

	NATIONAL TREND 	CONFIDENCE RATING 	IMPACT RATING 
Housing repossessions	There has been a large fall in mortgage and landlord repossessions since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions. <i>Note: this is a result of Government policy to suspend possession actions, in all but the most serious of cases, during the pandemic.</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major impact in the longer term as although the Government policy was beneficial to stop high levels of repossessions, once these measures are withdrawn the impact is likely to be significant)</i>
Local authority housing waiting lists	Data is not currently available to show a clear national trend in waiting lists since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Minimal impact as it is expected the renewals process will remove non-meaningful applications and new build programmes can meet the required levels of social housing for those in highest need ie: Band A&amp;B)</i>
Homelessness	There has been a decline in the number of homelessness assessments and the number owed a prevention or relief duty since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major impact in the longer term as although the Government policy was beneficial to stop high levels of homelessness, once these measures are withdrawn the impact is likely to be significant)</i>
House prices (impact on residents living within the district)	Average house prices has increased since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major impact for local residents who become priced out of the local market, even with below average rises locally)</i>

	<b>NATIONAL TREND</b> 	<b>CONFIDENCE RATING</b> 	<b>IMPACT RATING</b> 
House prices (impact on people living outside the district)	Average house prices has increased since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Minimal impact due to below average rises locally and a lag in employers revising working terms and conditions to accommodate homeworking, thereby making our rural district more desirable for people to move into)</i>
Housing rental market (impact on residents living within the district)	Private rents have increased since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major impact for local residents who become priced out of the local market, even with below average rises locally)</i>
Housing rental market (impact on people living outside the district)	Private rents have increased since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Minimal impact due to below average rises and a lag in employers revising working terms and conditions to accommodate homeworking, thereby making our rural district more desirable for people to move into)</i>
Housing affordability (house purchases for existing residents)	There has been an increase in the housing affordability ratio (homes have become less affordable) since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>1 = LOW</b> <i>(No robust national data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major impact for local residents who become priced out of the local market)</i>
Housing affordability (house purchases for people living outside the district)	There has been an increase in the housing affordability ratio (homes have become less affordable) since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>1 = LOW</b> <i>(No robust national data available)</i>	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Minimal impact due to a lag in employers revising working terms and conditions to accommodate homeworking, thereby making our rural district more desirable for people to move into)</i>

	<b>NATIONAL TREND</b> 	<b>CONFIDENCE RATING</b> 	<b>IMPACT RATING</b> 
Housing supply	A significant fall in starts and completions in April-June 2020 followed by recovery to similar or even higher levels from July 2020 to March 2021	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Minimal impact as construction recovery has been quick and limited expected supply chain impacts for developers. Short temporary impact)</i>

## Subject: Housing repossessions

**National data:** The coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has had profound effects on the UK economy, which, in turn, have had unprecedented impacts on household finances, however, the impacts on homeowners were mitigated by [temporary measures](#) put in place by the Government, Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and mortgage lenders to help them manage mortgage repayments and avoid potential repossession action. This included the Government suspending possession action in the Courts, apart from in the most serious of cases, for the majority of the lockdown periods of the pandemic.

[UK Finance has reported](#) that total mortgage arrears remain close to historically low levels and their data shows that the number of repossessions from April 2020 to March 2021 was less than 17% of the total repossessed from April 2019 to March 2020. No involuntary possessions took place in this period, with Government restrictions on evictions in place until 31 May 2021 in England. These findings align with the [Ministry of Justice's data](#), as shown in the graphs below.

**Figure 1: Mortgage possession actions (actual and seasonally adjusted) in the county courts of England and Wales, April to June 2016 to April to June 2021**  
 (Source: Table 10a)

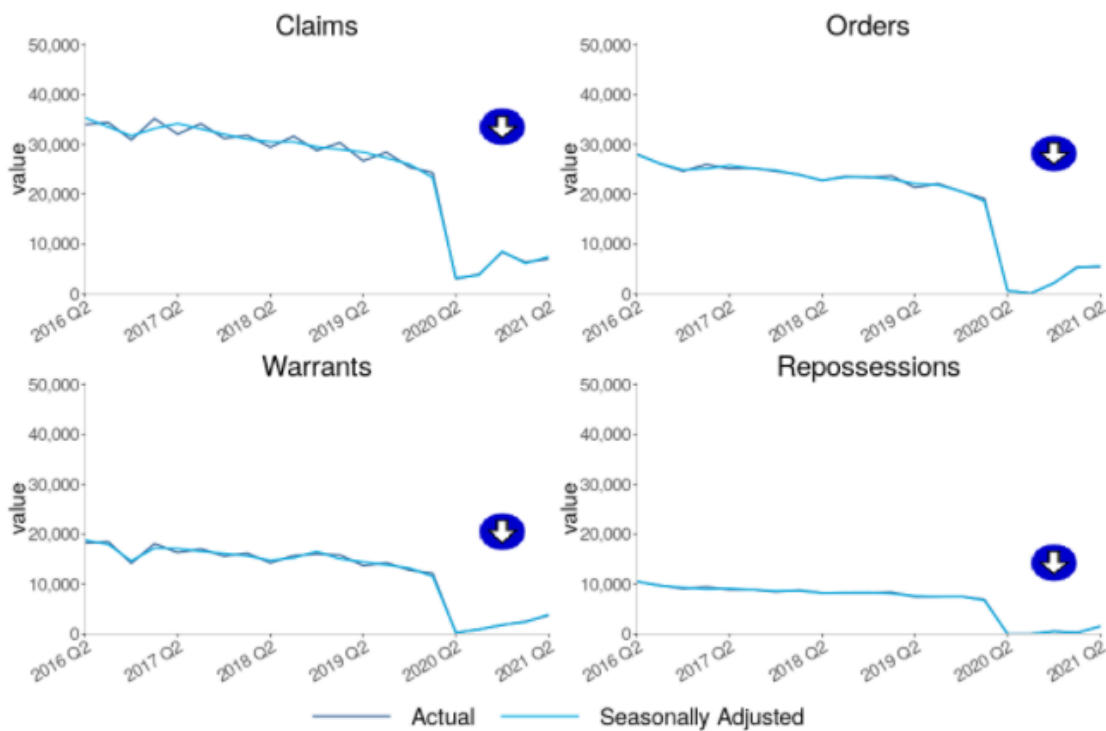


UK Finance’s latest data for April to June 2021 shows that just 0.85% of homeowner mortgages and 0.3% of buy-to-let mortgages were in arrears of over 2.5% of the balance. They report that lenders continue to prioritise those requiring urgent resolution due to vulnerability or where it is of benefit to the customer and therefore, they “do not expect significant increases in possessions immediately following the lifting of the Possessions Moratorium and restrictions on evictions”. Possessions, as a last resort after tailored support is exhausted and a thorough court-based process considering individual circumstances are expected to increase slowly as the backlog of cases from 2020 unwind.

The Government also put protections in place for renters, including longer notice periods of six months and banning bailiff enforcement of evictions for all but the most serious cases until 31 May 2021. These are reflected in the following graphs.



**Figure 3: Landlord possession actions (actual and seasonally adjusted) in the county courts of England and Wales, April to June 2016 to April to June 2021**  
 (Source: Table 10b)



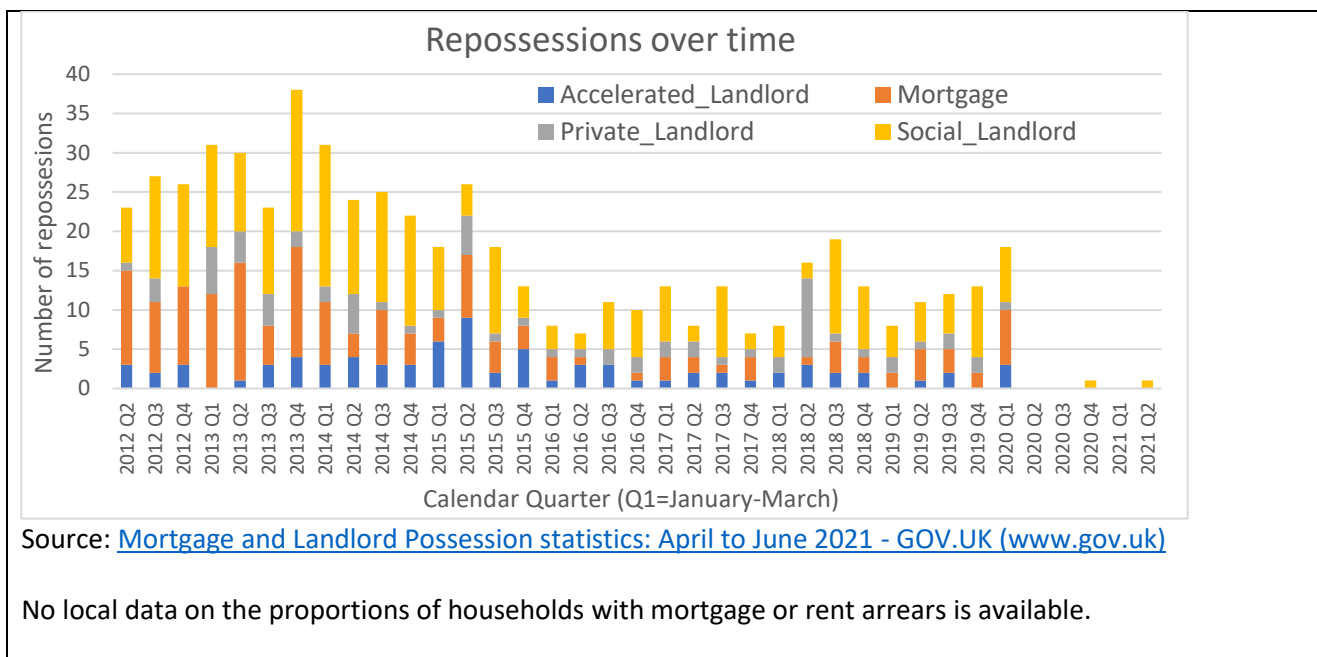
Source: [Mortgage and landlord possession statistics: April to June 2021 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/mortgage-and-landlord-possession-statistics-april-to-june-2021)

Data on households with rent arrears is not collected nationally from all landlords. The [Household Resilience Survey Wave 2](#), based on approx. 3,600 surveys nationally, estimates that 9% of private renters and 11% of social renters were in arrears in November-December 2020. While the proportion of social renters in arrears is the same as pre-pandemic levels, private rental arrears are higher than previously recorded (3% in 2019/20) and a further 8% of both social and private renters said it was very or fairly likely they would fall behind with rent payments in the next 3 months. The majority of households with rental arrears were less than 2 months behind.

While the “unprecedentedly low levels” of repossessions during the pandemic mean that an increase is expected, there are conflicting views on the scale of increase expected. Numerous articles present views that there may soon be large increases in repossessions and rental evictions as restrictions, payment deferrals and other measures supporting people such as the furlough scheme come to an end. However, such articles tend to be written by those with a vested interest, with most predictions at this stage more guesses than evidence-based forecasts, and they are countered by views put forward by those not expecting rapid change such as UK Finance.

**Local data:** [Data from the Ministry of Justice](#) is also available at the local authority level and can therefore be directly compared with national data. Nationally, the number of repossessions fell by **97.6%** in April 2020 and March 2021 compared to the period from April 2019 to March 2020. Data for the same periods for Huntingdonshire shows there was a **98.1%** fall in repossessions locally.

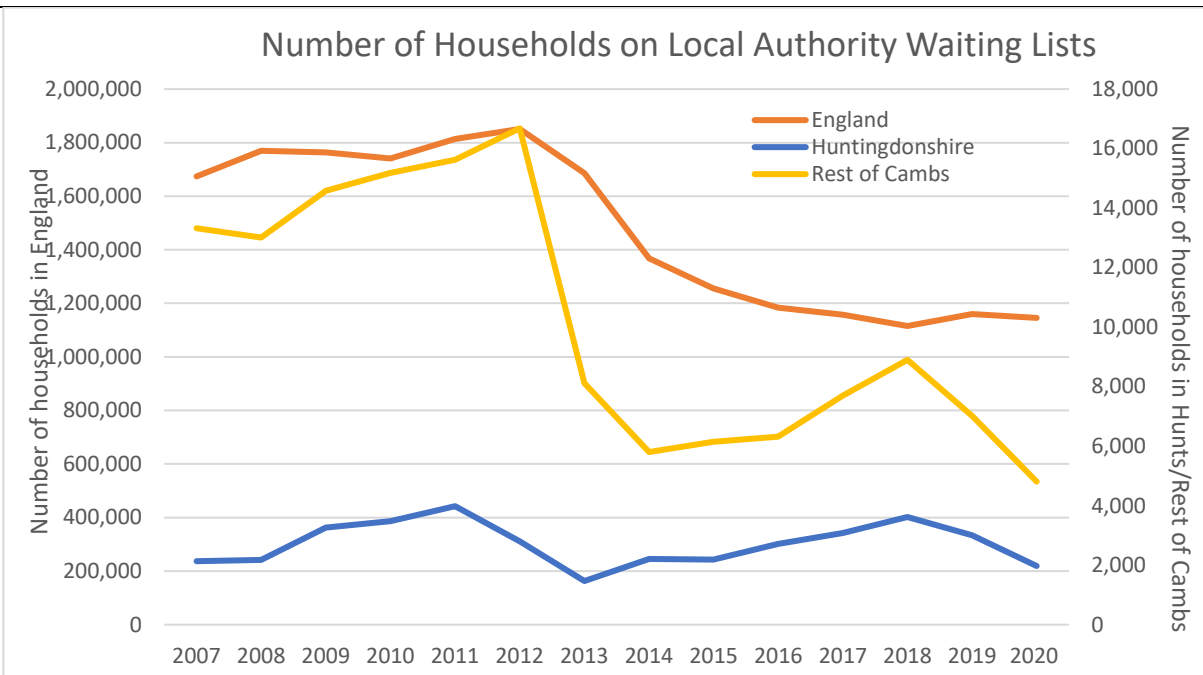




## Subject: Local Authority housing waiting lists

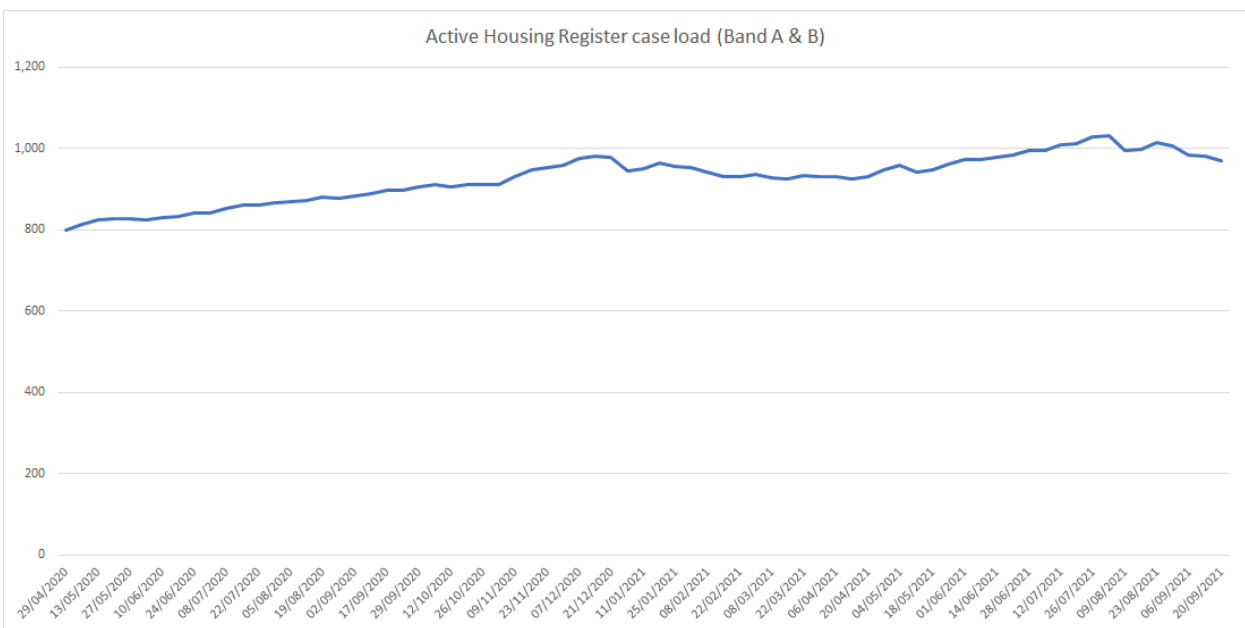
**National data:** Official data is currently available up to 31 March 2020, prior to the main impacts of the pandemic. [Housing waiting list figures](#) from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government cover all households on local authority waiting lists, however this is not the same as the number of households waiting. Local authorities periodically review their lists to remove households who no longer require housing, so the total number of households on waiting lists may overstate the number of households who still require social housing at any one time. The frequency of reviews varies between local authorities. Waiting list size may also be affected by other factors such as the potential for some households to be on the waiting list of more than one local authority.

This pattern of reviews is reflected in the Huntingdonshire and rest of Cambridgeshire numbers shown on the following graph. The general national trend over recent years has been relatively steady numbers on waiting lists following falling numbers between 2012 and 2018. However, locally there has been significant fluctuation, with numbers in 2020 almost halved compared to 2018 as a result of all households being required to re-register when a full scale review was completed in 2018/19. Not all households re-registered, leading to a reduction in the overall numbers on the register. This graph only covers the period to March 2020 so does not currently show any impact from the pandemic, but March 2021 figures are likely to indicate how numbers have been affected once they are published in November/December 2021.



Total numbers on housing waiting lists reflect those at all levels of priority for housing, rather than focussing on those with the highest level of need. Full details of local lettings criteria can be found in Huntingdonshire District Council’s Lettings Policy, but it should be noted that the national waiting list figures include Band D households assessed as having a ‘low’ housing need and include those who are “assessed as having sufficient financial resources to resolve their own housing need”.

**Local data:** The graph below tracks Huntingdonshire District Council’s active housing register case load for Bands A (urgent need) and B (high need) only. The combined Band A & B caseload at 20/9/21 was 22% higher than at 29/4/20 but the graph shows that numbers have fluctuated over the period as households in those bands move into appropriate housing and cases are reviewed. While there has been a generally increasing trend over the period shown, the numbers shown can overstate the number of households eligible to be included in Bands A and B at any one time as they may not account for recent changes of circumstance. Periodic reviews of the list can therefore lead to numbers changing as new information is considered and households which no longer require housing are removed.

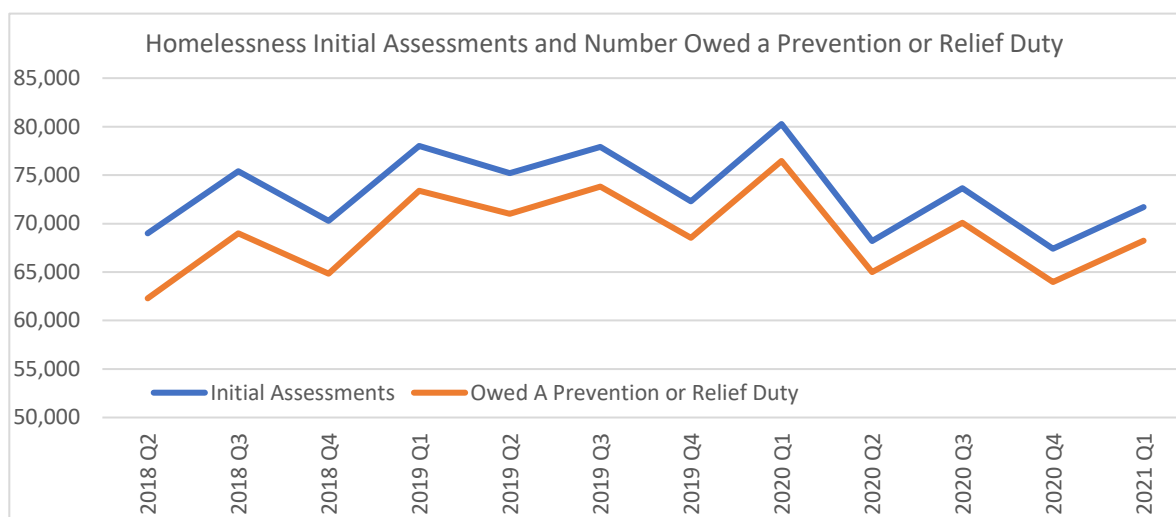


With regards to new applications made to the register, we have so far not seen an increase in numbers applying. There were 2,079 new applications in 2020/21 compared to 2,214 new applications in 2019/20.

There are many factors which may affect the numbers of residents registered in Bands A & B so significant further work would be required to help us understand how much of the increase can be attributed to impacts of the pandemic.

## Subject: Homelessness

**National data:** As reported in the [latest data tables on homelessness](#), the number of initial assessments of homelessness by local authorities across England was on an increasing trajectory prior to the pandemic, with the number assessed at Q1 2020 (January to March) the highest recorded since the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) 2017.

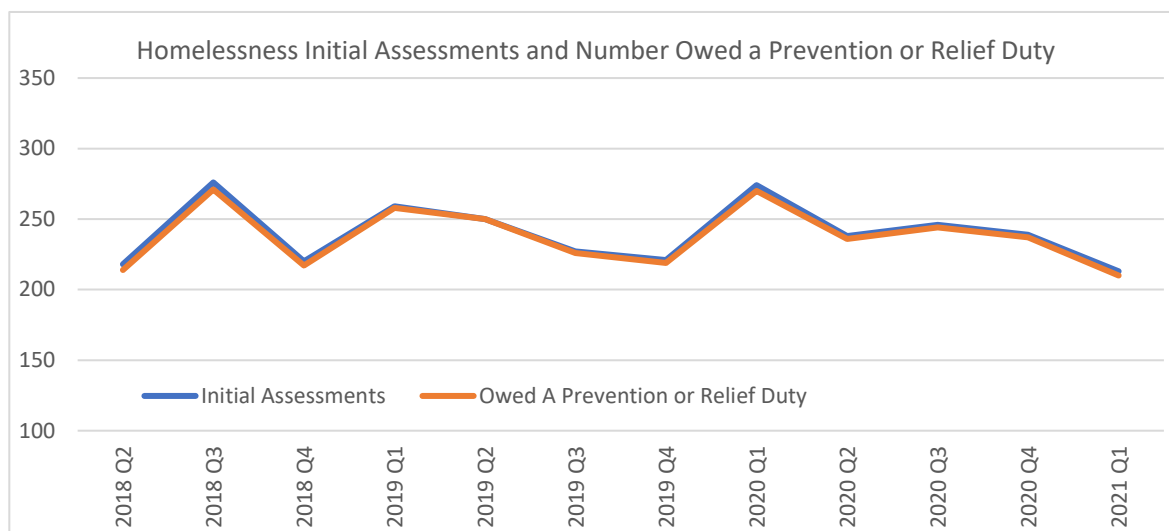


As shown in the graph above, the number assessed fell significantly in Q2 2020 (April to June) and remained relatively low through the rest of the 2020/21 municipal year. Similarly, numbers assessed as being owed a prevention or relief duty also fell compared to the longer-term trend. The number owed a duty in 2020/21 was 7.8% lower than in 2019/20 and 0.8% lower than in 2018/19.

The fall in homelessness cases is likely to be linked to actions taken in response to the pandemic. In addition to actions to halt or delay housing repossessions in most cases, action has also been taken to reduce the number of rough sleepers who may otherwise have presented as homeless. Rough sleeping snapshot data ([link to spreadsheet](#)) shows the number of people sleeping rough (those bedding down in open air locations and other places, including tents and makeshift shelters, but not including people in hostels or shelters, sofa surfers or those in any campsites) as recorded by local authorities each Autumn rose steadily in England from 2010 to 2017. Since then, the numbers fell slightly in 2018 and again in 2019 but then reduced significantly in the Autumn 2020 count (a fall of 37% from 4,266 to 2,688).

This is linked to the 'Everyone In' initiative response to the pandemic, where local authorities across the country sought to ensure that people sleeping rough and in accommodation where it was difficult to self-isolate (such as shelters and assessment centres) were safely accommodated to protect them, and the wider public, from the risks of Covid-19. This was an enormous challenge for local authorities, who block-booked hotel rooms, secured other en-suite accommodation (e.g. B&Bs, student accommodation, holiday rentals etc) and worked with partners to ensure that those accommodated had the food, medical care and support they required.

**Local data:** While the [latest data tables on homelessness](#) show that Huntingdonshire also saw a fall in homelessness assessments and the number owed a duty at Q2 2020 (April to June 2020), the numbers were not trending upwards prior to that so there is less difference between the full municipal year figures for 2019/20 and 2020/21 than seen nationally (Huntingdonshire’s 2020/21 total was 3.9% lower than in 2019/20, while nationally the total fell by 7.8%).



Rough sleeper numbers for Huntingdonshire tend to be low (up to a maximum of five at each annual snapshot between 2010 and 2019) and they are based on estimates rather than counts so there can be significant variance. However, it is notable that the latest figure showing eight rough sleepers estimated at Autumn 2020 is the highest number recorded over the period since 2010. The increase from the totals reported in recent years does not correlate with the change recorded nationally in 2020, although a quarter of other local authority areas also reported increases compared to 2019. Huntingdonshire District Council did participate in the ‘Everyone In’ scheme, providing accommodation to a peak of 30 people who were sleeping rough or in accommodation where it was difficult to self-isolate. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (formerly Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) is tracking outcomes for those helped by Everyone In, with results to be published in due course.

## Subject: House prices

**National data:** There are a multitude of house price indexes which vary by source of data, from sale prices recorded by the Land Registry (with some exclusions such as “sales that were not for full market value”) to individual bank/building society indexes or values of properties listed on property search websites. The different methodologies make it difficult to select any one as the ‘best’ indicator of trends in house prices as they all have their own merits. However, if we look at trends excluding the most recent monthly fluctuations reported then the various indexes tend to show rising average prices over the long-term from before the pandemic began and over the months since. The analysis in this section references Land Registry data (the UK House Price Index) which records confirmed sales and sale prices (although it should be noted that data for the most recent months may be subject to revisions as further sales are added) and Hometrack data from the [Housing Bulletins](#) which are used across the Cambridgeshire sub-region as a common source of information on house values. The Bulletins also include data on affordability and rent costs.

A recent [report](#) from the Resolution Centre considers how Covid-19 has affected housing demand across the UK, with analysis based on Land Registry data from the UK House Price Index. It looks at trends in house prices by rural/urban location and house type so is useful for exploring how Covid may have

affected housing preferences or led to ‘urban flight’. They found some evidence of this in the UK with local authorities with the fewest residents per square kilometre seeing prices rise by 10 per cent on average over the year to February 2021, compared to 6 per cent in the most populous areas. They also reported that cities across the UK saw slower growth in house prices than rural areas, suggesting a reduced preference for urban living, and that ‘denser’ types of property have become less attractive over the pandemic period with the average price of a flat growing by ‘just’ under 6 per cent, while houses of all types increased by around 9 per cent.

The [UK House Price Index data](#) which the Resolution Centre’s analysis is based on shows that there was a 9.8% change in the average house price for England and a 10% change in the average house price for the UK in the 12 months to March 2021.

The latest ([June 2021](#)) Housing Bulletin contains Hometrack and Land Registry data for the period up to March 2021, with local data listed for the same period. Price data is averaged over the previous six months. At the national level, it shows that the average price based on both sales and valuations rose by 8.8% in England between March 2020 and March 2021. However, the average price based only on actual sales rose by 13.6% in England over the same period. While there is usually some difference between these figures, the latest difference is greater than usual (by comparison, the sales/valuations average price in England rose by 3.5% in the year to March 2020 while the sales only average price in England rose by 3.8% in the same period). This may reflect different types of homes being sold, linked to changes in housing preferences as noted by the Resolution Centre.

**Local data:** The [Housing Bulletin](#) includes district level figures showing that the average price based on both sales and valuations rose by 9.8% to £334,390 in Huntingdonshire between March 2020 and March 2021 and that the average price based only on actual sales rose by 8.5% to £321,680 locally over the same period.

[UK House Price Index data](#) for March 2021 (based on three-month averages) also shows a lower rate of increase in Huntingdonshire (a 12 month change of +5.9%) compared to the national average (9.8%). The other local authority areas in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough also saw lower rates of increase than average, with Fenland, Huntingdonshire, Peterborough and Cambridge all among the bottom 25% nationally.

Local Authority	Average Price at March 2021	12 Month Change to March 2021
Cambridge	£458,971	+3.3%
East Cambridgeshire	£304,985	+7%
Fenland	£198,850	+6.1%
Huntingdonshire	£273,948	+5.9%
Peterborough	£204,717	+5.9%
South Cambridgeshire	£405,507	+8.6%

Huntingdonshire’s rate of increase is below the national average for all house types, suggesting that the below average change in house price is not solely due to a difference in demand for different types of housing (e.g. flats) locally. The table below shows the rate of increase in price for each type of housing in the 12 months to March 2021.

Area	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flat
England	11%	10.5%	11%	5.1%
Huntingdonshire	6.7%	5.7%	6.3%	2.4%

In addition to average prices, data showing the [lower quartile house price](#) (the price of the house sale that falls three-quarters of the way down the list, such that 75% of transactions lie above and 25% lie below that value) is also available. The latest data shows figures up to December 2020 (March 2021 data is due to

be published in September 2021). The December 2020 lower quartile price for Huntingdonshire was £215,000, which is the same as reported for December 2019. By comparison, the national lower quartile price was 6.2% higher at December 2020 than at December 2019. Looking at the lower quartile prices for different types of house shows a similar picture, with a higher increase nationally than locally for detached houses (3.8% vs 0.2%), semi-detached houses (4.5% vs 0%), terraced houses (4.3% vs -2.2%) and flats (1.5% vs -3.2%). While lower quartile house price data in the Housing Bulletin based on both sales and valuations does show an overall increase for Huntingdonshire at March 2021 compared to March 2020, this increase of 4.8% is again lower than the national increase reported (6.7%).

The data available at district level shows relatively low rates of increase compared to the England average. However, it is clear that the pandemic has had a significant impact on the housing market. UK House Price Index data on sales completed in the six months to March 2021 shows that both Huntingdonshire and England saw significantly higher levels of cash sales and lower proportions of new homes sold when compared to the six months to March 2020. From October 2019 to March 2020, just 24% of homes locally and 27% in England were cash sales with the remainder purchased with a mortgage. From October 2020 to March 2021, the proportion of cash sales was 45% of all house sales for both England and Huntingdonshire. New homes made up 16% of sales in Huntingdonshire and 13% of sales in England from October 2019 to March 2020. For the period from October 2020 to March 2021, only 2% of sales in Huntingdonshire and 3% of sales in England were new homes.

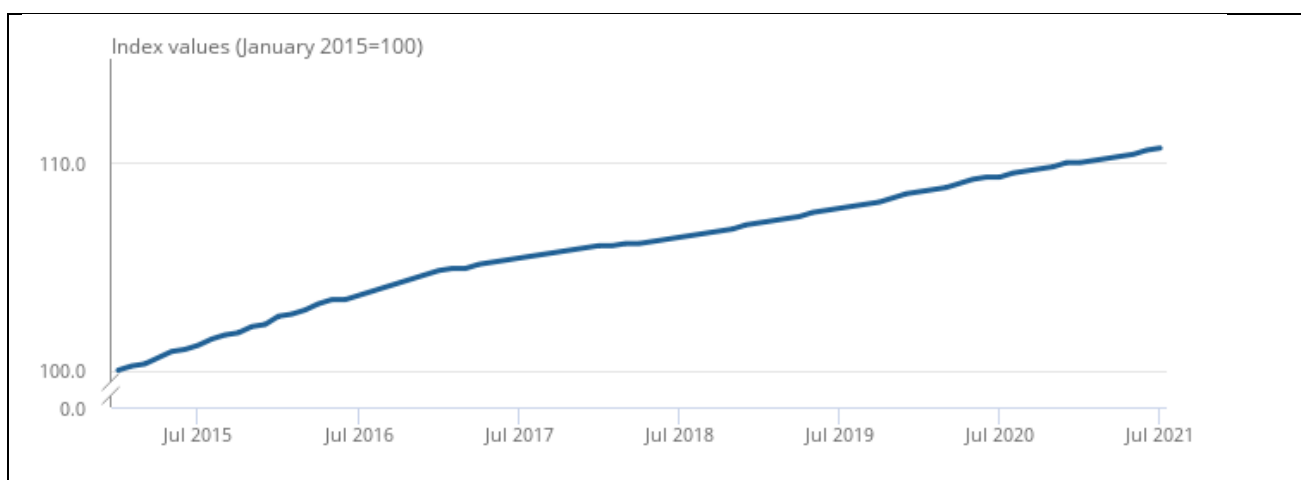
## Subject: Housing rental market

**National data:** The [Index of Private Housing Rental Prices](#) (IPHRP) from the Office for National Statistics is an experimental price index tracking the prices paid for renting property from private landlords in the UK. The latest data (to July 2021) shows that, when London is excluded, the national average private rent price increased by 2.0% in the 12 months to July 2021, up from an increase of 1.8% in June 2021. However, the average increase for the East of England was slightly lower at 1.9%.

Supply and demand pressures, such as the report from Association of Residential Letting Agents in June 2021 that members reported a decrease in rental stock while the average number of new prospective tenants registered per branch was the highest on record, can take time to feed through to the IPHRP, which reflects price changes for all private rental properties rather than only newly advertised rental properties.

While the IPHRP is an experimental statistic, it is based on over 450,000 private rental prices in England annually and indicates strongly that private housing rental prices have continued to rise over the course of the pandemic.

Index of Private Housing Rental Prices indices, UK, January 2015 to July 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – Index of Private Housing Rental Prices

The latest ([June 2021](#)) Housing Bulletin contains Hometrack data on median private rents by size of home (number of bedrooms) for the period up to March 2021, with local data listed for the same period. Price data is averaged over the previous twelve months. The latest data indicates that the median private rent at March 2021 was 15.9% higher for a one-bedroom home than at March 2020, 22.2% higher for a two bedroom home, 21.5% higher for a three bedroom home and 10.1% higher for a four bedroom home. The quarterly figures suggest rents have increased over the course of the pandemic, at higher rates of increase than over the prior 12 months.

**Local data:** IPHRP data is only available down to regional level but Hometrack data from the [Housing Bulletin](#) can be used to see how private rents in Huntingdonshire have changed over time. The table below compares the local and national changes by number of bedrooms:

Area	1 bed change	2 bed change	3 bed change	4 bed change
Huntingdonshire	+1.4%	+2.9%	+2.9%	+8.7%
England	+15.9%	+22.2%	+21.5%	+10.1%

As the data for England and Huntingdonshire should be directly comparable, this indicates that rises in private rents in Huntingdonshire have been significantly lower than the national average for 1-, 2- and 3-bedroom homes and lower than the national average for 4-bedroom homes.

## Subject: [Housing affordability \(house purchases\)](#)

**National data:** In order to assess the affordability of housing, we not only need data on housing costs but also on household income. The latest Office for National Statistics estimates of average household income in the UK relate to the financial year 2019/20, the period leading up to the Covid-19 pandemic, with no current release date set for 2020/21 data.

An alternative source of data on household income is CACI’s Paycheck product, which uses data from their lifestyle database in conjunction with data from the Office for National Statistics’ Average Weekly Earnings and Living Costs & Food Survey to build a model reflecting income from all sources, including earnings, benefits and investments. CACI’s [Wealth of the Nation 2021](#) report provides estimates for the UK as a whole and by region, as well as lists of the top and bottom local authority and postcode areas by mean annual gross household income.

They report that the current average gross household income in the UK is £40,300, which is lower than the 2020 Paycheck release figure of £41,100. Prior to the pandemic average gross household income was



increasing each year, suggesting that the pandemic has affected the recent trend. CACI advise that “the data reflects that as lockdown restrictions were easing, many people were still on furlough, and/or had reduced salaries”.

Both mean and median household income estimates are lower than in 2020 in all regions except London, with a small increase of £300 in mean income. The South East remains the region with the highest mean gross household income at £46,900 and Northern Ireland the lowest at £33,100. The East of England’s 2021 estimate was £44,400, which is £1,000 lower than the 2020 estimate.

With a 10% increase in the average UK house price in the 12 months to March 2021 and reduced average gross household income in 2021 compared to 2020, we would expect to see the housing affordability ratio fall. The UK average house price at March 2020 and 2021 from the UK House Price Index and the average gross household income figures from CACI’s Paycheck allow us to calculate the following ratios:

Period	Average UK house price in March	Average CACI Paycheck gross household income	Housing affordability ratio
2020	£232,684	£41,100	5.7
2021	£255,913	£40,300	6.4

It should be noted that this data is included as an indication of the likely change only and not official statistics.

**Local data:** While Huntingdonshire District Council does not have a subscription to access CACI’s Paycheck data, the latest ([June 2021](#)) Housing Bulletin contains published affordability ratios at district level and below which are calculated using CACI’s household income data. The ratios published show how many “times” income the house prices in an area represent.

In addition to a median average ratio, the Bulletin also includes a lower quartile ratio of lower quartile house price to lower quartile income. The report states that lower quartile ratios have worsened everywhere except Peterborough and South Cambridgeshire and that median ratios have worsened everywhere except Peterborough. However, the data in tables 10 and 11 (shown below) that these conclusions are based on shows ratios fluctuating over time since March 2019 and for most districts the latest ratios at March 2021 are not the highest recorded in the period.

Table 11 Median house price to income ratio (rounded)

	Mar-19	Jun-19	Oct-19	Dec-19	Mar-20	Jul-20	Sept-20	Dec-20	Mar-21
Cambridge	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	9.9	9.9	9.9	10.0	10.3
East Cambs	7.4	7.6	7.6	7.7	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.6	7.7
Fenland	6.7	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.3	6.3	6.5	6.5	6.7
HDC	6.9	6.9	7.1	7.1	6.7	6.7	6.8	6.9	7.1
South Cambs	8.2	8.3	8.3	8.3	7.8	8.0	8.1	8.3	8.6
Former Forest Heath	6.9	7.0	7.2	7.3	7.1	7.3	7.3	7.4	7.6
Former St Edmundsbury	7.6	7.2	7.5	7.6	7.2	7.0	7.1	7.2	7.5
Peterborough	6.7	6.4	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.3	6.5	6.5	6.5
East of England	8.2	8.1	8.1	8.1	7.9	7.9	8.0	8.0	8.3
East Midlands	6.3	6.1	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.1	6.2	6.4	6.4

Table 10 Lower quartile price to income ratio (rounded)

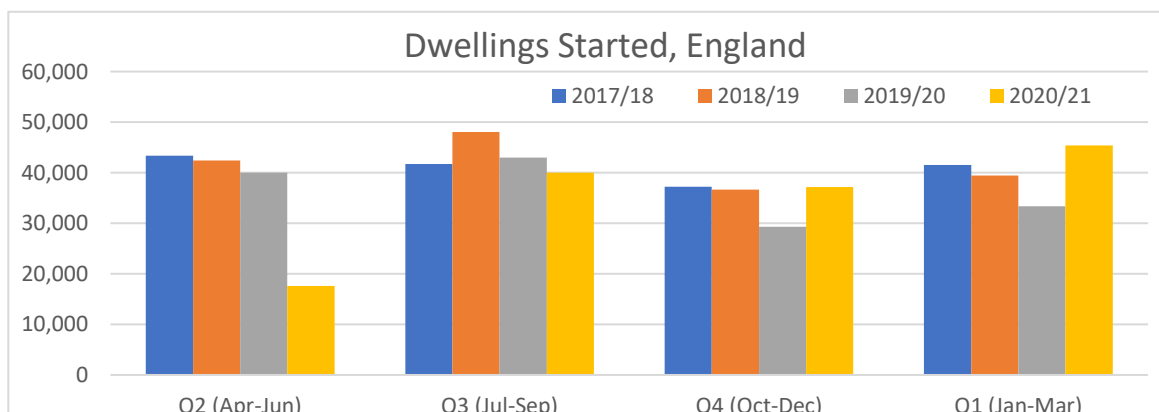
	Mar-19	Jun-19	Oct-19	Dec-19	Mar-20	Jul-20	Sep-20	Dec-20	Mar-21
Cambridge	14.2	14.1	14.4	14.4	13.3	13.1	13.1	13.3	13.5
East Cambs	9.8	9.9	10.2	10.3	9.9	9.9	9.9	10.0	10.3
Fenland	9.2	9.0	9.1	9.1	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.9	9.1
HDC	9.3	9.5	9.5	9.8	9.2	9.0	9.1	9.2	9.4
South Cambs	10.8	11.4	11.3	11.3	10.6	10.6	10.8	11.0	11.0
Former Forest Heath	9.7	9.9	10.1	10.1	9.7	10.0	10.0	10.3	10.4
Former St Edmundsbury	10.4	10.0	10.1	10.3	9.7	9.4	9.5	9.7	10.2
Peterborough	9.3	8.9	9.1	9.1	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.8
East of England	10.6	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.2	10.2	10.3	10.4	10.6
East Midlands	8.5	8.2	8.2	8.2	7.9	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.6

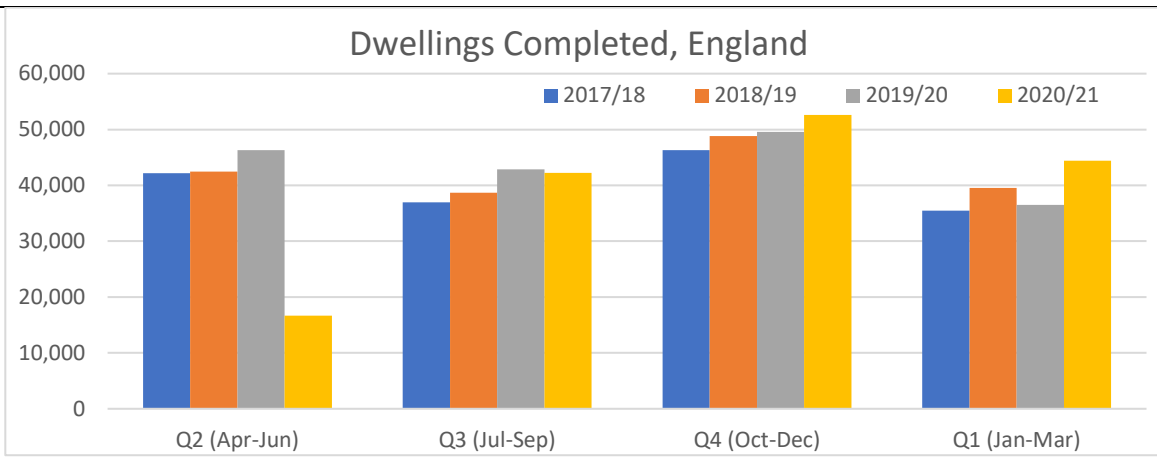
For Huntingdonshire (listed as ‘HDC’ in these tables), the median ratio of 7.1 at March 2021 is higher than reported at any point in 2020 but is the same as has been reported for October 2019 and December 2019. Similarly, the lower quartile ratio of 9.4 at March 2021 is higher than during 2020 but is lower than had been reported from June 2019 to December 2019. Ratios are also below the regional ratios.

While this suggests that the affordability ratio has not increased in line with the likely national trend, the data used is not official statistics and may not be directly comparable with UK figures. The data will also not account for further increases in house prices beyond the period to March 2021.

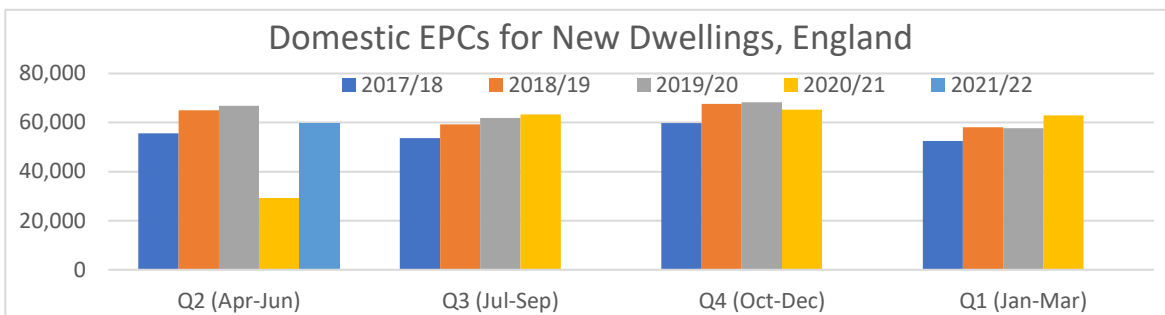
## Subject: Housing supply

**National data:** [Indicators of new housing supply](#) include data from building control inspectors, Energy Performance Certificates lodged and Council Tax data from the Valuation Office Agency. [Building control data](#) nationally indicates that there were significant reductions in both dwelling starts and completions in Q2 2020 (April to June), when many industries including construction were impacted by the initial lockdown restrictions. As restrictions eased and on-site social distancing measures were put in place, dwelling construction appears to have recovered in Q3 2020 (July to Sept) and increased over Q4 2020-Q1 2021 (from October 2020 to March 2021). Despite the recovery, the overall number of dwelling completions in England in 2020/21 was 11% lower than in 2019/20.





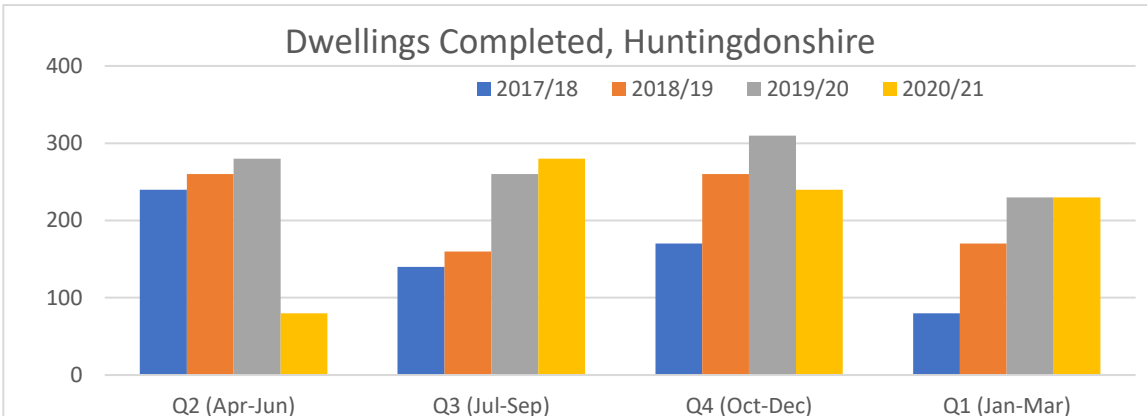
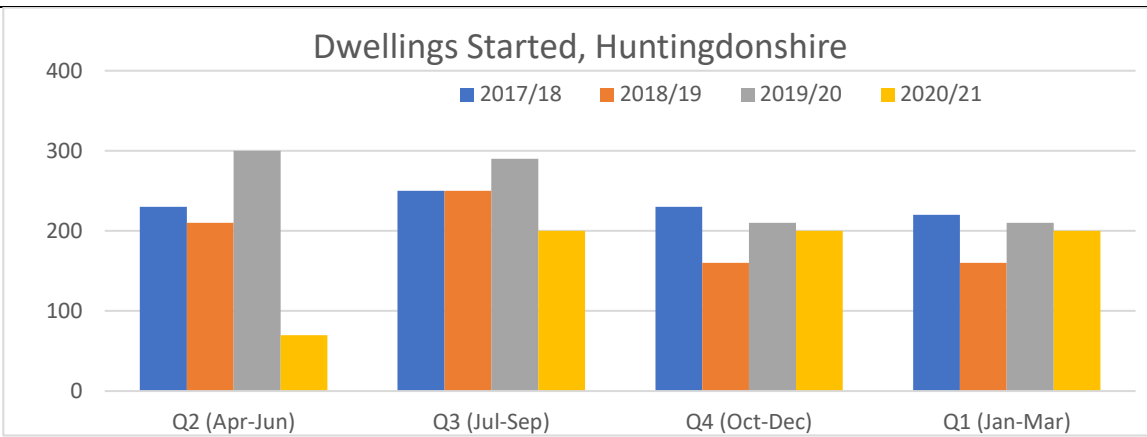
Figures for [Energy Performance Certificates \(EPC\)](#) lodged for new dwellings are not directly comparable with building control data, as the EPC data includes new builds, conversions and change of use, however they shows a similar pattern of a significant reduction followed by recovery.



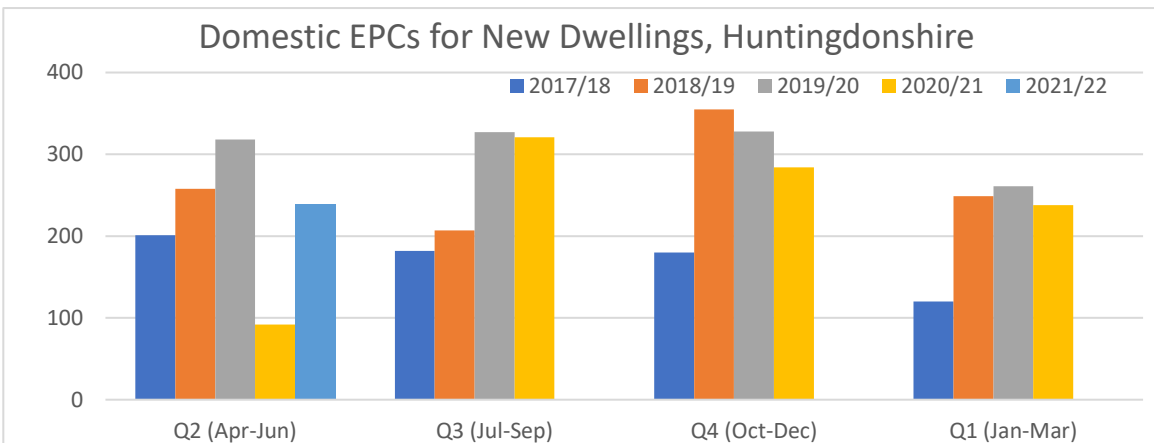
One further measure of changes in housing supply is the number of homes with a Council Tax valuation, which we can use to calculate the net change in homes which have been given a Council Tax banding. As with the EPC data, this data is not directly comparable with building control figures as it includes conversions and change of use. Data showing how the [stock of Council Tax banded properties](#) has changed nationally since March 2020 is not due to be published until 23 September 2021.

While national data on housing supply suggests immediate recovery following the impacts of restrictions at the start of the first lockdown, the Office for National Statistics advises that anecdotal evidence from businesses suggests that price increases and product shortages caused by supply chain issues have led to a recent decline in construction output (for further details, see the Construction section under Good Work). However, demand is still strong as shown by recent new orders, with quarterly total housing new orders increasing by 2.9% in Quarter 2 (April to June) 2021, and, in a recent presentation on the state of the housing market, the Head of Research at Zoopla advised that housebuilders have the longest lead in forward sales in history.

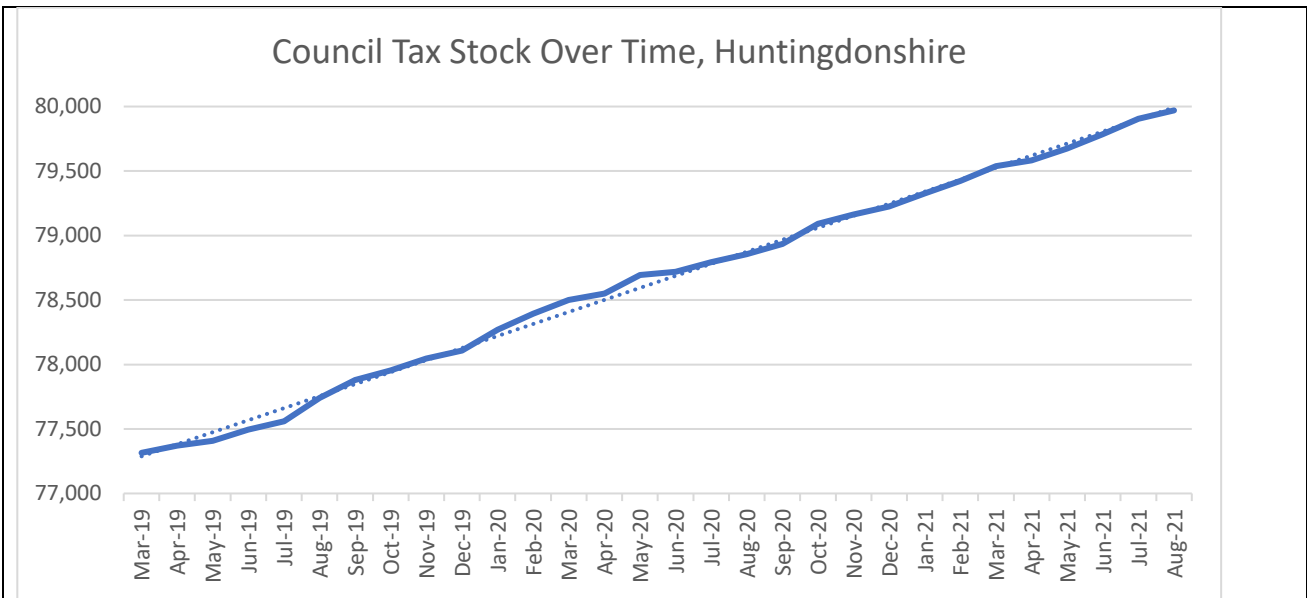
**Local data:** Building control data at local authority level ([link to spreadsheet](#), note: this data includes numbers reported by all approved inspectors not just local authority building control inspectors) shows starts and completions by quarter, although district level data quarterly data for house building is volatile and not generally suitable for making quarter on quarter comparisons. District level data should be considered either as part of larger geographic aggregations or over a longer time period. As such, the patterns shown in the graphs below provide a better indication of how house supply was affected by the pandemic than comparing percentage changes against the national figures. However, we can report that the total number of dwelling completions in Huntingdonshire in 2020/21 was 23% lower than in 2019/20.



These graphs clearly indicate a significant reduction in both starts and completions in April to June 2020 was followed by recovery from Q3 onwards to similar levels as recorded in previous years, following the same pattern as seen nationally. This pattern is also mirrored by EPC data for the district as shown in the following graph.






While national data on Council Tax stock is not yet available for the period, Huntingdonshire District Council has data showing how the net number of dwellings with a Council Tax valuation has changed locally. This shows low variation in the rate of increase over the period from March 2019 to August 2021, with no obvious reduction linked to the fall in starts, completions and EPCs lodged in April-June 2020. The dotted line represents the overall trendline over the period shown.



Final data on the [number of additional homes built](#) in 2020/21 is due to be reported in November 2021, with the 2021 Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for Huntingdonshire to be published in December 2021. The AMR (due the end of October) will also review the deliverability of Local Plan targets for the district, although given the recovery suggested by the building control, EPC and Council Tax data, our ability to meet our housing delivery target seems unlikely to have been significantly affected by what appear to have been only temporary impacts of the pandemic on the construction industry locally.

## Topic: Environment

	NATIONAL TREND 	CONFIDENCE RATING 	IMPACT RATING 
Climate change	There was a temporary reduction of global emissions of CO2 since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>1 = LOW</b> <i>(Negligible impact as trend was only short term now traffic levels have return to pre-pandemic levels)</i>
Air quality	Air quality improved temporarily since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>5 = HIGH</b> <i>(Data available down to sub-district level if required)</i>	<b>1 = LOW</b> <i>(Negligible impact as trend was only short term now traffic levels have return to pre-pandemic levels)</i>

### Subject: Climate change

**National data:** Initial estimated data that has been published by the [Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy](#) shows that the restrictions brought in as a result of Covid-19 significantly reduced greenhouse gas and carbon dioxide emissions in the UK compared to previous years. This is still the case when considering changes in external temperature. They estimate that Carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions in the UK fell by 10.7% in 2020 compared to 2019 and total greenhouse gas emissions fell by 8.9%. Total greenhouse gas emissions were 48.8% lower than recorded in 1990. This decrease is reportedly driven by the reduction in road transport during the national lockdowns and reductions in business activity. CO2 emissions from transport fell nearly 20% in 2020, accounting for over half of the overall fall from 2019, and in the business sector they fell by 8.7%. On the other hand, CO2 emissions from the residential sector increased by 1.8% as more people stayed at home. The graph below shows the trend of decline in emissions since the 1990's as a result of less use of fuels such as coal. Final estimates of this data set are not due to be released until February 2022 and there has been no reliable data published yet that accounts for post national lockdown levels in 2021.

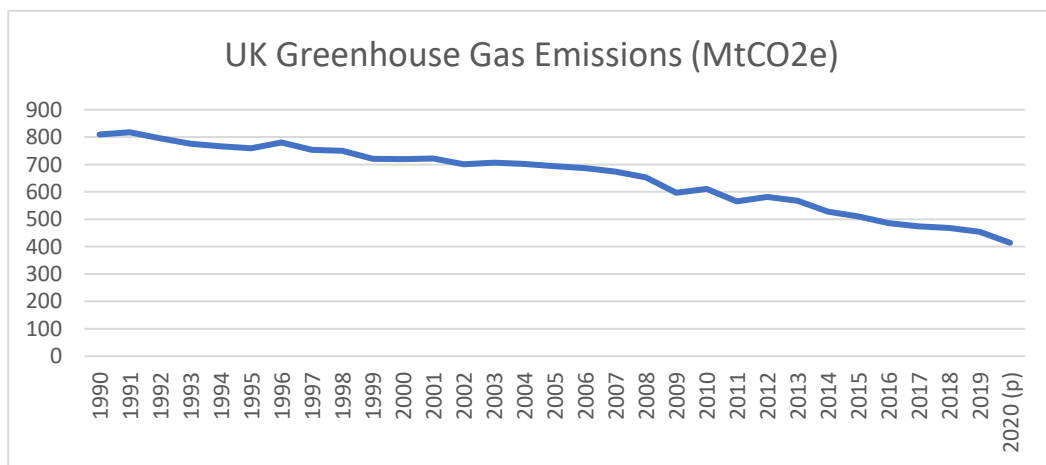


Figure 15: UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions Over Time  
Source: Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy

**Local data:** There is no data available at Local Authority level, however in October 2019 [Cambridgeshire County Council](#) published a document about what actions they must take to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050. Greenhouse gas emissions in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough were 6.1 megatonnes (Mt) CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2016, making up 1.6% of the UK's total emissions. Emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough fell 26% from 2005 to 2017, while nationwide emissions dropped 33%. The graph below from the report shows historic emissions by district for the county as at 2017.

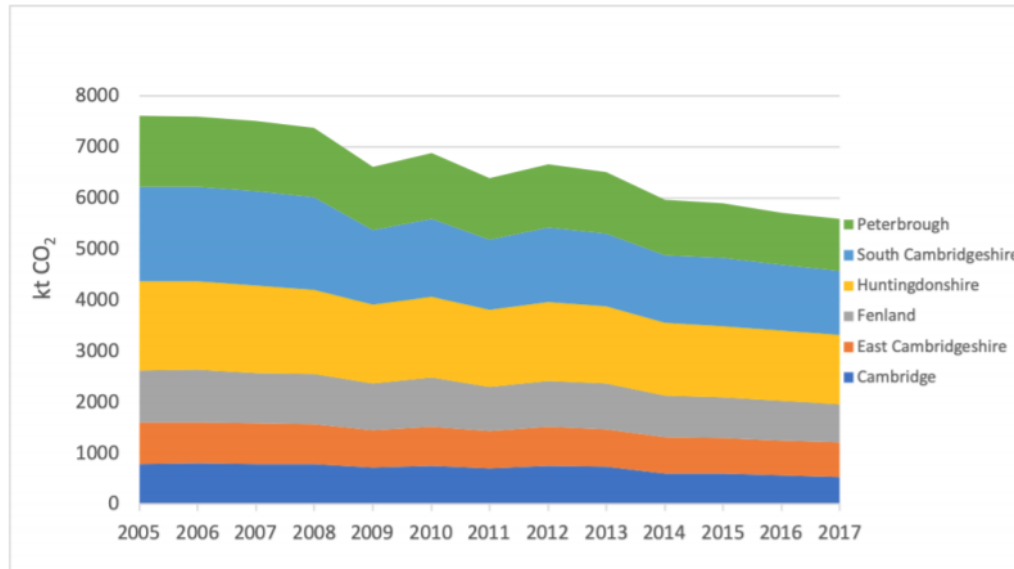


Figure 16: Historic CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions (District Level) 2005-2017

Source: Cambridgeshire County Council, Net Zero Cambridgeshire, October 2019, Page 17

It should be noted that this does not cover the period which includes and demonstrates the impact of Covid-19 and so is being provided to offer some context of the topic prior to relevant data being made publicly available. The report states that emissions in all districts decreased during the 12-year period, while the population of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough has increased. A number of factors have contributed to these emissions reductions, including energy efficiency measures in building and homes, more efficient production and transport, and the falling carbon intensity of the national grid. Huntingdonshire data was analysed (although it is not present in the report) which showed over half of the total emissions within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough come from Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire, which was concluded to be due to the major A roads present in both areas. Also, Huntingdonshire (and South Cambridgeshire) had transport emissions per capita that were well above Cambridgeshire and Peterborough and the national average at that time.

The [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority \(CPCA\)](#) commissioned a report on climate in the area, which was published in March 2021. The report concluded that greenhouse gas emissions in the Combined Authority region are high and emissions were found to be around 25% higher per person than the UK average. The report suggests that many of the risks that the nation faces from the impact of climate change are particularly acute in this region: flooding, high summer temperatures, water shortages, and damage to the natural carbon stores in the deep peat of the Fens.

Data on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions at local authority for 2020 is unlikely to be available until August 2022 ([latest data](#) published in August 2021 covers the period to 2019 only).

Subject: Air quality

**National data:** The [UK Research and Innovation Organisation](#), a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy reported in April 2021 that air quality



improved in national cities during the start of the national lockdown in the UK. The article states that nitrogen dioxide levels and small particle pollution (which can cause or irritate respiratory issues such as asthma, amongst other illnesses) were significantly lower than usual. The data that evidences this theory was produced by Scientists from the National Centre for Atmospheric Science who compared this year's air pollution levels to previous averages for the past five years.

[The Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs](#) published data on air quality statistics in the UK from 1987 to 2020 in April 2021 and produced a section for each pollutant on the impact from the national lockdowns as a result of Covid-19. They found that in 2020, [nitrogen levels](#) at the roadside were consistently lower than the average of the previous 3 years. Between April and June (inclusive) they were 42% lower which was attributed to the reduction in vehicle traffic as a result of restrictions. From July onwards, concentrations rose (as expected) until the end of the year. [Concentrations of particulate matter](#) were 31% below the 2017-19 average before the national lockdown. Levels then fell an average of 17% lower through to May 2020, this drop coincided with the first UK lockdown where some pollution activity would have been reduced as a result of restrictions. The remainder of the year saw levels revert to similar trends recorded in 2017-19.

**Local data:** In April 2020, the level of Nitrogen Dioxide were, on average, 33% lower compared with the previous 3 years, across all 5 air quality monitoring stations in Cambridge City according to [The Greater Cambridge Partnership: Covid-19 Initial Impacts report](#). Levels then presented as unusually low during the summer but increased as traffic returned. An update published by Cambridge City Council in the Air Quality in Cambridge report in [November 2020](#) states that all air quality measurement sites continued to record a fall in air pollution compared with the average of the data for the previous 3 years.




[The 2021 Air Quality Annual Status Report for the year 2020](#) produced by HDC states that restrictions associated with Covid seem to have had a significant impact on the NO<sub>2</sub> results in Huntingdonshire over 2020. In line with national trends this appears to be more pronounced in urban areas. In Huntingdonshire's case the relocation of the A14 is also likely to have had an impact. Within the Huntingdon Air Quality Management Area there has been around a 35% - 45% reduction in the annual mean NO<sub>2</sub> concentrations at roadside diffusion tube monitoring sites, with the average reduction throughout the district being around 35%.

The graphs below show the trends in Huntingdonshire of the annual mean particle matter concentrations (PM10 and PM2.5) in 2020 compared to previous years.



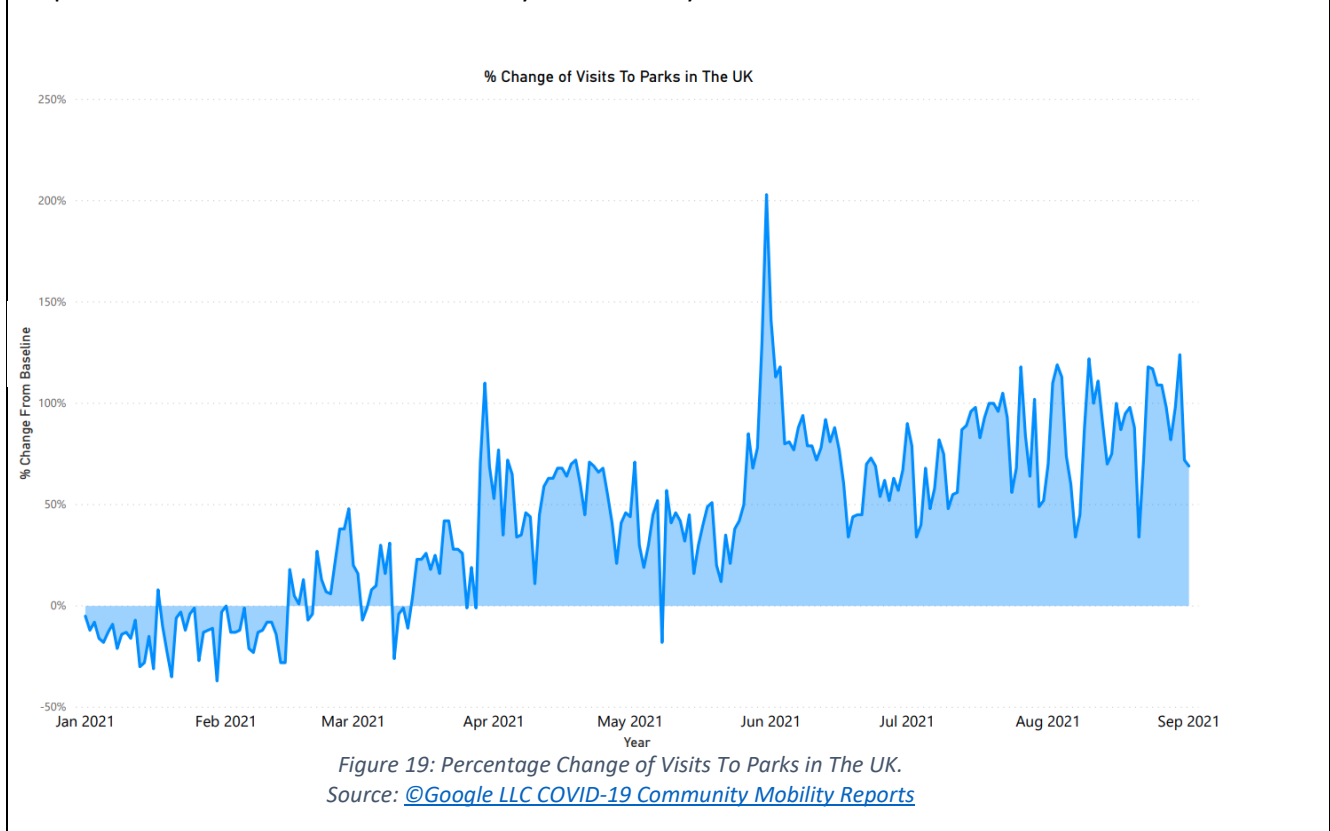
Figure 17: Trends in Annual Mean PM10 and PM2.5 Concentrations in Huntingdonshire  
 Source: [2021 Air Quality Annual Status Report \(ASR\) for the year 2020, pages 47 & 49](#)

## Topic: Public Open Spaces

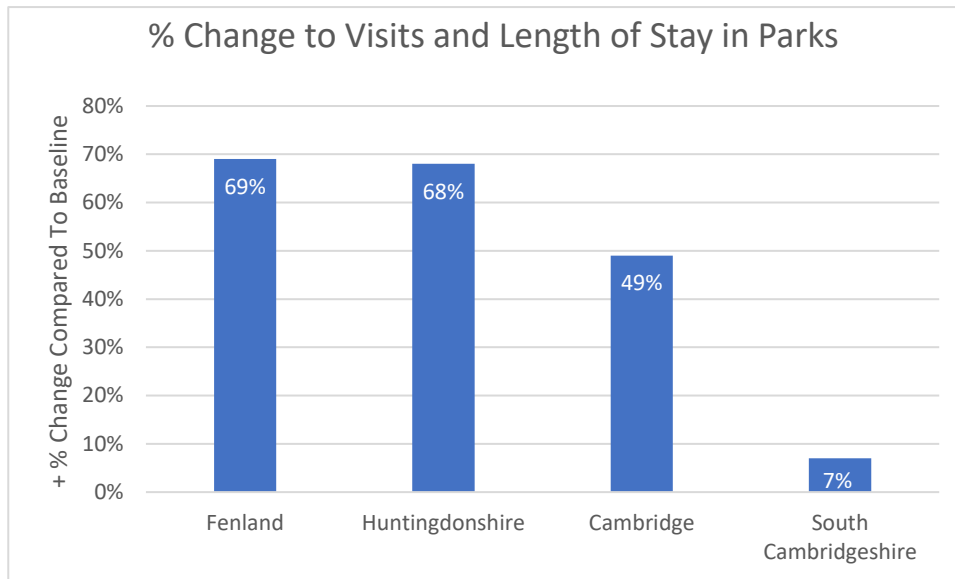
	NATIONAL TREND 	CONFIDENCE RATING 	IMPACT RATING 
Use of public parks and spaces	Visits to public parks and open spaces have increased since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major <u>POSITIVE</u> impact to support increased physical activity and improved mental health)</i>

### Subject: Use of public parks and spaces

**National data:** Google have been producing [mobility reports](#) showing how frequently several types of place have been visited during the lockdown and comparing this to baseline, which is the median value, for the corresponding day of the week during the five-week period 03/01/20 to 06/02/20. The graph below shows a snapshot of these changes for visits to parks to 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021 in the United Kingdom. Whilst a big increase in visits to parks is shown at a national level (+69%), it is expected to see a greater number of visits to parks in warmer months than in January and February.






**Local data:** The Google mobility report also provides data at Local Authority Level, using the same baseline period as at national level. The graph below shows the percentage change in how visits and length of stay changed (compared to baseline) in Parks to 22/08/2021 in Huntingdonshire and those seen within our geographical neighbours<sup>3</sup>.



<sup>3</sup>Data relating to Peterborough and East Cambridgeshire have been excluded as they do not meet the quality and privacy thresholds set by Google for every day featured in the chart.

## Topic: High Streets

	NATIONAL TREND 	CONFIDENCE RATING 	IMPACT RATING 
Local shopping	There has been an increase in demand for shopping locally since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>5 = HIGH</b> <i>(Data available down to sub-district level if required)</i>	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Minimal impact as the district doesn't have large chain stores that were susceptible to closure and mass redundancies)</i>
Parking	The decline in vehicle traffic since the pandemic has reduced demand for car parking since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>5 = HIGH</b> <i>(Data available down to sub-district level if required)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major impact as recovery is slower due to changes in consumer online habits and few commuters using car parks for work travel)</i>
Markets	Footfall in markets have fallen significantly since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>1 = LOW</b> <i>(No robust national data available)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate impact due to the support provided by the district council and Government initiatives eg: Welcome Back Fund)</i>

### Subject: Local shopping

**National data:** National reports suggest that there has been an increase in demand for shopping locally, such as within High Streets. In March 2021 [Barclaycard](#) published some analysis of card data (they process nearly half of the nation's credit and debit card transactions) and found that staying local and supporting independent and local retailers has been particularly popular over the last year, a choice made by 64% of the British public. Restrictions in international travel also saw a record number of staycations and daycations, which aided the High Street and Retail Park footfall according to [Springboard](#), a national retail tracker. An article by [Sky News](#) (based on Springboard data) reported that although overall retail footfall is still below pre-pandemic levels (18.6% lower in August 2021 than in August 2019) this was an improvement from July when the difference was higher at 24.2%, high street footfall was 23.5% lower when comparing the same period.

Google mobility reports also feature retail and recreation visit frequency during the lockdown and compares this to baseline, which is the median value, for the corresponding day of the week during the five-week period 03/01/20 to 06/02/20. The graph below shows a snapshot of these changes for visits to retail spaces

such as restaurants, cafés, shopping centres, theme parks, museums, libraries and cinemas for 2021 in the United Kingdom.

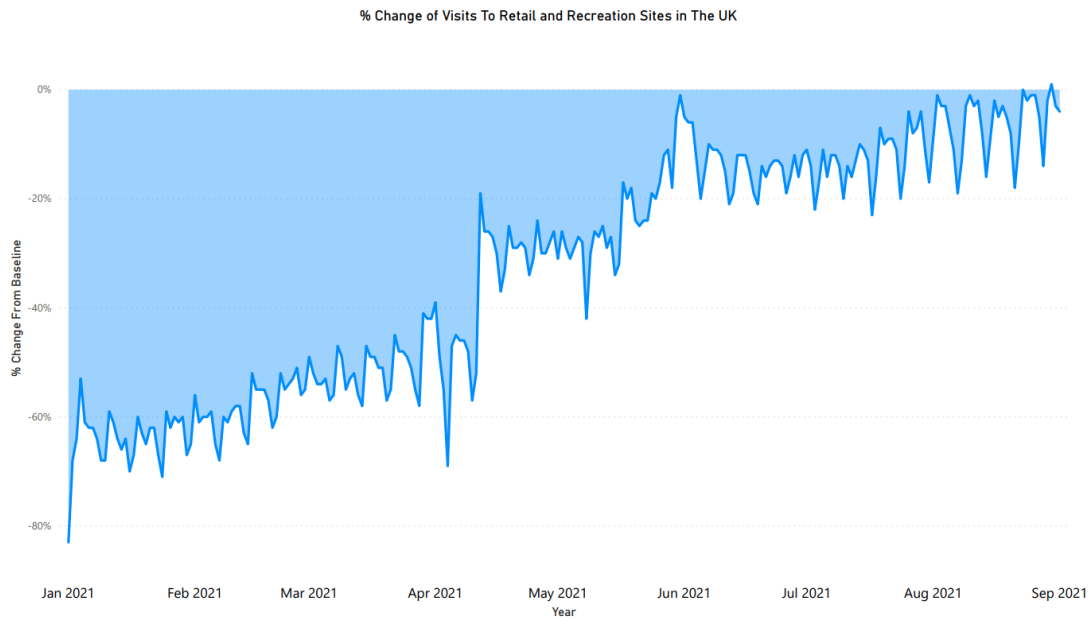


Figure 20: Percentage Change of Visits to Retail and Recreation Sites UK  
 Source: [@Google LLC COVID-19 Community Mobility Reports](#)

**Local data:** Footfall data relating to High Streets in Huntingdon, St Neots and St Ives have been collected on a weekly basis by Huntingdonshire District Council. The graphs below show footfall in these locations by week number per year since April 2019 for Huntingdon and since April 2020 for St Neots and St Ives. It is possible to determine that footfall in Huntingdon is generally lower than pre-pandemic levels (as seen in the national trend) however it is higher than the figures in 2020 during the national lockdown. It is not possible to understand the trend in St Ives and St Neots yet due to limited data being available.



Since March 2021, Huntingdonshire District Council have partnered with an online retail platform '[Click It Local](#)', to enable independent shops in towns across the district to offer a range of products for customers and have them delivered on the same or next day. Data from the 957 individual store orders (at 25<sup>th</sup> August 2021) shows an average overall order rate for the period April to August 2021 of 1.10 orders per store. This average ranges from a low of 1.03 (in April and May 2021) to 1.48 (in June 2021), the current average (at 16<sup>th</sup>

August 2021) was 1.20. The graph below shows the number of overall orders placed within the scheme in the period April to August 2021. As the scheme was not in place during the pandemic, there is no data available to establish if orders have increased since 2020. There is further information on the retail sector within the Good Work section.

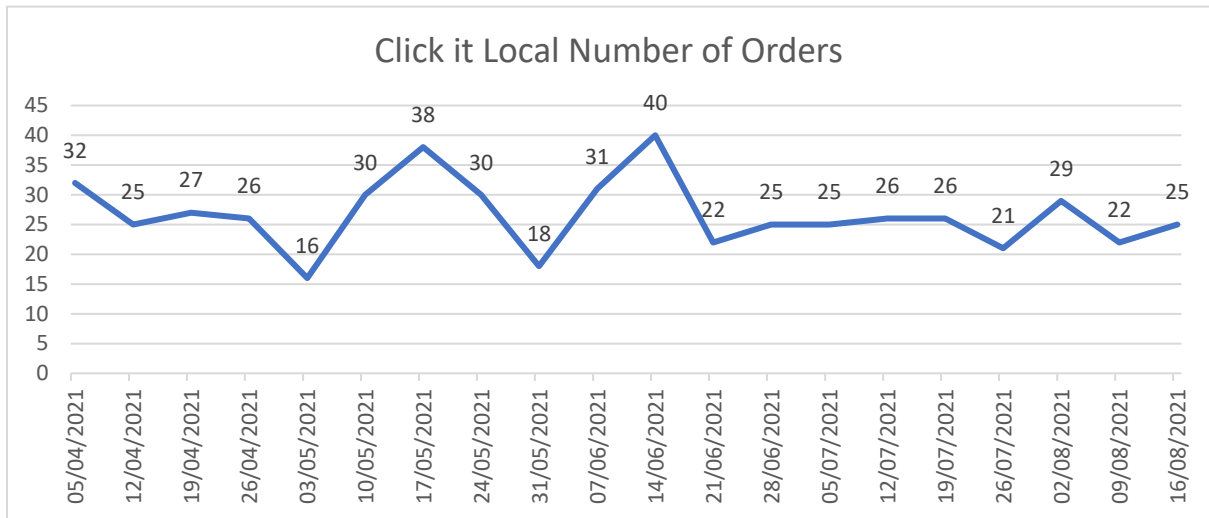


Figure 21: Number of Overall Orders Placed Via Click It Local Scheme (Huntingdonshire) April 2021 to August 2021

The Google mobility report also provides data at Local Authority Level, using the same baseline period as at national level. The graph below shows the percentage change in how visits and length of stay changed (compared to baseline) in retail and recreation sites in 2021 overall in Cambridgeshire County and the Huntingdonshire District.

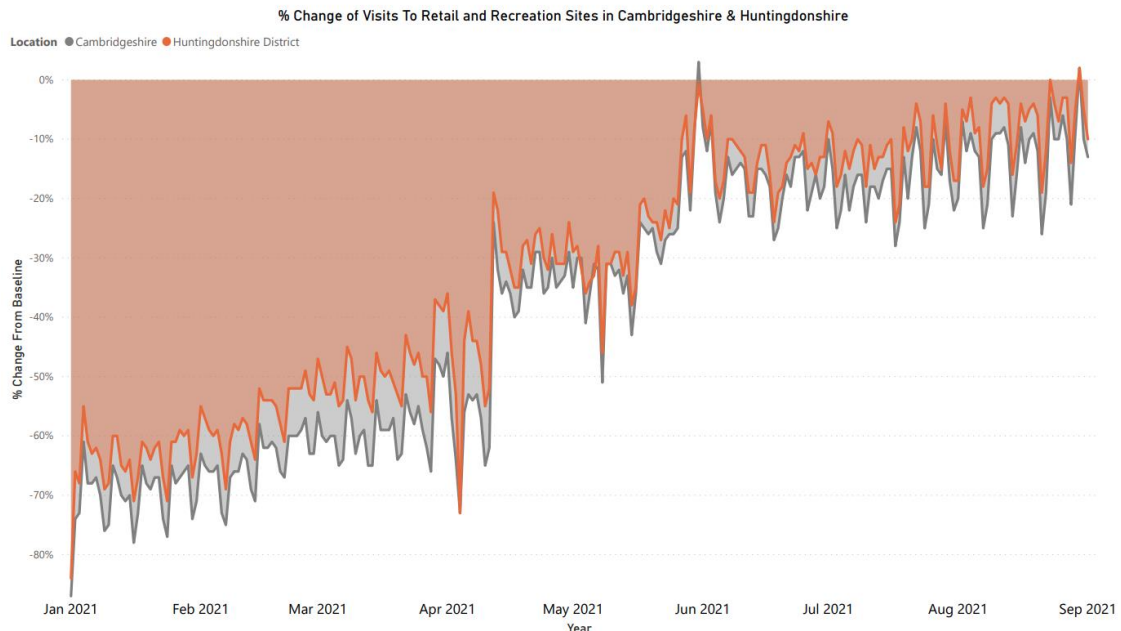


Figure 22: Percentage Change of Visits to Retail and Recreation Sites (Huntingdonshire and Cambridgeshire)  
Source: [@Google LLC COVID-19 Community Mobility Reports](#)

HDC carried out three consultations with residents in June, September and December 2020 as part of the Think Local campaign. Within the survey we asked some questions about online shopping and how comfortable people felt about visiting the High Street.

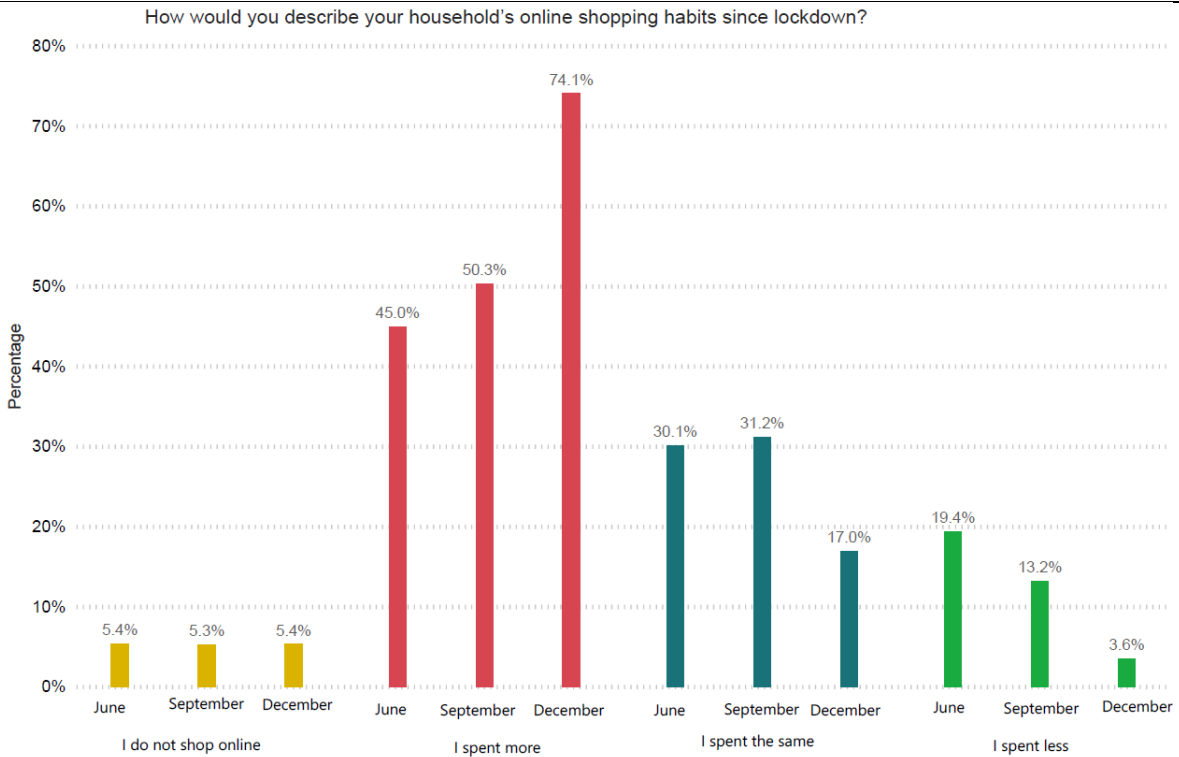


Figure 23: Graph showing survey responses about describing a households online shopping habits since national lockdowns

Source: Think Local Campaign, HDC

December saw the highest proportion of respondents state they spent more online (74% compared to 45% by the June cohort) although the reasons why were not collected, it is likely that holiday spending influenced this result. The proportion of respondents who stated they do not shop online stayed the same across all three surveys at around 5%.

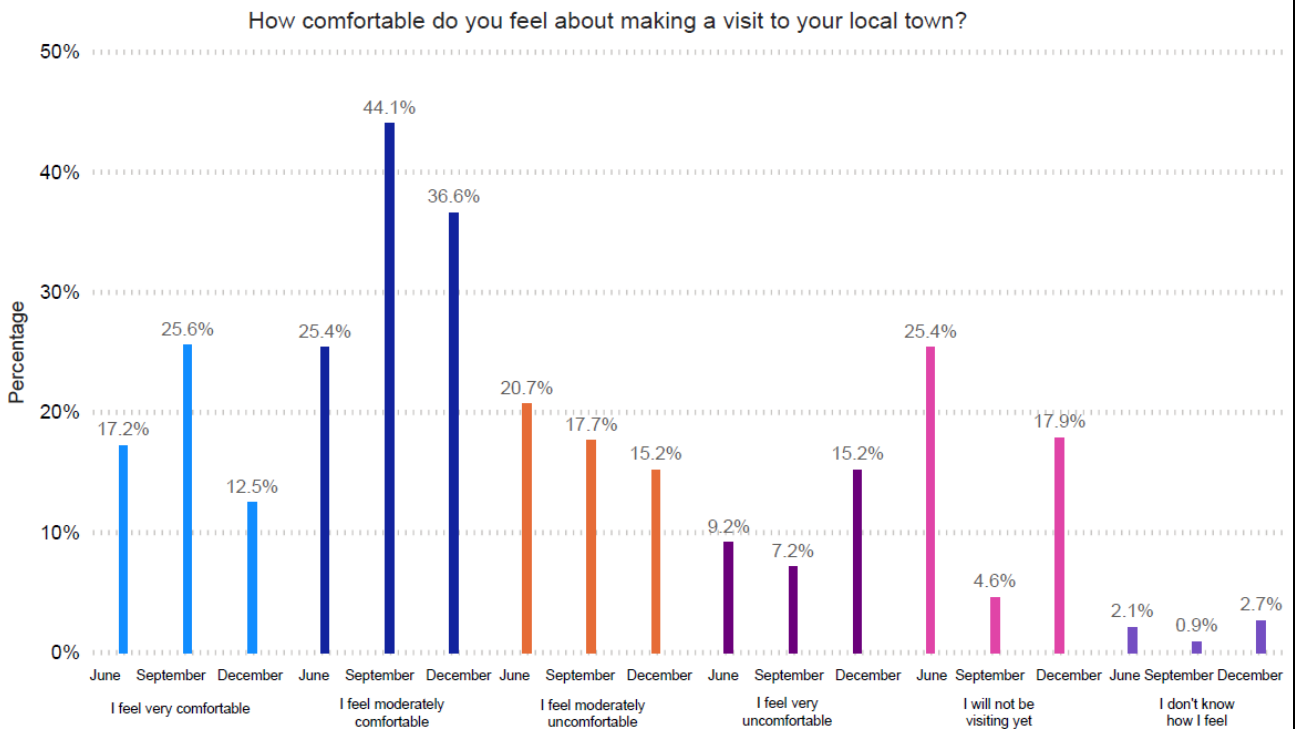


Figure 24: Graph showing survey responses about how comfortable people feel making visits to local towns

Source: Think Local Campaign, HDC



In June 2020, 43% of respondents stated they felt at least moderately comfortable about making a visit to their local town, by September this increased to nearly 70% of respondents. However, responses to the survey in December showed a lower proportion of respondents felt this way (49%).

## Subject: Parking

**National data:** According to [IBISworld](#) (Industry & Market Research Analysts) the impact of reduced vehicle traffic in the UK is expected to have a negative effect on the car parking industry. The increase of home working and the boom in online retail shopping since the pandemic are likely to be contributing factors to this. In a provisional statistical release on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2020, the [Department for Transport](#) compared data from the year ending September 2019 to the same period in 2020. They found that when comparing the period, the impact of the coronavirus pandemic affected car traffic more than any other vehicle, a reduction of 20.9% to 219.9 billion vehicle miles.

Google mobility reports also feature mobility trends for places of work visit frequency during the lockdown and compares this to baseline, which is the median value, for the corresponding day of the week during the five-week period 03/01/20 to 06/02/20. The graph below shows a snapshot of these changes for visits to workplaces for 2021 in the United Kingdom.

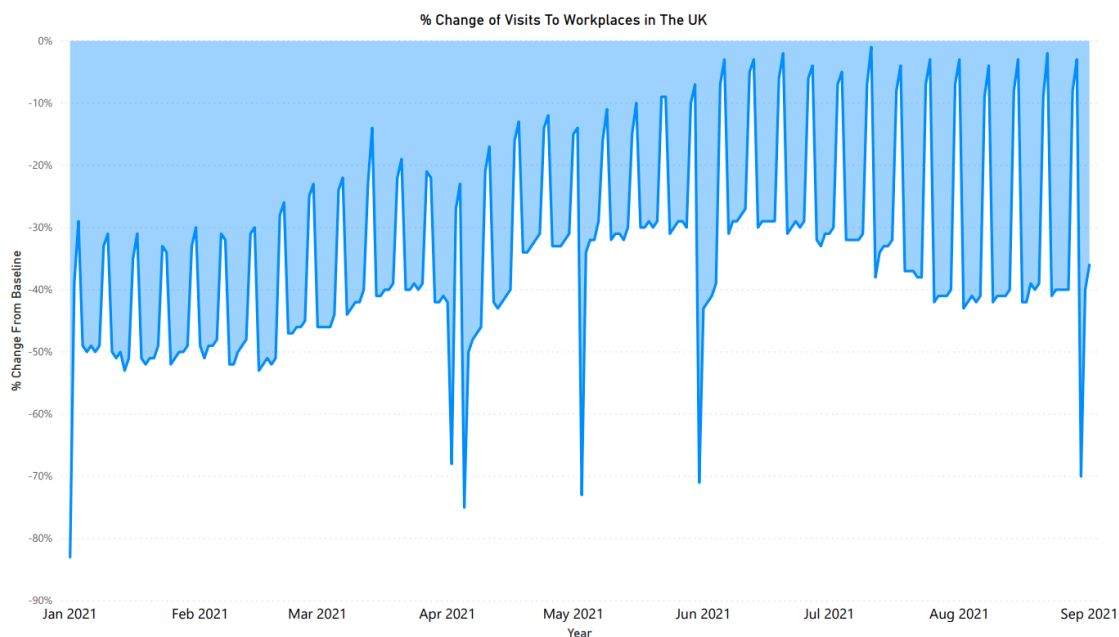


Figure 25: Percentage Change of Visits to Workplaces UK.  
Source: [@Google LLC COVID-19 Community Mobility Reports](#)

**Local data:** Parking charges in Huntingdonshire District Council owned car parks were suspended on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2020 until Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2020. Therefore, there is no data available during this period as tickets were not sold. Once car parks re-opened charges remained the same as they were pre-Covid and all sites also have the option for customers to pay via their mobile phone for contactless payment.

When comparing Huntingdon, St Ives and St Neots pay and display car park ticket sales income in Huntingdonshire District Council owned car parks, levels were lower in 2020/2021 than in 2019/20. The graph also shows that the income from tickets purchased in 2021 is similar to the income in 2019/20, before the Covid-19 pandemic.



Figure 26: Pay and Display Ticket Sales Income, October 2021 (All HDC Car Parks)

The Google mobility report also provides data at Local Authority Level, using the same baseline period as at national level. The graph below shows the percentage change in how visits and length of stay changed (compared to baseline) in workplace visits in 2021 overall in Cambridgeshire County and the Huntingdonshire District.

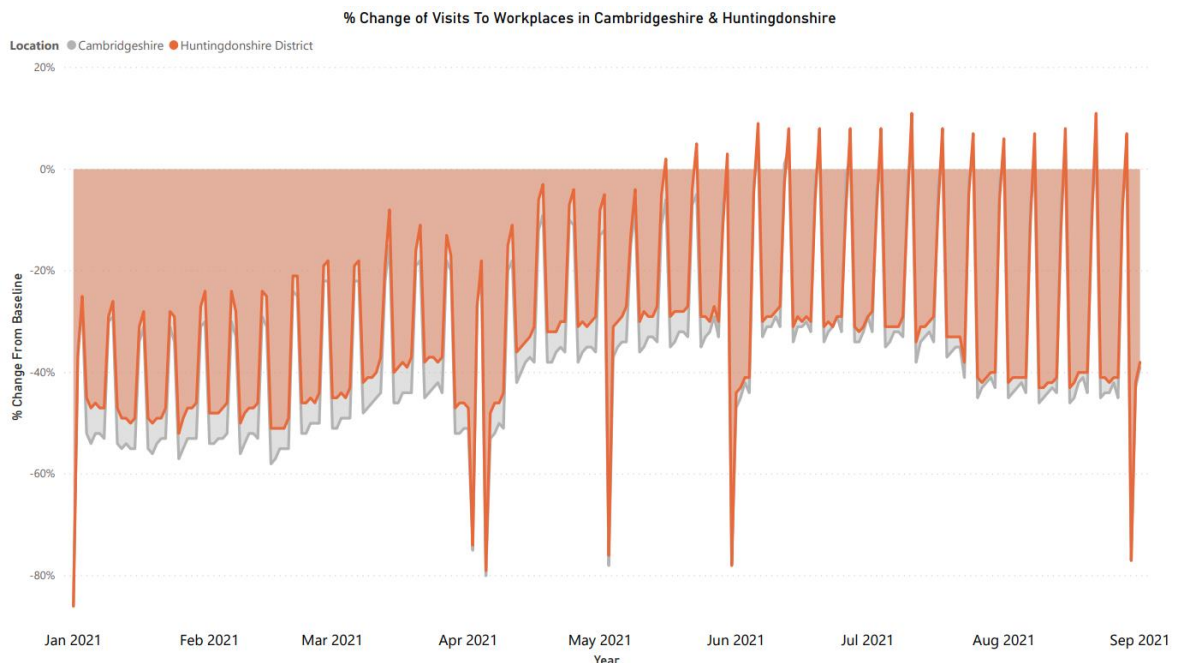


Figure 27: Percentage Change of Visits to Workplaces (Huntingdonshire and Cambridgeshire)

Source: [@Google LLC COVID-19 Community Mobility Reports](#)

Subject: Markets

**National data:** There is very little data about street markets at a national level and the data that is noted below in some cases are from very small samples, however they have been included to provide a reference point for this topic. Research from the Institute of Place Management at Manchester Metropolitan University ([published by the High Street Task Force](#)) suggests that markets can behave as anchors for centres and increase the attractiveness of the place, which in turn can generate more footfall. This was evidenced by data that showed high streets with an operating market significantly increased footfall on each of the homogenous shopping days (Monday-Thursday) by between 15% to 27%, compared to footfall in locations without markets based on research undertaken in [2015](#) by the Institute Of Place Management in collaboration with others.

The [Mission for Markets](#) survey collected by [NABMA](#) (an organisation that looks after the interests of market operators) and the [NMTF](#) (national trade association for market and street traders) from May to July 2018 advises that there were 1,173 markets in Britain and over 30,000 businesses traded on them. In 2017-18, traders on markets and events collectively turned over £3.1 billion - an increase of £200 million year on year since 2012. The survey was completed by just under 700 respondents made up of 235 market operators, 207 market traders, 225 events traders, and 29 street traders. They found that 41% of market operators reported a decrease in footfall, traders, and stall income. The average occupancy rate on traditional retail markets was 77% and 93% of market days stayed the same or increased in frequency.

[NABMA](#) issued results from a further survey from its members on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020, which was completed by 92 market operators, representing over 300 markets in the UK to evidence the hardship experienced in this sector during the pandemic. At this point in time, their respondents said only around a third of markets stayed open and 70% of traders reported a loss of income. This data was collected when the UK was still in a period of national lockdown which may have affected footfall and the numbers of markets in operation.

**Local data:** As part of the Think Local campaign in September and December 2020 we asked respondents to tell us the main reasons why they visit our towns. In both months, 17% of respondents stated this was because it was market day. The most popular choice in both months was to shop for food.

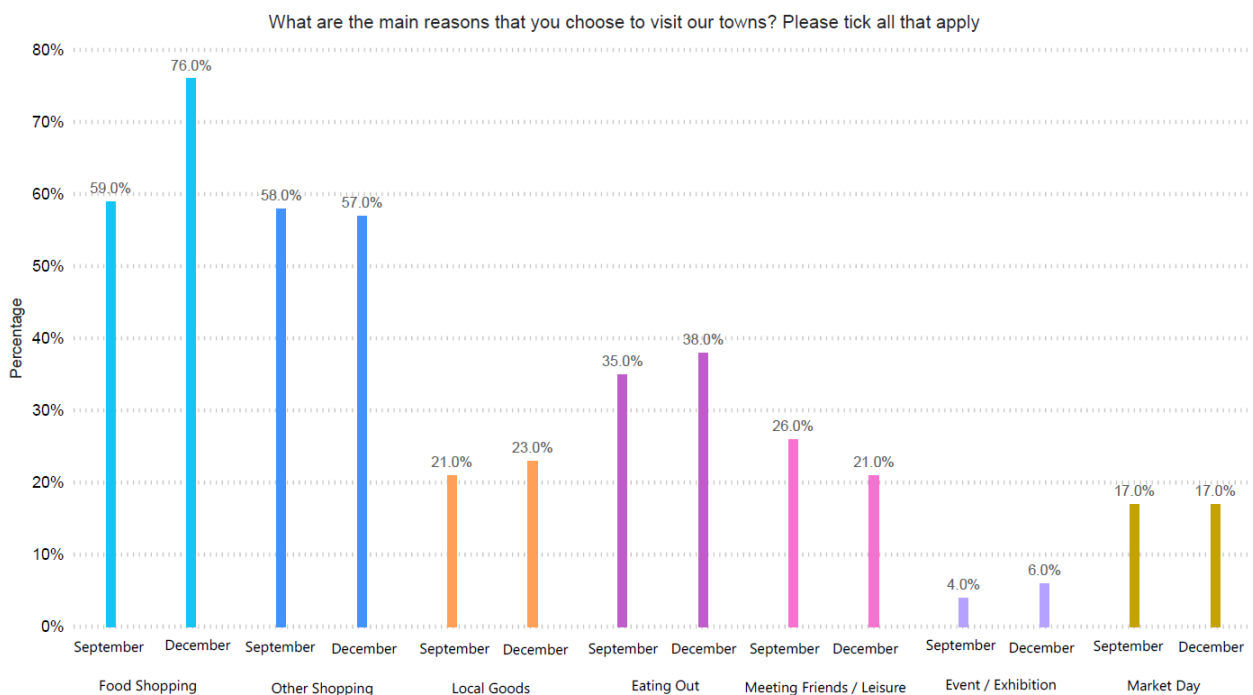





Figure 28: Survey Responses About The Main Reasons To Visit Towns  
Source: Think Local Campaign, HDC

There is a lack of published data at local levels about markets, those managed by Huntingdonshire District Council (held twice weekly in St Ives and Huntingdon) were impacted by the pandemic due to restrictions on the types of goods allowed to be sold and moving locations to allow for social distancing to be maintained. One of the weekly markets in Huntingdon was suspended for 18 months, reopening in September 2021 and pitch fees have been postponed until October 2021.

## Topic: Crime and Justice

	NATIONAL TREND 	CONFIDENCE RATING 	IMPACT RATING 
Crime and anti-social behaviour offences/reports	There has been a reduction in crime reported since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>5 = HIGH</b> <i>(Data available down to street level if required)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major impact as although the number of reported crimes has decreased the type of crime has been more impactful to people and for longer term eg: reduction in theft but increase in violence – likely in the home)</i>

### Subject: Crime and anti-social behaviour offences/reports

**National data:** [The Office for National Statistics reports](#) that patterns of crime in the year ending March 2021 were significantly affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and government instructions to limit social contact. Total police recorded crime, excluding fraud and computer misuse, during this period decreased by 13% compared to the year ending March 2019. The largest decreases in recorded crime were seen during the three-month period that coincided with the first national lockdown, with a 19% decrease in April to June 2020 compared with April to June 2019.

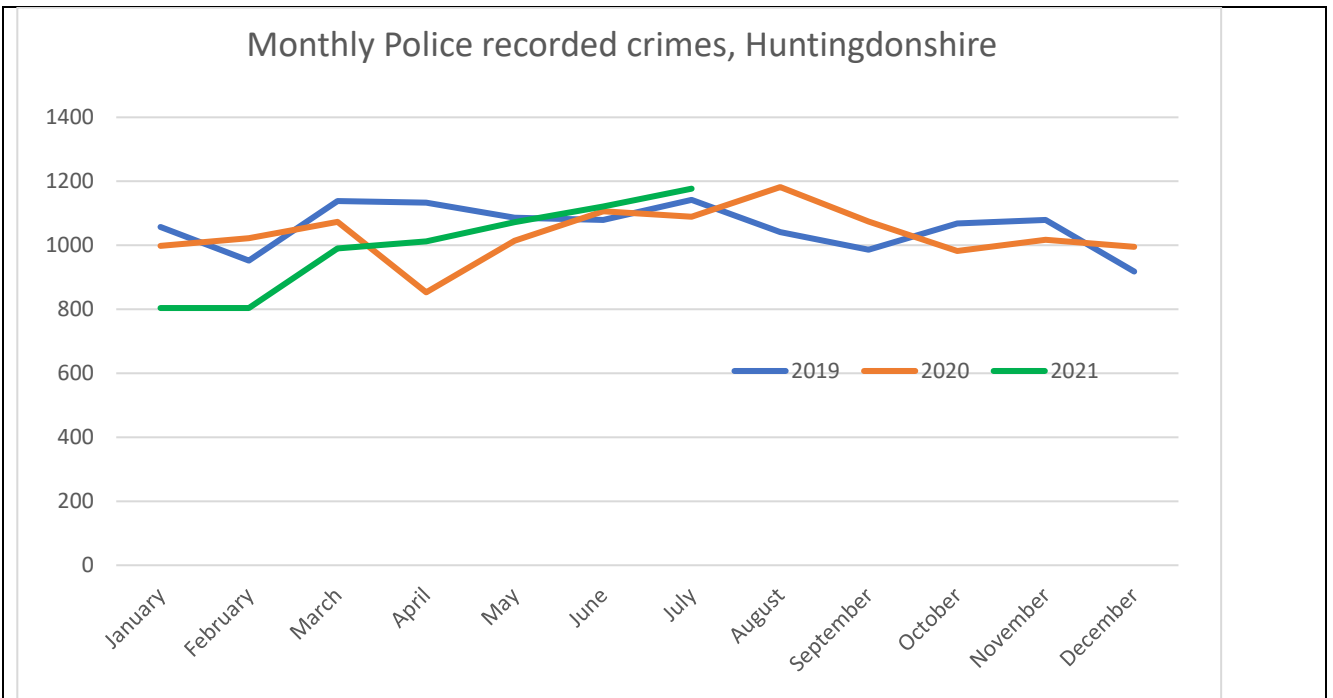
Billy Gazard from the Office for National Statistics Centre for Crime and Justice said: “The coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has had a significant impact on patterns of crime. There were large decreases in theft offences, such as domestic burglary and theft from the person, as more people stayed at home and limited their social contact.

At the same time, there were substantial increases in fraud and computer misuse offences such as hacking, as fraudsters took advantage of behavioural changes during the pandemic, such as increased online shopping.

The number of people who became victims of violent crime also fell, driven by decreases in violence where the offender was a stranger. This likely reflects a decrease in violence taking place in public spaces during national lockdown restrictions.”




It should be noted that the ONS’ analysis is based on both police recorded crime data, which can be affected by changes in levels of reporting to the police or police recording practices, and the Telephone-operated Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW), which reports survey results from a sample of over-18s interviewed across the year. TCSEW data isn’t available at district level.

**Local data:** [Data.police.uk](#) data for crimes reported to the police shows there were 11,910 crimes with a Huntingdonshire location recorded for the year to March 2021, which was 4.8% lower than the 12,517 crimes recorded in the district in the year to March 2019. Data for the period from April to June 2020 was 9.9% lower than recorded for the period from April to June 2019, suggesting that the first lockdown contributed to a larger decrease in crime, as seen nationally. The following graph shows how crimes recorded each month have varied across 2019, 2020 and 2021 so far.






There also appears to have been a change in patterns of crime locally, with large reductions in theft offences (bicycle theft down 47%, burglary down 44%, shoplifting down 54%, vehicle crime down 40%, robbery down 41%, theft from the person down 55% and 'other theft' down 41%) but increases in some other types (including violence and sexual offences up 34%, public order offences up 44% and drugs offences up 160%). Some of these differences may be linked to changes in reporting practices or police campaigns targeted at specific offence types/offenders.

## Topic: Transport and Infrastructure

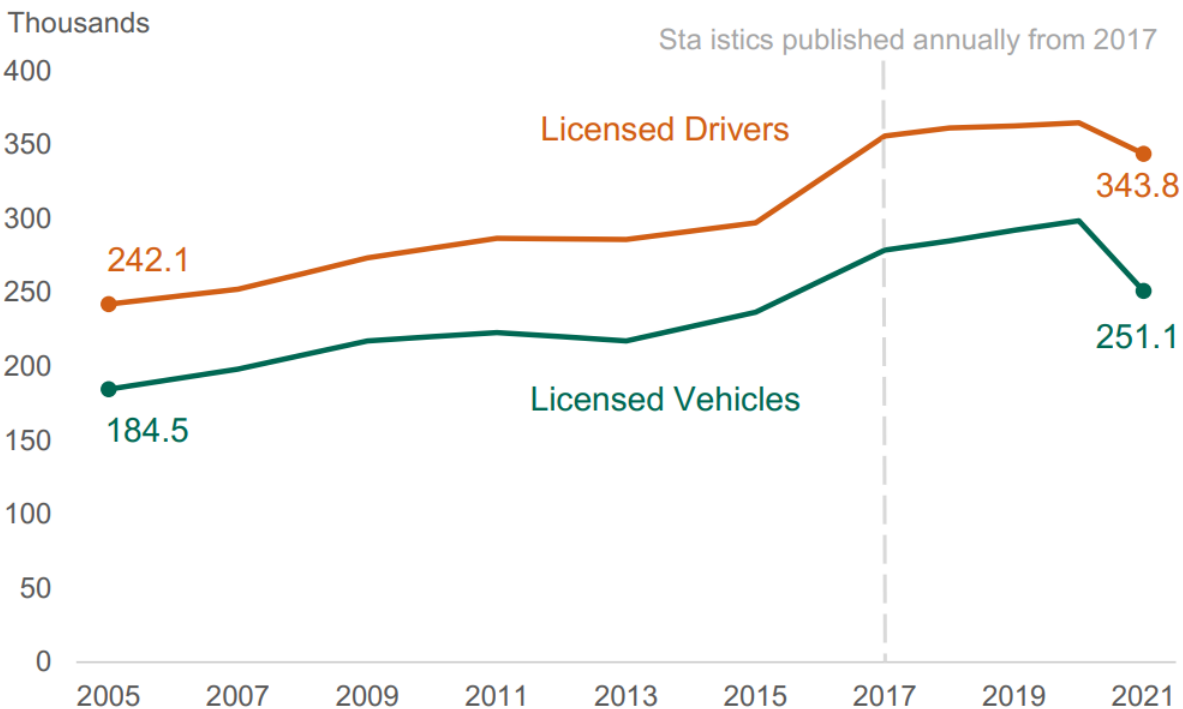
	NATIONAL TREND 	CONFIDENCE RATING 	IMPACT RATING 
Taxi and private hire vehicle usage	The number of taxi drivers and licensed taxis has reduced since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Minimal impact as local numbers increased, possibly due to the rural nature of our district. Short term impact)</i>
Rail usage	There has been a significant fall in passenger numbers and usage of rail stations since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major impact due to changes in work habits leading to significant reduction in commuting)</i>
Road usage – motor vehicles	There has been a reduction in road usage by motor vehicles since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(County level data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major <u>POSITIVE</u> impact due to lockdown but trend is reversing to pre-pandemic levels)</i>
Road usage – cycling (travel)	There has been a reduction in road usage by bicycles for travel (work/ shopping) since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Minimal impact due to changes in work habits and reduction in rail commuting)</i>
Road usage – cycling (recreation)	There has been an increase in cycling for recreation (sports/ leisure) since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major <u>POSITIVE</u> impact to support increased physical activity and improved mental health)</i>
Bus usage	There has been a decrease in passenger numbers and usage of buses since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major impact due to changes in work habits and safety concerns about traveling on public transport)</i>
Broadband connections (residential)	The availability and quality of broadband services have improved since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate <u>POSITIVE</u> impact due to the increased demand for faster speeds during lockdown (while increased numbers worked, schooled and shopped from home) resulted in greater demand.</i>



	<b>NATIONAL TREND</b> 	<b>CONFIDENCE RATING</b> 	<b>IMPACT RATING</b> 
Broadband connections (commercial)	The availability and quality of broadband services have improved since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>1 = LOW</b> <i>(Negligible impact due to the relative high proportion of manufacturing and SME businesses who have lesser broadband demands)</i>

Subject: Taxi and private hire vehicle usage

**National data:** The Department for Transport’s (DfT) [report on Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Statistics, England: 2021](#) shows that the number of licensed vehicles in England has fallen by 15.9% since 2020, from 298,600 at 31 March 2020 down to 251,100 at 31 March 2021. The number of licensed drivers in England has fallen by 5.7% since 2020, from 364,700 to 343,800. As shown in the graph below, the long-term trend prior to 2020 was rising numbers of licensed drivers and vehicles.



Year	Licensed Drivers	Licensed Vehicles
2005	242.1	184.5
2020	364.7	298.6
2021	343.8	251.1

The DfT advises that the decreases in the numbers of licensed vehicles and driver licences “has largely been attributed to the coronavirus pandemic”, with a greater rate of decrease for licensed vehicles at least in part “because licence lengths for vehicles are generally shorter than those for drivers”.

National Travel Survey data is not yet available for 2020 so there is no official data yet on the impact of the pandemic on taxi journeys. However, the reduction in licensed vehicles and drivers and the restrictions imposed on travel and activities during the pandemic would suggest that it is highly likely that taxi and private hire vehicle usage has fallen over this period.

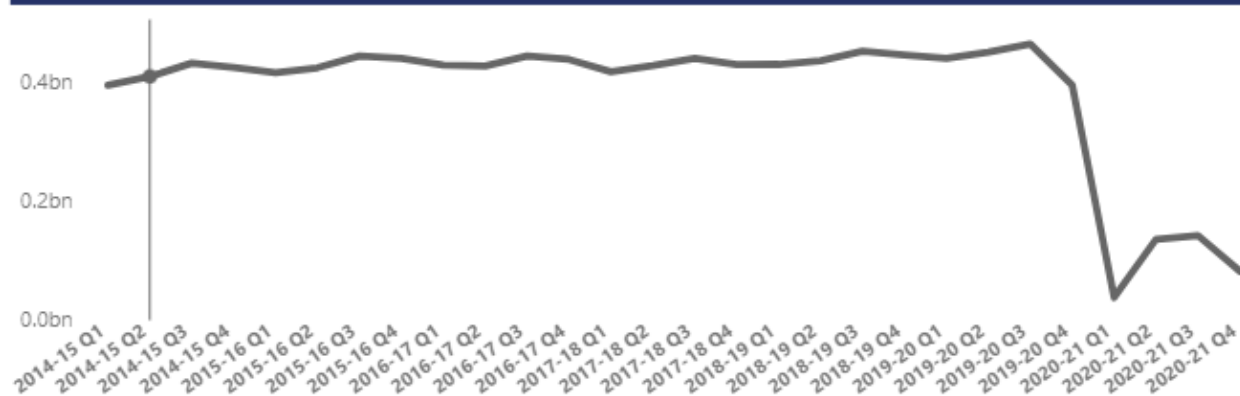
**Local data:** [DfT data](#) shows that the number of licensed vehicles in the East of England has fallen by 12.4% since 2020 and the number of licensed drivers in the East of England has fallen by 5%. In Huntingdonshire, there has been a small (1.4%) increase in the number of licensed drivers between 2020 and 2021, up from 981 at 31 March 2020 to 995 at 31 March 2021. However, the district has seen a fall in the number of vehicles licensed, with the 655 licensed at 31 March 2021 just over 15% lower than the 772 licensed at 31 March 2020. It should be noted that license numbers at 31 March 2020 in Huntingdonshire were lower than at 31 March 2019. There had already been a fall from 1,049 licensed drivers and 839 licensed vehicles in 2019, despite numbers continuing to rise nationally.

## Subject: Rail usage

**National data:** [Passenger rail use data from the Office of Rail and Road](#) (ORR) shows that annual passenger usage in Great Britain in 2020/21 was the lowest since records began in 1872. The 388 million rail passenger journeys in the year equates to just 22.3% of 1,739 million journeys made in 2019-20, after several years with annual totals of around 1.7-1.8 billion.

The graph below shows that numbers of passenger journeys first fell in Q4 2019-20, with the first national lockdown beginning before the end of March 2020, and then fell rapidly to just 35 million journeys in the first quarter of 2020-21. Numbers did increase in Q2 and Q3 but then fell again in Q4 (coinciding with most of the early stage of the third national lockdown), although the 80 million journeys in Q4 was more than double the total recorded in Q1.

Passenger journeys by financial quarter



The ORR's report links the fall in passenger journeys with restrictions in travel imposed to limit the spread of Covid-19. They state that the initial "unprecedented fall in usage" was "attributed entirely to the measures taken to limit the impact of the pandemic".

**Local data:** Passenger journey numbers are not published for individual routes such as Huntingdon or St Neots to London Kings Cross/St Pancras. However, data is published for train operating companies including Govia Thameslink Railway, which includes the Thameslink rail franchises (as well as Great Northern, Southern and Gatwick Express franchises) which provide services to/from the Huntingdon and St Neots stations. Govia Thameslink Railway provides services to a large number of stations across many routes mostly to/from/through London, with passenger journey numbers for the train operating company falling from 348.85 million in 2019/20 to just 76.1 million in 2020/21 (just 22% of the 2019/20 total).

An alternative source of data on rail usage locally is [ORR data on station entries/exits/interchanges](#). The latest data currently available is for 2019/20, which covers the period before and immediately following the government's announcement of measures to limit the impact and transmission of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in mid-March 2020. The ORR advise that "Rail passenger journeys decreased following

announcements advising against all unnecessary travel” and that “Although the impact of COVID-19 on station usage only affected the last few weeks of 2019-20 it does explain the fall in usage at most stations in Great Britain”.

To understand the likely impact of COVID-19 at a station level an ‘alternative’ entries and exits dataset for the period March 2019 to February 2020 has been produced on a consistent basis with the main dataset (April 2019 to March 2020). Looking at the differences between the main dataset and the alternative dataset provides some insight into the impact of COVID-19 at a station level. On average, usage (entries and exits) in the 2019-20 financial year (April 2019 to March 2020) was 3.5% less than in the year March 2019 to February 2020.

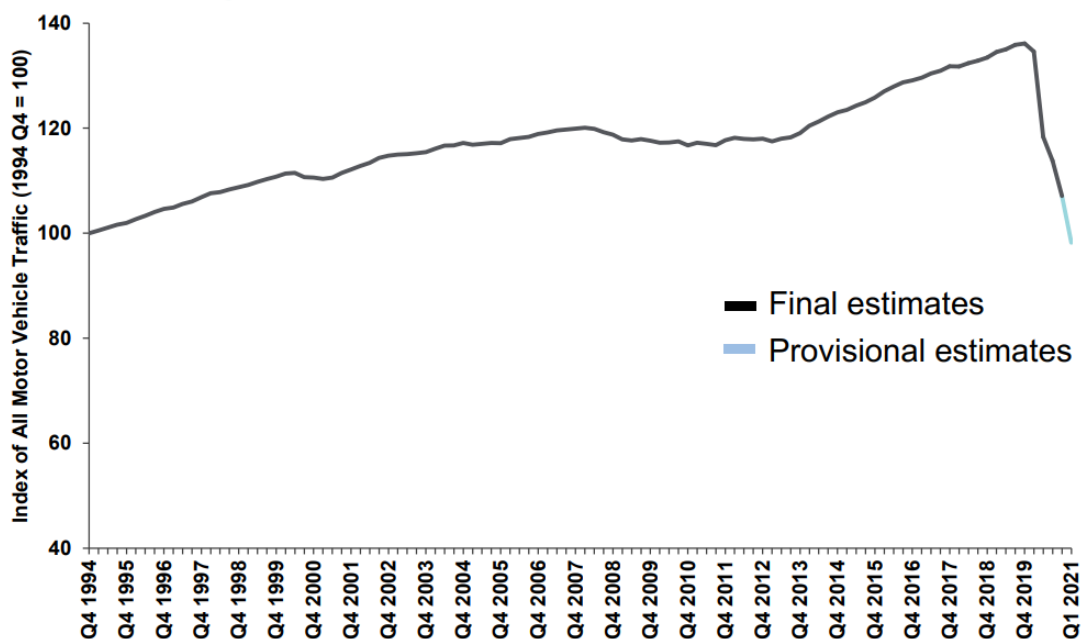
Both Huntingdon and St Neots stations saw reductions in the total number of passenger entries and exits (note: interchanges excluded due to small numbers – 35 estimated in Huntingdon and none in St Neots in 2019/20) 2019/20 compared to both 2018/19 and the alternative estimates for March 2019 to February 2020. Both stations have estimates 4.2% lower for 2019/20 compared to the alternative estimates, higher than the 3.5% average for all stations in Great Britain.

## Subject: Road usage – motor vehicles

**National data:** Provisional [road traffic statistics](#) from the Department for Transport (DfT) show that there was an estimated 27% fall in all motor vehicle traffic in the year ending March 2021 compared to the year ending March 2020. The DfT reports that this is “the largest fall since quarterly records started in 1994”. Breaking the road traffic data down by vehicle and road types, the data indicates that:

- Car traffic decreased by 31.0% to 189.1 billion vehicle miles.
- Van and lorry traffic decreased by 14.2% and 6.8%, respectively.
- Traffic decreased across all main road types. Motorways, 'A' roads and minor roads decreased by 32.8%, 28.3% and 22.7%, respectively

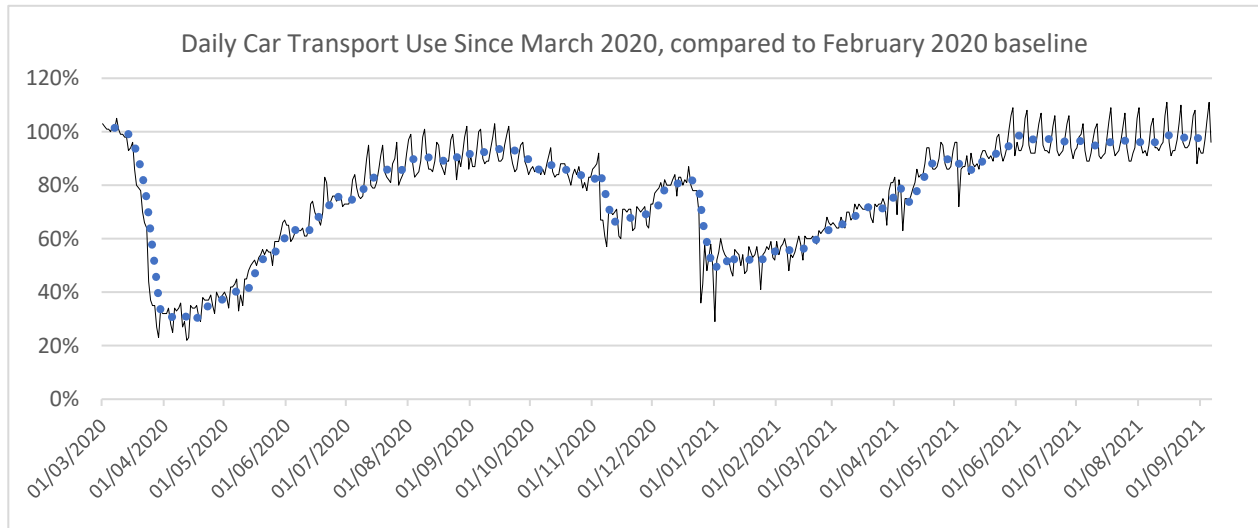
**Chart 1: Rolling Annual Indices of Road Traffic in Great Britain from 1994**



The report confirms that the data is “affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic in the UK”.

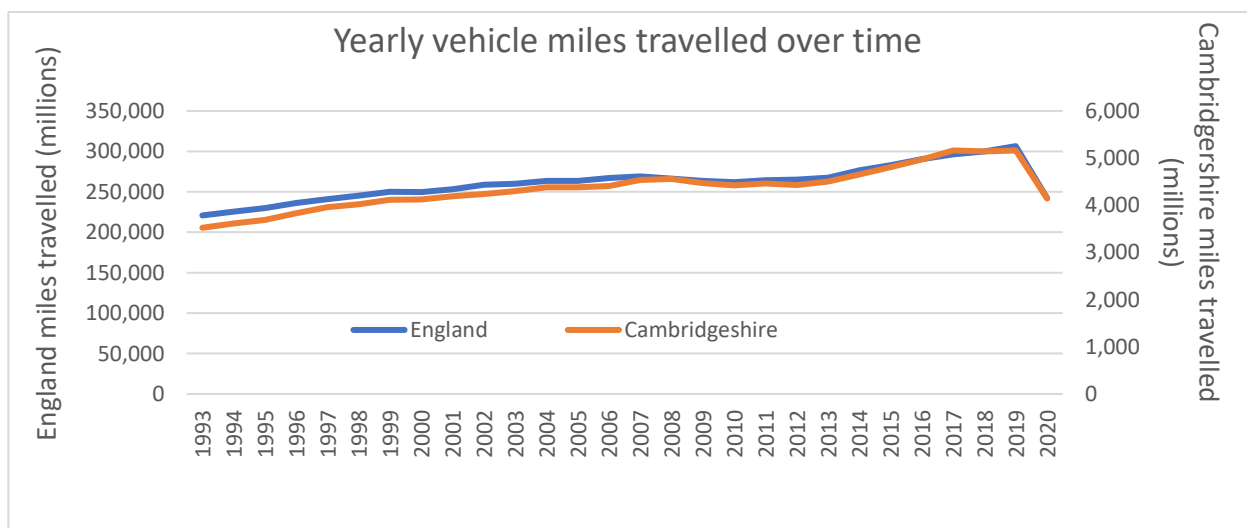
In addition to quarterly reports, the DfT also publishes [daily transport use statistics on a weekly basis](#). This is based on data collected from around 275 automatic traffic count sites across Great Britain, as an indication

of traffic change rather than actual traffic volumes. The data provided is indexed to the first week of February and the comparison is to the same day of the week (i.e. 100 means that traffic is the same as the equivalent day in the first week of February). Over the course of the year, normal traffic can vary by +/- 20%. The data for car use as shown in the graph below suggests that daily car transport use has returned to near baseline levels in recent months. While the DfT advise that lower levels of validation have been applied compared to normal statistical outputs in order to achieve a daily estimate of traffic change, they state that the data series is being verified against other sources and similar trends have been seen. The blue dots shown represent a moving 7-day average, with the regular peaks and troughs shown in recent data relating to weekends and weekdays respectively.



**Local data:** The latest local road traffic data published by Cambridgeshire County Council is for 2019: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/roads-and-pathways/road-traffic-data>. The Cambridgeshire County Council/Peterborough City Council “[COVID-19: Review of emerging evidence of Needs and Impacts on Cambridgeshire & Peterborough](#)” includes some data on vehicle movements from smart sensors but these are only located in the cities of Cambridge and Peterborough.

Annual data on [motor vehicle traffic \(vehicle miles\) by upper tier local authority](#) is available from the DfT’s National Road Traffic Survey and this is shown on the graph below. The recent trends nationally and for Cambridgeshire are similar, with a 21% fall in England in 2020 compared to 2019 and a 20% fall in Cambridgeshire over the same time period.



Car vehicle miles fell by 25% in Cambridgeshire (-24% nationally) and light commercial vehicle miles fell by 6% (-9% nationally), while there was a small increase in heavy goods vehicle miles in Cambridgeshire (+1%) despite a reduction nationally (-5%). There were similar reductions in vehicle miles travelled in the county on trunk roads (-19%) and non-trunk roads (-20%).

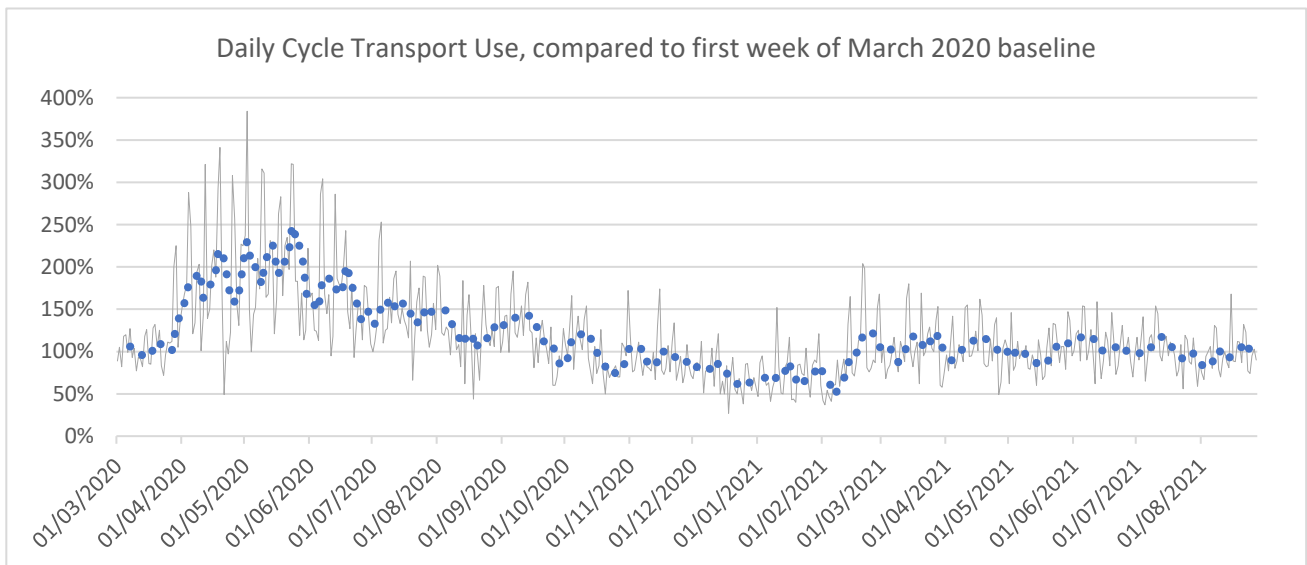
No data on vehicle miles travelled in Huntingdonshire is available and data on individual roads relates to road speeds/journey times rather than to miles travelled or the number of journeys.

## Subject: Road usage – cycling

**National data:** National [Road Traffic Statistics data](#) indicates there was a significant increase in cycling road use in 2020, with over 5 billion miles travelled by bicycle during the year compared to 3.5 billion in 2019 (a 46% increase).

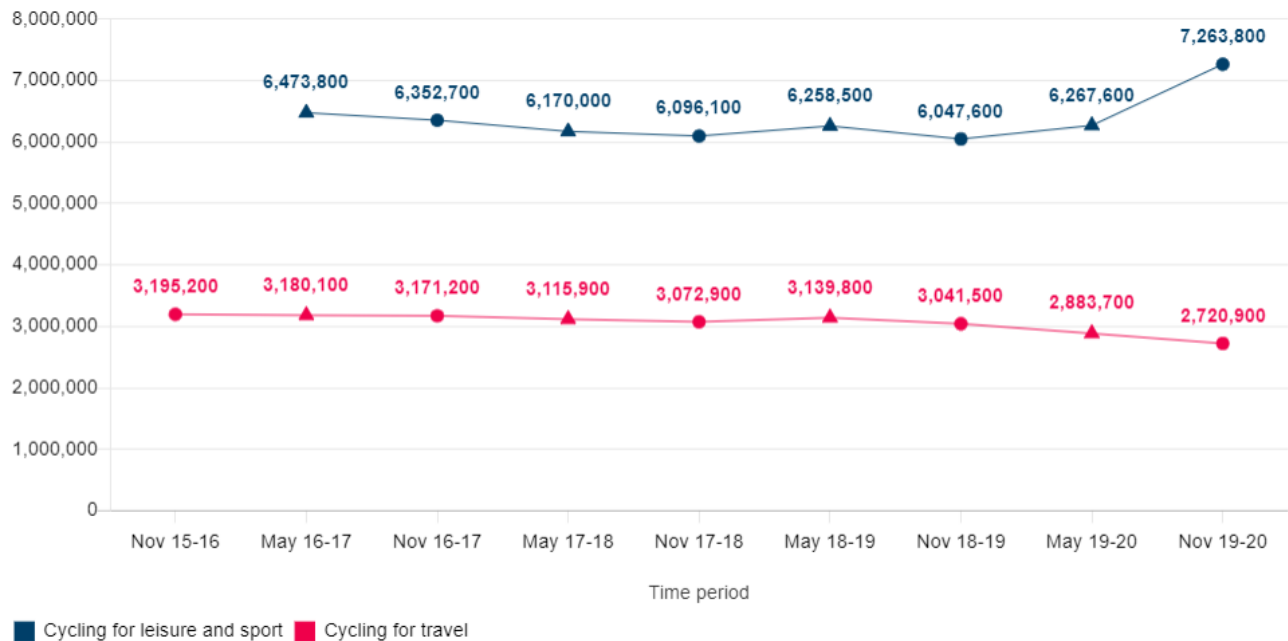


In addition to annual data, the DfT’s [daily transport use statistics](#) also reports on journeys by bicycle. The data for bicycle use as shown in the graph below suggests that daily cycle travel has returned to near baseline levels in recent months, with journeys over the 2021 spring/summer period lower than in 2020.



The DfT advise that this is a best-efforts estimate of national cycling utilising multiple data sources and is considered fit for purpose for reporting large changes in trends in usage. The methodology will be updated if or when additional information becomes available. Analysis applies to England only due to the available geographies in the individual data sets. They note that daily data is volatile based on both the relationship cycling has with the weather and volatility in the underlying data sources and methodology. Some of the increases noted will reflect the seasonal pattern of cycling as comparisons are to a base week in March 2020. Miles travelled by bicycle tend to peak in July and are at their lowest in December.

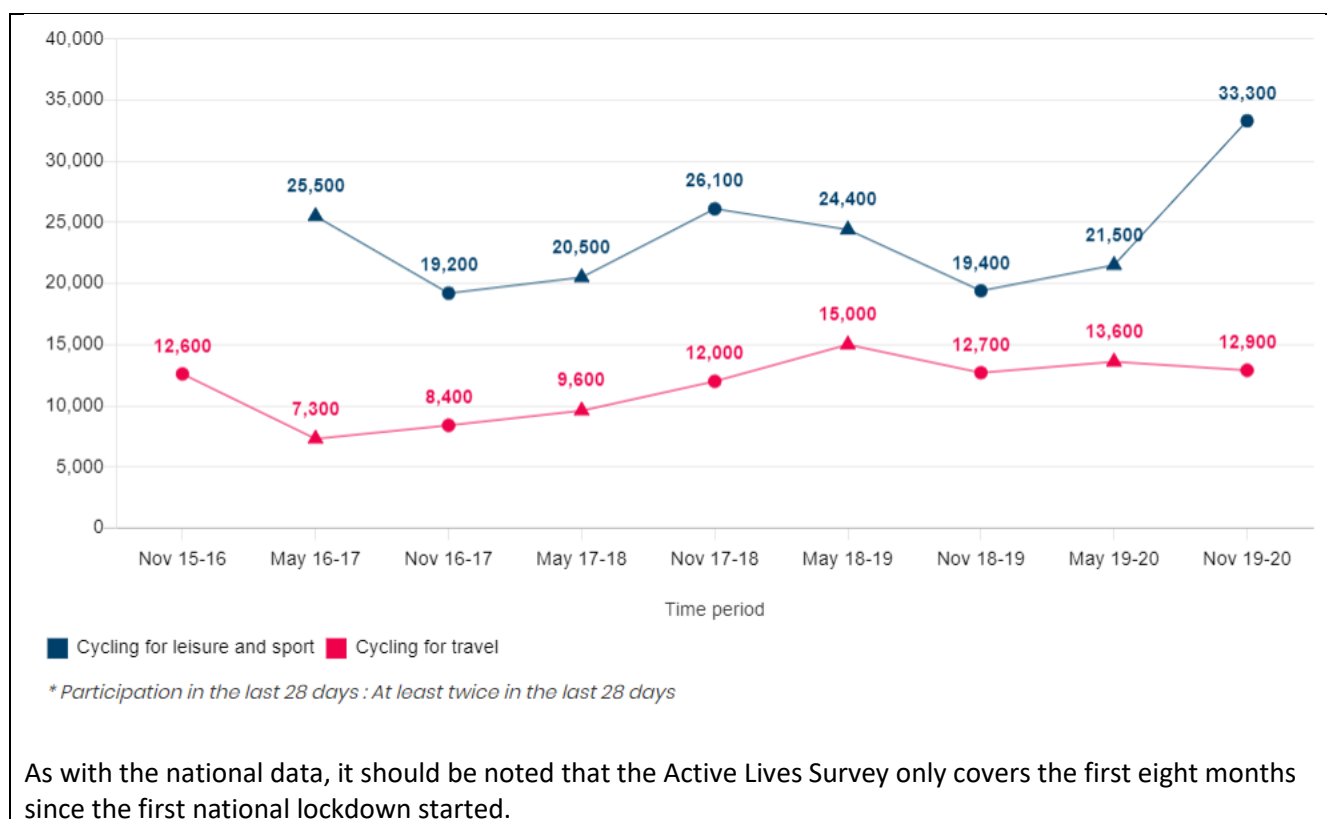
The latest [Active Lives Survey](#) data on people cycling for travel and cycling for leisure and sport at least twice in the last 28 days suggests that while cycling for leisure and sport increased compared to previous periods, cycling for travel decreased. There was a 10% fall in the number of people cycling for travel in November 2019-2020 compared to November 2018-2019 but a 20% increase in the number cycling for leisure and sport. It is likely that the decrease in cycling for travel is at least partly linked to increases in working from home and it should be noted that cycling for leisure and sport includes exercise bikes. Both types of cycling will also include off-road travel.



\* Participation in the last 28 days : At least twice in the last 28 days

**Local data:** Official [Walking and Cycling Statistics](#) for 2020 at the local authority level were due to be published in August 2021 but are currently still not available. The latest figures for 2019 won't show the impact of any recent changes linked to the pandemic. It should also be noted that their data is based on two surveys – the National Travel Survey and Active Lives Survey.

However, [Active Lives Survey data](#) is available at the district level so results for both cycling for travel and cycling for leisure and sport at least twice in the last 28 days are shown in the graph below. The low sample sizes at lower geographies mean greater variance in results so changes may not be statistically significant. While the small changes in cycling for travel are unlikely to be significant, there has been a large increase in the number cycling for leisure and sport in the latest period for November 2019-2020. The 33,300 people cycling for leisure and sport is 72% higher than the result for the November 2018-2019 period and 28% higher than the next highest result, which was 26,100 in November 2017-2018.



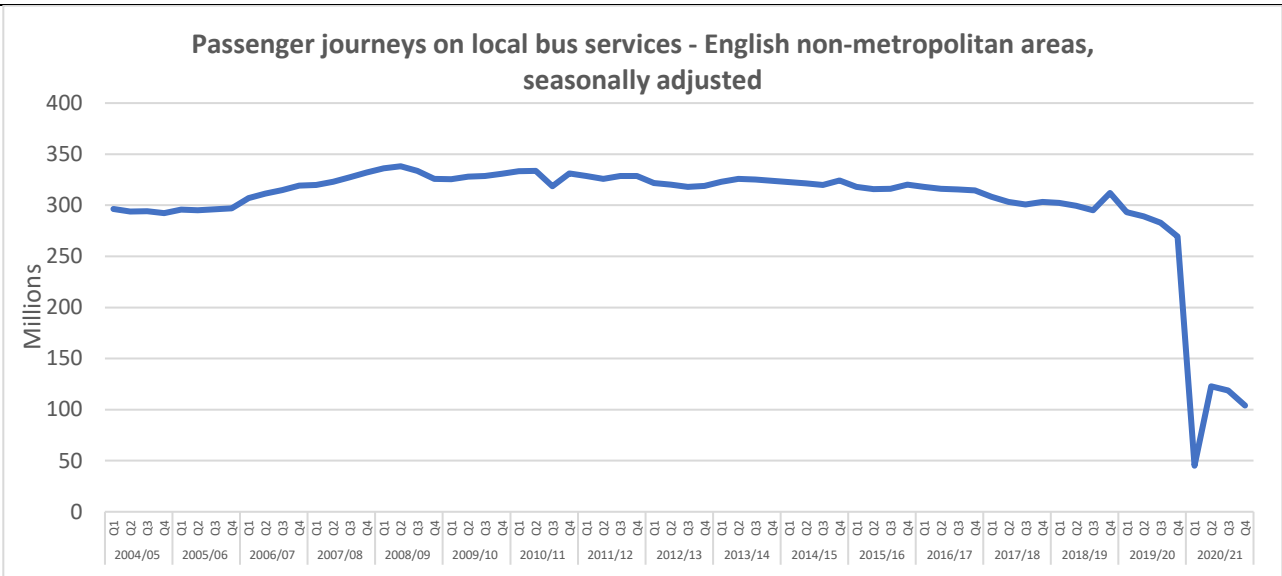
## Subject: Bus usage

**National data:** The most recent annual [Bus Statistics](#) publication covered the year ending March 2020. The 2019/20 annual data showed a fall of 5.5% in local bus passenger journeys, which “can largely be attributed to the effects of passenger journeys from COVID-19 in the last quarter of 2019/20”. While the national lockdown only began on 23rd March and covered a small proportion of the year, bus companies reported they started seeing declines in journeys in the preceding weeks. Bus mileage in England decreased by 3.1% when compared with 2018/19.

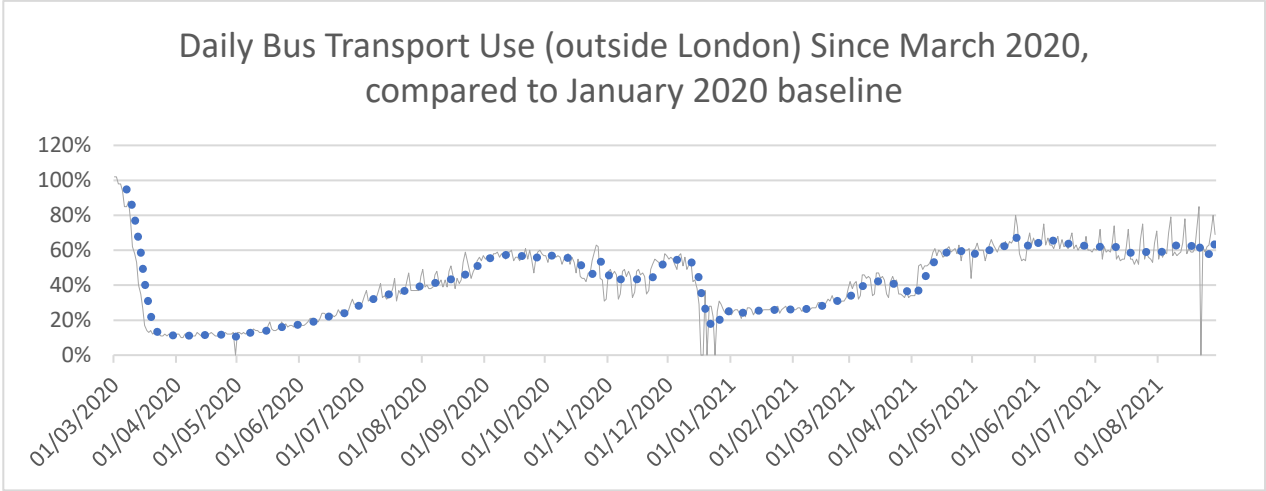
While a report for the year ending March 2021 is not due to be published until October 2021, the most recent quarterly publication covering [January to March 2021](#) has included some annual data for 2020/21. This showed a decline in annual passenger journeys of 62% across England when compared to 2019/20, with a 66% fall for non-metropolitan areas in England.

The graph below shows the number of passenger journeys on local bus services in English non-metropolitan areas (seasonally adjusted) by quarter. This shows that while there was an increase in bus journeys in Q2 2020/21 (July to September) following the first national lockdown, the number of journeys has remained significantly lower than before the pandemic. The number of journeys in Q4 2020/21 was 61.4% lower than in Q4 2019/20 and 66.6% lower than in Q4 2018/19.





The DfT’s [daily transport use statistics](#) also reports on journeys by bus. The data for bus use outside London shown in the graph below suggests that daily travel by bus has increased in recent months but remains well below the March 2020 benchmark.



**Local data:** Local data for 2020/21 is expected to be released in October 2021. The [latest figures](#) for Cambridgeshire show there was a reduction in passenger journeys on local bus services in the county between 2018/19 and 2019/20, in line with the national change. There was a 3% fall from 19.93 million journeys to 19.33 million journeys.

Subject: [Broadband connections](#)

**National data:** [Ofcom’s Online Nation 2021](#) report provides insight into internet activities and behaviours adopted by UK residents during the pandemic, with an increased demand for connectivity due to online communication, entertainment, culture, retail, work and education during the pandemic. The average daily time spent online in the UK by adults aged over 18 was 3 hours and 37 minutes over the last year, which is higher than levels documented in Germany, France and Spain.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) have been publishing weekly results during the pandemic from a cross sectional sample survey of between approximately 4000 and 4500 individuals, called the [Opinions and](#)

[Lifestyle Survey](#) (OPN). According to this survey, in August 2020 the estimates showed that 96% of households in Great Britain had access to the internet (between January and February of that year) an increase of six percentage points from 2017. The data set also stated that in households where there is at least one adult aged over 65, the number of internet connections increased by seven percentage points from 2019 to 80%, however households in this category still had the lowest proportion of connections overall.

A further report published by [Statista](#) in December 2020 (using data from unknown sources) suggest that there were over 27m fixed broadband connections in the UK in 2020.

Ofcom (the UK communication services regulator) publishes data via their Connected Nations Report which focusses on broadband and mobile network coverage in the UK. The key findings from the latest update as of [May 2021](#) (published in September 2021) shows the following country wide picture: The number of homes able to get gigabit capable broadband is up to over 11.6 million homes (40% of all UK homes), up from 10.8 million (37%) since December 2020.

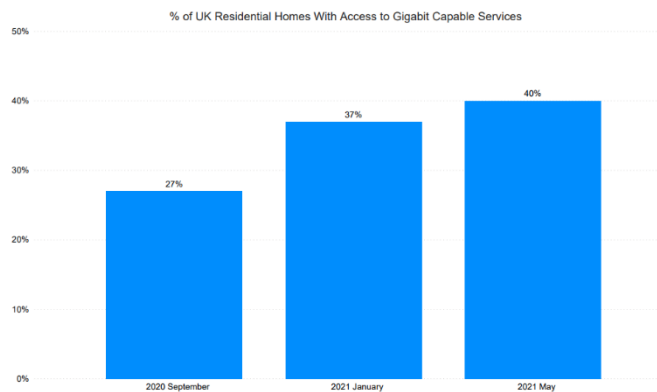


Figure 29: Percentage of UK Residential Homes with Access to Gigabit Capable Services  
Source: Ofcom

Full fibre coverage continues to increase, up to 24% from 21% between January 2021 and May 2021 an increase of 3 percentage points, with just under seven million homes now covered.

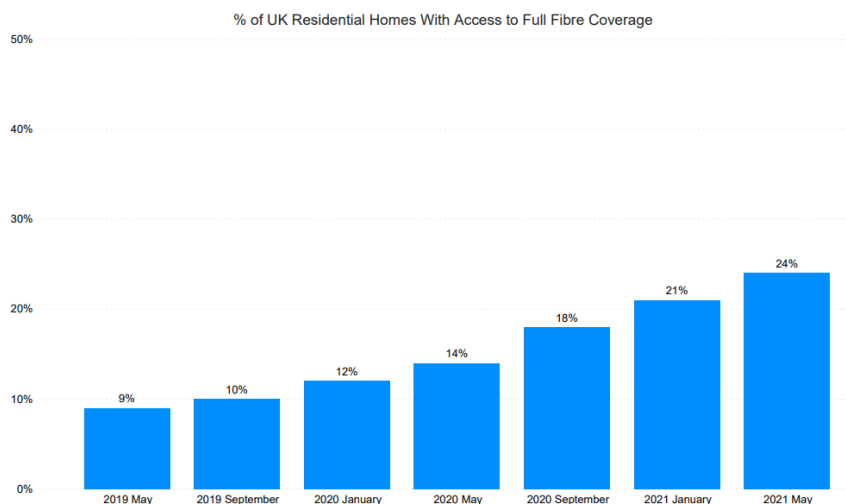


Figure 30: Percentage of UK Residential Homes with Access to Full Fibre Coverage.  
Source: Ofcom

Superfast and ultrafast broadband coverage continues to grow across the UK, with superfast broadband coverage remaining at 96%, but ultrafast broadband rising to 62% (from 61% in January 2021).

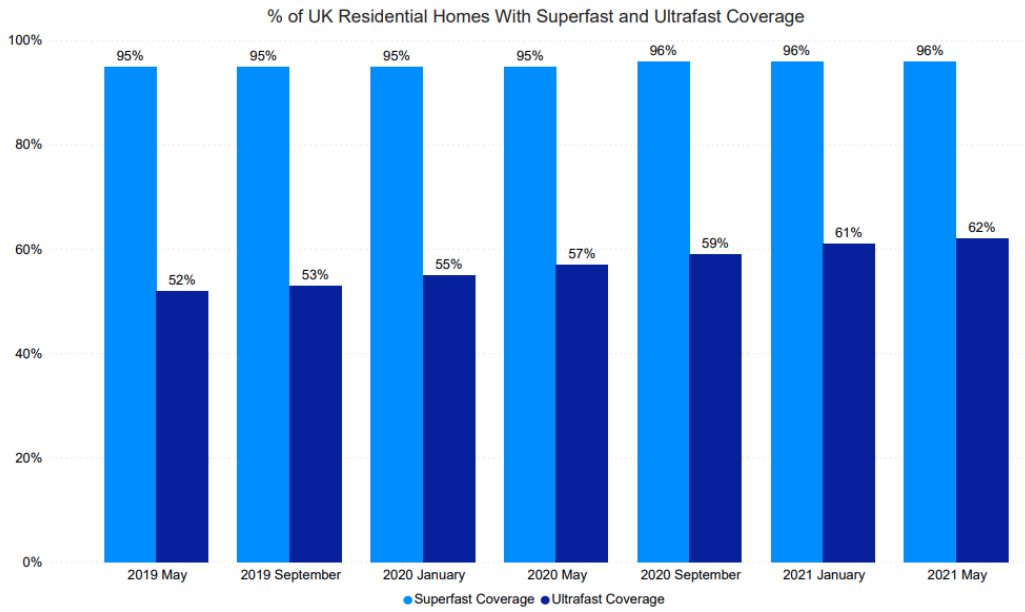


Figure 31: Percentage of UK Residential Homes with Access to Superfast and Ultrafast Coverage.  
Source: Ofcom

Mobile coverage remains stable as plans develop to start rolling out coverage to new areas through the Shared Rural Network scheme.

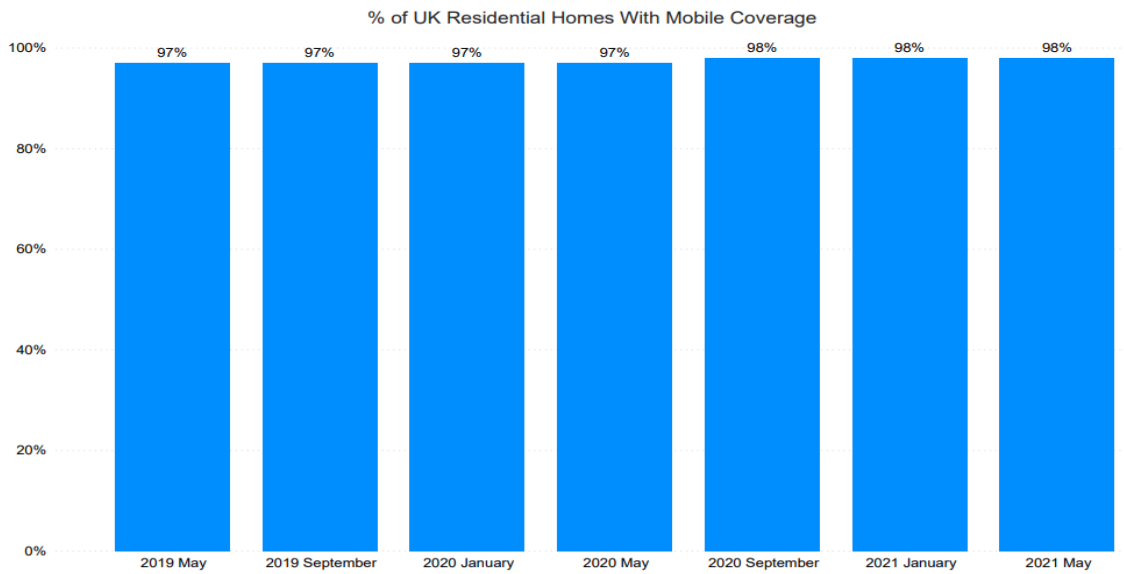
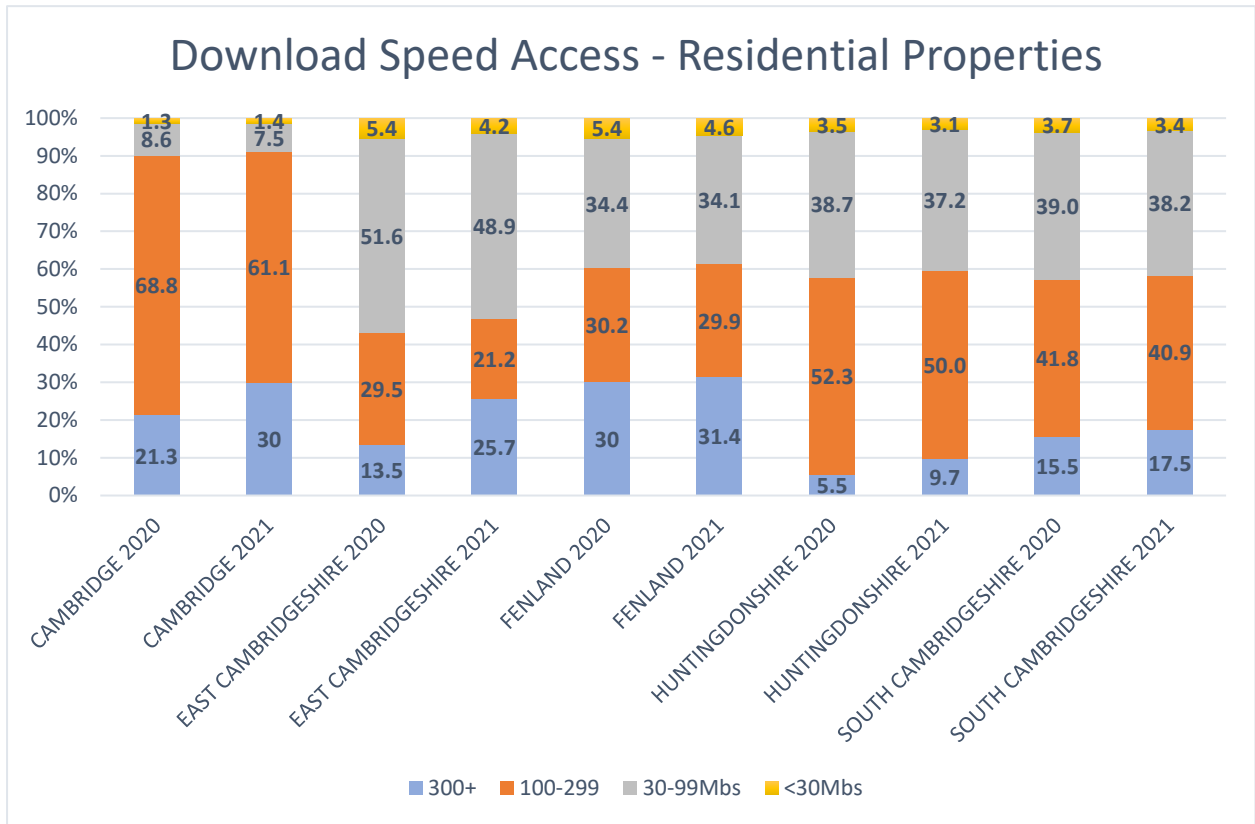
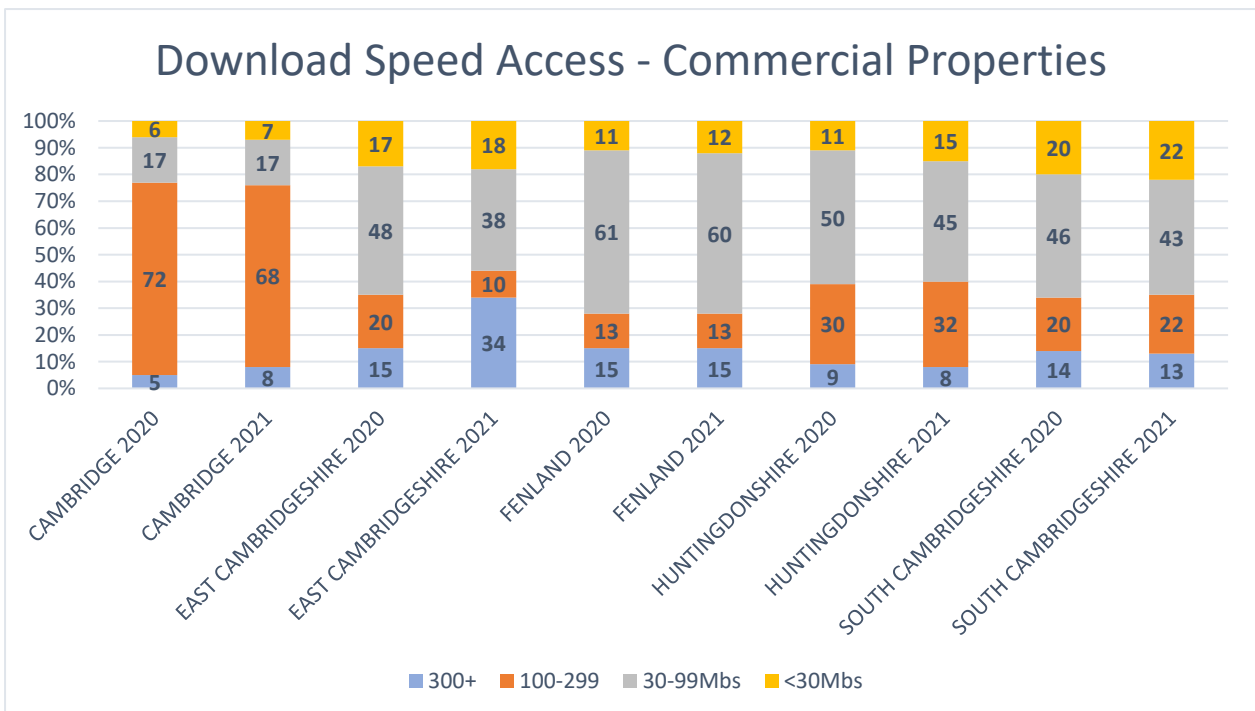


Figure 32: Percentage of UK Residential Homes with Access to Mobile Coverage  
Source: Ofcom

**Local data:** The [Ofcom interactive report](#) Summer 2021 states that most of Huntingdonshire (96% of commercial and resident properties combined) received more than or equal to 30Mbit/s coverage of broadband. The graph below shows the percentage of residential properties that have access to the noted download speeds in Huntingdonshire and our neighbouring local authorities since 2020.



The graph below shows the percentage of commercial properties that have access to the noted download speeds in Huntingdonshire and our neighbouring local authorities.



The average download speed in the UK at May 2019 was 58 Mbit/s, by June 2020 this increased to 72Mbit/s. Huntingdonshire download speeds were similar in 2019 to the national average (at 59%) but saw less of an increase than the rest of the UK by June the following year, rising to 70Mbit/s.

Over 70% of premises have an active broadband connection but only 10% of the district overall is Gigabit capable or has Full Fibre coverage. There are lower levels of residential Full Fibre broadband coverage in Huntingdonshire when compared to our neighbouring authorities, but this has increased by more than double since 2019. Coverage levels have remained fairly static for Commercial properties since 2019.

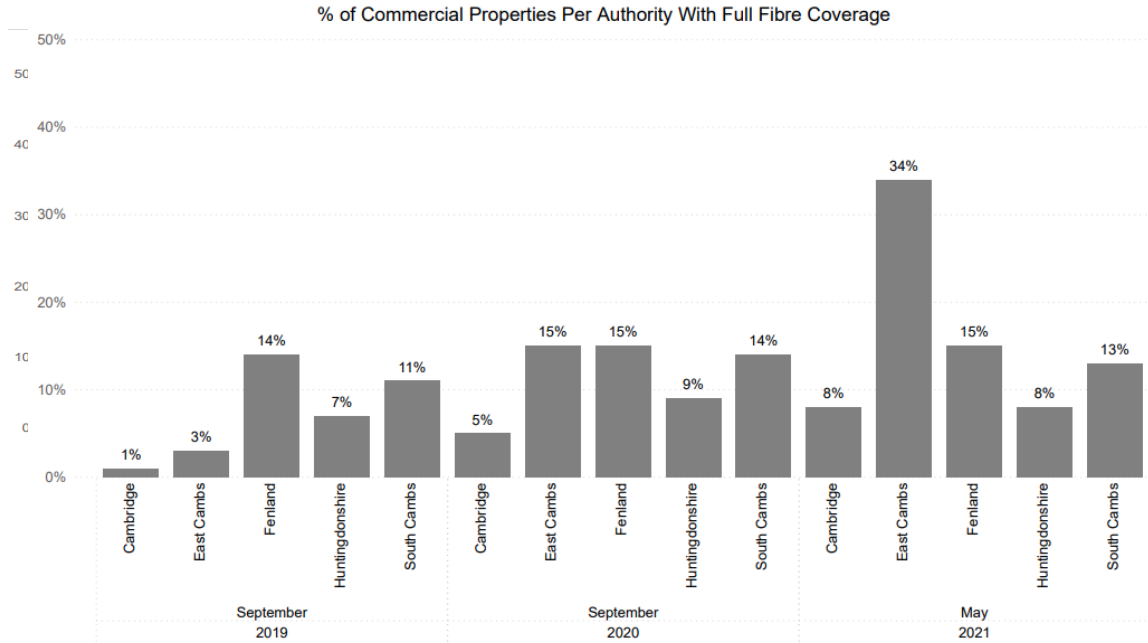


Figure 34: Percentage of Commercial Properties Per Authority with Full Fibre Coverage. Source: Ofcom

97.3% of premises in the district are covered by the network overlap of decent fixed broadband, good indoor 4G mobile and Wireless Internet Service Providers and according to OFCOM there are only 8 premises that are not covered by any network in Huntingdonshire.




## GOOD WORK

The Good Work section considers available data up until September 2021.

The assessment pre-cedes the end of furlough and multiple business data updates from the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

Emerging themes such as COVID versus Brexit and frictions in the skills and employment arenas lack the necessary data to make informed assertions at this time. It is estimated that by Quarter 1, March 2022, data will be available to identify any significant business impacts on our district.

### Topic: Economic Growth

	NATIONAL TREND 	CONFIDENCE RATING 	IMPACT RATING 
Economic productivity	Record national annual contraction in economic productivity, with latest data showing GDP output has improved significantly but remains below pre-pandemic levels	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate impact as record UK contraction of economic productivity resulted in the largest recession on record and negatively affected sectors and businesses in 2020 but there has been a strong rebound since Q3 July to September 2020)</i>
Economic support through business grants	Record levels of financial support provided for businesses since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions.	<b>5 = HIGH</b> <i>(Data available down to sub-district level if required)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major <u>POSITIVE</u> impact of the Government's business grant funding schemes which has supported businesses in Huntingdonshire. Ongoing business support will monitor the impact)</i>
Key business sectors - Retail	Contraction in retail sector output since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions.	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate impact due to mixed performance within retail sector; online sales appear to have outperformed non-food stores)</i>

	<b>NATIONAL TREND</b> 	<b>CONFIDENCE RATING</b> 	<b>IMPACT RATING</b> 
Key business sectors - Construction	Contraction in construction sector output since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions.	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Minimal impact as although sizeable initial impact on the sector, trend appears temporary and is recovering to pre-pandemic level. Need to monitor for changes in impact due to supply/ labour shortages.)</i>
Key business sectors – Manufacturing	Contraction in manufacturing sector output since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions.	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national/regional data available)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate impact on manufacturing output and data shows partial recovery, although output remains below pre-pandemic levels)</i>
Business activity	Business activity (total number of businesses) has continued to increase since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions.	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Minimal impact due to net growth in number of active businesses nationally, with this trend likely to be followed in Huntingdonshire)</i>
Wages	Wages initially fell but have since increased beyond pre-pandemic levels.	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate impact based on national trend only due to the timeframes of available local data. Need to review later on when more robust data is available and after the conclusion of furlough)</i>

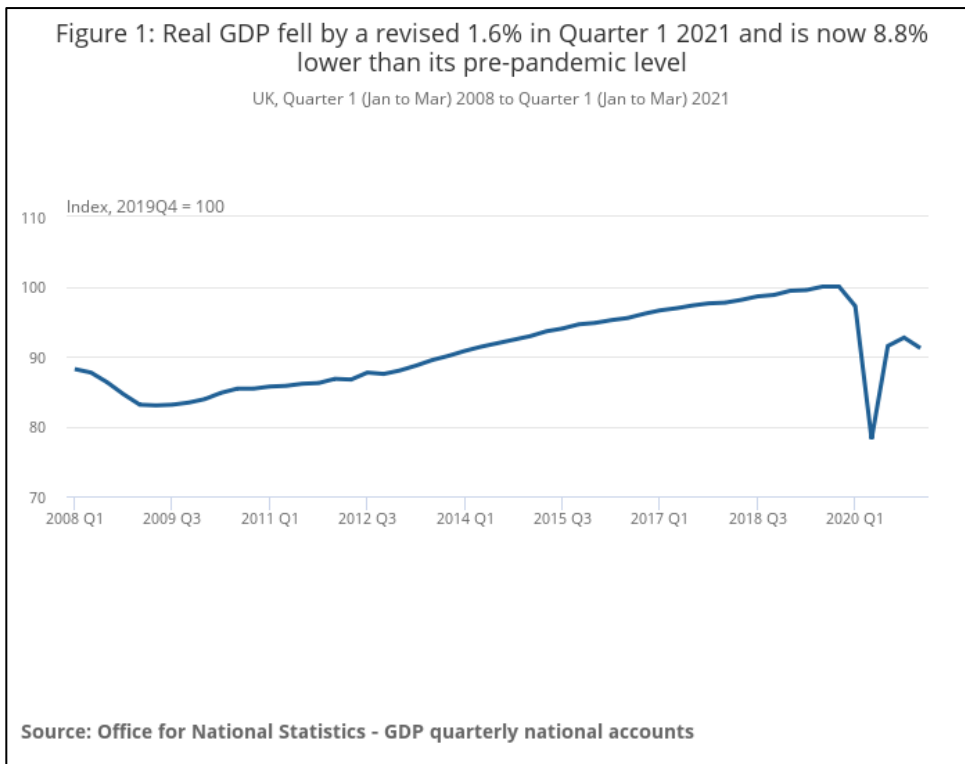
## Subject: Economic productivity

**National data:** Economic productivity concerns levels of output with growth in productivity supporting higher revenues, wage growth and living standards. Gross domestic product (GDP) is the total value of all goods and services produced in the economy and therefore is an indicator of the size and health of the economy. The COVID-19 pandemic led to record declines in GDP of advanced economies in 2020, according to the ONS. In 2020, The International Monetary Fund posited that the unprecedented retraction of GDP during the pandemic is resultant of infections reducing labour supply, restrictions curtailing mobility and workplace closures disrupting supply chains in addition to, typical, contagion effects.

As reported by the [ONS](#), the 9.8% contraction in GDP in 2020 was the largest annual fall on record. The most recently revised [quarterly GDP](#) levels demonstrate that GDP output for Q1 2021 was 8.8% below where it was pre-pandemic at Quarter 4 (Oct to Dec) 2019 (ONS, 2021). Indeed, [UK GDP quarterly estimates](#)



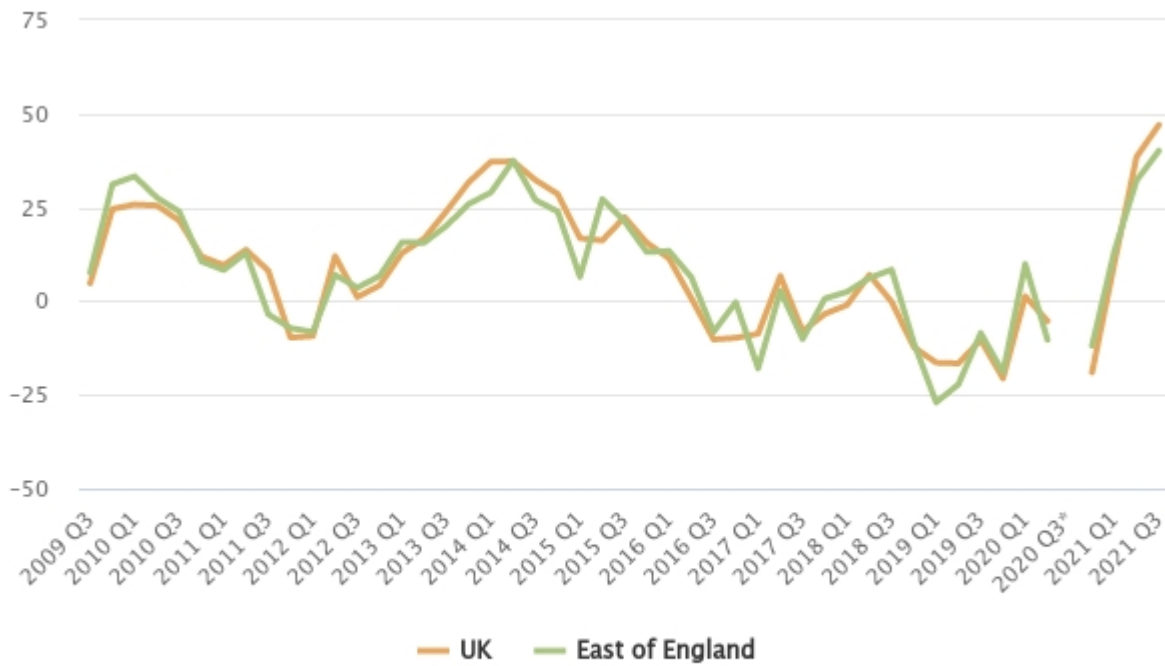
demonstrate that GDP is estimated to have increased by 4.8%, compared to a 1.6% contraction in the previous quarter (ONS, 2021).



Despite encouraging GDP growth forecasts, business investment remains a drag on the longer-term sustainability of economic productivity as COVID-19 was expected to lower investment by -12% in 2021 Q2 and -10% in 2021 Q3 (Bank of England, 2021); furthermore, enduring at 5% below its pre-Covid level at the end of 2022 (CBI, 2021).

**Local data:** The ICAEW (Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales) published its Q3 report stating Business confidence in the East of England has risen to +40.1 in Q3 2021, the highest level seen in the region since the survey began, although slightly below the UK average. The swift distribution of vaccines

and the gradual easing of coronavirus restrictions have helped lift business confidence.

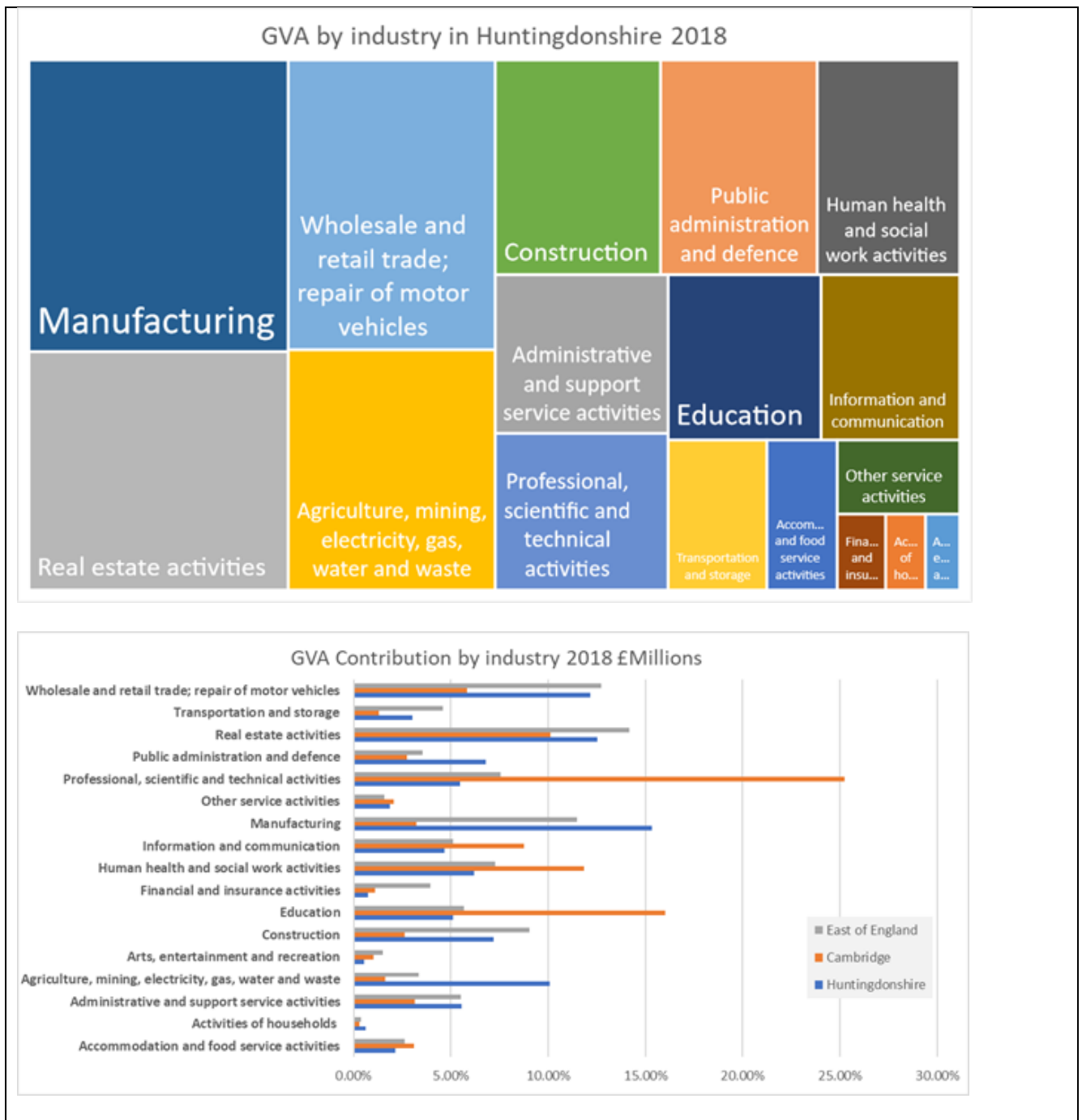


\* = data unavailable for Q3 2020

The Q3 East of England region key findings are:

- After a challenging year, businesses expect a marked pick-up in both domestic sales and exports growth. Although growth in the former will slightly trail the UK average.
- Job losses have been limited over the past year due to the furlough scheme. And in the year ahead, employment should rise considerably.
- Related to that, salary rises are expected to return to more familiar pre-pandemic rates, while businesses are becoming increasingly concerned by staff turnover and the availability of non-management skills.
- Regulatory requirements and transport problems are also becoming more prominent challenges.
- Both input and selling prices are expected to rise over the next 12 months, after being very muted during the pandemic.
- Against a backdrop of rising demand, growth in capital investment spending should improve. Emerging capacity constraints will be a driving factor here.

Although GDP or GVA figures since COVID restrictions are not available at local authority level, the most recently available productivity figures for Huntingdonshire demonstrated that manufacturing added £649m in gross value added (GVA) to the Huntingdonshire economy (ONS, 2019). GVA is a measure of the increase in the value of the economy due to the production of goods and services. It is measured at current basic prices, which include the effect of inflation, excluding taxes (less subsidies) on products (for example, Value Added Tax). The other major GVA contributors to the Huntingdonshire economy were real estate activities, wholesale and retail trade, agriculture and utilities and construction.



### Subject: Economic support through business grants

**National data:** According to a research briefing compiled by Parliament and released in September 2021 <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8938/CBP-8938.pdf> the UK Government has delivered over £21 Billion of unprecedented financial support by means of business grants to companies across the UK across seven different schemes. The schemes utilised by government were the:

- Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant,
- Small Business Grant.
- The Local Authority Discretionary Grant Scheme
- The Local Restrictions Support Grant
- Christmas Support Scheme

- Additional Restrictions Support Grant
- Restart Grants

**Local data:** As of August 2021, Huntingdonshire District Council had paid the following to local businesses:

**Business Grants Paid March 2020-27<sup>th</sup> August 2021**

Grant Scheme	Number of Grants	Number of Businesses supported	Value of Grants Paid
<i>Small Business Grant / RHL Grant</i>	2,366	2,366	£29,480,000
<i>LRSB</i>	5,378	1,026	£12,024,341
<i>Discretionary Grant</i>	219	219	£1,628,500
<i>Restart Grants</i>	2,702	991	£7,253,393
<i>ARG</i>	283	99	£655,050
<i>ARGE</i>	1,126	505	£3,704,600
<i>Enhanced ARG</i>	150	75	£762,565
<b>Totals</b>	<b>12,224</b>	<b>5,281</b>	<b>£55,508,449</b>

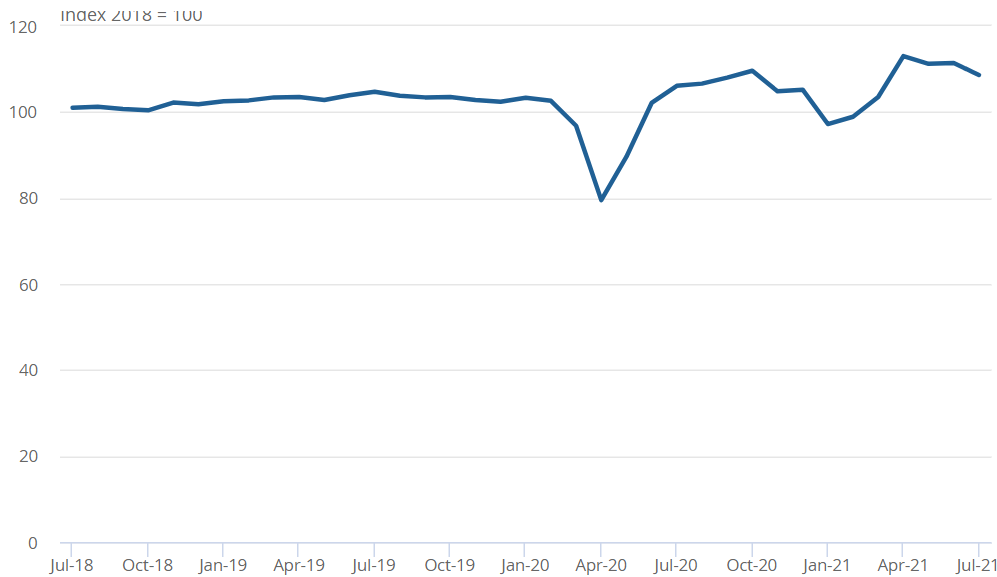
Subject: Key business sectors - Retail

**National data:** In relation to the GVA contributions by sector for Huntingdonshire in 2018, the level of data availability and the sectors of heightened interest (ONS reports) during the pandemic, a number of key business sectors are examined. [The ONS \(2021\) reports](#) that there have been GDP contractions in services and production output whilst construction output grew over the first quarter of 2021. The largest contributors to this fall were from the education, wholesale and retail trade, and accommodation and food services industries, in particular at the beginning of the quarter in response to the tightening of COVID-19 restrictions (ONS, 2021).

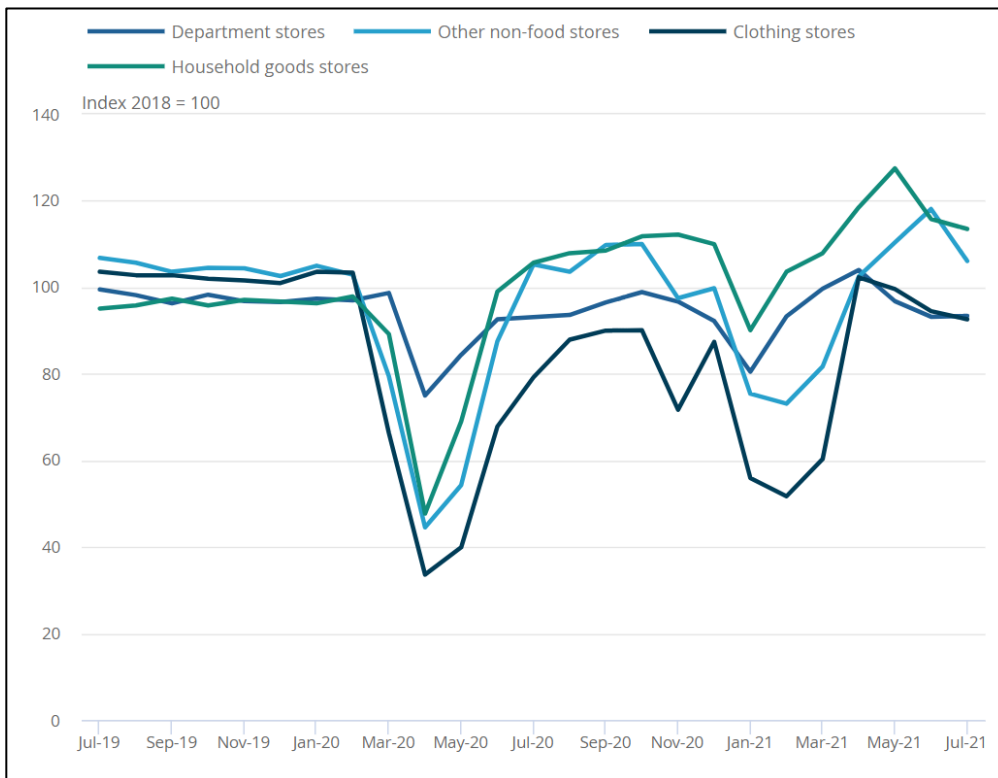
Despite the large returning numbers of people to pubs and restaurants following the end of restrictions, many high street businesses like cafes and shops did not perform as well (Centre for Cities, 2021). The ONS (2021) [reports](#) that regardless of the 2.5% retail sales fall between June and July 2021, retail sales were 5.8% higher than their pre- COVID-19, February 2020, levels.

**Figure 1: Retail sales volumes fell by 2.5% in July 2021, when compared with June 2021, but were 5.8% higher than in February 2020, before the impact of coronavirus**

**Volume sales, seasonally adjusted, Great Britain, July 2018 to July 2021**



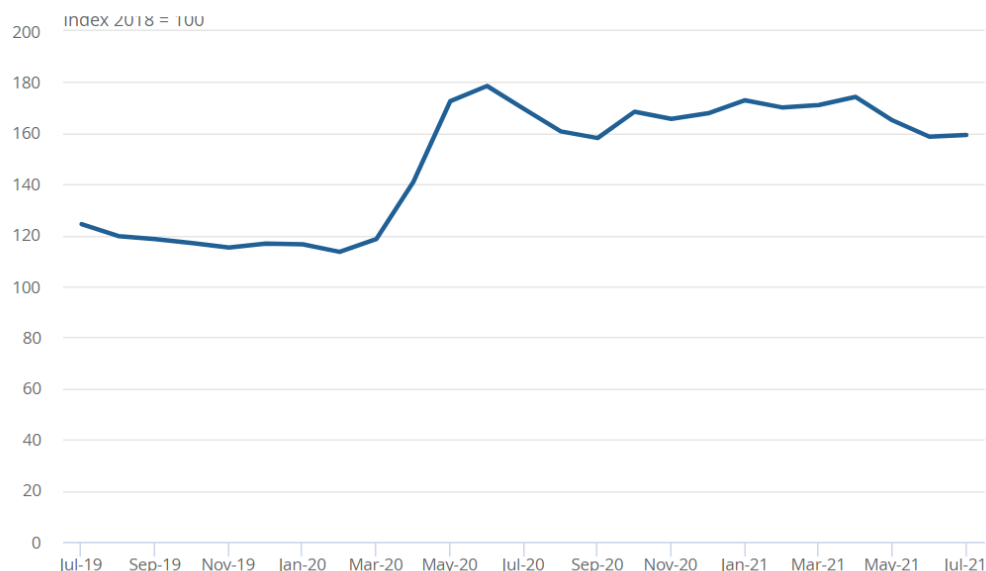
The proportion of online retail sales increased to 27.9% in July 2021 from 27.1% in June 2021 and remained substantially higher than the proportion of online retail spending in February 2020 of 19.8% (ONS, 2021). Other non-food stores reported the largest monthly fall of 10.1% in July 2021 (ONS, 2021). The seasonally adjusted non-food stores volume sales for Great Britain between July 2019 and July 2021 (ONS, 2021) demonstrates the temporal increase in variation of sales comparatively between pre-and-post COVID-19 restrictions beginning March 2020.



Within the broadly defined retail sector performance has been mixed since non-store retail sales volumes increased in July 2021 and have been comparably more stable since COVID-19 restrictions than non-food stores.

**Figure 4: Non-store retail sales volumes increased by 0.5% in July 2021, when compared with June 2021**

Volume sales, seasonally adjusted, Great Britain, July 2019 to July 2021



**Local data:** Since COVID restrictions, economic productivity by sector is not available at local authority level. ONS national accounts demonstrate that certain sectors, such as construction, have performed better than other sectors. Further ONS sectoral analysis shows that within the broad sector classifications there has been mixed performance with online retailers outperforming non-food store retailers (ONS, 2021).

**Online retail development Huntingdonshire's local and independent retailers**

As part of Huntingdonshire District Council’s approach to building more resilience into the local economy for local and independent retailers, the Council sourced, procured and implemented a brand-new initiative called Click It Local. The service launched in Huntingdonshire in March 2021 and will be subsidised until March 2022 as part of the Council's usage of Additional Restriction Grant Money.

Click It Local enables local and independent retailers in Huntingdonshire to sell more goods but online instead of physically. This creates further opportunities for retailers who have never sold online previously or for those who wish to use this additional channel to generate more sales. Residents of the district place their orders and receive goods from their chosen local retailers on a same or next day basis.

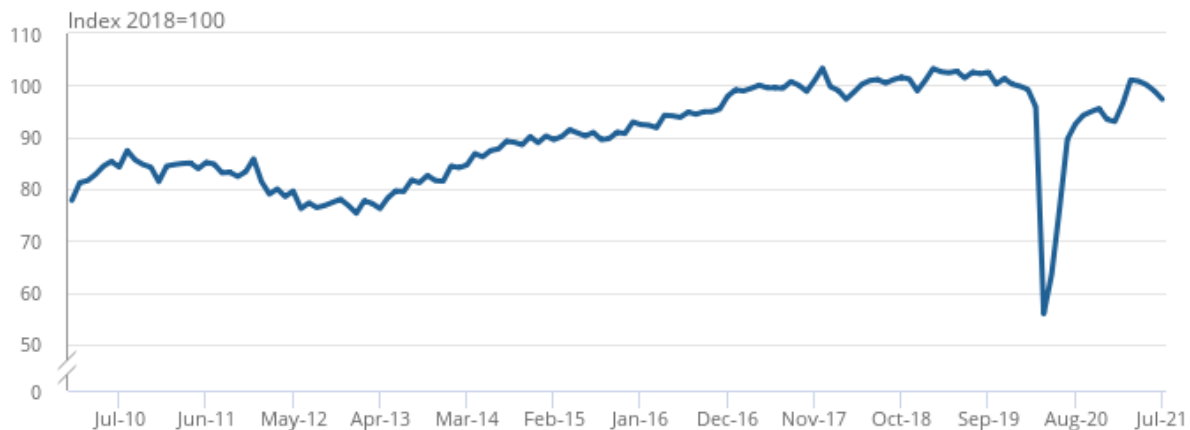
You can see the performance of Click it local (to September 2021) in the table below:  
Overview - Orders and Revenue

Total Orders	Individual Items Purchased	Revenue	Average Order Values	Average Spend per store
1,334	1,474	£52,091	£39.05	£35.34

Live Store profiles = 80 Stores

## Subject: Key business sectors - Construction

**National data:** The construction industry was reported, by the ONS, to have outperformed other sectors. [Construction output in Great Britain](#) fell by 1.6% in volume terms in July 2021, with the level of output now below its pre- COVID-19 February 2020 level. The immediate impact of the pandemic is featured by the sharp fall at April 2020.



*The monthly all work index for Great Britain (chained volume measure and seasonally adjusted)*

Output recovered to levels above the February 2020 level in March and April 2021 but have subsequently declined. The ONS reports that both new work and repair and maintenance contributed to the monthly decline in July 2021. The ONS advises that the decrease in private housing output in volume terms is mainly coming from upward pressure on prices within the industry, and that this is backed up by anecdotal evidence collected from businesses on the Monthly Business Survey for Construction and Allied Trades explaining that price increases are being caused by delays in the availability of certain construction products (most notably steel, concrete, timber and glass), because of supply chain shortages. However, it should be noted demand is still strong as shown by the recent new orders in the construction industry data, which saw quarterly total housing new orders increase by 2.9% in Quarter 2 (April to June) 2021.

Regarding construction prices for goods, services and materials bought by the whole sector compared with normal expectations, at 18<sup>th</sup> July 2021, 50% of businesses were reporting price increases by more than normal expectations (Business Insights and Conditions Survey). This has grown steadily over recent months from 32% in early May 2021.

The UK construction industry is being hit by unprecedented shortages of raw materials and labour, the costs of which are also rising at rates far in excess of anything previously recorded in over two decades of PMI\* survey history (\*Purchasing Managers' Index™ (PMI™) data are compiled by IHS Markit for more than 40 economies worldwide).

UK PMI data showed construction activity slowing sharply in August. The headline IHS Markit/CIPS PMI slumped from 58.7 in July to 55.2, its lowest since February. While the index remained above 50.0 to indicate ongoing growth in total construction activity, the current reading compares with an historical average of 53.8. Given the amount of stimulus and relatively early stage in the recovery, to be slowing so close to the long-term trend is disappointing.

Part of the slowdown can be linked to weaker growth of new orders for construction work, with the survey's New Orders Index slowing for a third consecutive month to register a further cooling of demand growth from May's record high.



However, the New Orders Index remains far higher than the Total Activity Index, reading at 59.4 in August 2021. Thus, activity has slowed much more sharply than demand for new work, meaning there must be other factors at play in explaining the sharp output slowdown.

The slowdown can also be partly attributed to ongoing and near-record shortages of raw materials, as measured by suppliers' delivery times, which have in turn led to unprecedented price hikes for building materials in recent months.

Adding to materials shortages are problems finding subcontractors. Subcontractors account for a vast amount of construction work, with the major building firms tending to hire specialists to cover most forms of specialist tasks, from carpenters and electricians to groundwork or foundation specialists and roofers. The availability of these subcontractors deteriorated on average at a record rate excluding last year's initial pandemic-related shutdown.

Just as raw material shortages are driving prices higher, the deterioration in subcontractor availability is pushing average rates charged by subcontractors higher. In August 2021, the rate of wage increase was far in excess of anything recorded previously in almost a quarter of a century of PMI survey data.

A CBI report to government in September 2021 reported labour shortages seen across different skill levels in the construction sector, and the UK economy include scaffolders, bricklayers, carpenters, welders and electrical engineers amongst others which is adversely impacting the UK's recovery.

It is clear that a combination of Covid-19 restrictions, Brexit delays and shipping hold-ups are contributing to the reported delays in this sector's recovery.

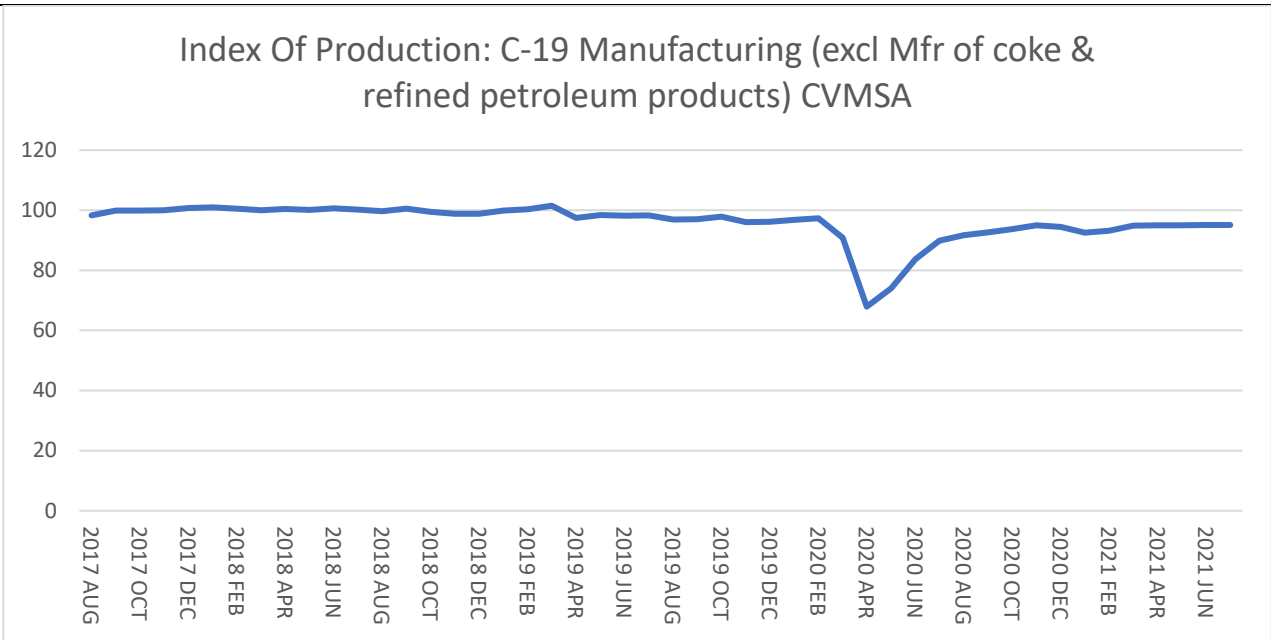
**Local data:** No detailed local data is available at the time of writing. However, the housing supply section in this report (discussed with both the Housing Needs and Resources Manager and Strategic Housing Manager) provides some insight into impacts on residential construction, with local data on home starts and completions indicating an initial fall followed by a swift recovery in homes being built in Huntingdonshire.

## Subject: Key business sectors - Manufacturing

**National data:** [UK manufacturers' sales by product](#) shows the total value of UK manufacturers' product sales was £358.7 billion in 2020, a fall of 10.8% compared with £402.2 billion in 2019 (ONS). Sales declined in nearly all manufacturing divisions, with sales within the manufacturing of motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers division declining the most, falling £13.1 billion (24.9%) to £39.5 billion in 2020.

Two divisions saw sales increase in 2020. The manufacture of pharmaceuticals increased by £1.1 billion (8%) to a total of £14.9 billion while the manufacture of paper and paper products increased by £10 million (0.1%) to £10.8 billion. The largest increase in product sales was from Medicaments for therapeutic or prophylactic uses, up by £969 million (14.9%) to £7.5 billion in 2020. Other selected products showing large value increases in 2020 included toilet paper (up 17.9% to £1.3 billion), bread (up 11.1% to £3.2 billion) and fresh or chilled cuts of beef/veal (up 6.3% to £4.5 billion).

Seasonally adjusted figures uncover monthly movements in the volume of UK production, which includes manufacturing, mining and quarrying, energy supply, and water and waste management. Production rose by 1.2% between June 2021 and July 2021 meaning output was 2.1% below its February 2020 level. The coronavirus pandemic has generally had a negative impact on production output, although each sector has been affected differently since manufacturing remained flat over the month at 0% growth. Though, manufacturing output remains 2.3% below its February 2020 level.



Make UK’s Q3 2021 Manufacturing Outlook report, in partnership with BDO, highlights the sector’s return to growth following many months of turmoil. Last quarter manufacturers reported output levels expanding at record rates, thanks mainly to growth in domestic orders. However, export orders have also continued to improve since the start of the year as manufacturers from the UK side better adapt to new trading conditions. Yet, some risks remain as manufacturers from the EU side are only beginning to understand the weight of the changes in the UK-EU relationship.

The third quarter’s figures have shown remarkable improvement across all our primary metrics, with 8 out of 10 rising to record heights. The latest data confirms that the bounce back which started early this year has maintained speed till now with only supply-chain disruptions highlighted as the main barrier holding manufacturers back. Still, we are yet to achieve any new growth as on average manufacturers are still clawing back lost output from 2020. An output balance of 42% this quarter indicates that the largest ever share of manufacturers have increased their output levels, relative to those that have reported a decrease. This continual expansion in output is mirrored by the continual growth in order books both domestically and internationally.

Both the UK order and export order balances have expanded to record levels this quarter, reporting at 48% and 37% respectively. The UK order balance has grown in positive territory for the last three quarters now, meaning the domestic market may well be establishing itself as a reliable source of demand for UK manufacturers. This is likely driven partly by the increased frictions between UK-EU trade leading to some manufacturers seeking new relationships with suppliers at home. However, exports are also improving with the orders balance here jumping from 22% to 37% this quarter.

INDICATOR	BALANCE	CHANGE	
Confidence	7.7	↑	Business confidence reaches a new peak
Output	42%	↑	Output balance highest on record
UK orders	48%	↑	UK orders balance highest on record
Export orders	37%	↑	Export orders recovering quickly
Employment	23%	↑	Jobs continue to grow but at a slower rate
Investment	37%	↑	Investment intentions highest on record

Source: Make UK Manufacturing Outlook Survey

The biggest issue to dominate UK manufacturer’s agenda in recent months are supply-chain related issues, which in turn are leading to rising cost pressures and increased selling prices. Both UK and Export prices reported at a record high balance of 49% and 43% respectively, with expectations prices would rise further in Q4. For the first half of this year manufacturers were passing on costs only partially, as evidenced by negative balances scores for margins. However, this quarter it appears margins are increasing again indicating that manufacturers are passing on higher costs at greater rates down the supply-chain.

With the Job Retention Scheme (JRS) closing this month, there remains concerns that redundancies will increase in various segments of the economy. However, the recent boom in activity suggests the impact of these job losses will be relatively mute on the overall economy. The employment and investment intentions balance have now expanded for two quarters in a row, with the latter reporting a particularly high figure highlighting the impact greater certainty had on manufacturers confidence in investing.

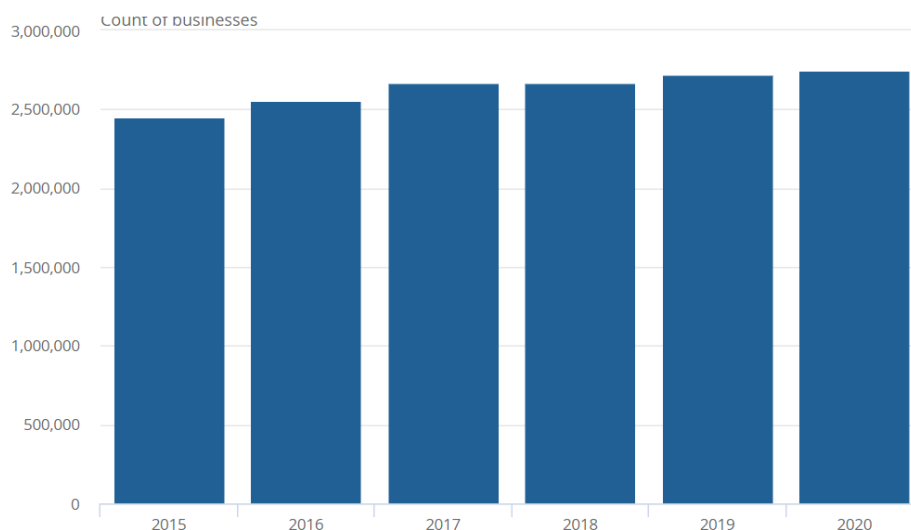
**Local data:** Data from the Prodcom survey on manufacturer’s sales and the Index of Production is not published for any geographies below the UK level. BRES data on employees by industry in 2020 and the number of businesses at March 2021 is also not available at the time of writing.

## Subject: Business activity

**National data:** The number of business deaths (closures) or the ratio of business deaths to births (creations) are indicators of the health of the economy, with higher or increasing business deaths possibly indicative of unfavourable business conditions as overall business growth retracts. The Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR) maintains records of UK business demography. The latest release of [annual data on births and deaths](#) covers data to March 2020, which showed that the number of businesses was growing, as graphed below (ONS, 2020).

**Figure 1: The number of VAT and/or PAYE businesses in the UK increased by 1.2% from March 2019**

**Number of VAT and/or PAYE based businesses, UK, 2015 to 2020**



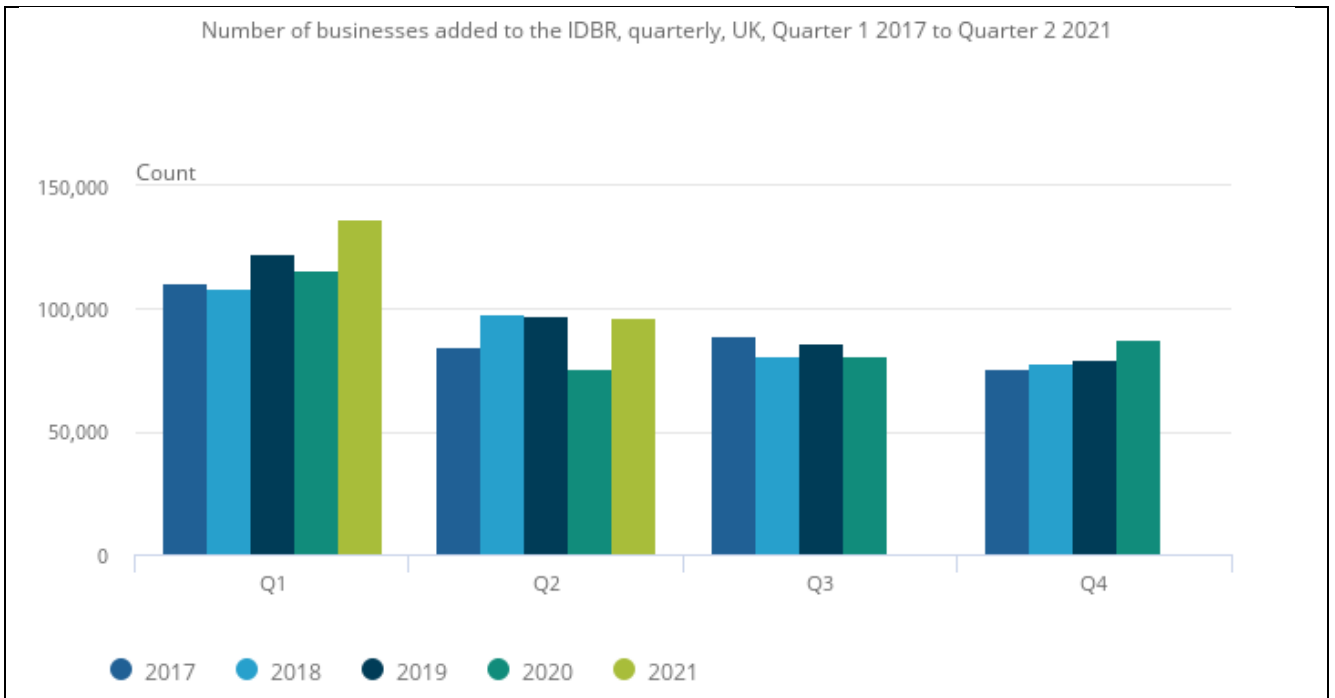
In response to the economic impact of the pandemic, the ONS are producing rapid and experimental [quarterly data on business births and deaths](#). The data in this release is not entirely consistent with the annual business demography publication, which is a more accurate reflection of births and deaths, but the quarterly data is broadly in line and provides new evidence using new methods. Business closures are those removed from the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR). A business is removed from the IDBR if its turnover and employment are zero for several periods, or the Office for National Statistics (ONS) is notified

that the business has ceased trading through an administrative source. Business creations, often referred to as business births, are enterprises added to the Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR). Enterprises are added to the IDBR when a new business is identified from administrative sources, usually the VAT or PAYE systems.

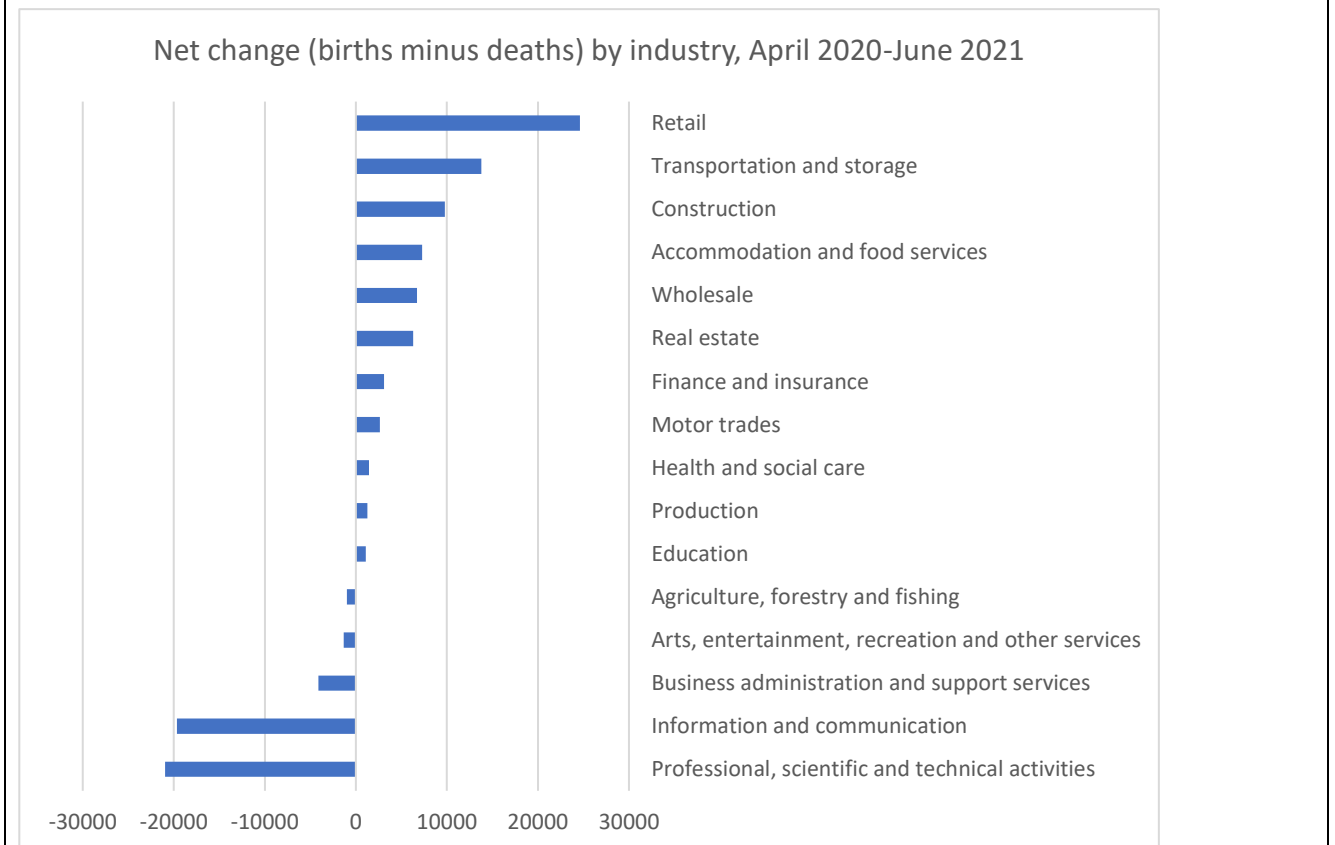
Business closures in the last two quarters, Q1 2021 (January to March 2021) and Q2 (April to June 2021), were the highest since the start of 2017, and followed the highest Q4 (October to December) recording. However, low levels preceded in the first two full quarters of the pandemic, Q2 2020 and Q3 2020 as the ONS reported that business closures did not appear to have yet increased as a result of the pandemic and that this was “because of the time it takes for a business to close, delays in the reporting process and government support for businesses”.



Business creations have generally remained high since the pandemic began. While the first full quarter since lockdown restrictions were introduced in Q2 2020 (April to June 2020) saw a fall in new businesses, numbers since then have been similar to, or higher than, the totals seen in the same quarters since Q1 2017. The ONS has previously reported that the relatively strong numbers of business creations are “contrary to expectations that business creation would be lower due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic”. It noted that “Businesses which have been created since the pandemic tend to be smaller in terms of employment than those created prior to the pandemic.”

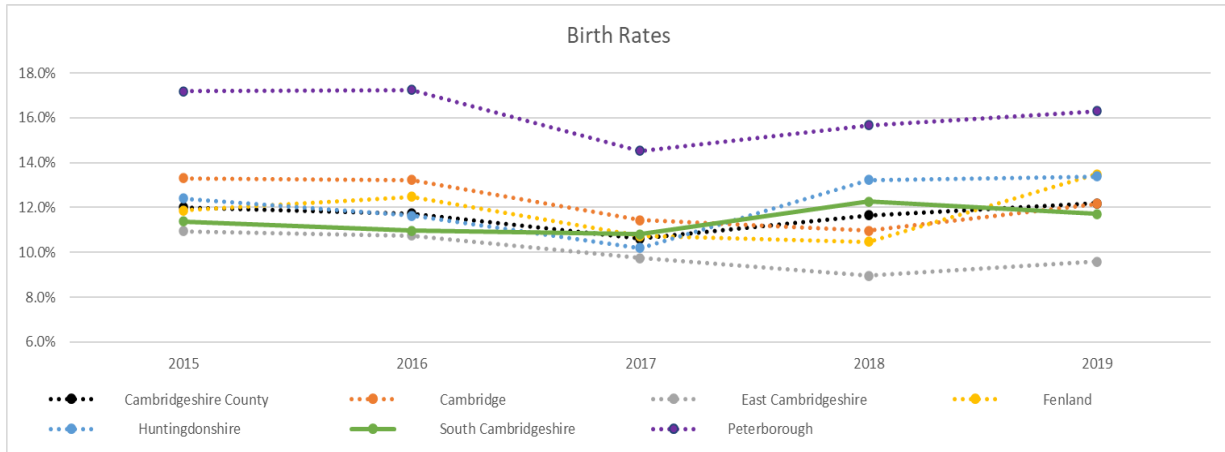


Overall, there was a net increase of 31,640 businesses between April 2020 and June 2021 since only Q4 2020 and Q2 2021 had more business closures than creations. Though some industries increased in business numbers whilst others had reductions. It is possible that declines in the Professional, scientific and technical activities and Information and communication sectors may be partly linked to changes to taxation rules on contracting, with the ONS previously reporting that “There is some evidence that a larger number of single employee companies were closed in Quarter 1 2020, and it is possible that this is due to those businesses getting ready for changes to taxation rules on contracting”. The ONS states that the strong growth in retail is “likely to be due to an increase in online retailers, [since there has been a large increase in online retail sales during the pandemic](#)”.

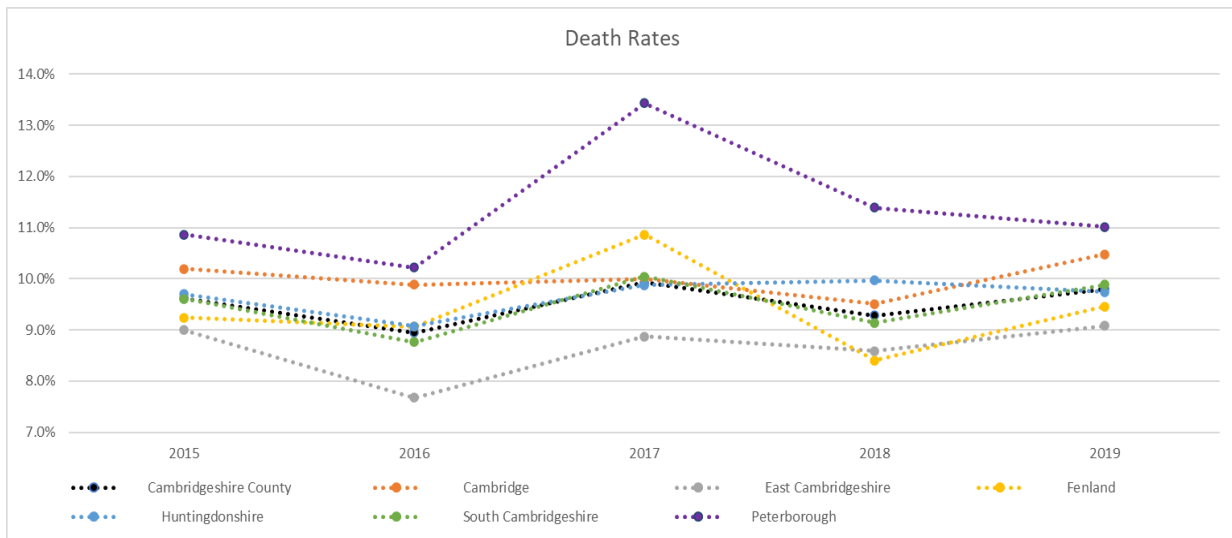


**Local data:** There is no local data for business births and deaths relating to IDBR data beyond 2019. At the time of writing, data on the number of businesses at March 2021 and numbers of births, deaths and active enterprises for the calendar year 2020 are due to be published in October and November 2021 respectively.

Previous annual data at the local authority level illustrated that the business birth rate in Huntingdonshire exceeded the county rate in 2018 and 2019. When excluding Peterborough, Huntingdonshire had the highest birth rate in 2018 and was second highest in 2019.



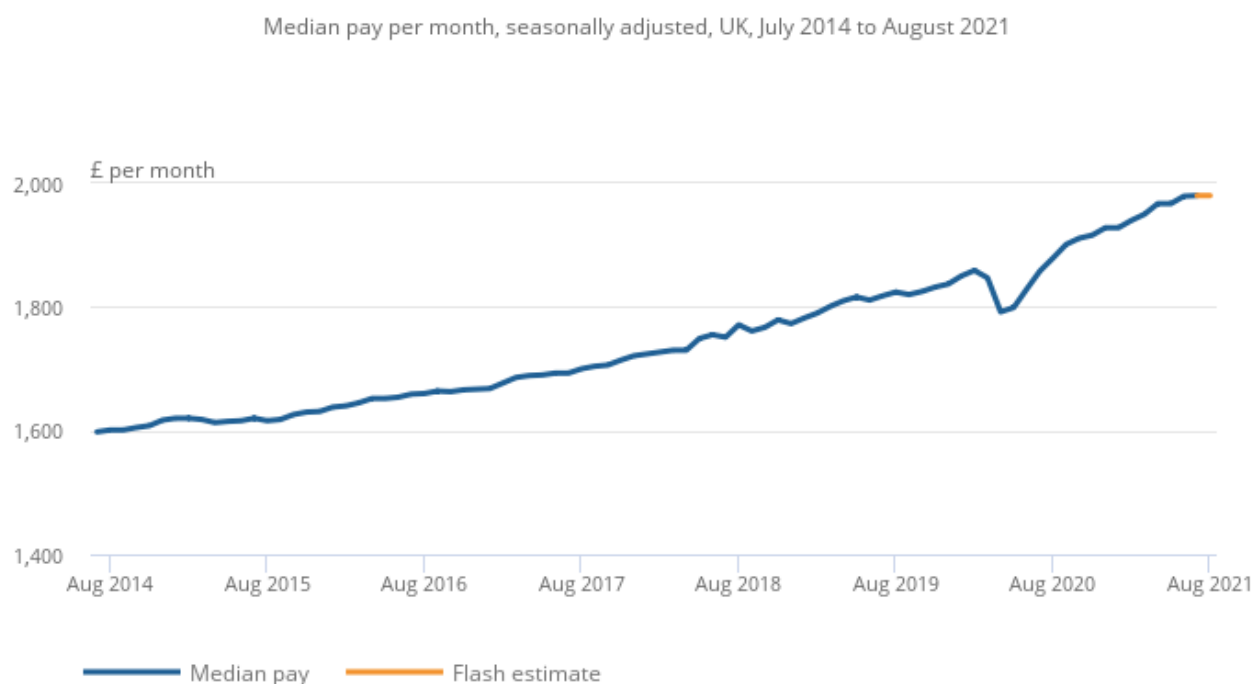
Business death rates in Huntingdonshire have typically been similar to the county rate over the past five years (to 2019).



## Subject: Wages

**National data:** The Office for National Statistics produces experimental monthly data on [Earnings and employment from Pay As You Earn Real Time Information](#). This covers people paid through the Pay As You Earn (PAYE) system where their pay is reported through the Real Time Information (RTI) system. As employees who are furloughed as part of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) programme should still have their payments reported through this system, they should feature in these data and contribute toward the employment and pay statistics for the relevant periods. Statistics in this release are based on people who are employed in at least one job paid through PAYE.

Following a general trend of increasing pay growth between mid-2015 and mid-2018, this data shows that pay growth tended to fluctuate around 3.6% until 2020, when pay growth became negative as the pandemic and related economic and policy responses started. From June 2020, median pay growth has been positive, and is now above pre-coronavirus (February 2020) levels. The graph below shows median pay per month and how the recent estimates compare with pre-pandemic levels.



The latest data includes final data to July 2021 and early estimates for August 2021. The August figures are based on around 85% of information being available so are considered of lower quality and may be subject to revision in next month's release when between 98% to 99% of data will be available. These early estimates indicate that median monthly pay increased to £1,980 in August 2021, up by 5.3% compared with August 2020 and by 6.5% when compared with February 2020. The July 2021 estimates also put median monthly pay at £1,980, up 6.6% on July 2020.

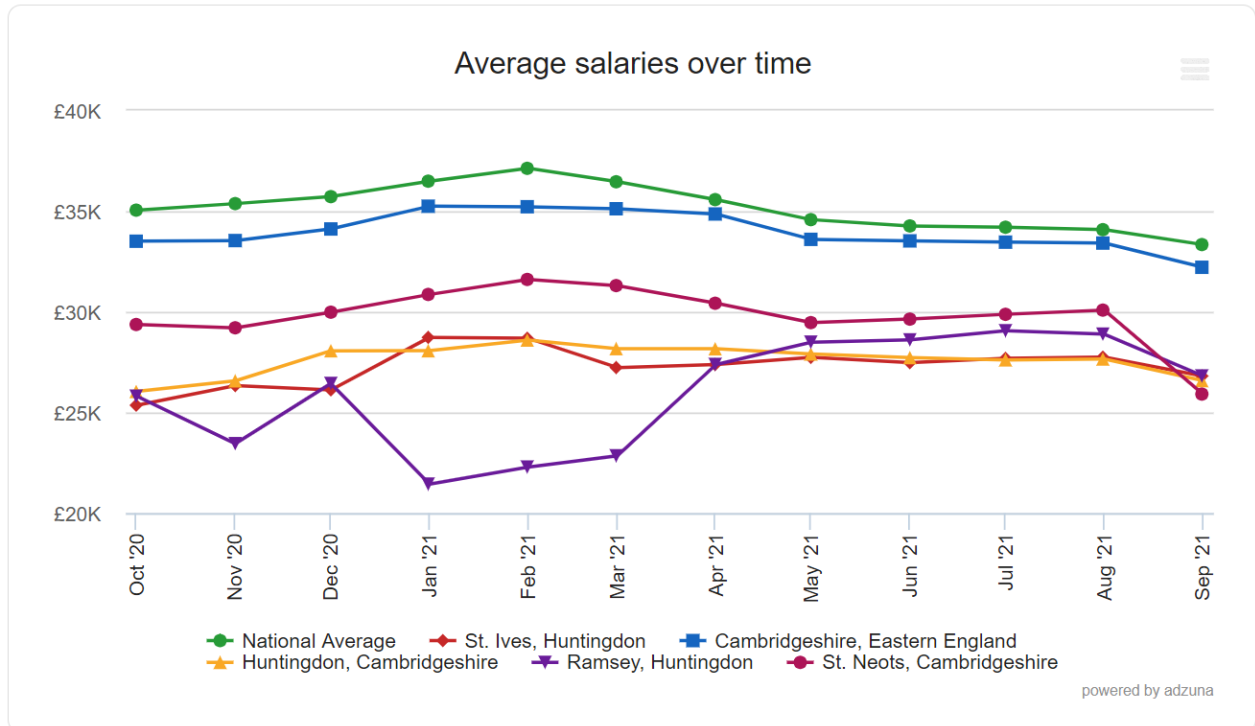
Official National Statistics data on earnings in 2021 is not yet available. While provisional 2020 earnings data has been published, the ONS has advised that these estimates were subject to more uncertainty than usual due to the challenges faced in collecting the data under government-imposed public health restrictions. With those figures relating to April 2020, when an estimated 8.8 million employees were furloughed, the 2020 data has not been reported here as in isolation this may give a misleading impression of how wages have changed since the start of the pandemic/lockdown restrictions.

**Local data:** While local data on average wages for employees is not available yet, the Economic Development team has been tracking jobs vacancy data for the area. It should be noted that this relates to new vacancies advertised only and so does not indicate how wages for existing employees may have changed. While recent news headlines suggest rapidly rising wages, the articles are often also based on jobs advertised or individual sectors rather than reflecting real wage changes for all employees. Data on recent pay deals (including a [public sector pay freeze](#), the [3% uplift for NHS staff](#) and [XpertHR's headline basic pay award](#) showing a median pay settlement for the three months ending 31 August 2021 of 2%) suggests there may be large differences between increases in wages for new vacancies and wage rises for existing employees.

Adzuna provides jobs vacancy related data, average salary and number of vacancies, at County and Town location level. For the most recent period of 12 months (previous data not available), this indicates that salaries offered in Cambridgeshire rose between October 2020 and January 2021 and remained around £35,000/year to April 2021. The average salary advertised then fell to October/November levels of around









£33,500 in May 2021, remaining at that level until falling again in September 2021. As past data is not available, this cannot be compared with pre-pandemic levels or average salaries advertised from March to September 2020, but the graph shows salaries offered in Cambridgeshire following the national trend.



As would be expected given smaller numbers of vacancies being advertised at a more local level, there has been variability in the average salary reported by Adzuna each month across all the Huntingdonshire Towns. Since October 2020, Ramsey’s average salary has seemingly been the most variable, month-on-month, which is likely to be due to lower vacancy numbers in Ramsey. The other Town locations of St. Neots, St. Ives and Huntingdon appear to have been more stable, broadly following a rise and fall pattern similar to that shown in the national and countywide averages, albeit with lower average salaries offered.

## Topic: Employment

	NATIONAL TREND 	CONFIDENCE RATING 	IMPACT RATING 
Job vacancies	The number of job vacancies advertised initially fell but have since increased beyond pre-pandemic levels to a record high.	<b>5 = HIGH</b> <i>(Data available down to sub-district level if required)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate impact as after an initial sizeable fall, vacancy levels have risen to record levels. CBI labour market insights however cite labour shortages impacting the economy. Need to review later on when more new data is available, although furlough is not expected to fill labour supply gaps and shortages are already impacting business operations)</i>
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (aka Furlough)	Over the course of the scheme (ended 30 September 2021), more than 40% of eligible employments were furloughed. Numbers furloughed reduced over time, with latest figures indicating the number furloughed one month before the scheme end was just 15% of the peak level.	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(Major <u>POSITIVE</u> impact due to protected jobs, delayed redundancies and reduced benefits payments for people who would otherwise be out of work)</i>
Redundancy	Increase in redundancies since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions, although levels have since returned to pre-pandemic levels.	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Only national data available)</i>	<b>2 = LOW/MEDIUM</b> <i>(Minimal impact due to the mitigations offered to businesses to avoid staff redundancy eg: furlough and business grants. Impact score based on national trend likely to be followed in Huntingdonshire)</i>

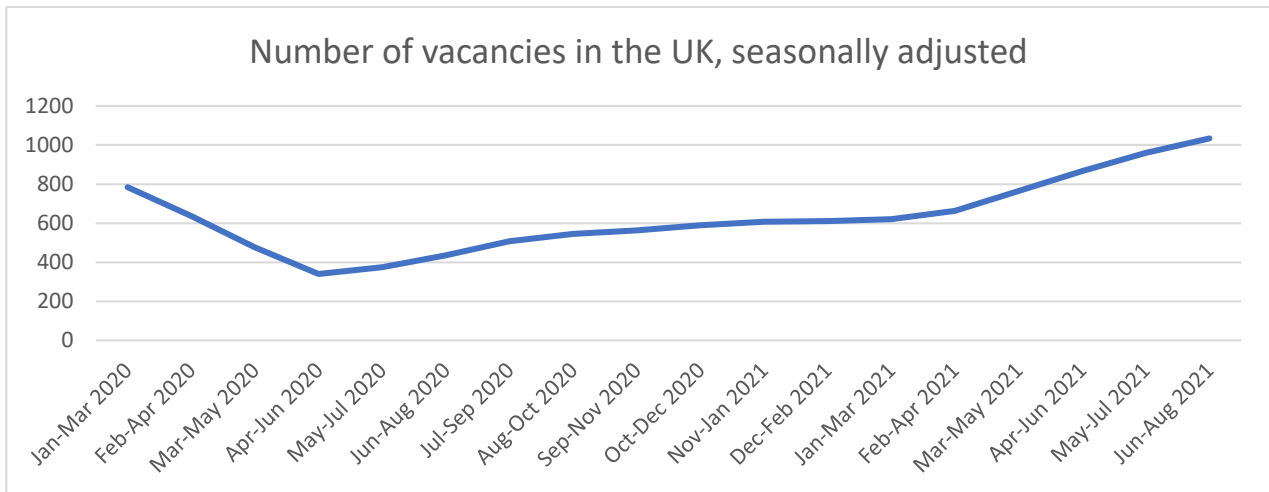
	<b>NATIONAL TREND</b> 	<b>CONFIDENCE RATING</b> 	<b>IMPACT RATING</b> 
Unemployment	There has been an increase in unemployment since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions. Although the level has fallen, and numbers of payrolled employees has returned to pre-pandemic levels, numbers receiving unemployment benefits remains higher than at any point of the 2008-09 financial crisis with most current recipients claiming for over a year.	<b>5 = HIGH</b> <i>(Data available down to sub-district level if required)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate impact as the unemployment rate did not rise as high as in the previous economic downturn and has started to fall, although the number of people in receipt of unemployment benefits remains above pre-pandemic levels)</i>
Self-employment	The number of self-employed people working has decreased since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions.	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate impact as data conflicting and will be sector specific trends. Need to identify if this is a temporary or continued trend and in which direction)</i>
Support for self-employed residents	Significant levels of financial support provided for businesses since the beginning of the pandemic/ lockdown restrictions.	<b>4 = MEDIUM/HIGH</b> <i>(District level data available)</i>	<b>3 = MEDIUM</b> <i>(Moderate <u>POSITIVE</u> impact due to protected jobs and reduced benefits payments)</i>

## Subject: Job vacancies

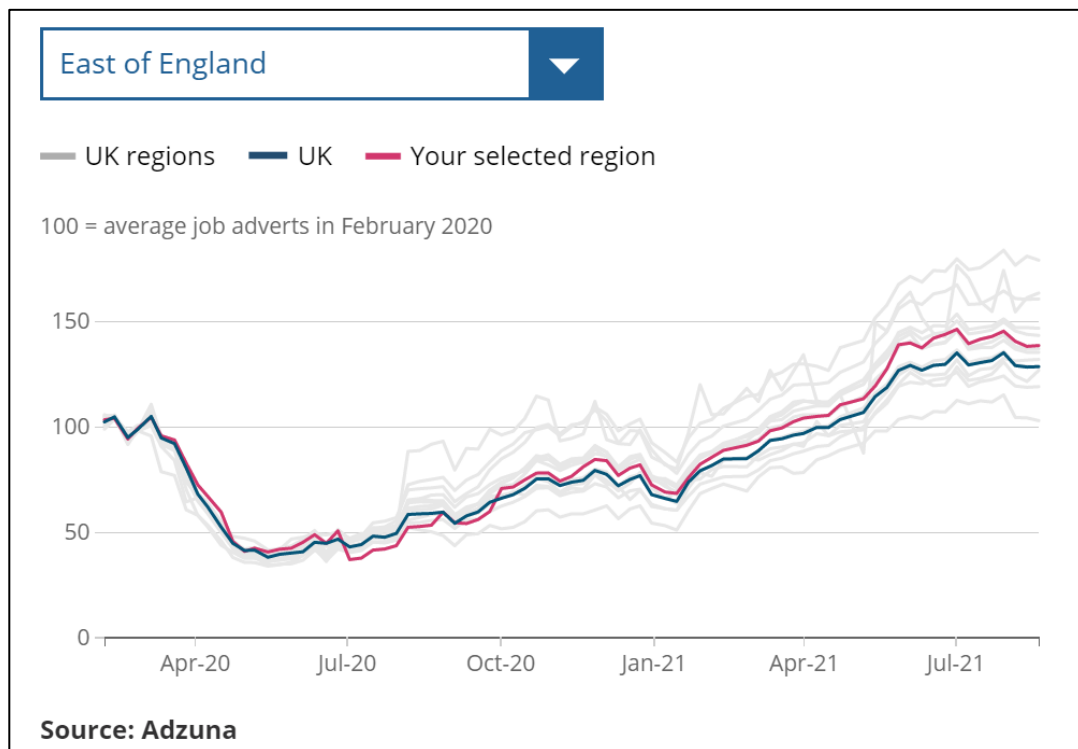
**National data:** COVID-19 restrictions appear to have variedly impacted employment levels across locations, industry sectors and according to demographic groups. The UK's unemployment rate is expected to peak at 5.5% in Q3 2021, then the unemployment rate will fall back, at 4.2% ending 2022 (CBI, 2021). The ONS (2021) reports that over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, payrolled employee growth rates in all regions followed a similar pattern, that was, rapidly declining and becoming negative from April 2020 but beginning to improve in more recent months. For the three months ending June 2021, the highest employment rate estimate in the UK was in the East of England (78.1%) and the lowest was in Northern Ireland (71.1%) (ONS, 2021).

Estimates from the ONS [Vacancy Survey](#) data for England show a fall of more than 50% in jobs advertised in the three months to June 2020 compared to the number of jobs advertised in the three months to March 2020. The initial fall in vacancies has since reversed, with the rate of recovery increasing since March 2021 and recently rising to a record high. The ONS reports that in the June to August 2021 period, the estimated

number of vacancies was at its highest level since records began, with all industries growing on the quarter. In the same period there were 3.4 vacancies for every 100 employee jobs, also a record high.



Aggregated data from Adzuna, based on [online job adverts](#) from several thousand sources, can be used as an indication of job vacancy rates. Recent Adzuna data highlights variation in hiring at the regional level. The East of England shows a marked increase in the number of jobs adverts by month between January 2021 and May 2021, an indication that firms are increasing their recruitment activities, although the trend has seemingly levelled off since. The East of England appears to also be tracking the UK overall, but is lagging several other regions.



**Local data:** While ONS Vacancy Survey data is not available at local level, the [Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority \(CPCA\) has published data](#) on vacancies from Metro Dynamics analysis of data from Burning Glass. For the CPCA area, the graph below shows an immediate fall in vacancies of more than 50% between March 2020 and April 2020, followed by recovery as numbers increased to pre-pandemic levels by autumn 2020. The data currently published only goes to April 2021 so there could be further increases since then in line with national data, but this will only be known once further data is published.

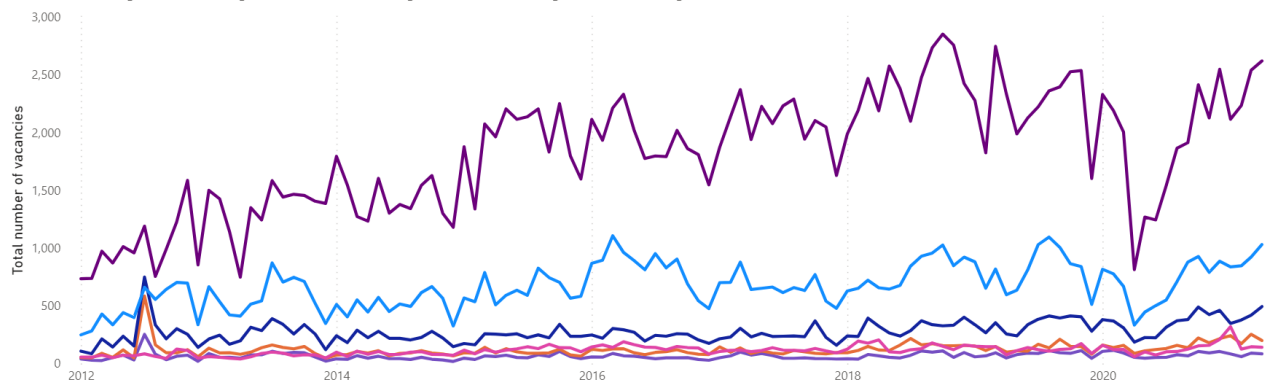
The April 2020 figure was the lowest figure reported by the CPCA since their published data starts in January 2012.



The CPCA also publishes data at district level. The number of jobs vacancies recorded for Huntingdonshire over time shows a reduction in vacancies between March 2020 and April 2020 (from 309 vacancies to 185). As with the CPCA level data, vacancies in Huntingdonshire have recovered since April 2020, although there appears to be more volatility at this level. The latest figure at April 2021 of 493 is nearly 60% higher than at March 2020 and the second highest figure reported since January 2012. The April 2020 figure is not the lowest reported, with figures around the end of the calendar year frequently lower than this.

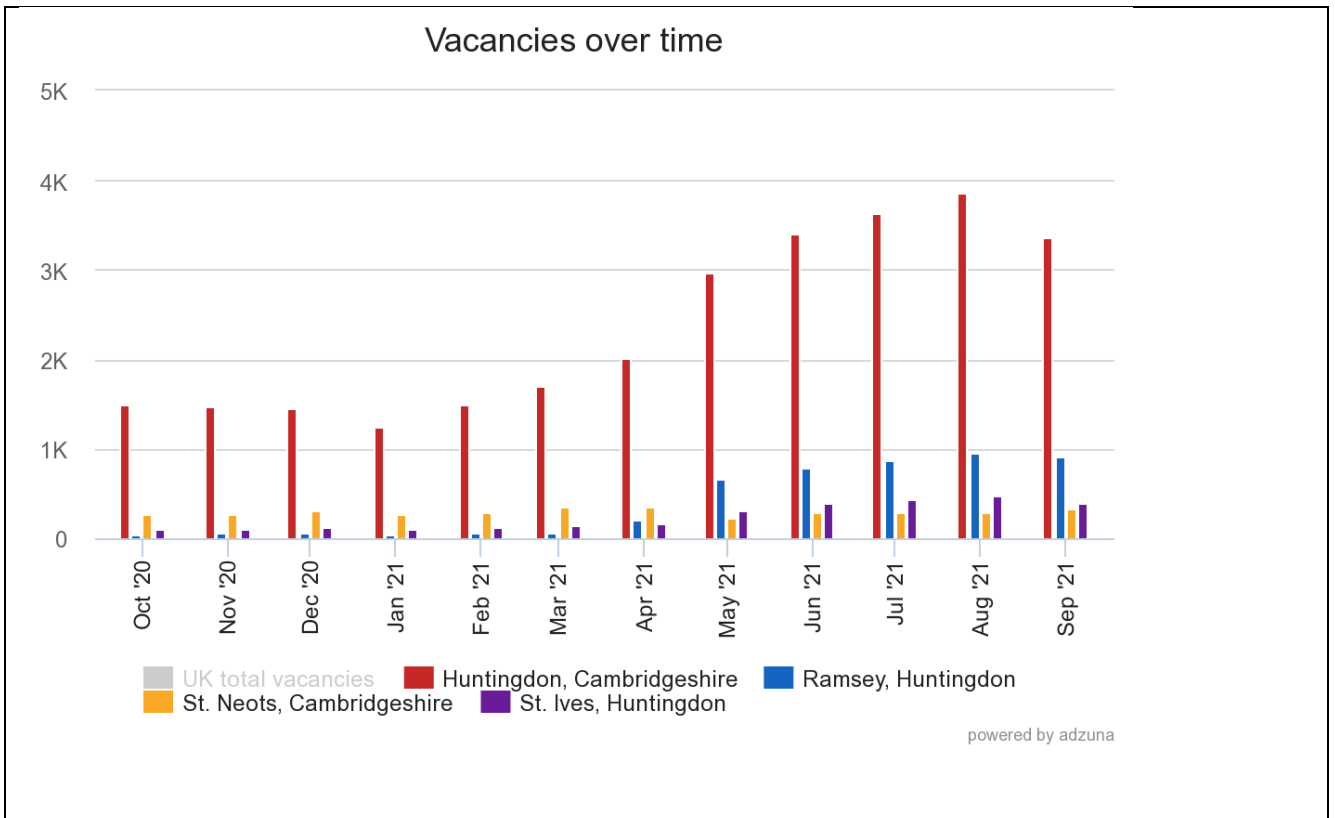
Online Job Advertisements by district

District ● Cambridge ● East Cambridgeshire ● Fenland ● Huntingdonshire ● Peterborough ● South Cambridgeshire



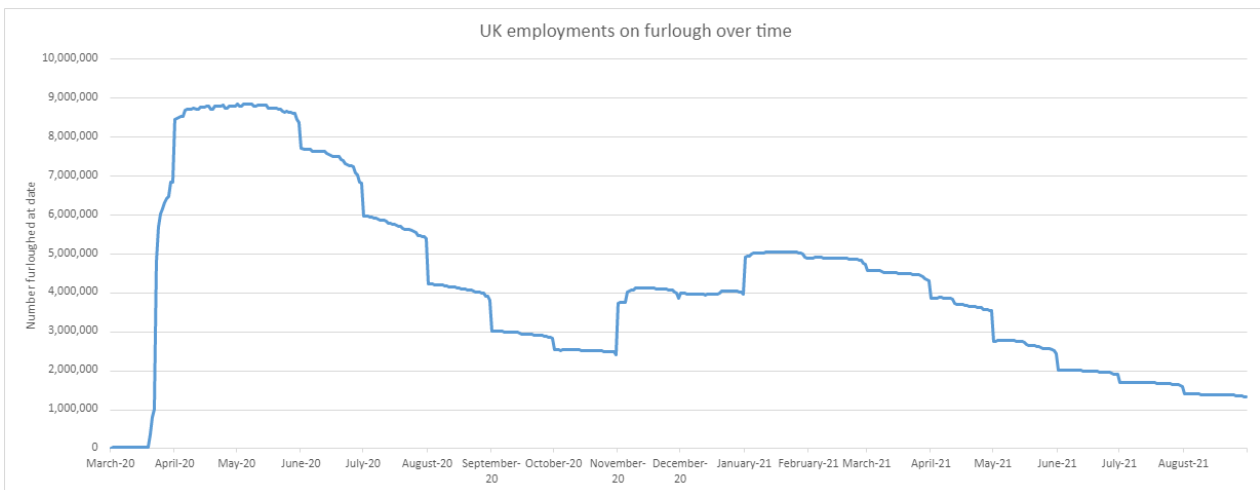
It should be noted that vacancies by district, industry and skill type have a filter applied (within the source dataset) that ensures only direct job postings from employers are included, while postings from agencies and other sources are excluded. The total vacancies for the CPCA area do not include this filter and covers postings from all sources. This explains why the CPCA total estimates are higher than the estimates split by district, industry or skill type.

In addition, [Adzuna](#) provides jobs vacancy related data, average salary and number of vacancies, at Town location level. For the most recent period of 12 months (previous data not available), Adzuna data uncovers that for all the Town locations of Huntingdon, Ramsey, St. Ives and St. Neots the number of vacancies by month since May 2021 was on an upward trend up to and including August 2021. Thereafter, in September 2021, the number of jobs vacancies regressed across all the locations.



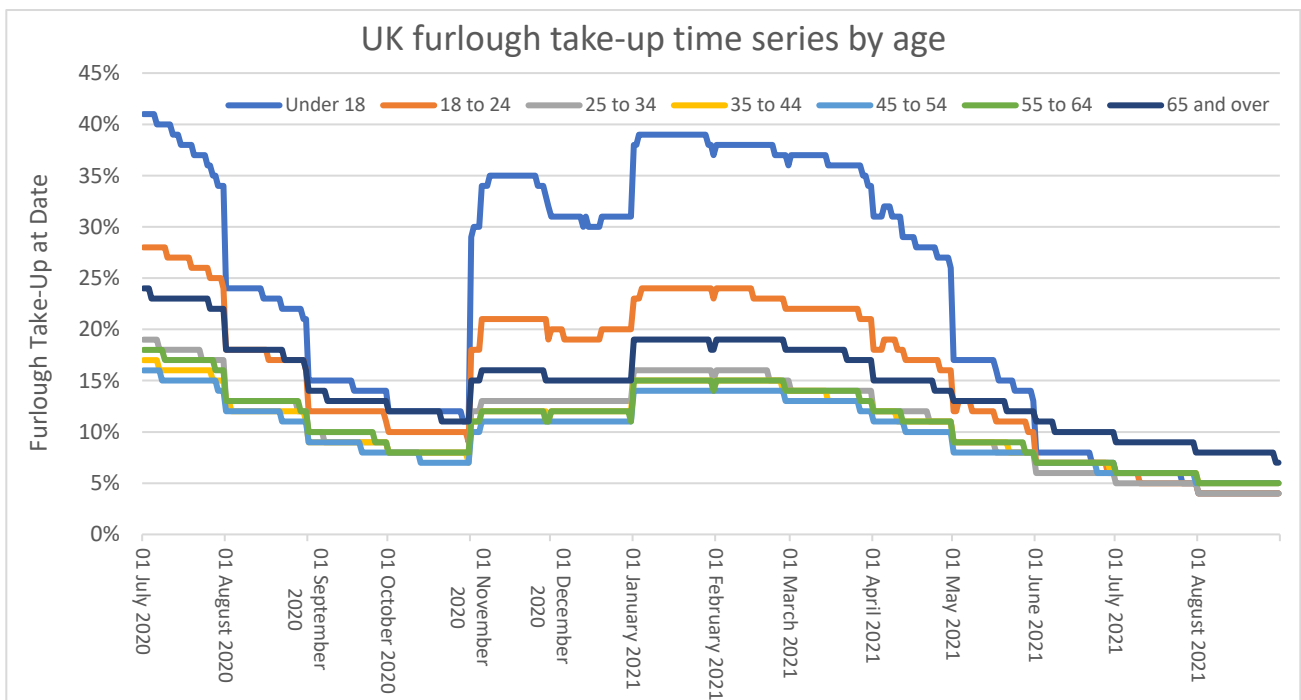
Subject: Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (aka Furlough)

**National data:** [HMRC data on the scheme](#) showed 11.6 million UK employments had been furloughed to 16 August 2021. This equates to just over 40% of all eligible employments. While the cumulative count of the total number of employments furloughed is likely to still be rising after the scheme’s end on 30 September 2021, with final claims due by 14 October 2021 and any amendments required by 28 October 2021, the number on furlough at any time has fluctuated over time as the scheme’s rules have changed and businesses have reacted to changes in lockdown restrictions. As shown in the graph below, the second and third national lockdowns both appeared to trigger rises in the number of people furloughed. As restrictions eased, numbers on furlough reduced, with the provisional figures for August 2021 suggesting that just over 1.3 million employments were furloughed. This is a reduction of 85% on the peak level of nearly 8.9 million in early May 2020.



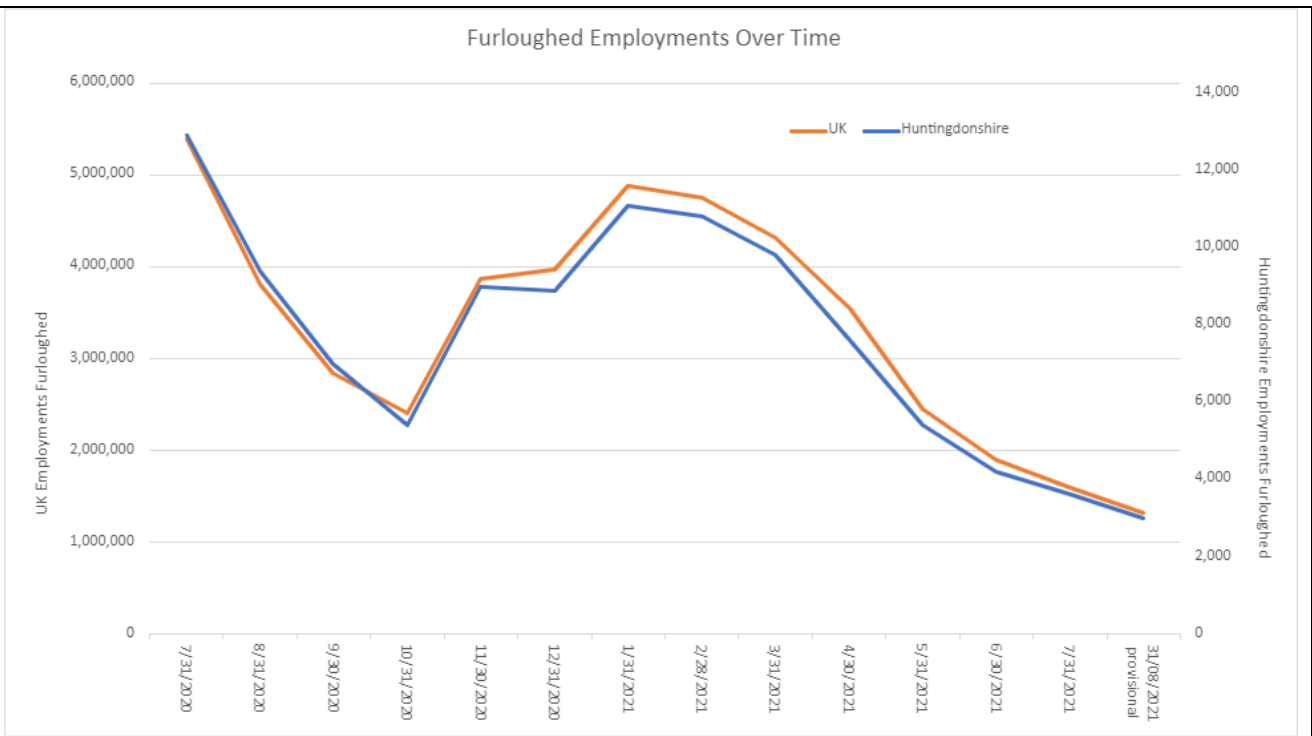
HMRC’s data also includes details of those furloughed by age and gender. While there has been some difference in take-up of the furlough scheme by gender, the gap between male and female take-up has been relatively small. Females were more likely to be furloughed than males throughout most of the period the scheme ran for, with the gap peaking at 1.5 percentage points in August 2020 and March 2021, although males have been more likely to be furloughed than females since May 2021.

However, the difference in take-up rates by age group has been more significant. For the majority of the scheme’s history, the youngest age groups (Under 18 and 18-24) and the oldest age group (65+) have had higher take-up than the age groups between 25 and 64. The following graph plots the take-up rates of each age group from 1 July 2020 to 31 August 2021 (provisional). It shows that prior to 1 June 2021, the Under 18 age group had a consistently higher take-up rate than any other age group. Rates for this age group were regularly at least 10 percentage points higher than for any other age band. However, it should be noted that the total numbers furloughed in the youngest and oldest age groups remained relatively low over the course of the scheme as the higher take-up rates reflect relatively low numbers of eligible employments in these age groups. These age groups tend to have significantly lower employment and economic activity levels as those under 18 are more likely to be in education or training than other age groups and those aged 65 or over are more likely than average to be retired or otherwise not in employment or seeking work. Despite that, we can say that those in eligible employments in those age groups were significantly more likely to be furloughed than those aged 25-64.

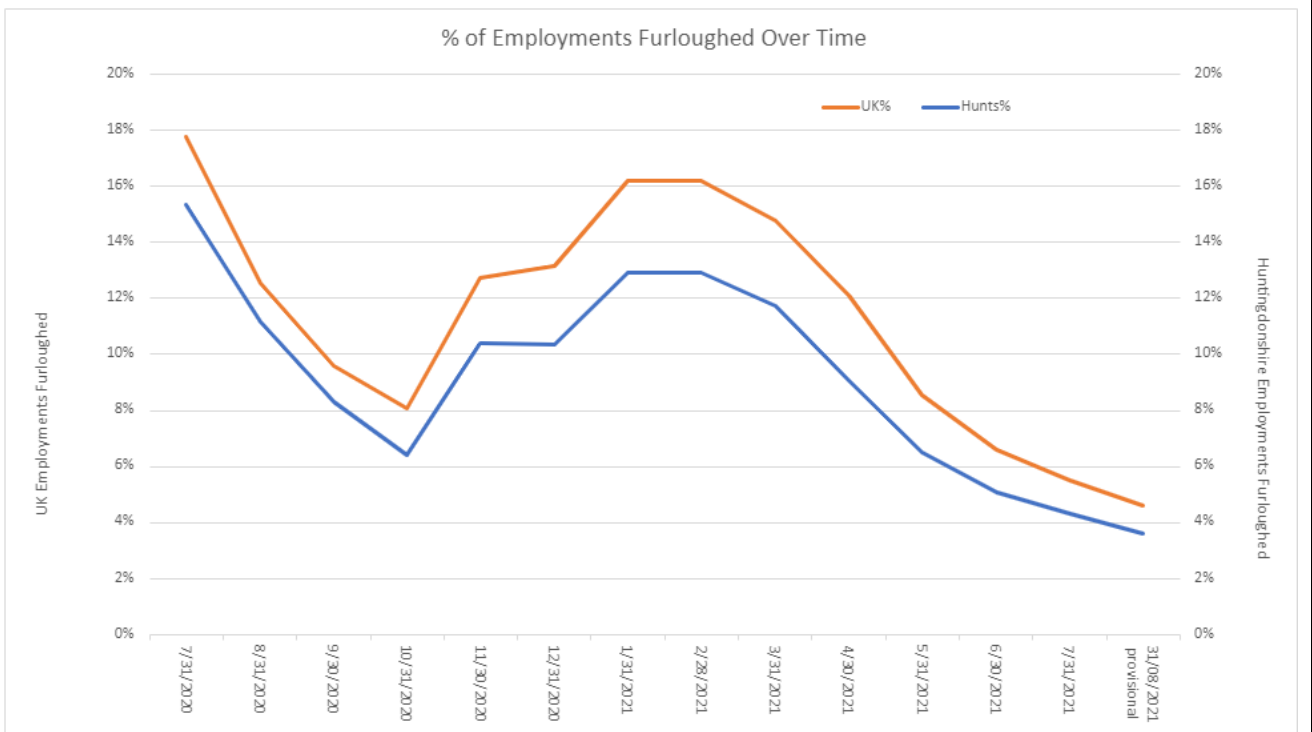


**Local data:** As seen nationally, Huntingdonshire has seen a large proportion of employments furloughed during the course of the scheme. The latest non-provisional estimate for the cumulative total count to 16<sup>th</sup> August shows there have been 30,700 employments furloughed in the district overall. This is equivalent to 37% of all eligible employments which is slightly below the UK and England averages (both 40.4%).

The district has also seen numbers furloughed change over time in a similar pattern to that seen nationally, with numbers rising as new lockdowns have been introduced and reducing as restrictions have eased. Data on numbers furloughed at any point in time is only available at district level from 31 July 2020 onwards as time series counts for local authority areas have not been published. However, numbers over the period from then to 31 August 2021 (provisional) are shown following the national trend in the graph below.



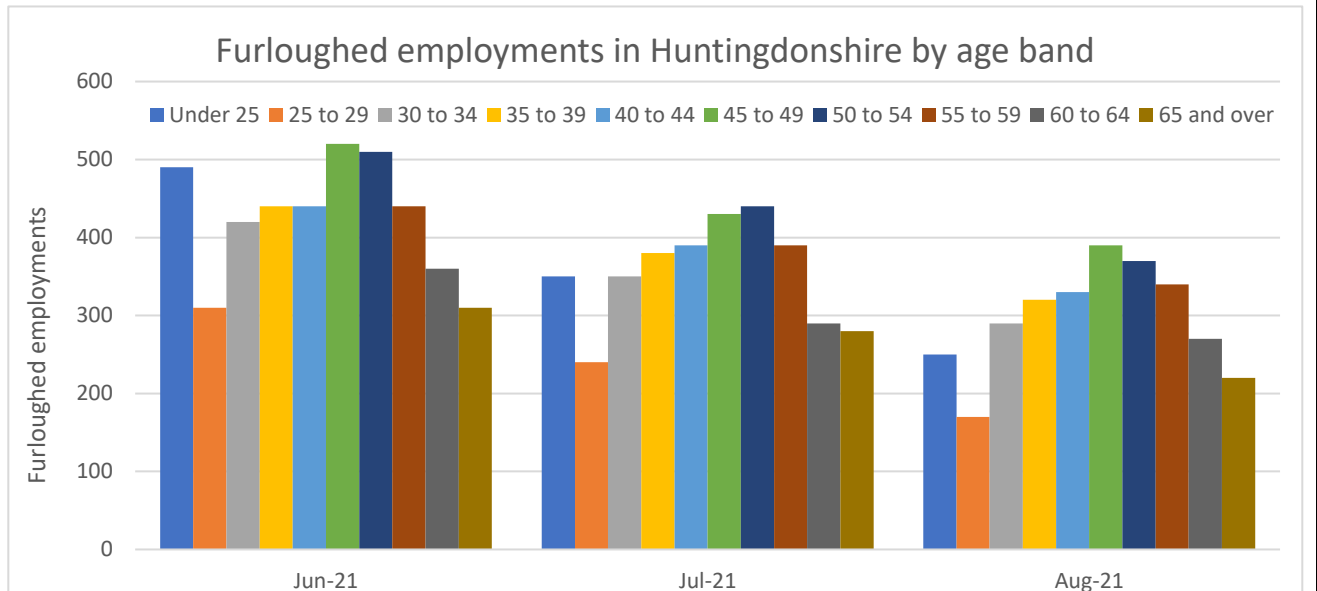
The following graph shows the percentage of eligible employments furloughed over time (take up rate). Again, this shows a similar pattern to changes over time across the UK, but this graph also highlights the lower take-up rate locally across the whole time period. The latest provisional data indicates that 3,000 employments remained furloughed at 31 August 2021, equivalent to 3.6%. This is one percentage point lower than the UK total percentage of employments furloughed at this data.



Data has been published regularly on take-up by gender at local authority level and this has shown that females in Huntingdonshire were more likely to be furloughed than males from July 2020 (earliest data available) to May 2021. The gap in take-up rates by gender peaked at just over 2 percentage points in July 2020 but reduced over time and the rates for both genders have been close in the most recent months.



Limited data is available on take-up by age at local authority level. The split of furloughed employments by age band has only been made available for Huntingdonshire as at June, July and August 2021 so far, with this data showing falling numbers each month in every age band as total numbers on furlough decreased. While no data on eligible employments by age band to calculate take-up rates has been published at the district level, it is probably that the 65+ age band had the highest take-up rate during this period as this age band represented 7-8% of all employments furloughed and that is likely to be higher than the proportion of eligible employments held by people in this age band (data on employment by age band from the Annual Population Survey for the period April 2019-March 2020 indicates 4.7% of those employed were aged 65+).



## Subject: Redundancy

**National data:** Labour Force Survey data on redundancies consists of employees who were made redundant or who took voluntary redundancy in the three months prior to the interview date. These are actual rather than planned redundancies. The ONS's [Redundancy levels and rates](#) estimates, sourced from the Labour Force Survey, indicates that the rate of redundancies recorded since the beginning of the pandemic has exceeded the highest rate reached during the 2008 to 2009 financial crisis, peaking in September-November 2020. It is possible that this was linked to the original planned end of the furlough scheme on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2020 as the [extension was only announced that day](#) and some businesses made decisions about redundancies prior to and around that time without knowing the scheme was to be extended. There were also increases in August, September and October 2020 in the level of employer contributions required for those on furlough.

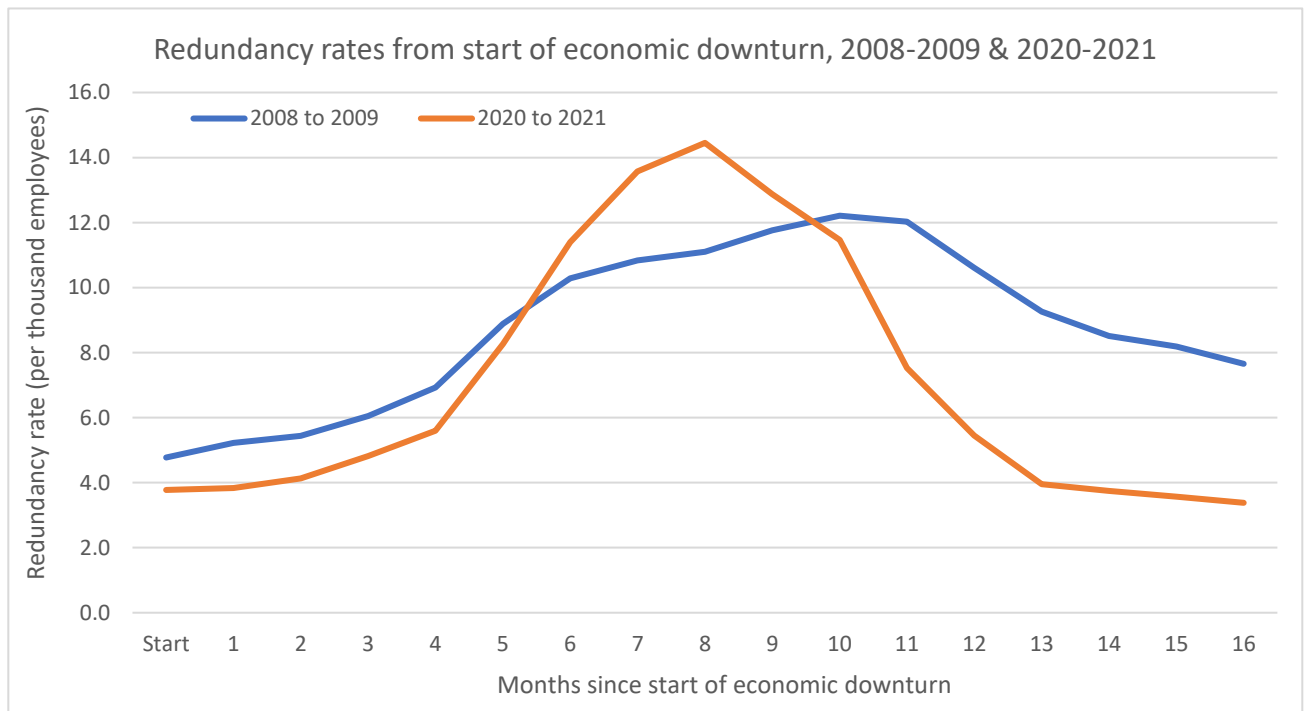
However, the [latest redundancy rate](#) to July 2021 is similar to pre-pandemic levels, as shown in the graph below. These rates represent the ratio of redundancies to the number of employees in the previous quarter in each sector.

**Figure 8: The redundancy rate has returned to pre-pandemic levels**

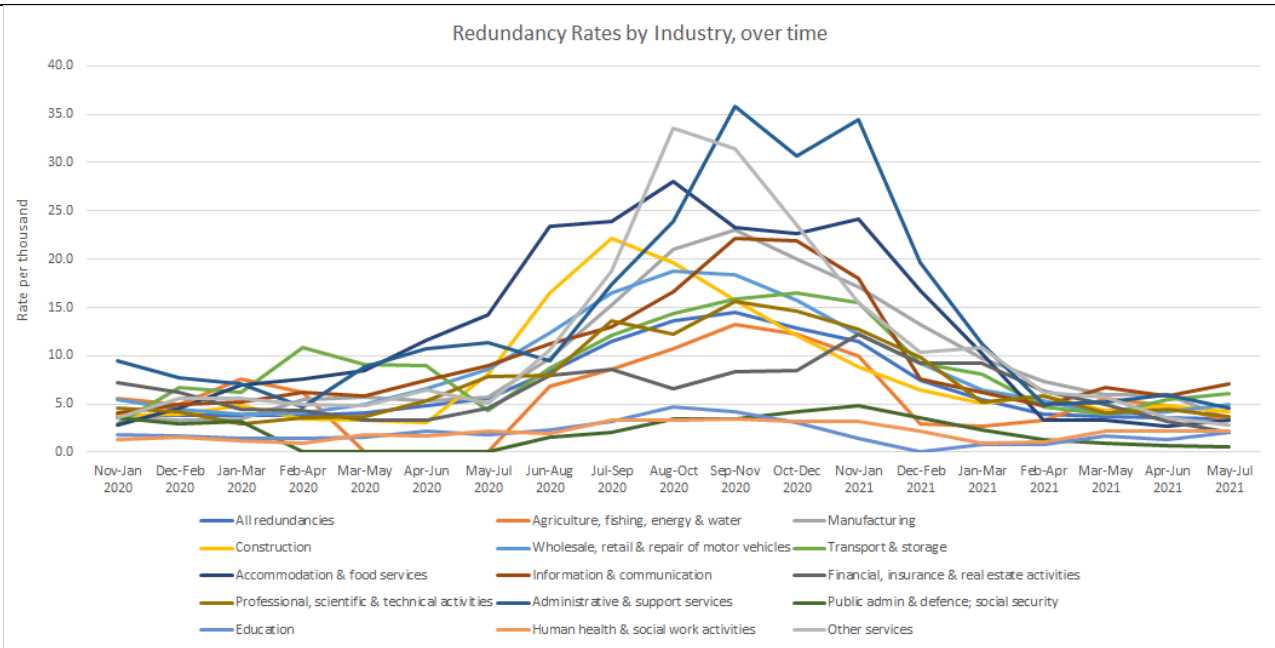
UK redundancy rate, (people aged 16 years and over), not seasonally adjusted, between May to July 2006 and May to July 2021



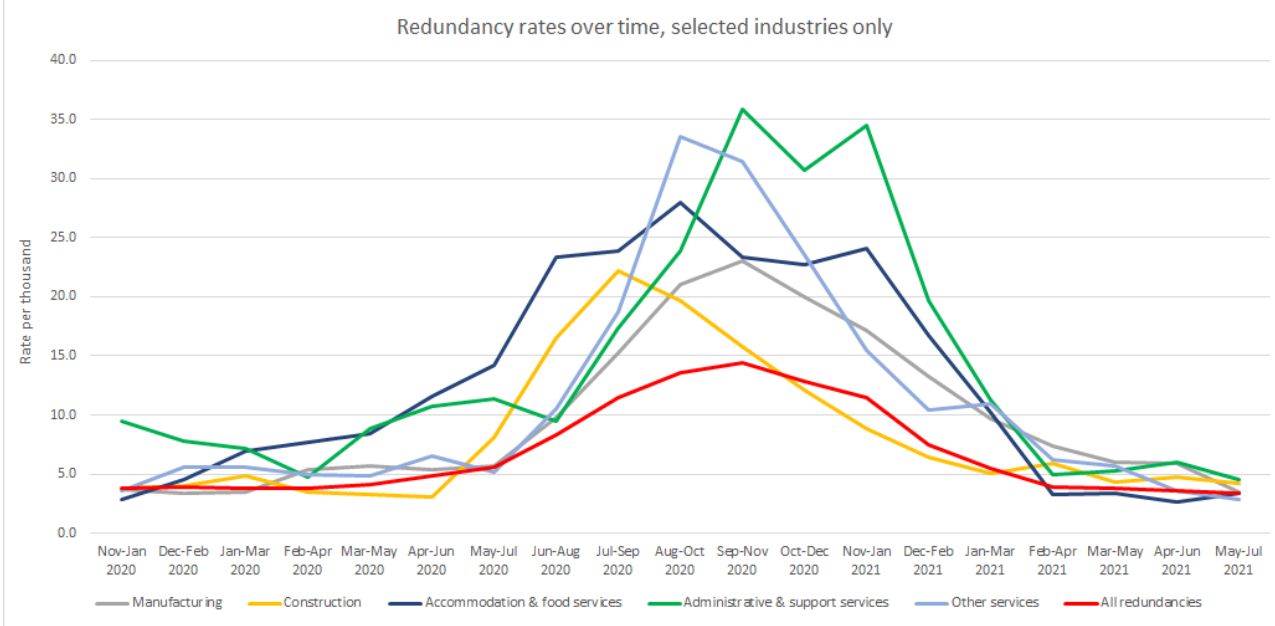
The graph below gives a clearer comparison of how redundancy rates have changed in the months since the first lockdown began in March 2020 compared to rates seen during the financial crisis starting in 2008.



Further data on [redundancy by age and industry](#) is also available. With different sectors seeing varying impacts and rates of recovery from the impacts of the pandemic, the following graph splits the overall redundancy rate by industry over time. While this graph contains too much information to review the impacts on any individual industry, it does indicate that redundancy rates in all industries had broadly fallen back to pre-pandemic levels by summer 2021.



The next graph focussing on a few selected industries which saw greater increases in redundancy rates than average. Overall redundancy rates peaked in September-November 2020, but Construction saw an earlier peak and faster recovery. Manufacturing followed the same pattern as the overall rate, peaking at the same time as the average but at higher levels. The Accommodation and Food Services, Administrative and Support Services and Other Services industries are included here as the sectors with the highest redundancy rates at their peaks.

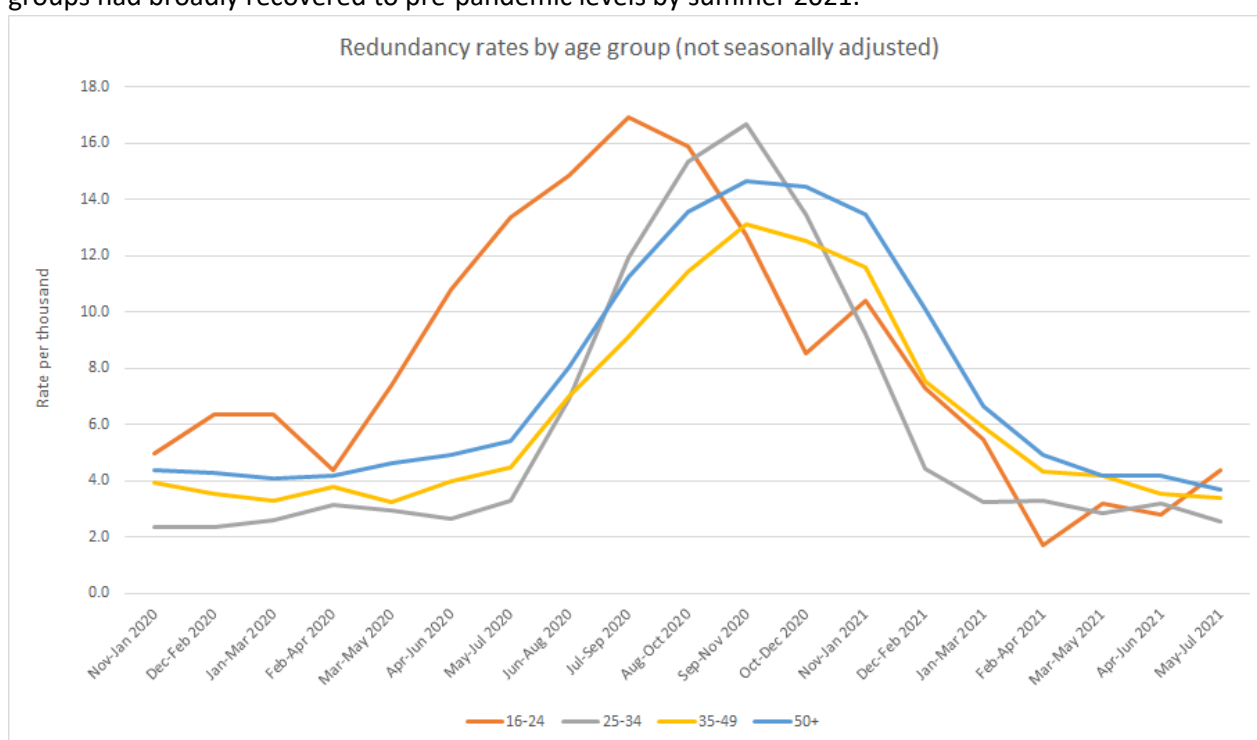


The graphs show the impact on those working in a sector, while the table below presents the number of redundancies by industry during the highest overall peak period (September-November 2020) to show how much impact each industry had on the overall number of redundancies at the time. It should be noted that the overall total number of redundancies includes people whose workplace was outside the UK and those not stating the industry they were made redundant from so the percentages shown do not equal 100%.

Industry	Number of redundancies	% of redundancies
Wholesale, retail & repair of motor vehicles	67,160	16.7%
Manufacturing	59,660	14.9%
Administrative & support services	41,145	10.2%

Other services	36,827	9.2%
Accommodation & food services	34,207	8.5%
Professional, scientific & technical activities	31,521	7.8%
Information & communication	28,555	7.1%
Construction	21,059	5.2%
Transport & storage	20,768	5.2%
Human health & social work activities	14,102	3.5%
Education	13,348	3.3%
Financial, insurance & real estate activities	13,182	3.3%
Agriculture, fishing, energy & water	8,416	2.1%
Public admin & defence; social security	7,642	1.9%

Redundancy rates by age group are presented in the following graph. This shows that the youngest (16–24-year-old) age group has had high rates of redundancy over a longer period than other age groups experienced, with an increase in redundancy starting earlier than seen in the other age groups at February–April 2020. As with the industry redundancy rates, the graph indicates that redundancy rates for all age groups had broadly recovered to pre-pandemic levels by summer 2021.

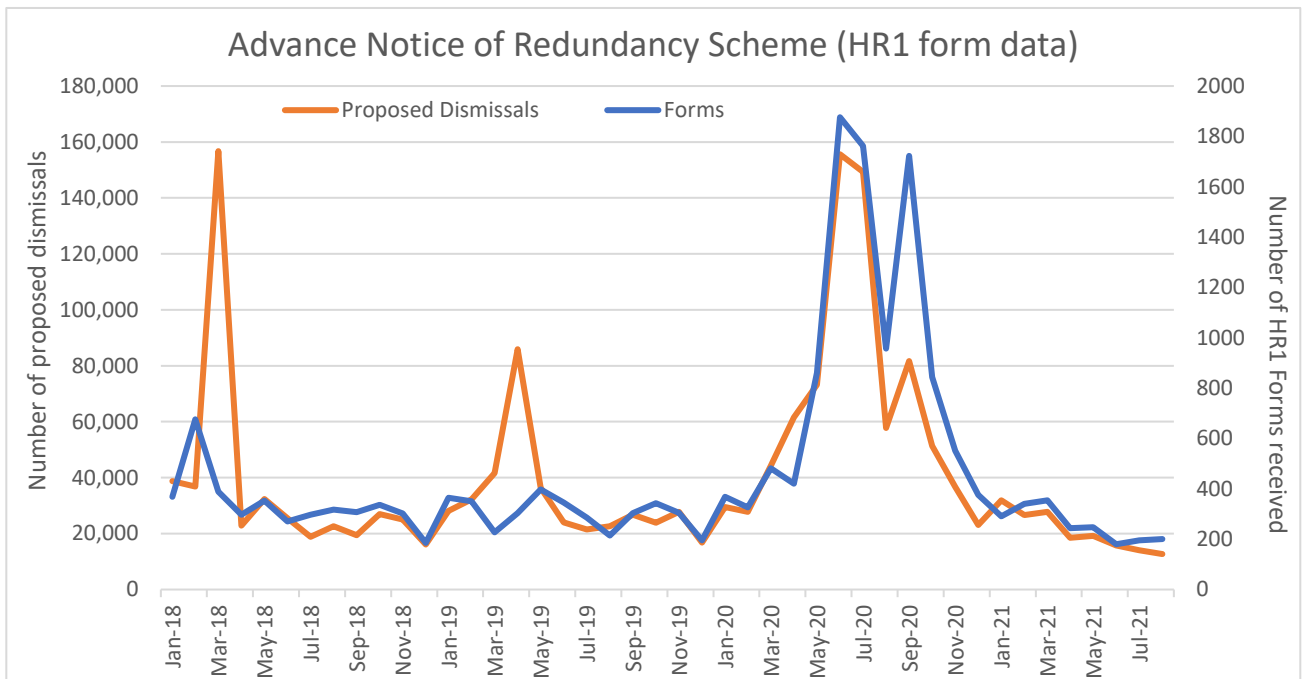


The graphs show the impact on those in each age group, while the table below presents the number of redundancies by age group during the highest overall peak period (September–November 2020) to show how much impact each age group had on the overall number of redundancies at the time.

Age group	Number of redundancies	% of redundancies
16-24	42,746	10.6%
25-34	114,854	28.6%
35-49	120,723	30.1%
50+	123,288	30.7%

While the data covered so far relates to redundancies which have occurred in the recent past, information on planned redundancies can be used to look ahead. Data published in response to a [Freedom of Information request](#) and [Management information on Advanced Notification of Redundancy Scheme](#) from the Insolvency Service is shown in the next graph. This shows large increases since April 2020 in both the number of HR1 forms\* notifying proposed dismissals and the total number of dismissals proposed for

companies proposing to dismiss 20 or more employees at a single establishment. The number of HR1 forms received each month between May and October 2020 was higher than at any point since January 2006, while the total number of dismissals proposed for an individual month did not quite reach March 2018 levels but was higher than in the same month in 2019 from May to December 2020. However, both forms and proposed dismissals have fallen to levels at or below pre-pandemic level from April 2020 onwards.

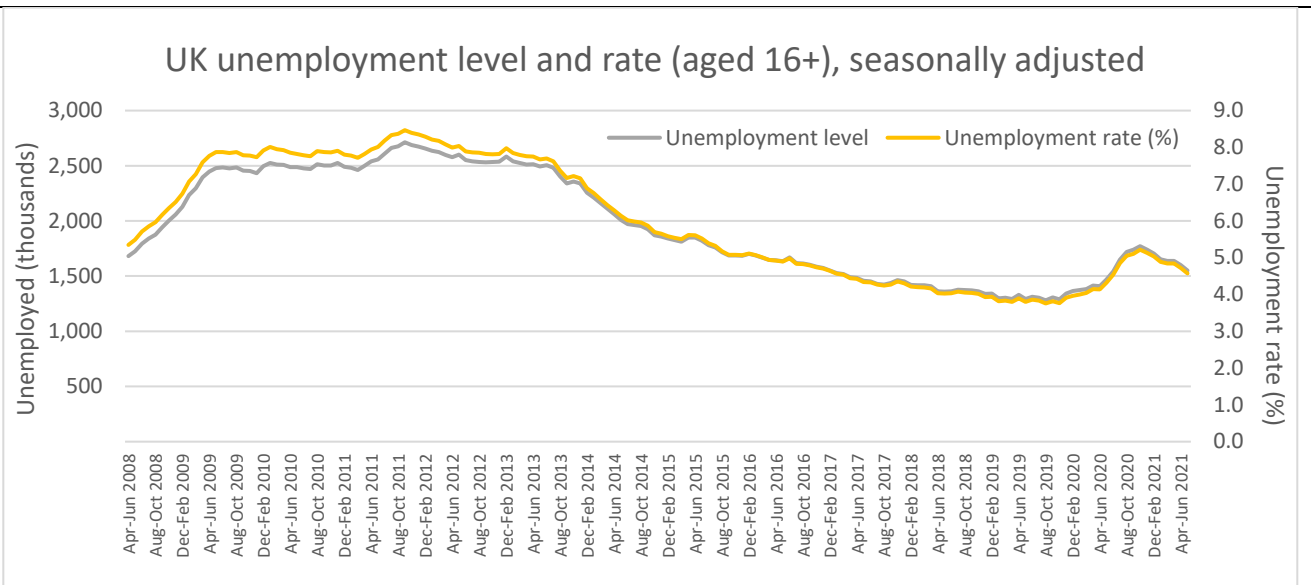


\* Under the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, employers are required to notify the Secretary of State, using a Form HR1, where they are proposing to dismiss 20 or more employees at a single establishment. A separate form is required for each establishment where it is proposed that 20 or more employees will be dismissed, meaning that an employer may be required to file multiple HR1 forms where redundancies are proposed at multiple establishments. The requirement to notify the Secretary of State includes notification of proposed dismissals due to insolvency, restructuring of a solvent/continuing business, changes to terms and conditions, proposed relocation of employees etc. It should also be noted that a proposal to make a given number of dismissals does not necessarily result in all or any of the proposed dismissals occurring.

**Local data:** No local data on redundancies is available. The following section includes local data on unemployment, with changes likely to reflect the impact of redundancies on local residents. This will include redundancies which would not feature in data on HR1 forms because their employers' proposals to dismiss staff have involved fewer than 20 employees at a single establishment.

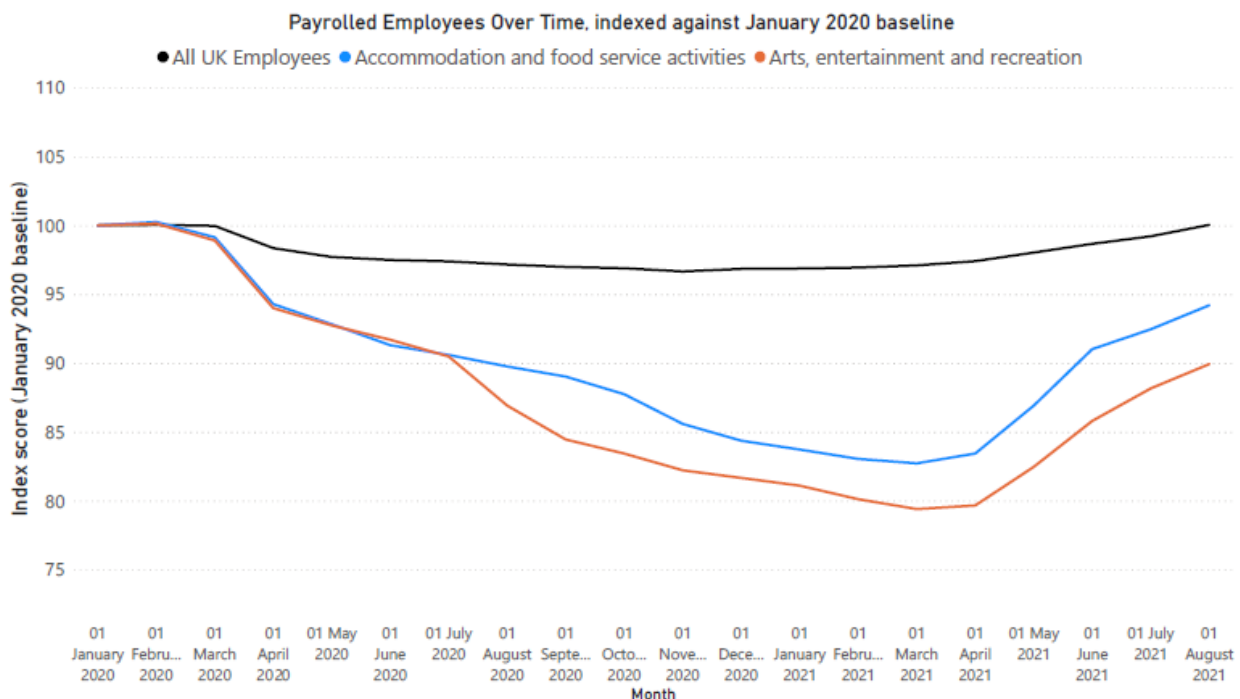
## Subject: Unemployment

**National data:** While redundancies since the start of the pandemic have exceeded levels seen as a result of the 2008 to 2009 financial crisis, unemployment has not. Labour Force Survey estimates show the [unemployment rate](#) for those aged 16 and over has increased significantly since March 2020, peaking at 5.2% in October-December 2020, this is considerably lower than the 8.5% rate recorded in September-November 2011.

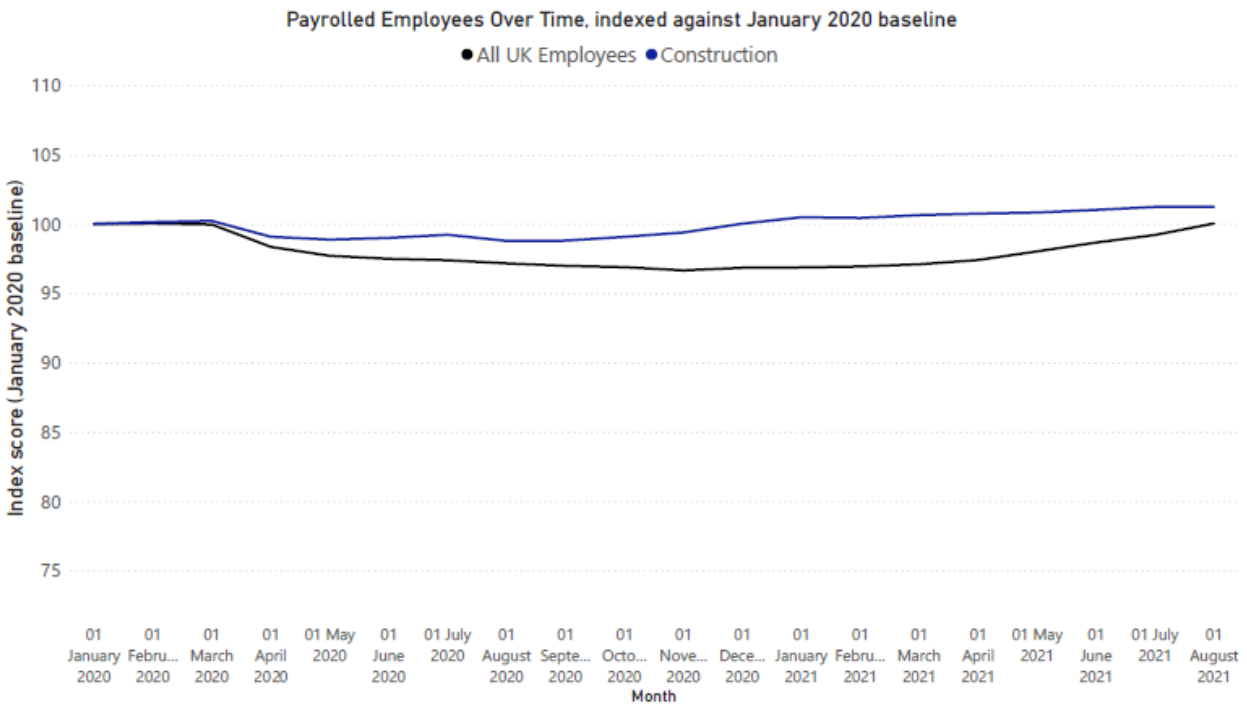
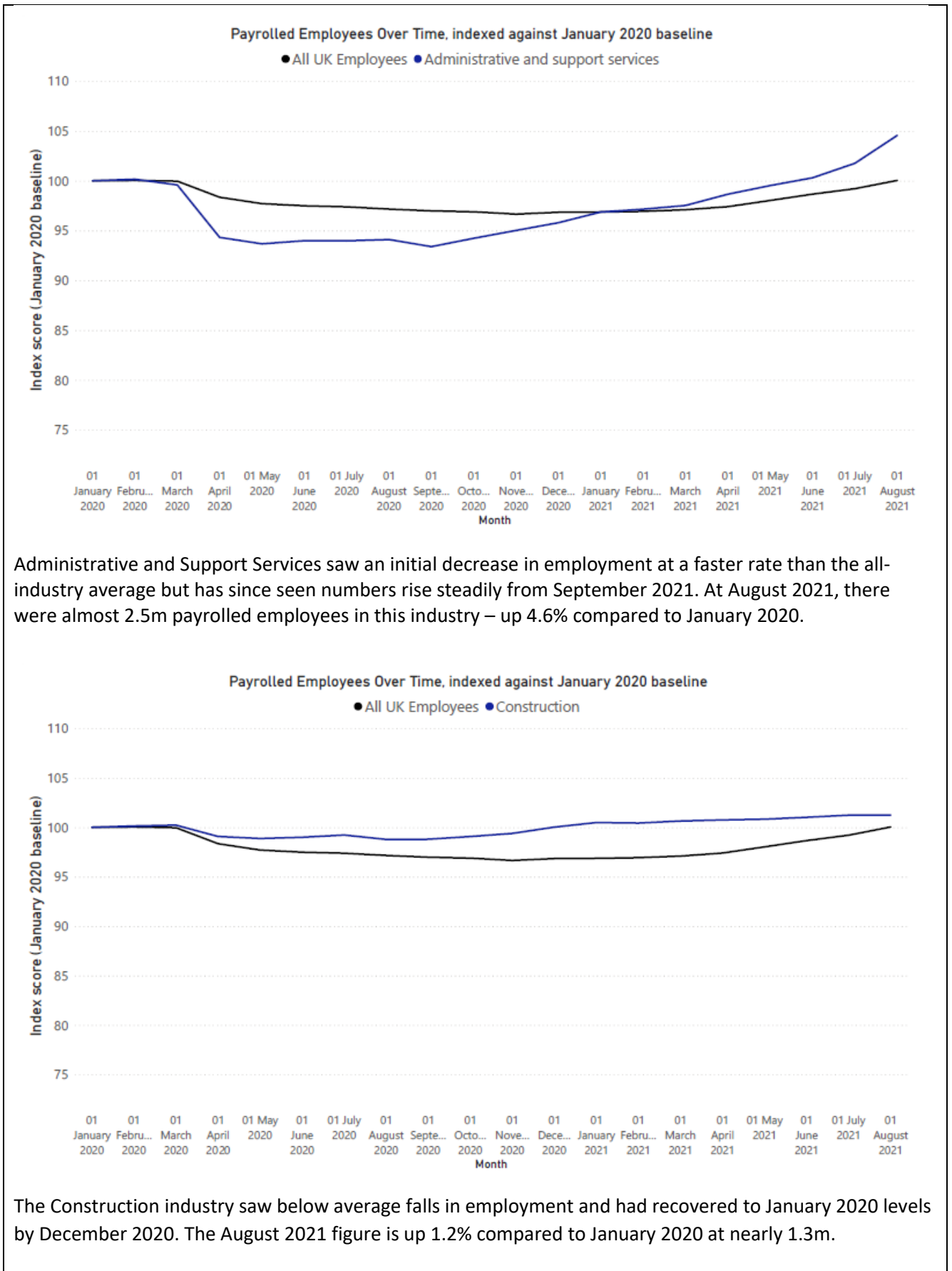


The latest unemployment rate at May-July 2021 is 4.6%. Prior to the pandemic, the rate was last that high in January-March 2017. The latest rate is 0.6 percentage points higher than it was at January-March 2020.

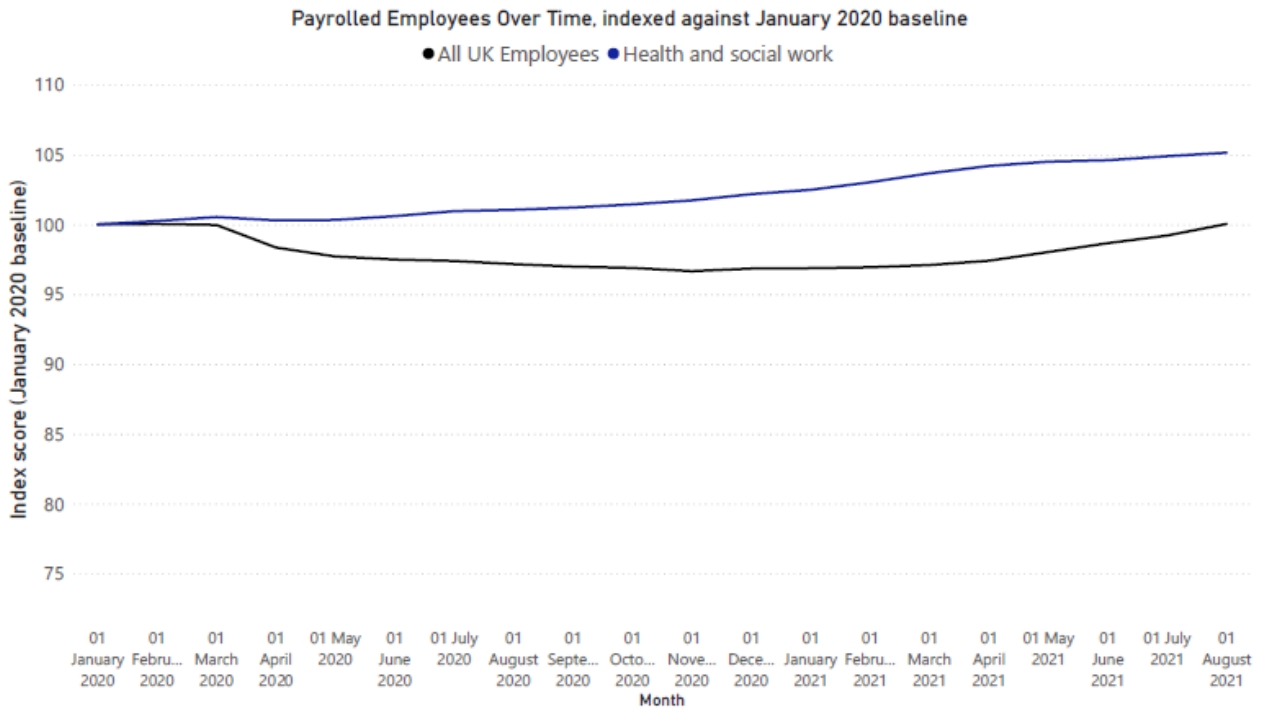
The number of people employed can also be tracked over time, using Payrolled Employee data from [Pay As You Earn Real Time Information](#) published by the ONS. This data shows that the number of payrolled employees in the UK had returned to January 2020 levels by August 2021 (29m employees at August 2021). Employee numbers by industry over this period have been indexed against the January 2020 baseline in the graphs below. Graphs have only been produced for selected industries where patterns over this period show the largest differences to the overall trend.



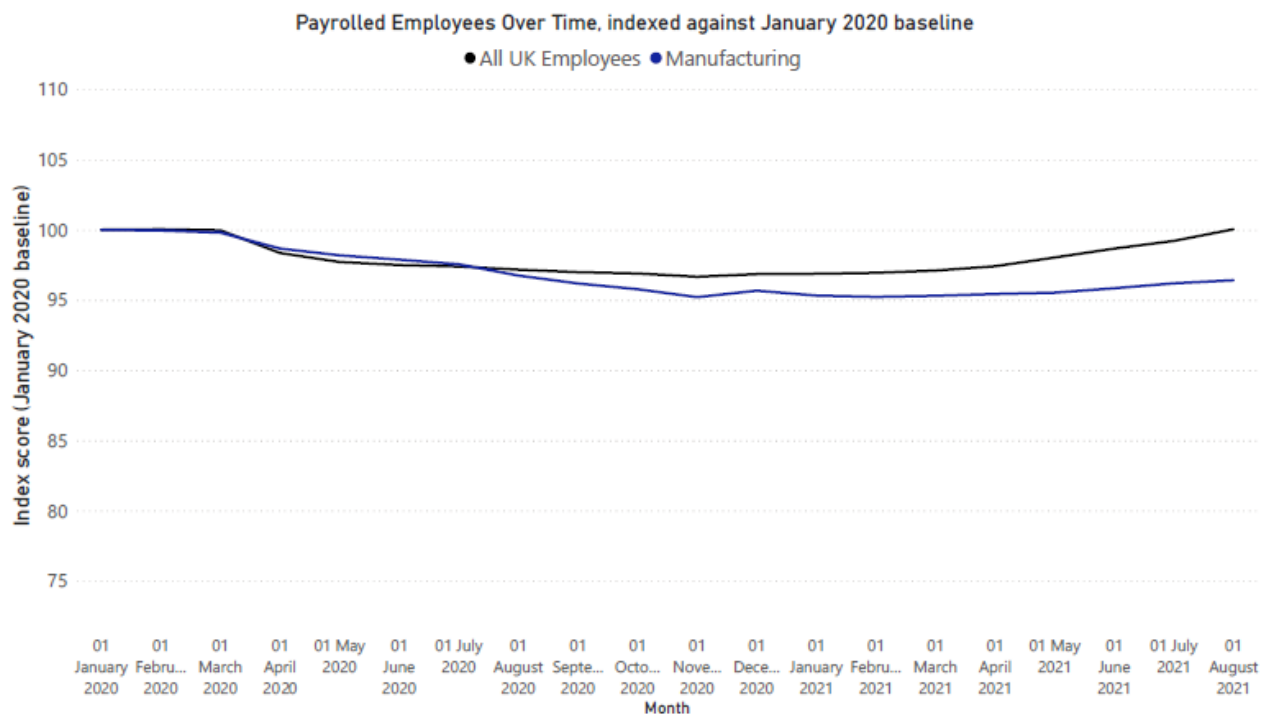
The Accommodation and Food Service Activities and Arts, Entertainment and Recreation industries have seen the greatest decrease in employment since the first lockdown, with employment down by over 17% and 20% respectively at March 2021. Employment in these sectors remains down at August 2021, by 5.8% for Accommodation and Food Service Activities and by 10.1% for Arts, Entertainment and Recreation.





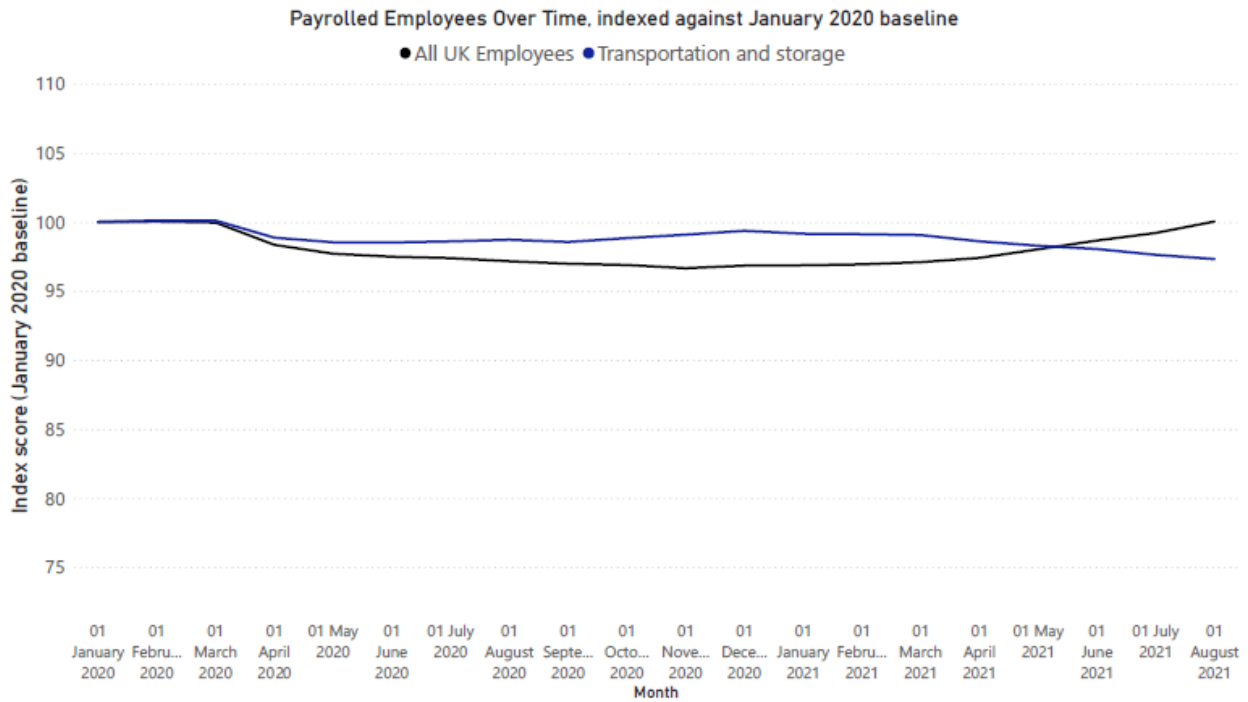


The Health and Social Work did not see payrolled employees fall below the January 2020 baseline at any point and has seen steady growth from August 2020 onwards. At August 2021, there were over 4m payrolled employees in the industry, up by 5.1% compared to the number at January 2020.

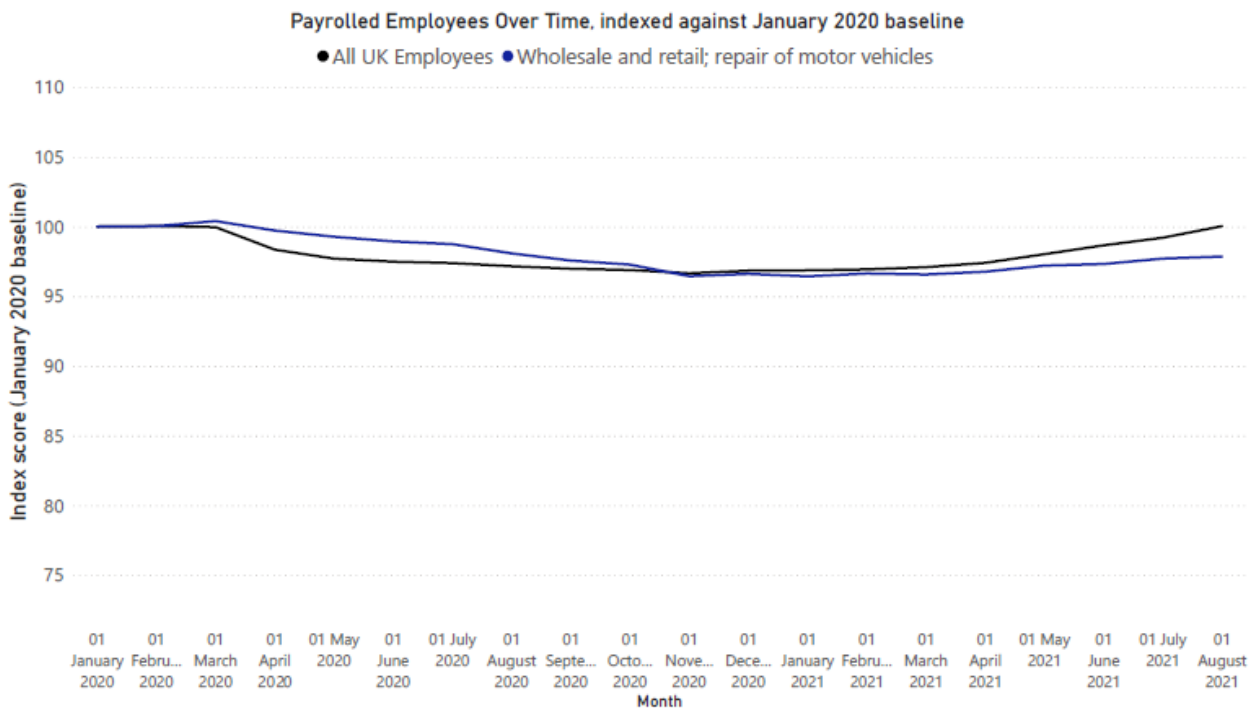


The Manufacturing sector initially followed the overall trend but saw a greater rate of falling employment between July 2020 and February 2021. The rate of recovery since then has been slower than the overall average, leaving the number of payrolled employees at August 2021 3.6% lower than at January 2020.



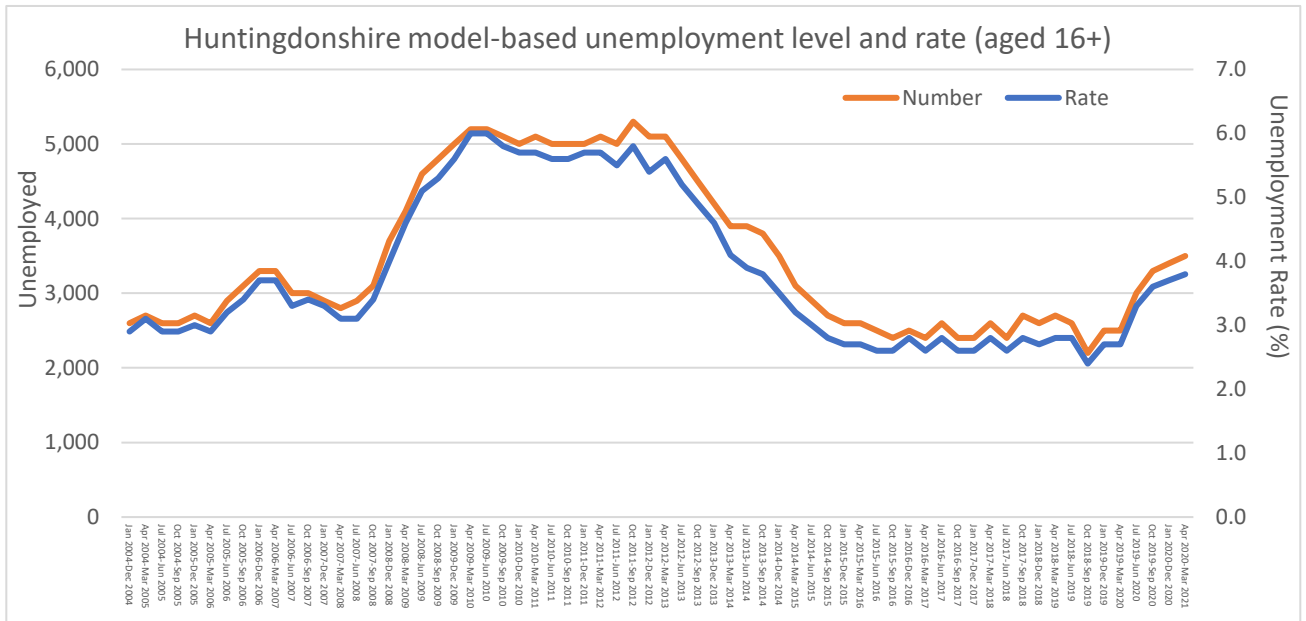


Employment in the Transportation and Storage industry did not initially fall as fast as total employment and had an early recovery as numbers increased between May and December 2020. However, employment in this sector has fallen steadily since then while overall employment has headed in the opposite direction. At August 2021, the number of payrolled employments in Transportation and Storage was 2.7% lower than at January 2020. Recent news articles about lorry driver shortages suggest a range of factors are involved.



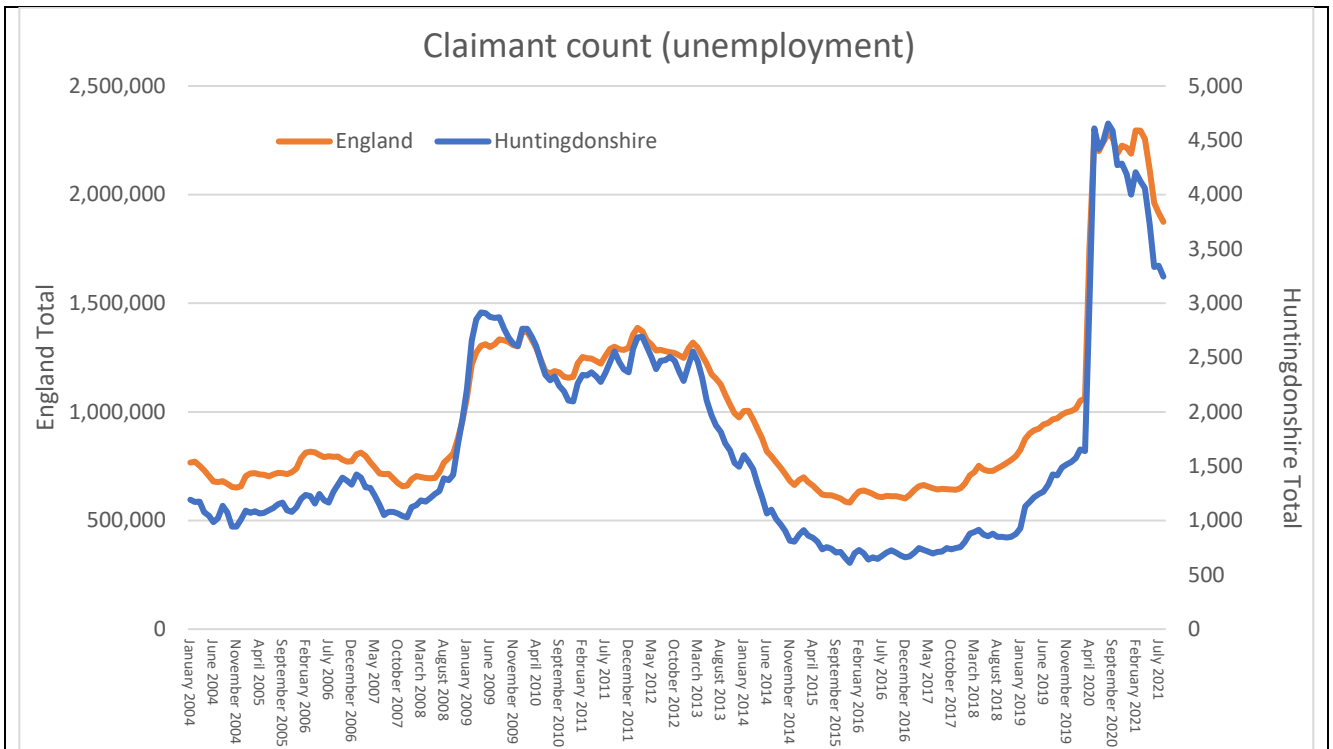
The Wholesale and Retail; Repair of Motor Vehicles industry also saw lower rates of falling employment than average initially. However, employment in this sector continued falling steadily until January 2021 and has since recovered at a slower pace than average. At August 2021, the 4.4m payrolled employees in this industry remained 2.1% lower than at January 2020.

**Local data:** Local district level estimates of unemployment are [model-based estimates](#), calculated from a model based on the Annual Population Survey with Jobseeker's Allowance as an auxiliary variable. Huntingdonshire estimates are shown in the graph below. It should be noted that the latest figures available relate to the period up to March 2021 only so would not show any recent reductions, as seen in the UK figures.



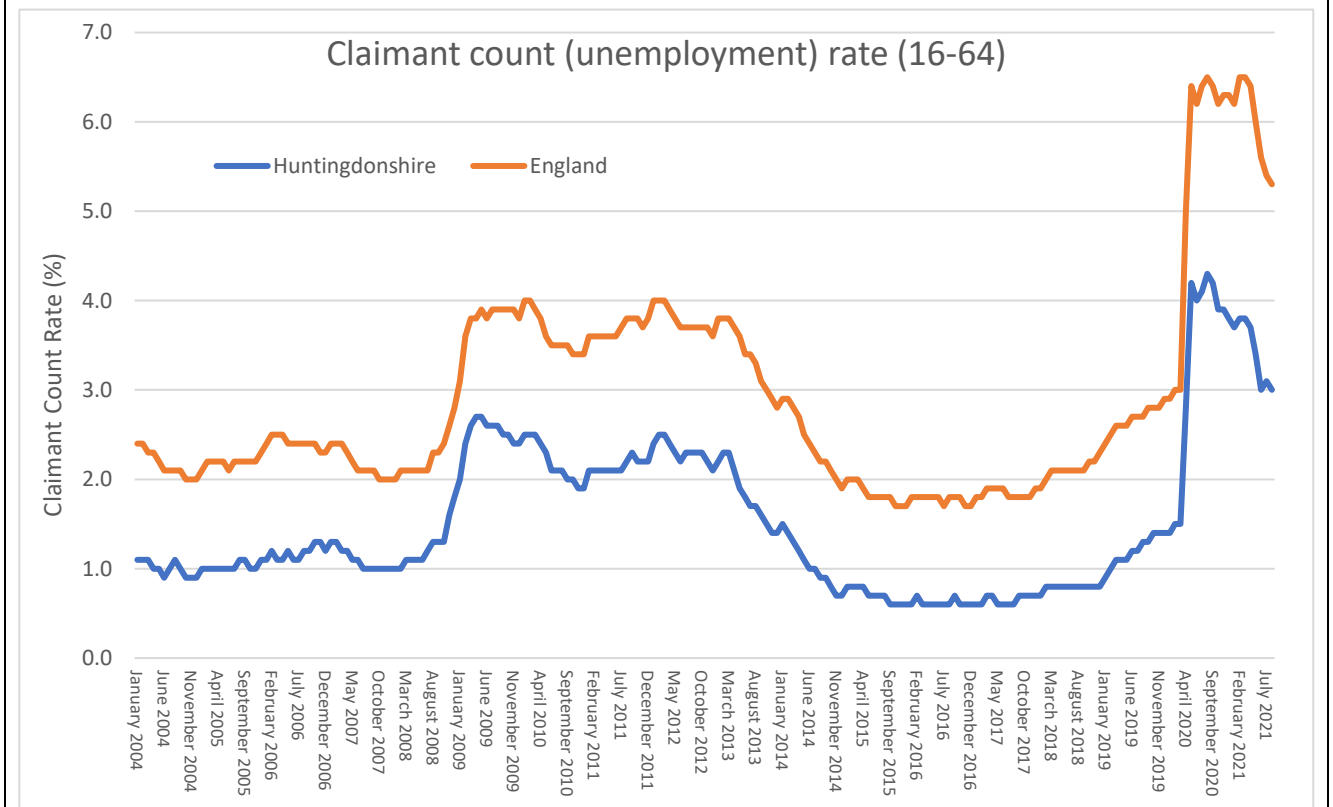
The Huntingdonshire rate at April 2020-March 2021 is 3.8%, which is 1.1 percentage points lower than the UK average at March 2021. However, the UK rate is a quarterly estimate based directly on survey results rather than a model so not directly comparable. It can be compared with the pre-pandemic Huntingdonshire rate for April 2019-March 2020, which was 1.1 percentage points lower at 2.7%. The Huntingdonshire rate was higher than the latest figure throughout the period from December 2008 and September 2014.

As an alternative to the model-based estimates, the Department for Work and Pension’s [claimant count](#) data reports on actual numbers of Universal Credit and Job Seekers Allowance claimants every month – specifically those claiming benefit principally for the reason of being unemployed. While this does not include people who might consider themselves unemployed but are not in receipt of the relevant benefits (including those ineligible to claim for any reason), this data is comparable between areas and over time.

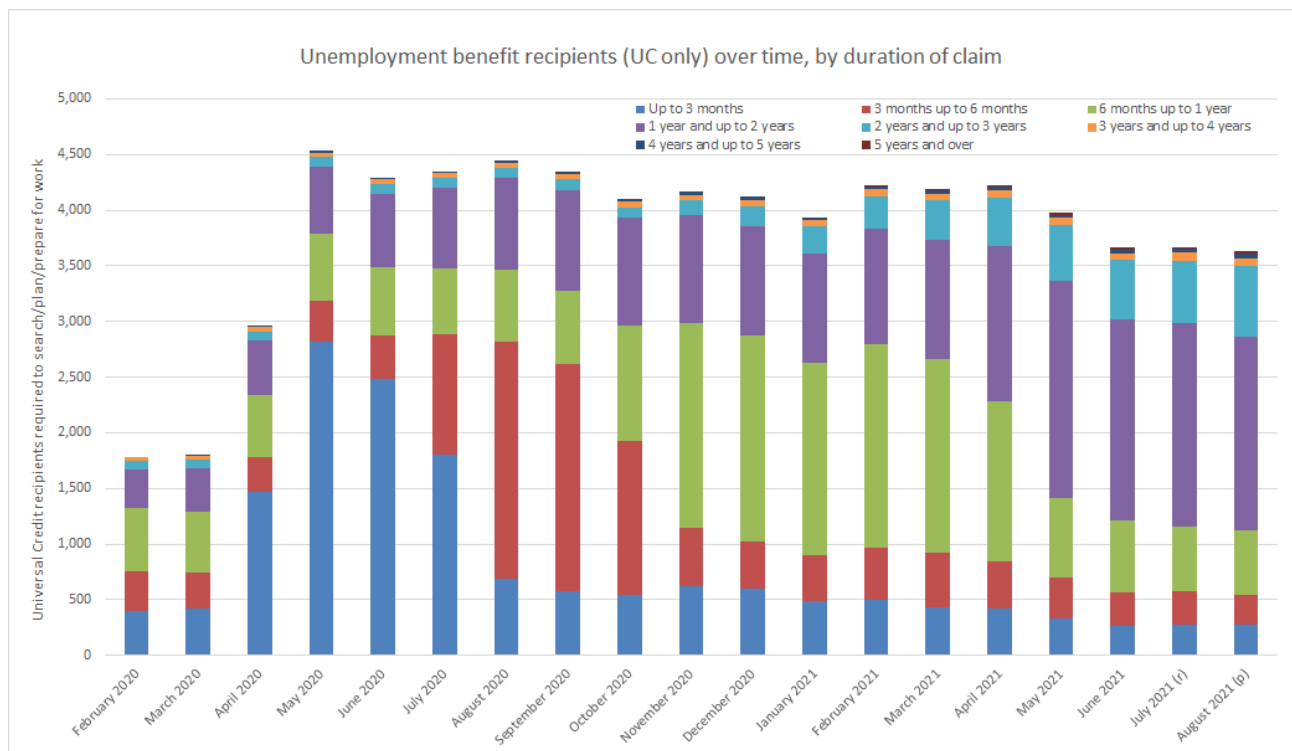


Despite recent reductions in the claimant count total locally, the latest figure at August 2021 (3,245) is higher than seen at any point of the previous economic downturn and remains well above pre-pandemic levels (1,640 at March 2020).

In addition to claimant numbers, the graph below shows claimant count rates (based on the proportion of people aged 16-64 who are claiming benefit principally for the reason of being unemployed). This clearly shows that the Huntingdonshire rate has remained well below the national average but indicates that unemployment locally has followed a very similar pattern to that seen across England. The local rate of 3% at August 2021 is 2.3 percentage points lower than the national average.



While numbers of people in receipt of unemployment benefits have fallen since the peak in 2020, the level at August 2021 was nearly double the level recorded locally in March 2020. Focussing on [Universal Credit claimants who are required to search, plan or prepare for work](#) (note: this excludes those in receipt of Jobseekers Allowance), a significant proportion of those receiving unemployment benefits at the latest count had been receiving them for over a year. In March 2020, just over 500 residents had been claiming for durations of at least a year. At August 2021, this had increased nearly five-fold to almost 2,500 residents. The graph below indicates that many of this group were new claimants early in the pandemic, with large numbers of people starting new claims around April-May 2020 switching between the ‘up to 3 months’ and ‘3 months up to 6 months’ categories around July-August 2020. Then large numbers moved up to the ‘6 months up to 1 year’ category around October-November 2020 and then into the ‘1 year and up to 2 years’ category from April 2021. More than two-thirds of current claimants at August 2021 had been claiming for at least a year.



## Subject: Self-employment

**National data:** According to [Statista](#) there were over 4million people self-employed in the UK in July 2021 and this number had been increasing at a steady rate for the last 20 years. However due to the impact of Covid-19, they suggest that self-employment levels have fallen to the lowest since the mid 2000’s. The graph below which includes data from the Annual Population Survey for the period April 2020 - March 2021 shows there were 3.41million self-employed people in England and over 380,00 in the Eastern Region. As you can see there is a significant national drop of just over 400,00 fewer people compared to the previous year, numbers within the East of England have also declined but not to the same extent seen nationally. Source: [Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Labour Market Statistics \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](#)

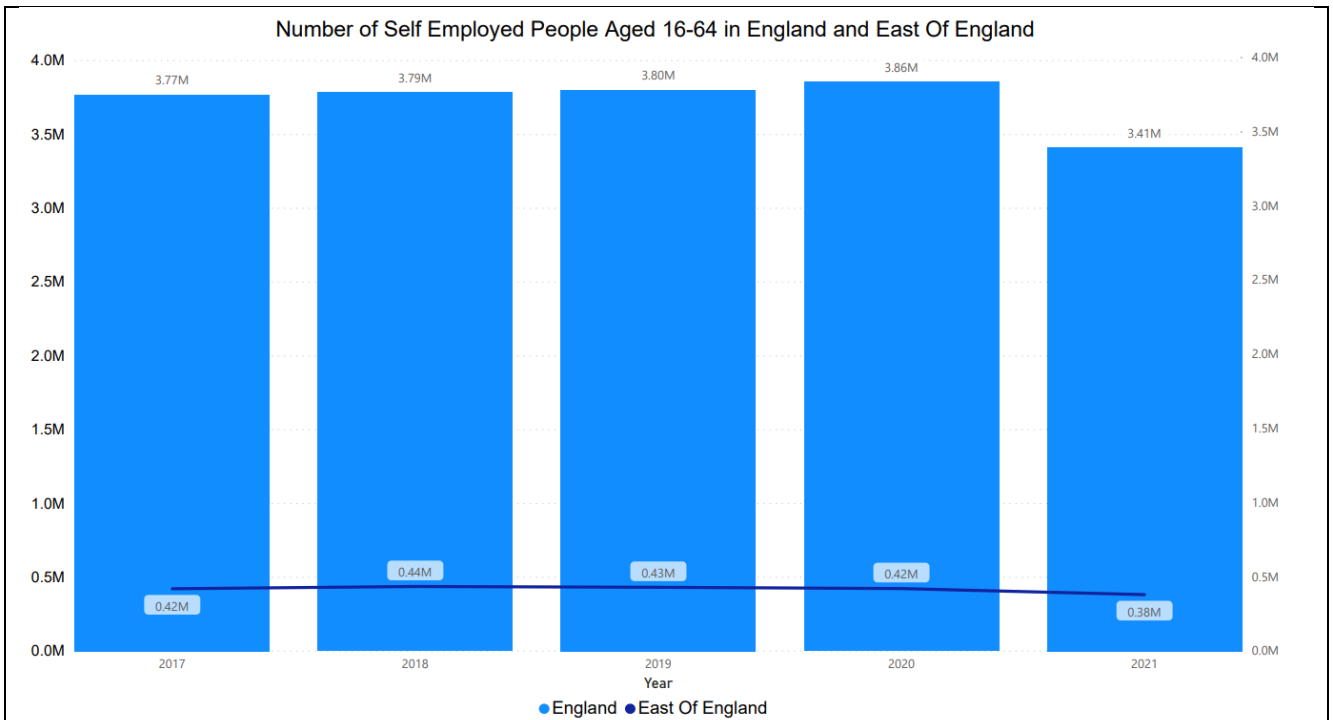


Figure 35: Number of People Self Employed (16-64) In England and East of England. Source: Nomis

**Local data:** According to the Annual Population Survey, at March 2021 there were 11,200 self-employed people within Huntingdonshire (10.3% of people aged 16-64 who were employed) which is a decrease of nearly 9% compared to the previous year. This is slightly higher than the decrease seen overall within Cambridgeshire (7.36%) but lower than the national trend in England of -11.5% when comparing data to the year before. Although there is a decrease in the most recent figures for Huntingdonshire, the figures are still above the number of self-employed people in previous years (up from 8000 in March 2019 to 11200 in March 2021).

Source: [Labour Market Profile - Nomis - Official Labour Market Statistics \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](https://nomisweb.co.uk)

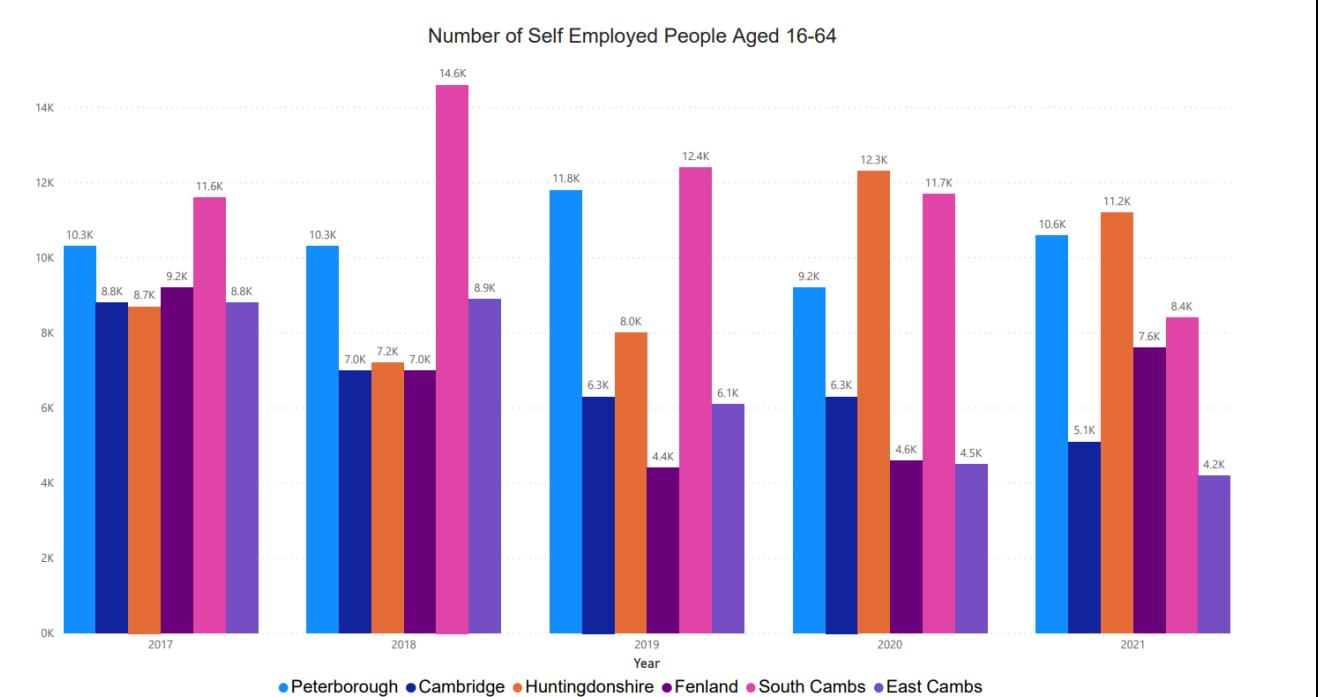


Figure 36: Number of Self-Employed People (16-64) Local Geographical Area by Authority. Source: Nomis

## Subject: Support for self-employed residents

**National data:** High numbers of self-employed workers, or of small businesses, may influence some regions resiliency when compared to others as they likely face sharper declines in sales than larger companies, with broader customer bases (ICAEW, 2020). Oxford Economics (2020) found that the Eastern region had a vulnerability index score of 0.3 regarding the numbers of self-employed workers (0 represents the UK). This was because self-employed workers would not earn wages whilst self-isolating or contracting the virus, causing an immediate consumption hit (Oxford Economics, 2020)- Economic Development Analyst

The [Self-Employment Income Support Scheme](#) (SEISS) provides support for self-employed individuals whose business has been affected by Coronavirus (COVID-19). There have been five grants issued by central government to eligible claimants and as at 15<sup>th</sup> August 2021, £27.1 bn pounds has been paid out to nearly 3 million individuals in the UK. The fifth and final grant covered May to September 2021 and was determined in part by the amount a claimant’s turnover had reduced in the financial year 2020/21. [LG Inform](#) calculate the take-up rate for England overall at August 2021 (fifth grant) to be 33%, based on the total number of claims to date over potentially eligible population.

The sector with the highest number of potentially eligible individuals and the highest proportion of claims is the construction industry. By 15 August, construction workers had made 284,000 claims for the fifth SEISS grant, totalling £729 million. Construction is the largest sector among the self-employed population with 1.2 million individuals assessed for eligibility. HMRC only publish data on the take up rate by sector at national level and not at local levels.

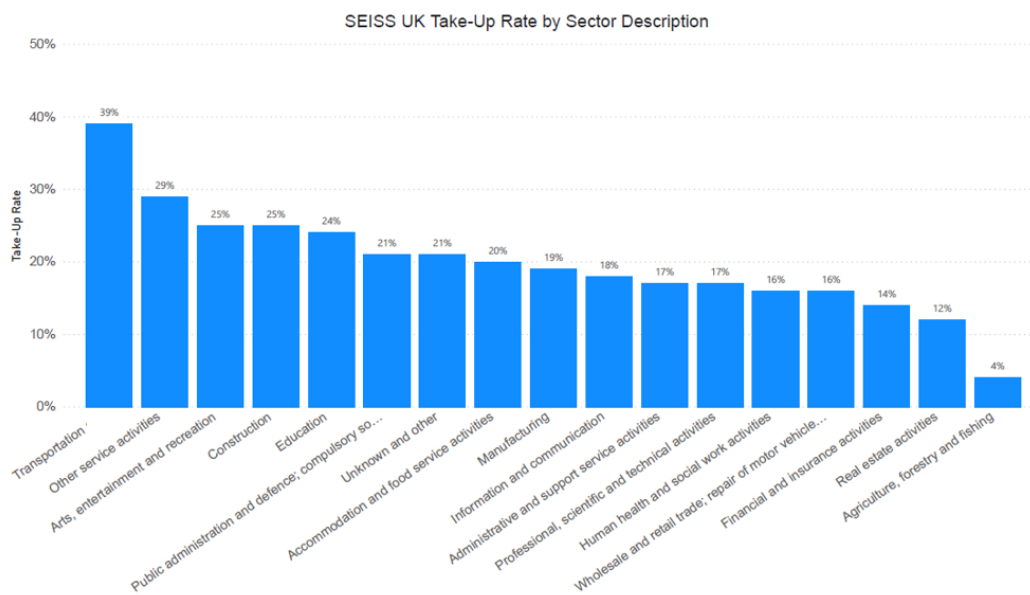


Figure 37: SEISS Take-Up Rate By Sector. Source: Nomis

[HMRC](#) data relating to the number of claims for the 5<sup>th</sup> SEISS grant by geography shows the SEISS population and number of claims made by country and region. The East of England was ranked third largest for the number of assessed potentially eligible population.

SEISS Population and Number of Claims for the 5th Grant Made to 15th August 2021 by Country and Region. (Ranked by Size of Assessed for Eligibility Population)

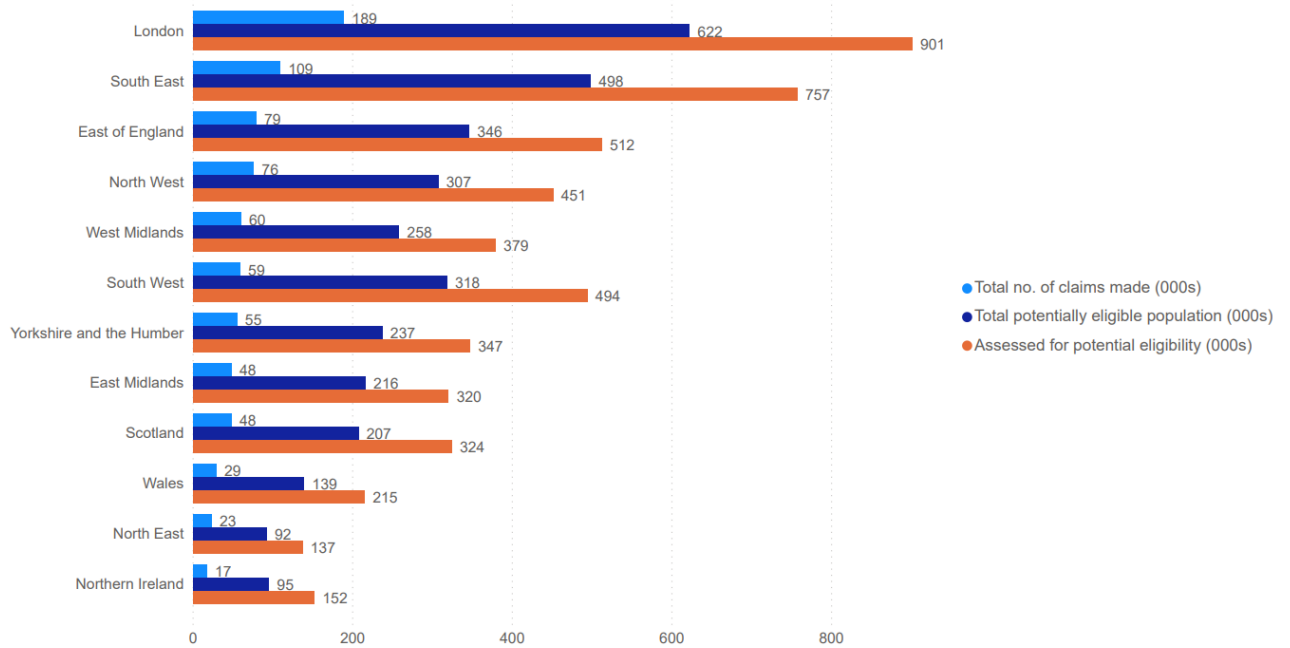


Figure 38: SEISS No Of Claims of 5th Grant Made (to 08/21) by Country and Region. Source: Nomis

**Local data:** [LG Inform](#) publish SEISS data at Local Authority Level and to July 2021 the total number of Self-employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) claims in Huntingdonshire were 22,400 (taking into account all rounds of grant issues). These were made by self-employed people who were potentially eligible to claim, which is slightly higher than the mean number of claims for all local authority districts in the Eastern Region. The total number of claims submitted in Huntingdonshire was higher than those by the self-employed community located within our geographical neighbours (Fenland, South Cambridgeshire, East Cambridgeshire and Cambridge).

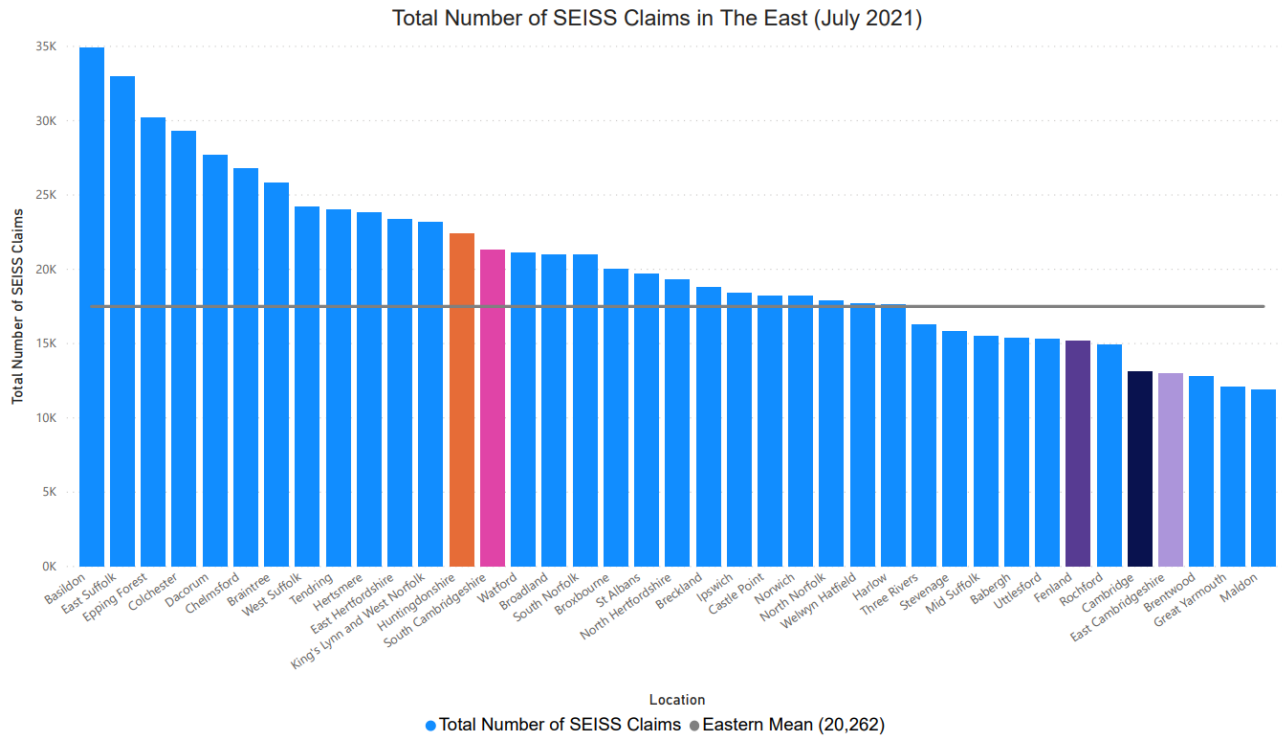


Figure 39: Total Number SEISS Claims In Eastern Region. Source: LG Inform

There were 6,800 individuals claiming SEISS (for all rounds of grants issued) in Huntingdonshire at July 2021, receiving a total of £66,700,00.00 shared between eligible claimants.





Huntingdonshire has mainly followed the national trend, but at a lower rate for the percentage of people that have claimed SEISS grants (per round) since the scheme opened in May 2020. The data has not been published monthly by HMRC but at different intervals. It should be noted that eligibility was changed for the fourth and fifth rounds to take into account 2019/20 tax returns and therefore became open to those who became self employed in the same tax year, meaning more people qualified to apply. The graph below shows the total take-up (%) per grant since the scheme began in Huntingdonshire and in England.

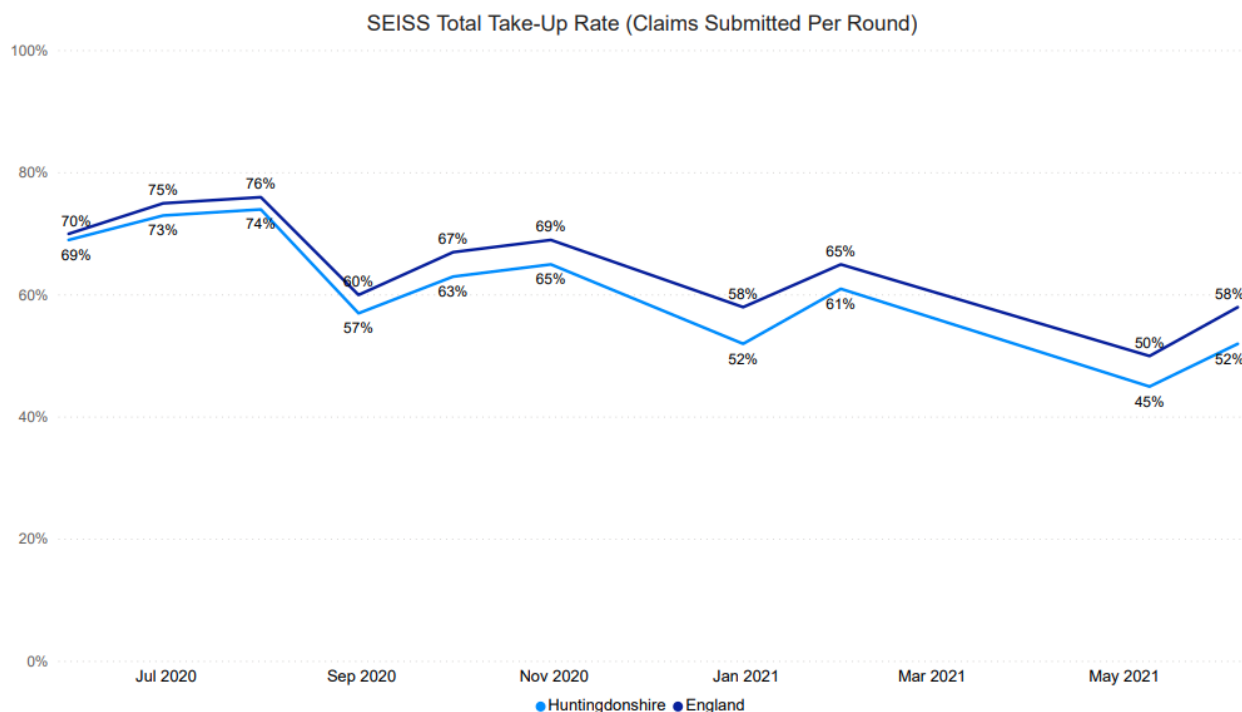


Figure 42: SEISS Total Take up Rate (Claims Submitted Per Round) in Huntingdonshire and England.  
Source: Coronavirus: Self Employment Income Support Scheme

The House of Commons Library published a research briefing paper called [Coronavirus: Self Employment Income Support Scheme](#) in October 2021, which documents the various dates associated with each round.

The table below outlines the round that each entry on the graph refers to.

Claims Up To	SEISS Grant Round	Huntingdonshire Take-Up Rate %	England Take-Up Rate %
31/05/2020	1	69%	70%
30/06/2020	1	73%	75%
31/07/2020	1	74%	76%
31/08/2020	2	57%*	60%*
30/09/2020	2	63%	67%
31/10/2020	2	65%	69%
31/12/2020	3	52%	58%
31/01/2021	3	61%	65%
09/05/2021	4	45%	50%
06/06/2021	4	52%	58%

\*This calculation referred to the number of claims to date (not per round)