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**Oxfordshire Quarterly Economic
Update – March 2007**

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Contents

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Gross Value Added	5
3.	Average Earnings	6
4.	Business Growth	7
5.	Employment Growth	8
6.	Other Labour Market Indicators	9
7.	Benefit Claimants	10
8.	Educational Attainment	11
9.	Property Prices	12
10.	Further Information	12
	References	13
	Data Tables	14

1. Introduction

This report is 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 statistics that have been released in the last six months, since the completion of the last report in October 2006.

The report includes annual updates for some key economic indicators for Oxfordshire, including gross value added (GVA), average earnings, employment, VAT registrations, and exam attainment (including 2006 results at GCSE and 'A' level). The report also includes the latest monthly or quarterly updates on employment rates, claimant count unemployment, numbers of working age benefit claimants and house prices. In addition, new data showing business survival rates for Oxfordshire is included for the first time.

The new or updated datasets discussed in the report are listed below:

- Regional, sub-regional and local gross value added (GVA) – annual estimates updated to 2004 (released by the Office for National Statistics on 15 December 2006);
- Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) – annual update, providing earnings data for April 2006 (released by the Office for National Statistics on 26 October 2006);
- VAT registrations and de-registrations – annual update, providing data for the 2005 calendar year (released by the DTI Small Business Service on 25 October 2006);
- New estimates of business survival rates – this data is available for the first time at county and local authority district level (released by the DTI Small Business Service in February 2007);
- Annual Business Inquiry – annual update, providing employment data for 2005 and revised estimates for 2004 (released by the Office for National Statistics on 17 January 2007);
- Annual Population Survey – updated local labour market indicators for the 12 months to June 2006 (released by the Office for National Statistics on 19 March 2007);
- Claimant count data – claimant unemployment data for February 2007 (released by the Office for National Statistics on 14 March 2007);

- DWP benefits data – data for the July to September 2006 quarter (released by the Department for Work & Pensions on 14 February 2007);
- GCSE and 'A' Level results – providing results for 2006 at local authority and school level (released by the Department for Education & Skills on 11 January 2007);
- Residential property prices – average house price data for the October-December 2006 quarter (released by the Land Registry on 2 February 2007).

Other recently released datasets which may be of interest to readers, but which are not discussed in this report, include:

- Key Stage 3 test results – for the 2006 tests (released by the Department for Education & Skills on 1 March 2007);
- Educational attainment data by pupil residence – data for the 2005 tests/exams, released on the Neighbourhood Statistics website on 16 November 2006;
- Educational attainment data by ethnic group – data for the 2005 tests/exams, released on the Neighbourhood Statistics website on 20 December 2006 (and in amended form on 1 March 2007);
- Commercial and industrial floorspace statistics – annual update, providing data for April 2006 (released by the Department for Communities & Local Government on 5 March 2007);
- Estimates of dwelling stock by tenure and condition – annual update, providing data for 2005, and revised estimates for earlier years (released on the Neighbourhood Statistics website on 19 January 2007);
- New Deal Programmes – updated data on the annual number of starts and jobs gained, for 2005 (released on the Neighbourhood Statistics website on 1 February 2007);
- Job Centre vacancies – data for February 2007 (released by the Office for National Statistics on 14 March 2007).

In order to benchmark the performance of the Oxfordshire economy, the report includes comparisons with the county's geographic neighbours and, for educational attainment data, with its statistical neighbours. In this report, these are defined as follows:

Geographic neighbours (neighbouring counties and unitary authorities) – Buckinghamshire, Milton Keynes, Berkshire (including Bracknell Forest, Reading, Slough, West Berkshire, Windsor & Maidenhead and Wokingham), Swindon, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire and Northamptonshire.

Statistical neighbours (local authorities closest to Oxfordshire in terms of their socio-economic characteristics, as defined in the Children's Services Statistical Neighbour Benchmarking Model recently developed for the Department for Education & Skills) – Cambridgeshire, Bath & North East Somerset, West Berkshire, Hertfordshire, Wiltshire, Hampshire, Gloucestershire, Bracknell Forest, Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire.

As can be seen, there is some overlap between Oxfordshire's geographic and statistical neighbours. Of the ten closest statistical neighbours, five are also amongst the county's geographic neighbours.

2. Gross Value Added

The Office for National Statistics released updated and revised estimates of gross value added for Oxfordshire in December 2006. Gross value added (GVA) measures the total monetary value of an economy's output, and is one of the most useful indicators of overall economic performance. The latest estimates provide data for 2004 and a revised time series back to 1995. It is therefore possible to look at GVA growth in Oxfordshire over this period. Separate estimates of GVA for the Oxfordshire districts are not currently available.

- The latest figures show that GVA per head in Oxfordshire was £21,400 in 2004. This is 16% above the South East average (£18,500) and 22% above the English average (£17,500).
- Oxfordshire's GVA per head is currently the fourth highest amongst the 14 NUTS3 areas in the South East, behind Berkshire (£27,500), Milton Keynes (£25,900) and Surrey (£22,700).
- The growth in GVA per head in Oxfordshire between 1999 and 2004 was 32%, which is slightly above the South East (29%) and English averages (28%).
- Oxfordshire's recent GVA growth compares well with most of its immediate neighbours. Only Milton Keynes (35%) and Gloucestershire (40%) have experienced a faster growth in GVA per head than Oxfordshire since 1999 (see Table 1).

3. Average Earnings

Updated earnings data for 2006 was released by the Office for National Statistics in October 2006. The figures provide a snapshot of average earnings in April 2006, and are part of an annual series that goes back to 1998. Figures are available both for Oxfordshire and the individual districts. Table 2 summarises the relevant data, showing mean gross weekly earnings for full-time workers.

Two sets of figures are shown, one relating to the earnings of those people working in Oxfordshire (workplace-based) and the other relating to the earnings of Oxfordshire residents (residence-based). The assessment of Oxfordshire's relative performance differs depending on which of these measures is used. Both measures are of interest, but we focus here mainly on the workplace-based measure. This indicates the earnings levels of those working in the county and is therefore a better measure of the strength of the county's economy, since the figure is not distorted by the high earnings of those commuting to work outside Oxfordshire.

- Workplace-based earnings for full-time workers in Oxfordshire averaged £543 in 2006. This is 1% below the English average (£547) and 4% below the South East average (£567).
- Residence-based earnings in the county are higher, averaging £593 per week in 2006. This is only 1% below the South East average and 8% above the English average.
- Variations in average earnings across the county are quite significant. Workplace-based earnings are highest in Vale of White Horse district (£585 per week) and Oxford City (£559), and lowest in Cherwell (£500) and West Oxfordshire (£502). Earnings levels for those working in Cherwell, South Oxfordshire and West Oxfordshire are below the national average.
- Earnings in Oxfordshire compare favourably with those in its immediate neighbours to the west and north (Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire and Northamptonshire). However, the area to the south and east of Oxfordshire, covering Berkshire and Buckinghamshire, has significantly higher earnings levels.
- Between 2001 and 2006, mean workplace-based earnings in Oxfordshire increased by 18% (see Table 2). This is slightly below the average increase in the South East and in England as a whole (both 19%). Within the county, earnings growth has been strongest in Cherwell (an increase of 28%), with smaller increases in most of the other districts (ranging from 16-19%). The exception is West Oxfordshire, which according to the latest figures has seen very little growth in average earnings during the last five years.

4. Business Growth

This section looks at the latest statistics on annual numbers of VAT registrations, which provide a proxy measure of business births. New data on business survival rates for Oxfordshire and each of the five districts is also discussed. The relevant data is summarised in Tables 3, 4 and 5.

- A total of 2,075 businesses registered for VAT in Oxfordshire during 2005. This is about 12% below the numbers of VAT registrations in the county in the previous two years (c.2,350 in both 2003 and 2004). There were also reductions in VAT registrations at regional and national level during 2005, but these were smaller than in Oxfordshire (4% in the South East and 3% in England).
- Despite this downturn in 2005, the rate of new VAT registrations in Oxfordshire continues at above the English average. In 2005, there were 41 VAT registrations in Oxfordshire per 10,000 adult residents, compared with an average of 42 in the South East and 38 in England.
- Oxfordshire's VAT registration rate continues to fall significantly below that in Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire, but is on a par with most of its other immediate neighbours (see Table 3).
- Business survival rates for Oxfordshire and neighbouring areas are shown in Table 4. These show the proportion of businesses that are still trading three years after first registering for VAT. For businesses registered during 2002, the three year survival rate in Oxfordshire is 75%. This is above the South East (73%) and England-wide averages (71%). Business survival rates in Oxfordshire compare favourably with most of the county's immediate neighbours.
- Within the county, survival rates are currently highest for businesses in South Oxfordshire (77%), Vale of White Horse (76%) and West Oxfordshire (76%), and slightly lower in Cherwell (72%) and Oxford City (73%).
- The number of VAT registered businesses in Oxfordshire increased by over 2,000 in the five years to January 2006. This represents a growth of 9.4% in the county's business stock; this compares with increases of only 6% at regional and national level (Table 5). Amongst Oxfordshire's immediate neighbours, only Milton Keynes has had a faster growth in business stock.

5. Employment Growth

Results from the 2005 Annual Business Inquiry (ABI) were released by the Office for National Statistics in January 2007. The ABI provides estimates of the number of employees working in Oxfordshire, broken down by gender, full-time/part-time status and industry sector. The self employed are not included in this employment estimate; since the ABI is based on responses from a sample of employers, it is also subject to sampling errors. There are continuing concerns about the reliability of ABI data in recording employment trends at sub-regional level.

- The latest ABI figures show a reduction in the number of employees working in Oxfordshire between 2004 and 2005, from 315,900 to 310,600. This is a reduction of 1.7% during the year, and compares with increases of 2.9% in the South East region and 1.6% in England as a whole.
- Looking at the rate of employment growth since 1998, Oxfordshire's performance is relatively poor. Oxfordshire has seen only a 3% employment increase between 1998 and 2005, compared with an average increase of 10% in the South East and of 9% England-wide (see Table 6).
- Oxfordshire is not alone in experiencing sluggish employment growth in recent years. Amongst neighbouring areas, job growth has also been relatively poor in Buckinghamshire (3%) and Warwickshire (5%), and employment has declined since 1998 in Swindon (an employment loss of 3%). Set against this, much stronger job growth has been experienced in Milton Keynes (17%), Berkshire (8%), Wiltshire (9%) and Northamptonshire (16%).
- Employment trends for the Oxfordshire districts are also shown in Table 6, although it should be noted that the ABI data is less reliable at this geographic level. Looking at the 1998-2005 period, employment growth appears to have been strongest in South and West Oxfordshire. The ABI data indicate an overall decline in employment levels in Vale of White Horse district since 1998.

We will report in more detail on the ABI results for Oxfordshire at industry sector level in the next quarterly report.

6. Other Labour Market Indicators

This section provides an update of key labour market indicators for Oxfordshire, including the employment rate, ILO and claimant count unemployment rates, and numbers of long term unemployed claimants.

- The latest results from the Annual Population Survey (APS) were released in March 2007, and confirm the relatively buoyant labour market in Oxfordshire. The latest figures are for the 12 months to June 2006, and are summarised in Table 7.
- The employment rate in Oxfordshire is currently above both the regional and national average. 81% of working age residents in the county are currently in paid employment, compared with 79% in the South East and only 74% in England. Amongst Oxfordshire's immediate neighbours, only Bracknell Forest (82%), West Berkshire (83%) and Wiltshire (82%) have a higher employment rate, and even then only marginally so.
- Employment rates are highest in the more rural districts of Cherwell (84%), Vale of White Horse (85%) and West Oxfordshire (87%), and lowest in Oxford City (71%). This latter figure is partly due to the large student population in Oxford.
- The APS also provides a measure of unemployment, based on the ILO definition. This differs from the claimant count measure of unemployment, discussed below. The APS measure, for the 12 month period to June 2006, shows that an estimated 3.1% of working age residents in Oxfordshire were unemployed. This compares with an average of 4.3% in the South East and 5.3% in England. Amongst neighbouring areas, only Wiltshire recorded a lower unemployment rate during this period.
- The more commonly used measure of unemployment is based on the monthly count of Job Seekers Allowance claimants (the claimant count). The latest figures, for February 2007, are shown in Table 8. They show that there are currently 4,465 unemployed claimants in Oxfordshire, representing 1.1% of working age residents. This is well below the South East (1.7%) and English average (2.6%).
- The number of unemployed claimants in Oxfordshire increased slightly during the 12 months to February 2007. An overall increase of 2.5% was recorded, compared with a 4% reduction at regional level.
- Claimant count rates continue to be less than 1% in South Oxfordshire (0.9%), Vale of White Horse (0.8%) and West Oxfordshire (0.8%). These are amongst the lowest unemployment rates in the South East region. Cherwell district also has an unemployment rate below the regional average

(1.2%). Oxford City currently accounts for almost 40% of unemployed claimants in Oxfordshire, but its unemployment rate (1.6%) is also just below the South East average (1.7%).

- The proportion of unemployed claimants in Oxfordshire who have been out of work for more than 12 months is currently 16.5% (February 2007). This is similar to the South East and English averages (see Table 9). Long-term unemployment is currently highest in Cherwell (20%) and Oxford City (19%), and lowest in Vale of White Horse (11%) and West Oxfordshire (9%).

7. Benefit Claimants

The latest quarterly benefits data from the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) was released in February 2007, and provides data for the July to September 2006 quarter. The 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. The relevant figures for Oxfordshire and its districts are summarised in Table 10; 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 July-September 2006. This represents 7.6% of the working age population, which is well below the South East (10.0%) and national averages (14.8%).
- At district level, the proportion of benefit claimants is lowest in South Oxfordshire (6.5%), Vale of White Horse (6.7%) and West Oxfordshire (6.4%). Indeed, these percentages are amongst the lowest in the South East region. Numbers on benefits are higher in Cherwell (8.3%) and Oxford City (9.1%), but these proportions are still below the South East average.
- Numbers of working age benefit claimants in Oxfordshire increased slightly in the 12 months to July-September 2006. The overall increase across the county was c.820, or 2.8%; this compares with a 1.6% increase in the South East region and a 0.6% increase at national level. Most of the additional benefit claimants in this period are located in Cherwell and Oxford City.

8. Educational Attainment

School performance tables for 2006 were released by the Department for Education & Skills in January 2007. In this section we focus on exam results for Oxfordshire at GCSE and GCE 'A' level. In order to benchmark Oxfordshire's performance, we compare the county's results with those in its statistical neighbours. These are the local authorities which are closest to Oxfordshire in terms of their socio-economic characteristics. Comparison with these statistical neighbours provides a useful indication as to whether Oxfordshire's performance is above or below the level that might be expected. The 2006 exam results data is summarised in Tables 11, 12 and 13.

- The performance of Oxfordshire schools at GCSE continues to lag behind regional and national averages. In 2006, 56.6% of pupils in Oxfordshire obtained at least 5 "good" GCSE's (at grades A*-C). This compares with 59.7% across the South East and 59.2% in England.
- Comparisons with its statistical neighbours are even less favourable for Oxfordshire. Of the county's ten closest statistical neighbours, performance at GCSE was superior to Oxfordshire in all but one local authority (Bedfordshire) (see Table 11). Across all ten statistical neighbours, the proportion of pupils gaining at least 5 good GCSE's was 62.5%, approximately 6 percentage points higher than in Oxfordshire.
- At local authority district level, GCSE results are relatively strong in South Oxfordshire (66% gaining at least 5 good GCSE's) and West Oxfordshire (64%), but below the English average in Vale of White Horse (55%) and Cherwell (49%), and particularly poor in Oxford City (only 44% with 5 or more good GCSE's).
- There is a very wide variation in exam attainment across Oxfordshire's 34 LEA secondary schools. In the 2006 GCSE results, 14 schools (or 41% of the total) had results below the English average, significantly so in some cases (see Table 12).
- The average points score per student in 'A' level exams in 2006 was 683 in Oxfordshire. This is about 5% lower than English average and 7% below the average for the MKOB Learning & Skills Council area. Again, Oxfordshire's performance compares unfavourably with most of its statistical neighbours (see Table 13).

9. Property Prices

Table 14 summarises the latest house price information for Oxfordshire published by the Land Registry. This data covers all residential property sales in the final quarter of 2006 (October to December). Comparative figures are also shown for the same quarter in 2005.

- The average property price in Oxfordshire continues to rise, and is currently £276,700. Property prices in the county are currently 12% above the South East average (£248,000) and 33% above the average for England and Wales (£207,600).
- Price increases during the last 12 months (13.6% in Oxfordshire) have been above those experienced at regional (8.4%) and national levels (8.5%).
- 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 (16.2%) and West Oxfordshire (16.5%). With the exception of Cherwell district, Oxfordshire's districts are amongst the least affordable areas in the South East.

10. Further Information

Readers may be interested in three new reports from the Oxfordshire Economic Observatory (OEO).

- OEO has recently completed a briefing paper for Oxfordshire County Council looking at the performance and characteristics of the county's rural economy (OEO, 2007). This is one of a series of papers examining different aspects of rural Oxfordshire, which will be a key component in the development of a Rural Framework for the county. The report's conclusions were presented at a seminar at Oxford Town Hall in November 2006.
- OEO has also recently completed an important piece of research for the Oxfordshire branch of the Federation of Small Businesses into the role of small businesses in the Oxfordshire economy (Glasson et al, 2007). The research report was launched at the Kassam Stadium in March 2007.
- Finally, nearing completion is a major update of OEO's Enterprising Oxford report, originally published in 2003. The new report, entitled "Enterprising Oxford – The Oxfordshire Model", looks at the changes that have taken place in the county's knowledge economy during the last five years.

References

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Glasson, J., Downing, L., Chadwick, A. & Lawton Smith, H. (2007), The Economic Ecology of Small Businesses in Oxfordshire. Report by the Oxfordshire Economic Observatory for the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), Oxfordshire Branch.

Lawton Smith, H., Glasson, J. & Chadwick, A. (2007), Enterprising Oxford – The Oxfordshire Model. Report by the Oxfordshire Economic Observatory.

Oxfordshire Economic Observatory (2007), Understanding Rural Oxfordshire: The Rural Economy – Briefing Paper. Report for Oxfordshire County Council. January 2007.

Data Tables

Table 1 – Workplace-Based Gross Value Added (GVA) per Head in Oxfordshire and Neighbouring Areas

NUTS 3 Area / Area	GVA per Head (£), 2004	% Growth in GVA per Head, 1999-2004
England	17,532	27.8
South East	18,496	28.7
Oxfordshire	21,429	32.1
Geographic Neighbours:-		
Buckinghamshire CC	20,285	26.3
Milton Keynes	25,867	35.0
Berkshire	27,493	29.2
Swindon	26,795	22.4
Wiltshire CC	15,425	25.5
Gloucestershire	19,386	40.4
Warwickshire	16,641	17.8
Northamptonshire	18,298	27.7

Source: Office for National Statistics.

Note: The table shows estimates of workplace-based GVA, which allocate income to the area in which commuters work.

Table 2 – Average Earnings for Oxfordshire and Neighbouring Areas

Area	Mean Gross Weekly Earnings, Full-Time Employees, April 2006		% Growth in Mean Workplace Earnings, 2001-2006
	Workplace	Residence	
	£	£	%
England	546.5	548.0	19.0
South East	567.1	598.5	18.8
Oxfordshire	542.6	593.4	18.3
Geographic Neighbours:-			
Buckinghamshire	590.3	713.2	17.0
Milton Keynes	577.2	553.4	25.1
Bracknell Forest	721.2	650.6	19.6
Reading	621.6	546.4	23.7
Slough	626.6	500.3	10.2
West Berkshire	637.8	663.3	17.7
Windsor & Maidenhead	765.5	766.8	40.1
Wokingham	774.9	744.2	25.4
Swindon	567.2	531.0	15.0
Wiltshire	501.0	556.7	25.3
Gloucestershire	498.9	541.9	13.1
Warwickshire	518.4	556.7	8.9
Northamptonshire	485.2	533.1	16.3
Oxfordshire Districts:-			
Cherwell	500.0	536.1	27.7
Oxford City	559.3	528.7	19.1
South Oxfordshire	525.7	692.0	19.0
Vale of White Horse	584.8	625.4	16.0
West Oxfordshire	502.3	601.0	0.6

Source: Office for National Statistics, Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings (ASHE).

Table 3 – Annual Rate of New VAT Registrations in Oxfordshire and Neighbouring Areas

Area	VAT Registrations per 10,000 Resident Adults		
	2003	2004	2005
England	42	40	38
South East	47	44	42
Oxfordshire	47	47	41
Geographic Neighbours:-			
Buckinghamshire	63	59	57
Milton Keynes	51	56	51
Berkshire (former county)	53	50	50
Swindon	34	35	37
Wiltshire	46	41	42
Gloucestershire	44	44	39
Warwickshire	48	45	40
Northamptonshire	45	45	42
Oxfordshire Districts:-			
Cherwell	51	50	42
Oxford City	26	27	24
South Oxfordshire	61	61	54
Vale of White Horse	47	45	43
West Oxfordshire	59	58	48

Source: DTI Small Business Service.

Table 4 – Three-Year Survival Rates of VAT Registered Enterprises in Oxfordshire and Neighbouring Areas

Area	% Still Trading After 3 Years, By Year of Registration		
	2000	2001	2002
England	68.2	69.4	71.2
South East	71.4	72.2	73.2
Oxfordshire	74	74	75
Geographic Neighbours:-			
Buckinghamshire	73	73	74
Milton Keynes	68	72	69
Bracknell Forest	72	73	71
Reading	70	71	71
Slough	59	61	64
West Berkshire	73	78	73
Windsor & Maidenhead	72	75	72
Wokingham	73	75	76
Swindon	65	69	72
Wiltshire	72	74	74
Gloucestershire	69	71	71
Warwickshire	75	73	75
Northamptonshire	71	73	72
Oxfordshire Districts:-			
Cherwell	73	72	72
Oxford City	71	73	73
South Oxfordshire	77	77	77
Vale of White Horse	76	74	76
West Oxfordshire	69	75	76

Source: DTI Small Business Service, Survival Rates of VAT Registered Enterprises, 1995 to 2004.

Table 5 – Growth in Number of VAT Registered Enterprises, 2001-2006

Area	Stock of VAT Registered Enterprises		
	Start of 2001	Start of 2006	% Growth
England	1,491,410	1,581,360	6.0
South East	274,980	291,755	6.1
Oxfordshire	22,060	24,130	9.4
Geographic Neighbours:-			
Buckinghamshire	22,555	23,595	4.6
Milton Keynes	6,625	7,520	13.5
Berkshire (former county)	29,355	31,330	6.7
Swindon	4,170	4,525	8.5
Wiltshire	15,610	16,695	7.0
Gloucestershire	21,020	21,915	4.3
Warwickshire	18,100	19,720	9.0
Northamptonshire	20,120	22,035	9.5
Oxfordshire Districts:-			
Cherwell	4,685	5,160	10.1
Oxford City	2,970	3,275	10.3
South Oxfordshire	6,005	6,440	7.2
Vale of White Horse	4,195	4,605	9.8
West Oxfordshire	4,210	4,650	10.5

Source: DTI Small Business Service.

Table 6 – Employment Growth in Oxfordshire and Neighbouring Areas, 1998-2005

Area	Number of Employees in Employment		
	1998	2005	% Growth, 1998-2005
England	20,983,400	22,792,200	8.6
South East	3,391,700	3,736,000	10.1
Oxfordshire	298,900	308,800	3.3
Geographic Neighbours:-			
Buckinghamshire	208,400	214,200	2.8
Milton Keynes	113,000	132,400	17.2
Berkshire (former county)	415,200	449,700	8.3
Swindon	113,900	110,600	- 2.9
Wiltshire	159,000	174,400	8.8
Gloucestershire	234,100	250,800	7.2
Warwickshire	229,400	240,500	4.8
Northamptonshire	264,600	306,100	15.7
Oxfordshire Districts:-			
Cherwell	62,900	66,200	5.1
Oxford City	94,700	98,300	3.7
South Oxfordshire	50,800	54,100	6.5
Vale of White Horse	56,200	53,700	- 4.4
West Oxfordshire	34,200	36,600	6.8

Source: Office for National Statistics, Annual Business Inquiry.

Note: All figures exclude employees in farm-based agriculture (SIC class 01.00).

Table 7 – Employment and Unemployment Rates for Working Age Residents, 12 Months to June 2006

Area	% Employment Rate (Working Age Residents)	% Unemployment Rate (Working Age Residents)
England	74.3	5.3
South East	78.6	4.3
Oxfordshire	81.1	3.1
Geographic Neighbours:-		
Buckinghamshire	79.6	4.4
Milton Keynes	77.8	6.7
Bracknell Forest	82.0	4.6
Reading	78.9	4.8
Slough	73.1	5.7
West Berkshire	82.7	3.7
Windsor & Maidenhead	79.2	3.8
Wokingham	80.9	3.7
Swindon	79.0	5.6
Wiltshire	82.4	2.7
Gloucestershire	79.8	3.7
Warwickshire	78.5	3.9
Northamptonshire	80.0	3.8
Oxfordshire Districts:-		
Cherwell	84.4	3.2
Oxford City	70.7	5.6
South Oxfordshire	81.2	1.7
Vale of White Horse	85.1	1.7
West Oxfordshire	87.1	3.1

Source: Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey (data tables from Economic & Labour Market Review – April 2007 Edition, released 19 March 2007).

Table 8 – Claimant Count Unemployment

Area	February 2006		February 2007	
	Number	%	Number	%
England	812,210	2.6	812,546	2.6
South East	85,978	1.7	82,753	1.7
Oxfordshire	4,355	1.1	4,465	1.1
Cherwell	1,053	1.3	1,023	1.2
Oxford City	1,672	1.6	1,743	1.6
South Oxfordshire	686	0.9	696	0.9
Vale of White Horse	538	0.8	554	0.8
West Oxfordshire	406	0.7	449	0.8

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

Note: Percentages show the number of claimant unemployed as a proportion of the resident working age population.

Table 9 – Number of Long-Term Unemployment Claimants, February 2007

Area	% of Claimants Out of Work Over 6 Months	% of Claimants Out of Work Over 12 Months
England	33.7	16.6
South East	31.0	15.1
Oxfordshire	31.1	16.5
Cherwell	33.4	19.7
Oxford City	36.0	19.1
South Oxfordshire	30.3	14.9
Vale of White Horse	22.1	10.9
West Oxfordshire	19.4	8.9

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

Table 10 – Working Age Benefit Claimants

Area	July-Sept 2005		July-Sept 2006	
	Number	%	Number	%
Great Britain	5,333,280	14.7	5,365,210	14.8
South East	494,730	9.9	502,860	10.0
Oxfordshire	29,470	7.4	30,290	7.6
Cherwell	6,700	8.0	6,950	8.3
Oxford City	9,380	8.7	9,750	9.1
South Oxfordshire	5,040	6.5	5,050	6.5
Vale of White Horse	4,660	6.6	4,770	6.7
West Oxfordshire	3,690	6.3	3,770	6.4

Source: Department for Work & Pensions.

Note: Percentages show the proportion of working age residents who are claiming at least one key benefit (calculated using ONS mid-2005 population estimates).

Table 11 – GCSE Exam Results for Oxfordshire and its Statistical Neighbours

Local Authority / Area	% of Pupils Gaining 5+ GCSE's at A*-C	
	2005	2006
England	57.1	59.2
South East	--	59.7
Oxfordshire	54.4	56.6
Statistical Neighbours:-		
Cambridgeshire	58.8	60.2
Bath & North East Somerset	63.5	66.9
West Berkshire	60.9	65.0
Hertfordshire	61.8	64.7
Wiltshire	58.2	58.2
Hampshire	60.9	61.6
Gloucestershire	62.8	63.9
Bracknell Forest	54.3	59.8
Bedfordshire	53.9	56.2
Buckinghamshire	67.6	68.8
Oxfordshire Districts:-		
Cherwell	--	49.4
Oxford City	--	43.8
South Oxfordshire	--	65.6
Vale of White Horse	--	55.4
West Oxfordshire	--	63.5

Source: Department for Education & Skills.

Table 12 – Ranking of GCSE Exam Performance in Oxfordshire’s LEA Schools, 2006

Name of School and Location	% of Pupils Gaining 5+ GCSE’s at A+-C
Gillotts School, Henley-on-Thames	76
Bartholomew School, Eynsham	73
Chiltern Edge Community School, Sonning Common	73
The Marlborough C of E School, Woodstock	71
The Warriner School, Bloxham	71
St Birinus School, Didcot	70
Matthew Arnold School, Oxford	69
Burford School & Community College	68
Didcot Girls’ School	67
Lord Williams’s School, Thame	66
Blessed George Napier Catholic School & Sports College, Banbury	65
The Cherwell School, Oxford	65
Chipping Norton School	65
Langtree School, Woodcote	65
Wallingford School	64
Carterton Community College	62
Icknield Community College, Watlington	62
King Alfred’s Community & Sports College, Wantage	61
Faringdon Community College	60
The Henry Box School, Witney	60
England Average	59.2
Gosford Hill School, Kidlington	56
Fitzharrys School, Abingdon	54
Wheatley Park School, Holton	52
Wood Green School, Witney	52
Cheney School, Headington	50
John Mason School, Abingdon	49
The Cooper School, Bicester	47
St Gregory the Great Catholic Secondary School, Cowley	42
Banbury School	41
Larkmead School, Abingdon	41
Bicester Community College	36
Oxford Community School, Cowley	36
Drayton School, Banbury	32
Peers School, Littlemore	25

Source: Department for Education & Skills.

Table 13 – GCE ‘A’ Level Exam Results for Oxfordshire and its Statistical Neighbours, 2006

Local Authority / Area	Average Point Score per Student, 2006	
	Score	Index (England = 100)
England	721.5	100.0
South East	--	--
MKOB LSC area	733.1	101.6
Oxfordshire	682.6	94.6
Statistical Neighbours:-		
Cambridgeshire	754.0	104.5
Bath & North East Somerset	671.3	93.0
West Berkshire	769.4	106.6
Hertfordshire	695.3	96.4
Wiltshire	741.6	102.8
Hampshire	766.3	106.2
Gloucestershire	744.2	103.1
Bracknell Forest	633.2	87.8
Bedfordshire	708.2	98.2
Buckinghamshire	802.2	111.2

Source: Department for Education & Skills.

Table 14 – Average House Prices in Oxfordshire

Area	Mean Residential Property Price (£)		
	Oct-Dec 2005	Oct-Dec 2006	% Change
England & Wales	191,327	207,573	8.5
South East	228,794	248,003	8.4
Oxfordshire	243,513	276,700	13.6
Cherwell	204,677	232,373	13.5
Oxford City	263,269	291,111	10.6
South Oxfordshire	286,694	317,585	10.8
Vale of White Horse	245,133	284,950	16.2
West Oxfordshire	235,626	274,400	16.5

Source: Land Registry.

Note: Figures for the South East are the average for the South East government office region, plus Bedfordshire, Essex and Hertfordshire.