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KEY POINTS

10% increase in Oxford City's population in the last five years – this is the fastest population growth of any local authority district in the South East. More modest growth in rest of Oxfordshire;

Most of Oxfordshire's districts have seen an increasing dependent population supported by a smaller number of people of working age in the last five years;

Labour market participation and employment rates in Oxfordshire are above the South East and national average. Qualification levels are also above average in most of the county, but are relatively weak in Cherwell and West Oxfordshire;

Proportion of working age people in Oxfordshire on key benefits is only half the national average, although numbers on benefits has increased slightly in the last 12 months. Numbers of people in Oxfordshire with personal debt problems are also below the South East and national average;

4,400 people are currently unemployed in Oxfordshire; this is 1.1% of the working age population, which is well below the South East (1.6%) and national average (2.6%). Numbers out of work in Oxfordshire are 5% higher than they were 12 months ago, but this is a smaller increase than has taken place regionally (10%) and nationally (14%);

Currently 21,700 VAT-registered businesses in Oxfordshire. Over one third of the county's businesses are in the real estate and business services sector, and this sector has been the main source of new businesses in the county in the last few years;

The amount of empty commercial and industrial property in Oxfordshire is below the South East and national average, and has declined in recent years;

Average property price in Oxfordshire continues to rise, and is currently £260,400, representing an increase of 10% on the equivalent quarter in 2005. Property prices in the county are currently 10% above the South East average and 31% above the average for England and Wales. Price increases during the last 12 months (10% in Oxfordshire) have been above those experienced at regional (6%) and national levels (8%).

1. INTRODUCTION

This report provides the latest in a series of quarterly updates looking at recent changes in the Oxfordshire economy. It has been prepared by the Oxfordshire Economic Observatory (OEO). The report draws largely on official published statistics that have been released in the last three months, since the completion of the last quarterly report in June 2006. The main areas in which new information for Oxfordshire and its districts has become available during the last quarter are listed below:

- Mid-year population estimates for 2005 (released by the Office for National Statistics, ONS, on 29 August 2006) (see Section 2 and Tables 1-3);
- Updated results from the Annual Population Survey (APS) for the 2005 calendar year, providing data on economic activity, employment, unemployment, qualifications and training (released by ONS in August 2006) (Section 3 and Tables 4 & 5);
- Updated data on numbers of benefit claimants for the first quarter of 2006 (released by the Department for Work & Pensions in August 2006) (Section 4 and Tables 6 & 7);
- A new dataset on levels of personal consumer debt, initially providing figures for 2004 (released by the Registry Trust Ltd on 14 August 2006) (Section 5 and Table 8);
- The latest monthly data on numbers of claimant unemployed and duration of unemployment, for August 2006 (released by ONS on 13 September 2006) (Section 6 and Tables 9-11). Data on numbers of Job Centre vacancies for August 2006 is not currently available; we have therefore used the data for July 2006 in this report (Section 6 and Tables 12 & 13);
- Counts of VAT-registered enterprises for March 2006, broken down by industry sector, employment size and age of business (released by ONS on 11 September 2006) (Section 7 and Tables 14-17);
- Commercial and industrial property vacancy statistics for 2003/4 and 2004/5 (released by the Department for Communities & Local Government on 13 July 2006) (Section 8 and Table 18);
- Updated house price data for the second quarter of 2006 (released by the Land Registry on 2 August 2006) (Section 9 and Tables 19-21).

We had also hoped to include statistics on the summer 2006 GCSE and 'A' level results for Oxfordshire. However, we have been unable to obtain data from a sufficient number of schools to draw firm conclusions in this quarterly report. A

full breakdown of Oxfordshire's results will hopefully be provided in next quarter's report.

Other new or updated statistics released this quarter, but not discussed further in the report, include the following:

- Release of 2001 Census data for all urban areas in Oxfordshire, defined as settlements with at least 1,500 residents (released on the NOMIS website in August 2006). Census statistics are available for 50 separate "urban areas" in Oxfordshire. This geography is based on the physical extent of built up areas, and provides an alternative to the use of ward level data in obtaining statistics on the county's towns and other settlements. Appendix 1 lists the urban areas in Oxfordshire for which statistics are available. The data can be found on the NOMIS website, at www.nomisweb.co.uk;
- Commercial and industrial floorspace and rateable value statistics for 2005 at sub-local authority district level (released by the Department for Communities & Local Government on 20 July 2006). This dataset provides statistics at middle layer super output area level, to complement the local authority district level data released earlier in 2006. The data can be found on the Neighbourhood Statistics website, at www.statistics.gov.uk;
- Number of dwellings in each council tax band for 2004, also at sub-local authority district level (released by the Department for Communities & Local Government on 18 September 2006). This dataset provides figures at census output area level (a sub-ward level geography), and therefore allows a very fine grained geographical analysis to be undertaken. The data can be found on the Neighbourhood Statistics website.
- Housing demand indicators for 2005 (released by the Department for Communities & Local Government on 1 September 2006). These indicators provide data on numbers of difficult to let, low demand and vacant dwellings, and can again be found on the Neighbourhood Statistics website.

Readers may also be interested in two recent reports of relevance to the Oxfordshire economy:

- MKOB Learning & Skills Council, Revised Oxfordshire Skills and Economic Assessment, published May 2006. This is an updated version of this report, originally published in 2004 (available from the MKOB LSC website, at www.lsc.gov.uk/mkob);
- The Oxford Trust, The Demand for Business Support by Science and Technology Companies in Oxfordshire: Report of a Survey by The Oxford Trust, July 2006 (available from the Oxford Trust website, at www.oxtrust.org.uk).

2. POPULATION

Updated population estimates for Oxfordshire were released by the Office for National Statistics at the end of August 2006. These are the official mid-year population estimates, and provide updated figures for mid-2005. Estimates are available for Oxfordshire and its five local authority districts. The 2005 estimates are summarised in Table 1 (for the total population) and Table 2 (for the working age population). These Tables also show rates of population growth in the last five years.

The mid-2005 estimates confirm the continued increase in population in Oxford City, and more limited growth in the other Oxfordshire districts. The county's resident population reached almost 627,000 in mid-2005, an increase of 3.3% since mid-2000. This compares with average population growth of only 2.2% in the South East region and 2.4% nationally (Table 1).

The continued population growth in Oxford City is the most notable feature, with almost a 10% increase recorded since mid-2000. This is the fastest rate of population growth over this period amongst all 67 local authority districts in the South East. Over the same period, growth has been at or below the South East average in all other Oxfordshire districts, and South Oxfordshire has seen almost no population growth since mid-2000 (Table 1). The population increase in Oxford City since 2000 has been due almost entirely to growth in the working age population, but in particular to increasing numbers of 20-29 year olds (presumably many of them students). The other Oxfordshire districts have seen very little growth in the numbers of people of working age in recent years, and South Oxfordshire has actually experienced a decline (Table 2).

The latest population estimates confirm a trend in most of Oxfordshire's districts towards an increasing dependent population supported by a smaller number of people of working age. There has been an increase in population dependency ratios in all Oxfordshire districts since 2000, with the exception of Oxford City. This is in contradiction to the regional and national trend over this period, which was for a small reduction in dependency ratios (Table 3).

3. LABOUR MARKET PARTICIPATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

Updated results from the Annual Population Survey (APS) were released by the Office for National Statistics in August 2006. The APS, formerly known as the Labour Force Survey, is a residence based labour market survey which provides information on population characteristics, economic activity, employment and unemployment, qualifications and training. Results are available for Oxfordshire as a whole and the five local authority districts, and are updated quarterly. Annual results are also available. Since the results are survey-based, they are subject to sampling errors and should be regarded as estimates rather than

accurate counts. The latest update provides data for the last quarter of 2005, but in this report we have used annual results for the 2005 calendar year. Selected results for Oxfordshire are summarised in Tables 4 and 5, and discussed below.

The latest APS results show that participation in the labour market, as measured by economic activity rates, continues to be above the South East and national averages for all Oxfordshire districts except Oxford City. An estimated 83% of Oxfordshire's working age residents were economically active (employed or unemployed) in 2005, compared with an average of 82% in the South East and 78% in England. Labour market participation is highest in West Oxfordshire (88%), Vale of White Horse (86%) and Cherwell (85%), and lowest in Oxford City (75%) (Table 4). The figure for Oxford is of course partly a reflection of the large student population, who do not count as economically active.

A broadly similar picture applies to employment rates in Oxfordshire. The employment rate for an area measures the percentage of working age residents who are in paid employment, including employees and the self-employed. Oxfordshire's employment rate was 81% in 2005, but this ranged from over 86% in West Oxfordshire to only 72% in Oxford City (Table 4).

Table 5 summarises the latest APS results on qualification levels amongst Oxfordshire's working age population. The latest figures for 2005 confirm the relatively weak position of Cherwell and to a lesser extent West Oxfordshire compared with the rest of Oxfordshire. The proportions of working age residents with NVQ Level 3, 4 and 5 qualifications are below the South East average in both of these districts. There is also evidence of a persistent small minority of people in Oxfordshire (around 10-11% in most districts) who have no formal qualifications, although this is little different from the regional average (Table 5).

4. BENEFIT CLAIMANTS

The latest quarterly benefits data from the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) was released in August 2006. This shows the number of benefit claimants in the first quarter of 2006 (January to March). This benefits data relates to people of working age (males aged 16-64 and females aged 16-59), and provides an overall count of the number of people claiming at least one key benefit. The benefits included are Bereavement Benefit, Carer's Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Incapacity Benefit/Severe Disablement Allowance, Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit, and Widow's Benefit. This count of benefit claimants provides a measure of the number of working age people experiencing some form of income or employment deprivation.

Results are available at local authority district level and also at sub-district level, including wards and super output areas. We focus here only on the district-level data, but interested readers can explore the sub-district data on the NOMIS

website, at www.nomisweb.co.uk. The relevant figures for Oxfordshire's districts are summarised in Table 6; comparisons are also provided with the equivalent quarter in 2005.

The latest data shows that there were 30,300 Oxfordshire residents claiming one of the key benefits listed above during the first quarter of 2006. This represents 7.6% of the working age population, which is well below the South East (10.2%) and national averages (14.9%). At district level, the proportion of benefit claimants is lowest in West Oxfordshire (6.5%), South Oxfordshire (6.6%) and Vale of White Horse (6.8%) (Table 6). Indeed, these percentages are amongst the lowest in the South East region, and these three districts are currently ranked 5th, equal 6th and 12th out of the 67 local authority districts in the region (where a rank of 1 indicates the lowest proportion of benefit claimants) (see Table 7). Numbers on benefits are higher in Cherwell (8.2%) and Oxford City (9.0%), but these proportions are still comfortably below the South East average.

Numbers of benefit claimants in Oxfordshire increased slightly in the 12 months to January-March 2006. The overall increase across the county was c.550, or 1.8%; this was lower than the increase experienced in the South East region (2.8%), but above the average national increase (1.2%) (Table 6). There was also some variation at district level within Oxfordshire. Increases in numbers of claimants were largest in Cherwell (3.3%), Oxford City (2.2%) and West Oxfordshire (1.9%), and lowest in South Oxfordshire (0.4%) and Vale of White Horse (0.6%).

5. LEVELS OF PERSONAL DEBT

This section looks at a new dataset on unmanaged personal debt that has recently become available. The data has been supplied by the Registry Trust, and was released on the Neighbourhood Statistics website in August 2006. The data is based on County Court Judgements (CCJ's) taken out against individuals for outstanding personal debts. This new dataset is likely to be of interest to those concerned with problems of low income, deprivation and social exclusion. Results are initially available for the 2004 calendar year, but data for 2003 and 2005 will also be published soon. Results are available at local authority district level and at sub-district level (for middle layer super output areas). We focus here on the district level results for Oxfordshire, which are summarised in Table 8.

There were almost 3,900 County Court Judgement's taken out in Oxfordshire for personal consumer debt during 2004. This represents an annual rate of 7.6 CCJ's per 1,000 population, which is below the South East (8.9) and English averages (12.7). Cherwell and Oxford City had the highest rate of CCJ's, although the average amount of debt was highest in South Oxfordshire (Table 8).

6. UNEMPLOYMENT AND VACANCIES

Unemployed claimants in Oxfordshire totalled 4,400 in August 2006, representing 1.1% of the working age population. This compares favourably with the South East average of 1.6% and an English average of 2.6% (Table 9). Claimant count rates continue to be very low in West Oxfordshire (0.7%), Vale of White Horse (0.8%) and South Oxfordshire (0.9%). These are amongst the lowest unemployment rates in the South East region, as shown in Table 10. Cherwell also has an unemployment rate below the regional average (1.2%). Oxford City currently accounts for 40% of unemployed claimants in Oxfordshire, although its unemployment rate (1.7%) is only slightly above the South East average (1.6%).

During the last quarter, there has been a reduction in the number of Oxfordshire wards with unemployment rates above the national average, from nine wards in May 2006 to only six in August 2006. The three wards showing this relative improvement were Cowley and Littlemore in Oxford City, and Banbury Grimsbury and Castle in Cherwell district. The highest unemployment rates in the county are currently found in Blackbird Leys (4.3%) and Barton & Sandhills wards (3.6%) in Oxford City.

During the last quarter, there has been a slight reduction in unemployment levels in Oxfordshire. However, looking at the last 12 months as a whole, the numbers out of work in the county have increased from 4,200 to 4,400, an overall increase of just under 5%. This is a much smaller increase than has been experienced across the South East (14%) and nationally (10%) over the same period. At district level, the growth in unemployment during the last 12 months has been highest in South Oxfordshire (11%), Vale of White Horse (9%) and Cherwell (8%). By contrast, both Oxford City and West Oxfordshire have seen no overall increase in unemployment levels in the last 12 months.

The proportion of unemployed claimants in Oxfordshire who have been out of work for more than 12 months is currently 15% (August 2006). This is similar to the South East and English averages (Table 11). The proportion of long-term unemployed in Oxfordshire is higher now than 12 months ago, although similar increases have taken place at regional and national levels over the same period. Long-term unemployment is currently highest in Oxford City (17%), Cherwell (17%) and South Oxfordshire (16%).

The latest monthly data on numbers of Job Centre vacancies, for July 2006, is summarised in Table 12, and trends over the last 12 months are shown in Table 13. The figures in both tables should be interpreted with caution, as there have been recent changes to the procedures used by Job Centres to record information on vacancies. These changes have resulted in a major discontinuity in the vacancies time series pre- and post-May 2006. The effects of this discontinuity on recorded vacancy levels in Oxfordshire can be seen in Table 13.

The latest figures for Oxfordshire, for July 2006, show a monthly total of just under 2,800 vacancies notified to Job Centres. This means that there are currently 1.6 unemployed claimants per job vacancy in the county, which is comfortably below the ratio in the South East (2.3) and nationally (2.6). Unemployment/vacancy ratios are lowest in Vale of White Horse (1.1 claimants per vacancy) and West Oxfordshire (1.1), and highest in Oxford City (2.3) (Table 12).

7. VAT REGISTERED ENTERPRISES

This section looks at recent growth in the stock of businesses in Oxfordshire, drawing on updated counts of VAT-registered enterprises released by the Office for National Statistics in September 2006. This new data provides counts of the number of VAT-registered businesses in March 2006; similar data is also available for March 2004 and March 2005. The data therefore provides an up to date snapshot of the characteristics of businesses in Oxfordshire, and also allows trends over the last two years to be examined. Results are available for local authority districts and also at sub-district level (for middle layer super output areas). Results can be disaggregated by age of business, size of business (employment sizeband), industry sector and urban/rural location. Selected results for Oxfordshire and its districts are summarised in Tables 14-17.

The latest figures for March 2006 show a total of 21,700 VAT-registered enterprises in Oxfordshire. This represents a 2.4% increase since March 2004, slightly above the regional and national increase of 2.0%. Over this period, West Oxfordshire (3.2%) and Oxford City (2.6%) have seen the largest percentage growth in numbers of businesses (Table 14).

Most of the growth in VAT-registered businesses in Oxfordshire since March 2004 has been in the property and business services sector (Table 15). This diverse range of activities now accounts for 35% of all VAT-registered enterprises in the county. There has also been significant growth in the construction and hotels and catering sectors. Sectors with declining numbers of businesses include agriculture, manufacturing, financial services, and public administration and other services.

Table 16 shows the number of businesses in different size categories, based on the number of staff employed. Micro-businesses, with less than 10 employees, have seen the largest growth in Oxfordshire since March 2004, accounting for 83% of the increase in the number of VAT-registered enterprises. All of this growth has taken place in the smallest businesses, employing fewer than five staff; numbers of enterprises in the 5-9 employee range has actually declined slightly in the last two years in Oxfordshire. There has also been some growth in the number of businesses employing 20 or more staff.

Data on the age and urban/rural location of businesses is available only for March 2005 and March 2006. The figures for March 2006 show that there is a sizeable number of well-established businesses in Oxfordshire. 43% of the county's VAT-registered enterprises have been trading for at least ten years, and only 16% are less than two years old. These percentages are in fact very similar to the national average, so the age profile of Oxfordshire businesses is typical of that for all businesses nationally. The latest results also show that growth in the number of businesses since March 2005 has been concentrated mainly in rural Oxfordshire.

8. COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL PROPERTY VACANCY

Updated statistics on vacancy levels in commercial and industrial property were released in July 2006 by the Department for Communities & Local Government. The new data shows estimated vacancy levels in 2003/04 and 2004/05, and supplements figures previously released for 2000/01 to 2002/03. The figures are derived from the amount of business rates relief given by local authorities on empty properties. Results are available for each of the local authority districts in Oxfordshire, summarised in Table 18.

The latest figures, for 2004/05, show that the proportion of vacant commercial and industrial property was highest in Cherwell, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse. In all three districts, an estimated 9% of property was vacant in 2004/05; this is identical to the South East and national average. Estimated vacancy levels were much lower in West Oxfordshire (5%) and Oxford City (only 3%). Since 2000/01, vacancy levels appear to have increased in Cherwell, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse, but have remained relatively unchanged in Oxford City and West Oxfordshire. There has also been an increase in vacancy rates at regional and national level over this period (Table 18).

9. HOUSING MARKET

Table 19 summarises the latest house price information for Oxfordshire published by the Land Registry, covering all property sales in the second quarter of 2006 (April-June). Comparative figures are also shown for the same quarter in 2005. The average property price in Oxfordshire continues to rise, and is currently £260,400, representing an increase of 10% on the equivalent quarter in 2005. Property prices in the county are currently 10% above the South East average (£236,900) and 31% above the average for England and Wales (£199,200). Price increases during the last 12 months (10% in Oxfordshire) have been above those experienced at regional (6%) and national levels (8%).

Property prices have increased at above the regional rate in all five Oxfordshire districts in the last 12 months, although the increase has been highest in Vale of White Horse (12%) and West Oxfordshire (11%). Table 20 shows how property prices in Oxfordshire's districts compare with other local authorities in the South East. Only Cherwell is ranked amongst the more affordable half of the region's local authorities; this is unchanged from the position last quarter.

The affordability of owner occupied property in Oxfordshire continues to compare unfavourably with South East and national averages. Based on house price data for April-June 2006 and 2005 earnings data, the average property price in Oxfordshire is currently 9.6 times average full-time earnings. This compares with an average ratio of 8.5 in the South East and 7.3 in England as a whole. Affordability problems are worst in South and West Oxfordshire (Table 21).

APPENDIX 1

“Urban Areas” in Oxfordshire for which 2001 Census statistics are available on the NOMIS website:

Abingdon	Kennington
Adderbury	Kidlington
Bampton	Kingston Bagpuize
Banbury	Long Hanborough
Benson	Marcham
Berinsfield	Middle Barton
Bicester	North Leigh
Blewbury	Oxford
Bloxham	Radley
Carterton	Shipton under Wychwood
Chalgrove	Shrivenham
Charlbury	Sonning Common
Chinnor	Stanford in the Vale
Chipping Norton	Steventon
Cholsey	Stonesfield
Deddington	Sutton Courtenay
Didcot	Thame
Drayton	Wallingford
Eynsham	Wantage/Grove
Faringdon	Watlington
Freeland	Wheatley
Goring/Streatley	Witney/Ducklington
Harwell	Woodcote
Henley-on-Thames	Woodstock
Hook Norton	Yarnton

Table 1 – Population Growth in Oxfordshire, 2000-2005

Area	Resident Population		Change	% Change
	Mid-2000	Mid-2005	2000-05	2000-05
	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands	%
England	49,233.3	50,431.7	1,198.4	2.4
South East	7,990.6	8,164.2	173.6	2.2
Oxfordshire	607.1	626.9	19.8	3.3
Cherwell	132.3	134.2	1.9	1.4
Oxford City	136.6	149.8	13.2	9.7
South Oxfordshire	127.9	128.2	0.3	0.2
Vale of White Horse	114.8	117.0	2.2	1.9
West Oxfordshire	95.6	97.7	2.1	2.2

Source: Office for National Statistics, mid-year population estimates.

Table 2 – Change in Oxfordshire’s Working Age Population, 2000-2005

Area	Working Age Population		Change	% Change
	Mid-2000	Mid-2005	2000-05	2000-05
	Thousands	Thousands	Thousands	%
England	30,242.7	31,330.4	1,087.7	3.6
South East	4,891.4	5,011.4	120.0	2.5
Oxfordshire	386.9	399.2	12.3	3.2
Cherwell	83.7	84.1	0.4	0.5
Oxford City	94.5	107.3	12.8	13.5
South Oxfordshire	79.4	77.9	- 1.5	- 1.9
Vale of White Horse	70.8	71.1	0.3	0.4
West Oxfordshire	58.6	58.7	0.1	0.2

Source: Office for National Statistics, mid-year population estimates. Working age population is defined as residents aged 16 to 59 (males) and 64 (females).

Table 3 – Working Age Group as Percentage of Total Population, 2000-2005

Area	% of Population Who are of Working Age	
	Mid-2000	Mid-2005
England	61.4	62.1
South East	61.2	61.4
Oxfordshire	63.7	63.7
Cherwell	63.3	62.7
Oxford City	69.2	71.6
South Oxfordshire	62.1	60.8
Vale of White Horse	61.7	60.8
West Oxfordshire	61.3	60.1

Source: Office for National Statistics, mid-year population estimates. Working age population is defined as residents aged 16 to 59 (males) and 64 (females).

Table 4 – Economic Activity and Employment Rates for Oxfordshire and its Districts, January-December 2005

Area	% of Working Age Population who are Economically Active (Jan-Dec 2005)	% of Working Age Population who are in Employment (Jan-Dec 2005)
England	78.4	74.6
South East	82.2	79.0
Oxfordshire	83.1	81.0
Cherwell	85.2	83.4
Oxford City	75.1	72.4
South Oxfordshire	83.4	81.9
Vale of White Horse	86.2	83.9
West Oxfordshire	88.2	86.4

Source: Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey.

Table 5 – Qualification Levels of the Working Age Population in Oxfordshire and its Districts, January-December 2005

Area	% of Working Age Population with:-		
	NVQ Level 4+	NVQ Level 3+	No Qualifications
England	26.2	43.9	14.1
South East	29.5	48.5	10.1
Oxfordshire	31.4	51.9	9.4
Cherwell	20.9	43.2	10.0
Oxford City	35.0	58.4	10.9
South Oxfordshire	37.9	57.7	5.5
Vale of White Horse	36.9	53.0	10.3
West Oxfordshire	26.4	45.9	10.6

Source: Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey.

Table 6 – Number of Working Age Benefit Claimants

Area	Jan-March 2005		Jan-March 2006	
	Number of Benefit Claimants	As % of Working Age Population	Number of Benefit Claimants	As % of Working Age Population
Great Britain	5,356,270	14.8	5,417,970	14.9
South East	495,020	9.9	508,690	10.2
Oxfordshire	29,750	7.5	30,300	7.6
Cherwell	6,690	8.0	6,910	8.2
Oxford City	9,440	8.8	9,650	9.0
South Oxfordshire	5,120	6.6	5,140	6.6
Vale of White Horse	4,770	6.7	4,800	6.8
West Oxfordshire	3,730	6.4	3,800	6.5

Source: Department for Work & Pensions, 100% Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) benefits data. Percentages calculated using mid-2005 population estimates.

Note: Figures show the number and proportion of people of working age who were claiming at least one of the following key benefits: Bereavement Benefit, Carer's Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Incapacity Benefit/Severe Disablement Allowance, Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit and Widow's Benefit.

Table 7 – Benefit Claimants as a Proportion of the Working Age Population, January-March 2006, South East Local Authority Districts

District and Rank	(%)	District and Rank	(%)
1 – Hart	5.1	35 – Tonbridge & Malling	8.8
2 – Wokingham	5.4	35 – Tunbridge Wells	8.8
3 – Surrey Heath	5.9	37 – Chichester	8.9
4 – Elmbridge	6.3	38 – Oxford City	9.0
5 – West Oxfordshire	6.5	38 – Spelthorne	9.0
6 – Guildford	6.6	40 – New Forest	9.5
6 – South Oxfordshire	6.6	41 – Maidstone	10.1
6 – Waverley	6.6	42 – Ashford	11.1
9 – Mole Valley	6.7	43 – Crawley	11.2
9 – Runnymede	6.7	43 – Reading	11.2
9 – Winchester	6.7	45 – Dartford	11.6
12 – Vale of White Horse	6.8	45 – Lewes	11.6
13 – South Buckinghamshire	6.9	47 – Canterbury	11.7
14 – Chiltern	7.0	47 – Gosport	11.7
14 – Mid Sussex	7.0	49 – Milton Keynes	12.0
16 – Horsham	7.1	50 – Arun	12.3
16 – Windsor & Maidenhead	7.1	51 – Adur	12.6
18 – Fareham	7.3	52 – Worthing	12.7
19 – Aylesbury Vale	7.4	53 – Portsmouth	13.6
19 – Tandridge	7.4	53 – Medway	13.6
21 – East Hampshire	7.5	55 – Southampton	13.8
21 – West Berkshire	7.5	56 – Slough	13.9
23 – Epsom & Ewell	7.7	57 – Rother	14.0
23 – Reigate & Banstead	7.7	58 – Gravesham	14.1
25 – Test Valley	7.8	59 – Havant	14.2
26 – Basingstoke & Deane	7.9	60 – Swale	15.0
26 – Bracknell Forest	7.9	60 – Brighton & Hove	15.0
26 – Woking	7.9	62 – Dover	15.6
29 – Cherwell	8.2	63 – Eastbourne	16.3
30 – Sevenoaks	8.4	63 – Isle of Wight	16.3
30 – Wycombe	8.4	63 – Shepway	16.3
32 – Eastleigh	8.6	66 – Thanet	20.1
32 – Rushmoor	8.6	67 – Hastings	21.7
32 – Wealden	8.6		

Source: Department for Work & Pensions, 100% Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) benefits data.

Note: Figures show the proportion of people of working age who were claiming at least one of the following key benefits: Bereavement Benefit, Carer's Allowance, Disability Living Allowance, Incapacity Benefit/Severe Disablement Allowance, Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance, Pension Credit and Widow's Benefit.

Table 8 – County Court Judgements for Personal Consumer Debt, 2004

Area	Number of CCJ's	CCJ's per 1,000 Adult Population	Average Value of CCJ's (£)
England	522,409	12.7	2,009
South East	59,180	8.9	2,617
Oxfordshire	3,860	7.6	2,290
Cherwell	901	8.4	2,258
Oxford City	1,084	8.7	1,738
South Oxfordshire	711	6.8	3,171
Vale of White Horse	658	7.0	2,350
West Oxfordshire	506	6.4	2,211

Source: The Registry Trust Ltd.

Table 9 – Claimant Count Unemployed as Percentage of the Resident Working Age Population

Area	August 2005		August 2006	
	(No)	(%)	(No)	(%)
England	719,191	2.3	792,950	2.6
South East	71,125	1.4	81,351	1.6
Oxfordshire	4,201	1.1	4,394	1.1
Cherwell	936	1.1	1,013	1.2
Oxford City	1,752	1.7	1,748	1.7
South Oxfordshire	614	0.8	683	0.9
Vale of White Horse	520	0.7	569	0.8
West Oxfordshire	379	0.6	381	0.7

Source: Office for National Statistics, monthly claimant count data (NOMIS).

Table 10 – Claimant Unemployed as Percentage of Resident Working Age Population (August 2006), South East Local Authority Districts

District and Rank	(%)	District and Rank	(%)
1 – Mole Valley	0.6	34 – Chichester	1.3
2 – Hart	0.7	34 – Eastleigh	1.3
2 – Tandridge	0.7	34 – Tonbridge & Malling	1.3
2 – Waverley	0.7	38 – Maidstone	1.4
2 – West Oxfordshire	0.7	38 – Rushmoor	1.4
6 – Elmbridge	0.8	40 – Arun	1.5
6 – Reigate & Banstead	0.8	40 – Ashford	1.5
6 – Surrey Heath	0.8	40 – Gosport	1.5
6 – Vale of White Horse	0.8	40 – Wycombe	1.5
6 – Wokingham	0.8	44 – Worthing	1.6
11 – Aylesbury Vale	0.9	45 – Adur	1.7
11 – East Hampshire	0.9	45 – Oxford City	1.7
11 – Epsom & Ewell	0.9	47 – Crawley	1.8
11 – Guildford	0.9	47 – Lewes	1.8
11 – Mid Sussex	0.9	49 – Canterbury	1.9
11 – Runnymede	0.9	49 – Rother	1.9
11 – South Oxfordshire	0.9	51 – Dartford	2.2
11 – Test Valley	0.9	51 – Reading	2.2
19 – New Forest	1.0	53 – Havant	2.3
19 – South Buckinghamshire	1.0	53 – Isle of Wight	2.3
19 – Wealden	1.0	53 – Milton Keynes	2.3
19 – West Berkshire	1.0	53 – Portsmouth	2.3
19 – Winchester	1.0	57 – Southampton	2.5
19 – Woking	1.0	58 – Slough	2.6
25 – Bracknell Forest	1.1	59 – Swale	2.7
25 – Chiltern	1.1	60 – Dover	2.8
25 – Horsham	1.1	60 – Medway Towns	2.8
25 – Sevenoaks	1.1	62 – Eastbourne	2.9
25 – Tunbridge Wells	1.1	63 – Gravesham	3.1
30 – Cherwell	1.2	63 – Shepway	3.1
30 – Fareham	1.2	65 – Brighton & Hove	3.2
30 – Spelthorne	1.2	66 – Hastings	3.7
30 – Windsor & Maidenhead	1.2	66 – Thanet	3.7
34 – Basingstoke & Deane	1.3		

Source: Office for National Statistics, monthly claimant count data (NOMIS).

Table 11 – Proportion of Long Term Claimant Unemployed

Area	Claiming for Over 12 Months		As % of All Claimants	
	Aug 2005	Aug 2006	Aug 2005	Aug 2006
England	97,800	129,775	13.7	16.4
South East	8,740	12,190	12.3	15.0
Oxfordshire	545	670	13.1	15.3
Cherwell	105	170	11.2	16.7
Oxford City	265	300	15.2	17.3
South Oxfordshire	100	110	16.4	15.9
Vale of White Horse	40	50	8.2	9.2
West Oxfordshire	35	40	9.3	10.5

Source: Office for National Statistics, monthly claimant count data (NOMIS).

Table 12 – Numbers of Job Centre Plus Vacancies and Claimant Unemployed

Area	Notified Vacancies		Unemployed Claimants per Notified Vacancy	
	July 2005	July 2006	July 2005	July 2006
England	247,320	301,379	2.9	2.6
South East	30,438	35,890	2.3	2.3
Oxfordshire	2,457	2,773	1.7	1.6
Cherwell	711	679	1.2	1.5
Oxford City	707	764	2.4	2.3
South Oxfordshire	307	466	1.9	1.5
Vale of White Horse	327	500	1.6	1.1
West Oxfordshire	405	364	0.9	1.1

Source: Office for National Statistics, monthly claimant count and Job Centre Plus vacancy data (NOMIS). Changes in Job Centre procedures for the handling of vacancies since April 2006 has resulted in a major discontinuity in this time series (see also Table 13). Numbers of vacancies vary significantly from month to month, and are subject to seasonal factors; all figures should therefore be treated with caution.

Table 13 – Trends in Monthly Numbers of Vacancies Notified to Job Centres, 12 Months to July 2006

Month	Cherwell	Oxford City	South Oxon	Vale of WH	West Oxon
Jul 2005	711	707	307	327	405
Aug 2005	634	615	285	449	541
Sep 2005	345	971	238	290	257
Oct 2005	547	824	286	374	300
Nov 2005	374	508	225	322	246
Dec 2005	313	462	206	292	166
Jan 2006	277	456	171	185	110
Feb 2006	523	599	228	238	195
Mar 2006	391	592	284	362	205
Apr 2006	609	782	255	405	233
Major discontinuity in time series here					
May 2006	360	401	175	280	144
Jun 2006	503	465	275	352	281
Jul 2006	679	764	466	500	364

Source: Office for National Statistics, Job Centre Plus vacancy data (NOMIS).

Table 14 – Number of VAT-Registered Enterprises, 2004-2006

Area	Number of VAT-Registered Enterprises			
	March 2004	March 2005	March 2006	Change, 2004-06
England	1,370,240	1,382,835	1,398,135	+ 27,895
South East	252,975	255,285	258,120	+ 5,145
Oxfordshire	21,210	21,480	21,720	+ 510
Cherwell	4,565	4,620	4,660	+ 95
Oxford City	2,865	2,900	2,940	+ 75
South Oxfordshire	5,640	5,710	5,765	+ 125
Vale of White Horse	4,040	4,065	4,125	+ 85
West Oxfordshire	4,100	4,185	4,230	+ 130

Source: Office for National Statistics, counts of VAT-registered enterprises.

Table 15 – VAT-Registered Enterprises in Oxfordshire By Broad Industry Sector, 2004-2006

Industry Sector	Number of VAT-Registered Enterprises			
	March 2004	March 2005	March 2006	Change, 2004-06
Agriculture	1,425	1,415	1,415	- 10
Manufacturing	1,680	1,655	1,620	- 60
Construction	2,485	2,570	2,630	+ 145
Motor Trades	790	785	780	- 10
Wholesale	1,115	1,135	1,110	- 5
Retail	1,770	1,800	1,795	+ 25
Hotels & Catering	1,285	1,345	1,360	+ 75
Transport	485	490	500	+ 15
Post & Telecoms	135	150	150	+ 15
Financial Services	100	95	85	- 15
Property & Business Services	7,050	7,395	7,600	+ 550
Education	235	245	260	+ 25
Health	125	130	125	0
Public Admin & Other Services	2,535	2,325	2,295	- 240
Total	21,210	21,530	21,720	+ 510

Source: Office for National Statistics, counts of VAT-registered enterprises.

Table 16 – VAT-Registered Enterprises in Oxfordshire By Employment Sizeband, 2004-2006

Employment Sizeband	Number of VAT-Registered Enterprises			
	March 2004	March 2005	March 2006	Change, 2004-06
0-4 Employees	16,090	16,440	16,580	+ 490
5-9 Employees	2,715	2,680	2,690	- 25
10-19 Employees	1,245	1,220	1,250	+ 5
20+ Employees	1,115	1,140	1,200	+ 85
Total	21,160	21,480	21,720	+ 560

Source: Office for National Statistics, counts of VAT-registered enterprises. Totals for 2004 and 2005 differ slightly from those shown in Tables 14 and 15.

Table 17 – VAT-Registered Enterprises in Oxfordshire By Age of Business and Urban/Rural Location, 2005-2006

Age of Business	Number of VAT-Registered Enterprises		
	March 2005	March 2006	Change, 2005-06
Less than 2 years	3,755	3,460	- 295
2-3 years	2,980	3,205	+ 225
4-9 years	5,550	5,620	+ 70
10 years plus	9,245	9,435	+ 190
Total	21,530	21,720	+ 190
Location of Business	March 2005	March 2006	Change, 2005-06
Urban Oxfordshire	9,745	9,765	+ 20
Rural Oxfordshire	11,785	11,950	+ 165
Total	21,530	21,720	+ 190

Source: Office for National Statistics, counts of VAT-registered enterprises. Column totals may not sum exactly due to rounding.

Table 18 – Commercial and Industrial Property Vacancy Levels

Area	% of Commercial & Industrial Property Which is Vacant				
	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
England	7	8	8	9	9
South East	6	7	8	9	9
Cherwell	6	7	5	8	9
Oxford City	2	3	4	3	3
South Oxfordshire	6	6	8	8	9
Vale of White Horse	5	9	7	8	9
West Oxfordshire	5	5	4	5	5

Source: Department for Communities & Local Government, Commercial and Industrial Property Vacancy Statistics.

Table 19 – Average House Prices in Oxfordshire

Area	Average (Mean) House Price, All Property Sales		
	April-June 2005 (£)	April-June 2006 (£)	% Change
England & Wales	184,924	199,184	+ 7.7
South East	223,348	236,915	+ 6.1
Oxfordshire	236,667	260,352	+ 10.0
Cherwell	198,657	213,959	+ 7.7
Oxford City	250,290	276,309	+ 10.4
South Oxfordshire	273,547	294,111	+ 7.5
Vale of White Horse	239,265	268,460	+ 12.2
West Oxfordshire	231,673	258,229	+ 11.5

Source: HM Land Registry, quarterly property price data.

Table 20 – Average (Mean) House Prices (April-June 2006), South East Local Authority Districts

District and Rank	(£)	District and Rank	(£)
1 – Elmbridge	467,751	35 – Lewes	233,496
2 – South Buckinghamshire	432,073	36 – Brighton & Hove	231,957
3 – Chiltern	401,713	37 – Rother	231,353
4 – Mole Valley	355,837	38 – Bracknell Forest	229,054
5 – Windsor & Maidenhead	350,589	39 – Basingstoke & Deane	227,185
6 – Waverley	348,362	40 – Ashford	222,409
7 – Sevenoaks	337,158	41 – Fareham	216,902
8 – Guildford	336,019	42 – Eastleigh	216,020
9 – Tandridge	330,725	43 – Maidstone	215,653
10 – Runnymede	305,669	44 – Cherwell	213,959
11 – Wycombe	302,574	45 – Arun	211,228
12 – Epsom & Ewell	301,944	46 – Reading	208,911
13 – Winchester	299,640	47 – Havant	203,328
14 – Chichester	299,000	48 – Canterbury	201,347
15 – South Oxfordshire	294,111	49 – Adur	196,673
16 – Surrey Heath	290,300	50 – Worthing	195,658
17 – Woking	288,570	51 – Crawley	193,491
18 – Tunbridge Wells	286,986	52 – Dartford	193,220
19 – Reigate & Banstead	286,511	53 – Rushmoor	193,119
20 – East Hampshire	284,716	54 – Slough	191,058
21 – Wokingham	283,995	55 – Isle of Wight	188,427
22 – Hart	280,916	56 – Gravesham	185,665
23 – Horsham	277,831	57 – Shepway	183,251
24 – Oxford City	276,309	58 – Eastbourne	181,720
25 – New Forest	269,518	59 – Milton Keynes	178,592
26 – Vale of White Horse	268,460	60 – Dover	170,785
27 – Tonbridge & Malling	265,085	61 – Thanet	170,612
28 – Wealden	261,321	62 – Swale	170,565
29 – Test Valley	259,302	63 – Southampton	167,776
30 – West Oxfordshire	258,229	64 – Gosport	165,556
31 – Mid Sussex	256,267	65 – Portsmouth	159,024
32 – West Berkshire	254,429	66 – Medway Towns	156,639
33 – Spelthorne	244,456	67 – Hastings	155,224
34 – Aylesbury Vale	242,012		

Source: HM Land Registry, quarterly property price data.

Table 21 – Index of Housing Affordability (Average House Prices as Ratio of Average Annual Full-Time Earnings, By Area of Workplace) (April-June 2006)

Area	Average House Price (Apr-June 2006)	Average Full-Time Earnings (April 2005)	Index of Affordability
	£	£	
England & Wales	199,184	27,180	7.3
South East	236,915	28,028	8.5
Oxfordshire	260,352	27,232	9.6
Cherwell	213,959	24,835	8.6
Oxford City	276,309	29,125	9.5
South Oxfordshire	294,111	26,473	11.1
Vale of White Horse	268,460	28,189	9.5
West Oxfordshire	258,229	25,293	10.2

Source: HM Land Registry, quarterly property price data and Office for National Statistics, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings.