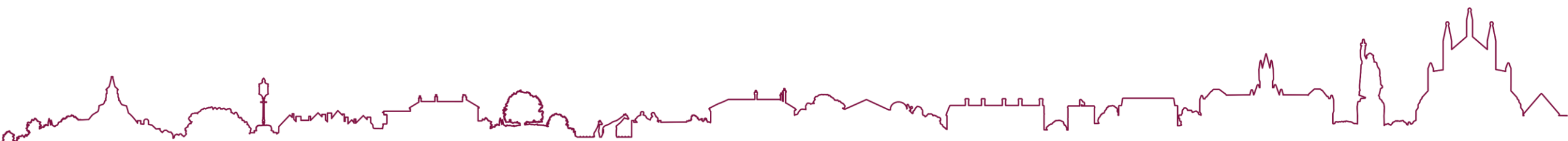


# Winchester District Quarterly Economic Intelligence Dashboard



September 2025

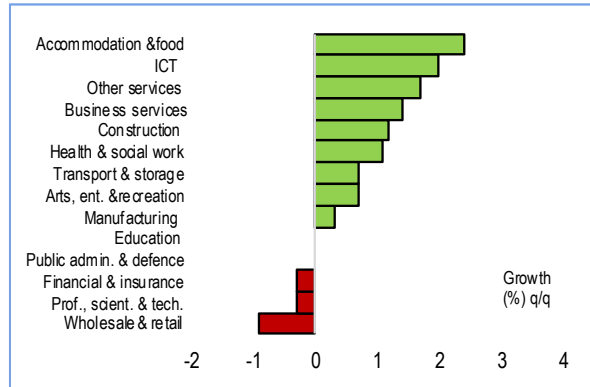
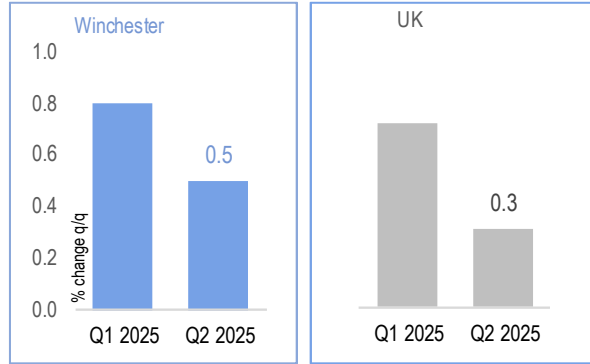


**Winchester**  
City Council

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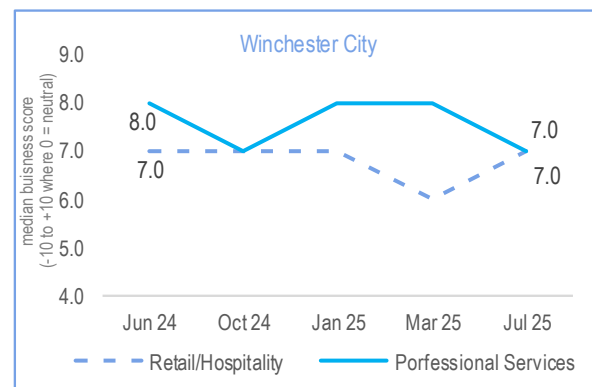
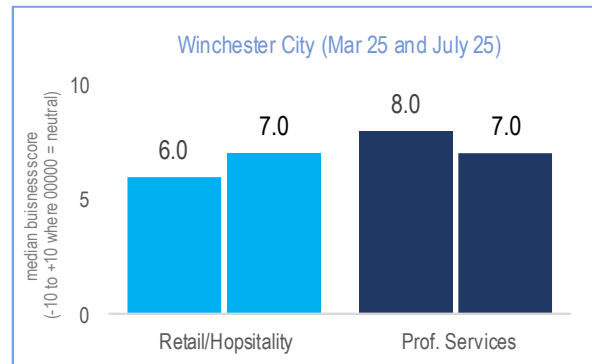
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## Economic Growth



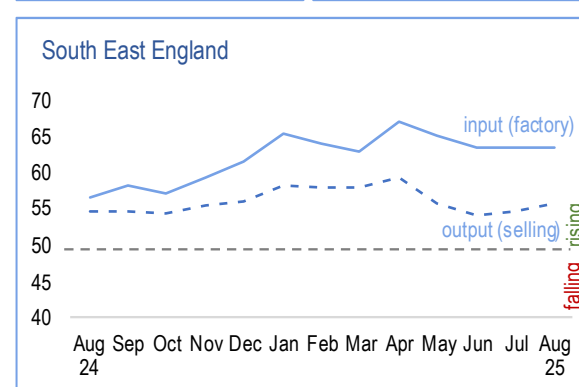
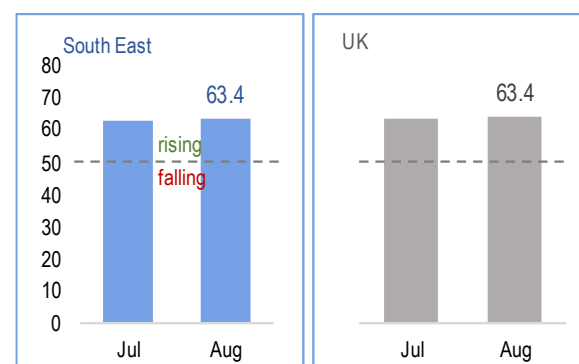
- Our preliminary estimate suggests that Winchester's economy expanded by 0.5% in Q2, faster than UK (0.3%), and better than was widely expected. However, growth much slower than Q1.
- Growth was mainly driven by services (notably ICT and accommodation & food) and construction. Sharp decrease in output was in wholesale & retail.

## Business Performance



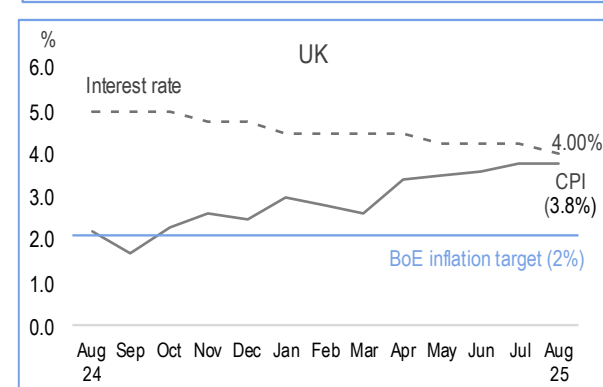
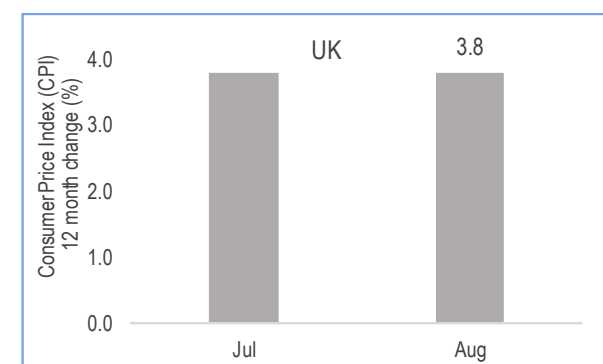
- Survey evidence from Winchester BID Business Barometer suggest that business performance in July saw retail edged higher but professional services activity was slightly down.
- Timelier survey data suggests that business activity in the region grew by its fastest pace in a year. July saw upturn in new work in S. East.

## Business Prices



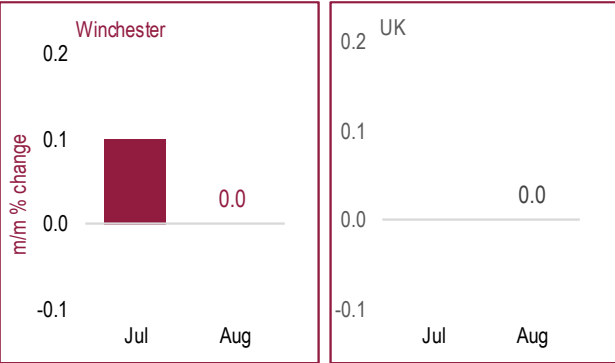
- Business cost pressures remain elevated in the region, although the pace of increase in August was unchanged from July.
- Anecdotal reports indicate higher supplier prices and rising employment costs. In response, firms are seeking to pass on cost increases where possible.

## Inflation

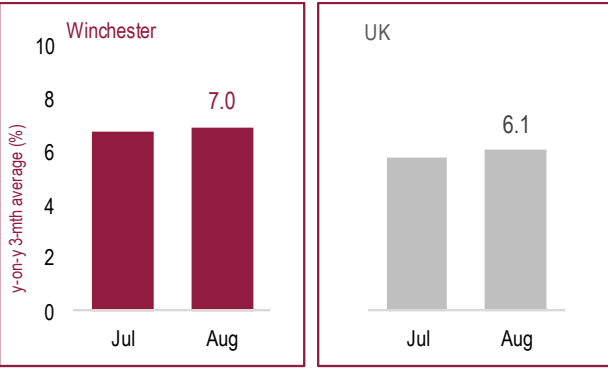


- Annual CPI (Consumer Price Inflation) remains high and was unchanged at 3.8% in Aug, driven by higher food prices (5.1%) and motor fuel costs.
- Core inflation slowed to 3.6% while services inflation slowed to 4.7%.
- Despite weak economic growth, the Bank of England held interest rates in Sept at 4% as inflation remains sticky.

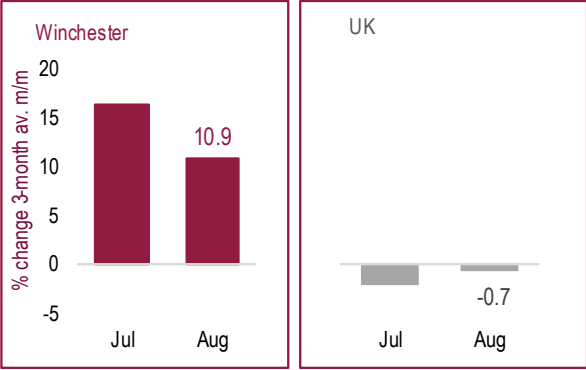
PAYE Employees



PAYE Earnings

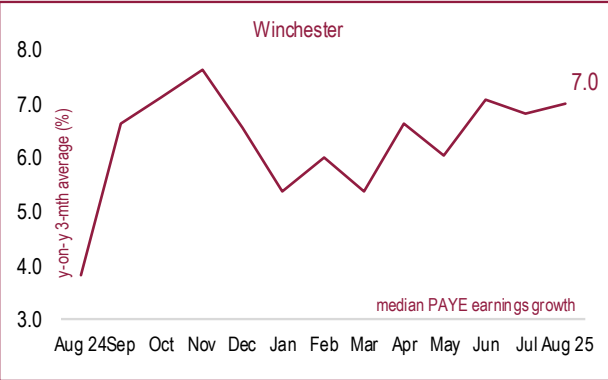
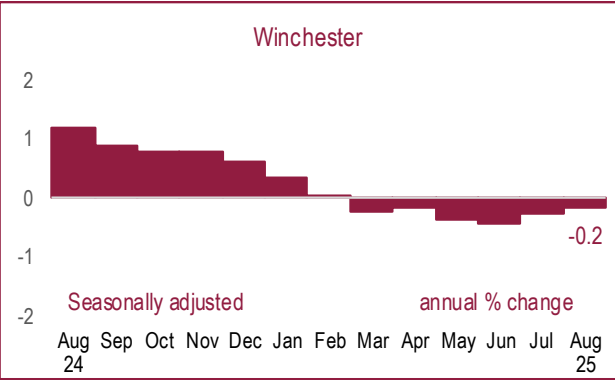


Labour Demand



Demand by Occupation

Unique jobs postings by Occupation (SOC)	Aug	% of total
Cleaners and Domestics	186	6.7
Kitchen and Catering Assistants	143	5.1
Sales Related Occupations n.e.c.	138	4.9
Chefs	134	4.8
Programmers and Software Development Professionals	124	4.4
Care Workers and Home Carers	123	4.4
Special and Additional Needs Education Teaching Professionals	72	2.6
Early Education and Childcare Practitioners	69	2.5
Secondary Education Teaching Professionals	64	2.3
Teaching Professionals n.e.c.	63	2.3



Unique jobs postings by Occupation (SOC)	May	% of total
Cleaners and Domestics	120	6.6
Care Workers and Home Carers	101	5.5
Sales Related Occupations n.e.c.	99	5.4
Programmers and Software Development Professionals	98	5.4
Chefs	83	4.6
Kitchen and Catering Assistants	74	4.1
Early Education and Childcare Practitioners	69	3.8
Elementary Construction Occupations n.e.c.	51	2.8
Special and Additional Needs Education Teaching Professionals	47	2.6
Secondary Education Teaching Professionals	43	2.4

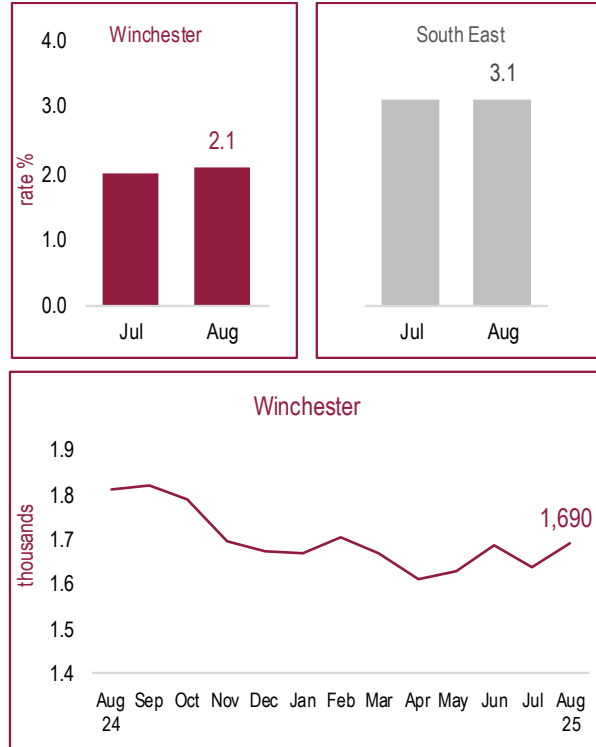
- Timely preliminary estimates from HMRC points to cooling labour market in Winchester - PAYE employment growth was flat in August - in line with the UK.
- PAYE employment in Winchester was 0.1% higher on the quarter, but down 0.2% compared to the same month last year.

- PAYE earnings in Winchester remain elevated, ticking up in Aug following strong growth so far in Q3 with growth above the UK.
- Nationally, wage data covering the entire UK economy showed a 4.8% annual increase. Regular pay rose by 5.6% in the public sector and 4.7% in the private sector.

- Forward looking data suggests that labour demand in Winchester as measured by the number of online job postings has been strong in Q3, although it eased in August. Labour demand was considerably stronger than in the South East.
- Timelier daily points to rising seasonal demand – stronger than last year.

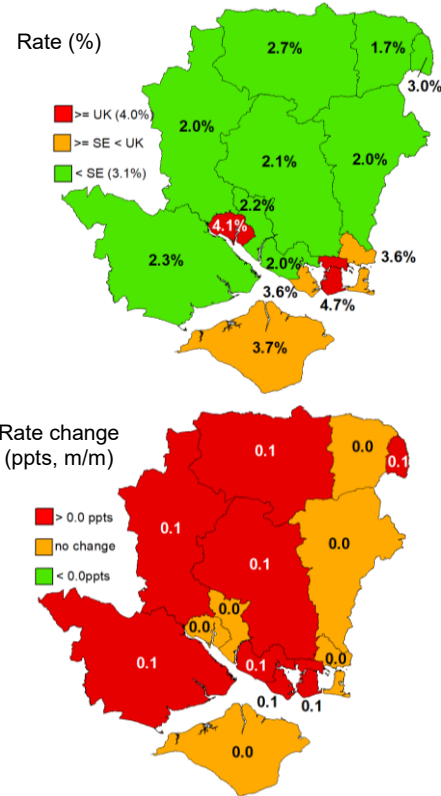
- Top in-demand skills in Winchester in Aug compared to previous quarter have risen for cleaners, sales, chefs/kitchen staff, IT workers and SEN professionals.
- The top specialised skills: Project Management, Auditing, Food Safety - Sanitation, Continuous Improvement Process, Risk Analysis, Finance.

## Claimant Unemployment



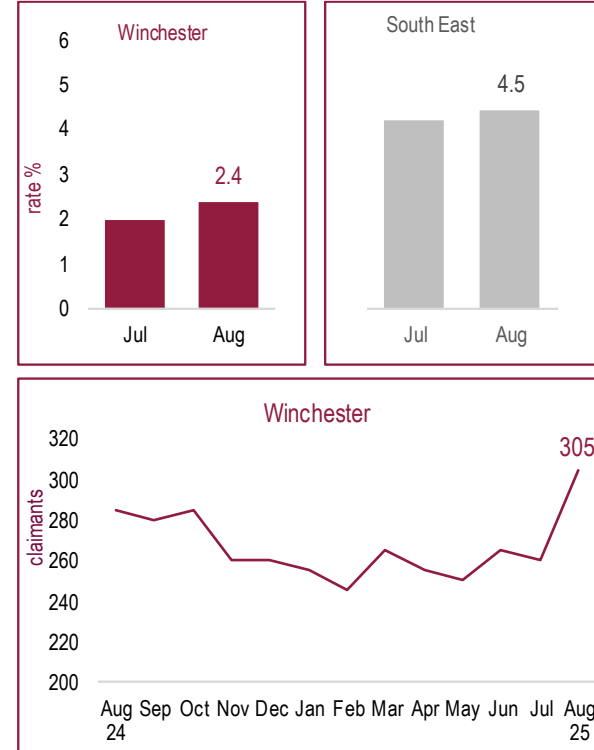
- The number of unemployed claimants in Winchester district (not adjusted for seasonal factors) increased by 55 to 1,690. Winchester had fewer unemployed people (-120) than at the same time last year.
- The rate increased on the month to 2.1% in Aug, below South East (3.1%) and UK rates (4.0%).

## Local Claimants



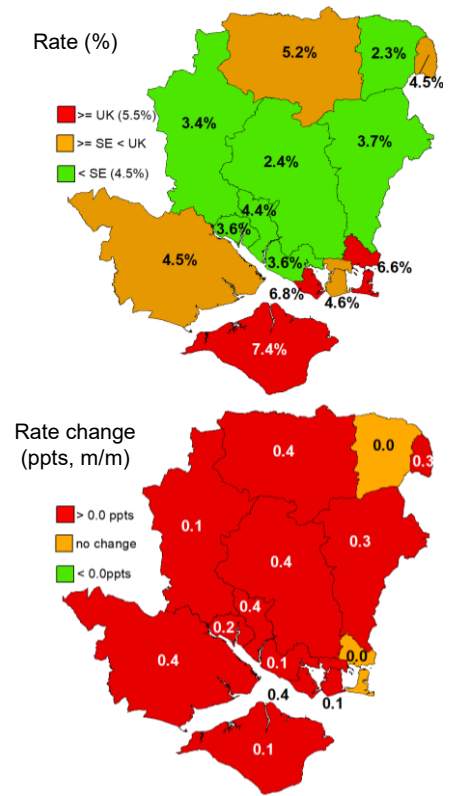
- Like most Hampshire & Isle of Wight authorities, Winchester is below the two benchmarks, with the two cities above the UK rate and Gosport, Havant and IoW above SE.
- Winchester district was one of eight local authorities in Hampshire & Solent to see an increase in the monthly claimant count rate.

## Youth Unemployment



- The number of young unemployed claimants aged 18–24-year-olds in Winchester district up 45 claimants in Aug (305) – highest since Sep 2021.
- The youth claimant unemployment rate increased to 2.4%, the highest rate since Sep 2021. The 18-24-year-old rate below the South East (4.5%) and the UK (5.5%) averages.

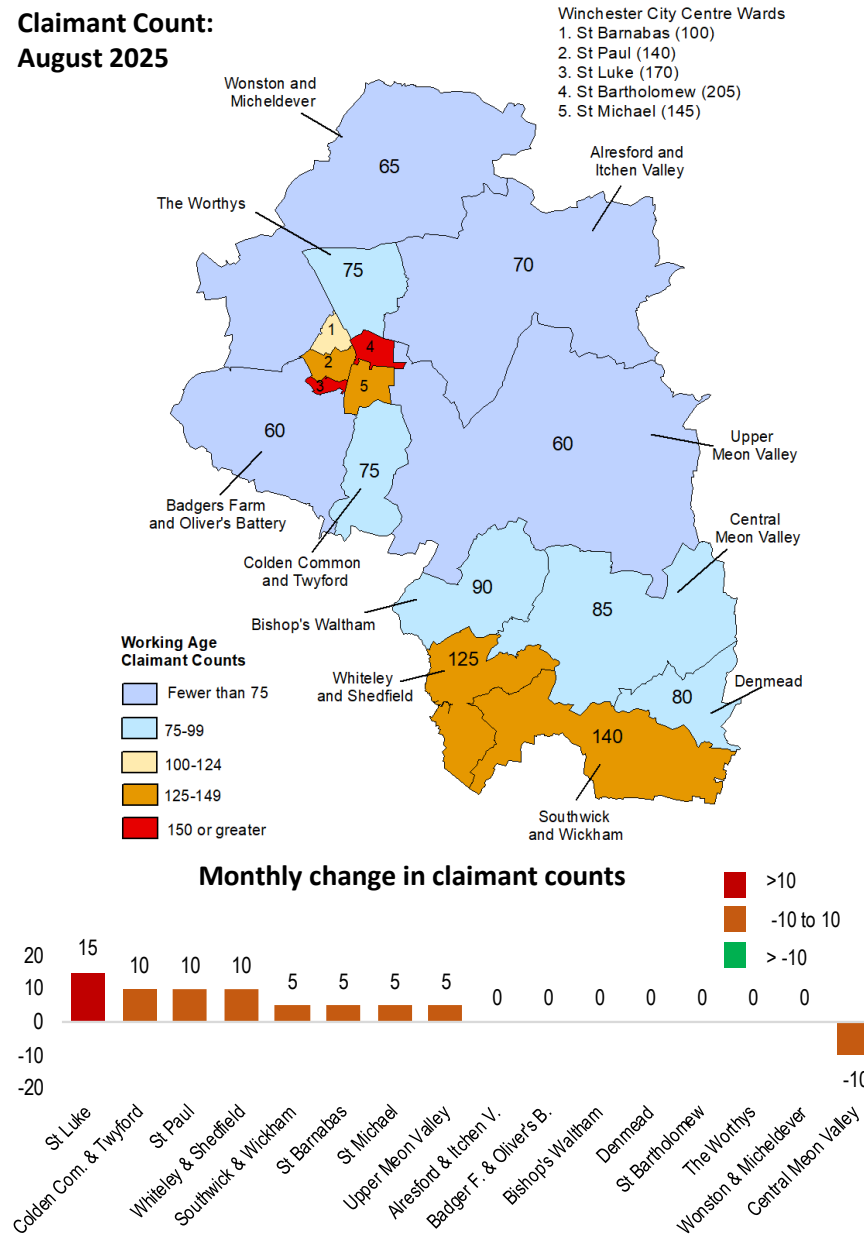
## Young Local Claimants



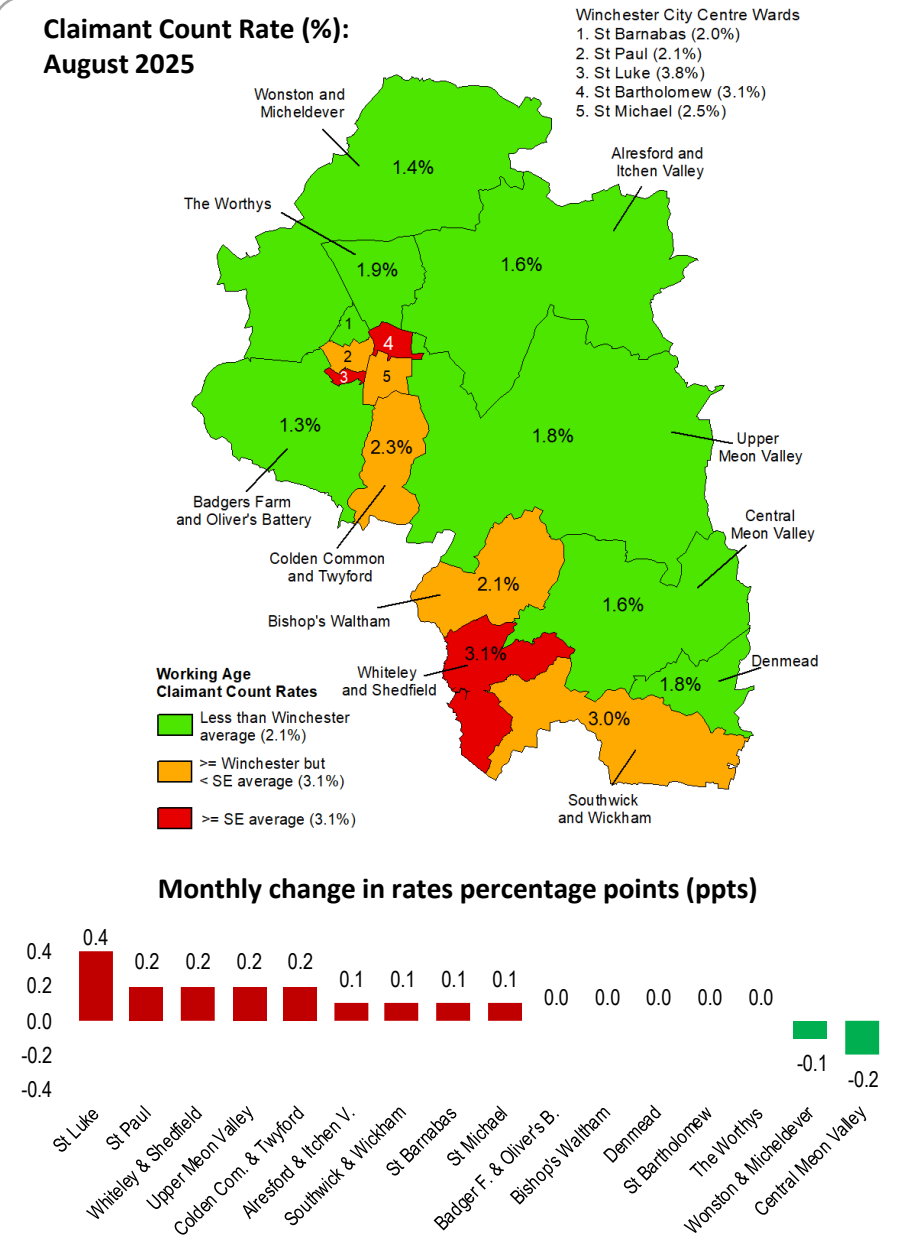
- Half of the 14 Hampshire and the Solent districts have rates below the SE and UK rates. Four above the SE rate, three LAs above the UK.
- Almost all local authorities (12) saw an increase in rates (including Winchester) compared to the previous month, while Hart and Havant saw no change.

- Based on the thresholds almost all wards (15 out of 16) saw no change in claimant counts on the previous month i.e., between -10 and 10.
- Only St Luke Ward (+15) met the threshold for an increase of greater than 10 claimants.
- Claimant count concentrations (over 150) are in the City of Winchester – St Luke and St Bartholomew wards.
- However, small increases in claimant counts was enough for 14 of the 16 Winchester district wards to also see small increases in their claimant rates in August, with St Luke Ward seeing +0.4ppt increase (albeit from a small base). Five wards saw no change while Wonston & Micheldever and Central Meon Valley wards saw a decrease.
- There are three wards with an unemployment rate above or equal to the South East average (3.1%). No Winchester district wards are above the UK average (4.0%) – but St Luke Ward with 3.8% is the closest.

**Claimant Count:  
August 2025**



**Claimant Count Rate (%):  
August 2025**

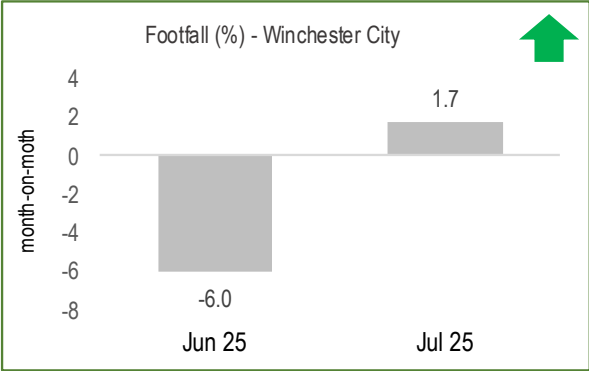


Business Confidence



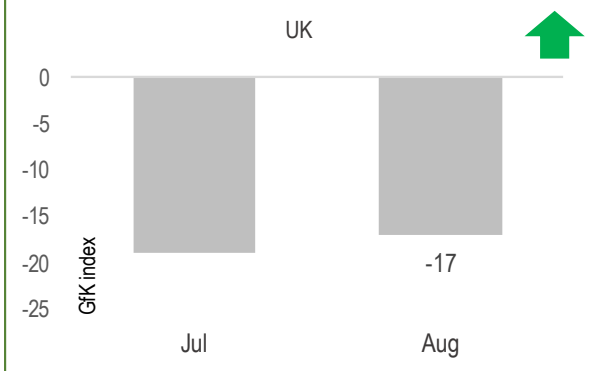
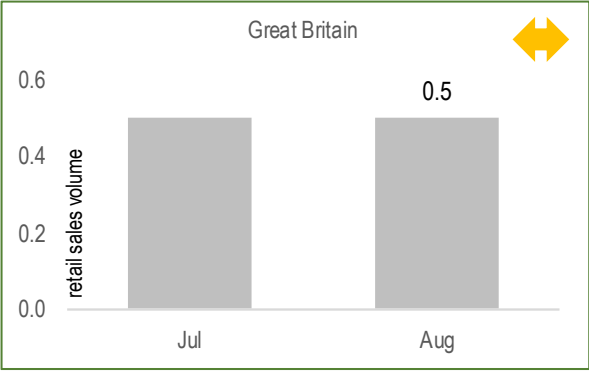
- Business sentiment scores in Winchester city centre were unchanged for both sectors in Jul 25. Businesses remain broadly optimistic for 2025, despite some headwinds.
- Timelier regional survey data suggests that business conditions will improve over the next year, as new work at highest level for a year.

Vacancies & Footfall



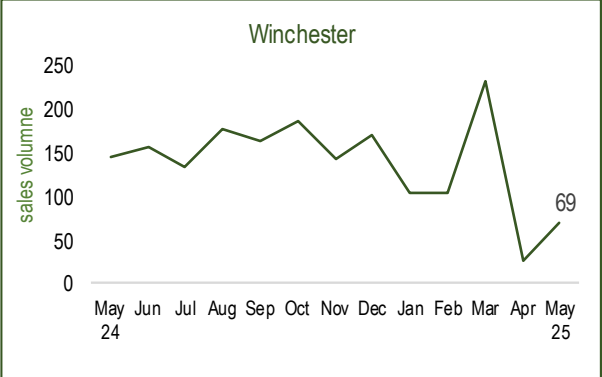
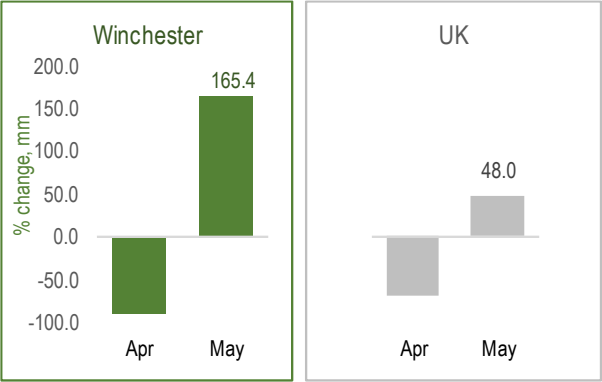
- The Winchester High Street vacancy rate decreased in July 2025 – the rate was lower than a year ago but well below the national vacancy rate.
- Winchester City businesses reported 6% decrease in June compared to May 2025 - footfall saw a recovery in July, but 1% down on the same period a year ago.

Spending & Sentiment



- Retail sales volumes up 0.5% in Aug, same as Jul. Growth down 0.1% in 3-mths to Aug compared to 3-mths to Jul but rose by 0.7% over the year.
- Consumer confidence ticked-up 2 points to -17 in Aug, highest score so far in 2025. Improved outlook for personal finances, due to Bank of England reducing interest rates.

House Sales



- House sales in Winchester saw strong growth in May following changes to Stamp Duty from April 2025, but sales are still way below levels seen in May 2024.
- The average price in Winchester stood at around £456K in July, lower on the month and on the year. Average detached houses worth around £733K.

## Business-specific Intelligence and News (BID)

- **Winchester City BID report (July 2025) points to a solid performance** at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, with Retail/Hospitality (RH) performance score ticking up to '7', while Professional Services (PS) slipped slightly from '8' to '7'.
- Winchester's **city-centre RH outlets reported 'no change' in their total July sales** compared with April. However, Professional services saw sales growth decrease sharply from 10% in April to 2% in July.
- **Around three-in-ten (31%) RH businesses reported higher levels of net profitability** in July, down 36% in April, but about the same as last year. **PS businesses achieved higher levels of net profitability at 39%**, down sharply from 45% in April and lower on the year.
- **Cash flows remain an issue** for around **three-in-ten (29%) RH businesses** compared to just **6% of PS businesses** and fewer than in 2024 (9%).
- **Short term RH sentiment scores unchanged at 5.0 although up from 4.0 last June.** PS sentiment unchanged at 6.0 and unchanged on the year.
- **Cost pressures remain for businesses from staffing costs and inflation.** According to the BID survey, two-thirds of PS businesses (66%) were not looking to recruit additional staff during the rest of 2025, up from two fifths three months ago (42%).
- The **Winchester High Street vacancy rate decreased** to 5% in July 2025.
- **Winchester City businesses reported 1.7% monthly increase in footfall** in July 2025 recovering from a large fall in June (-6%).
- **Number of new businesses in Winchester city centre** including Amor Optical, Fig and Fox, Luxe Nails and Beauty, Mythic Tabletop Games, Quorn Stone, Sostrene Grenes, Toast Winchester, and Mathnasium.

## Public Policy News

- **Government sets out a long-term plan for government support for small and medium-sized businesses.** There are five core themes:
  - **1. Fixing the fundamentals** (legislating to end late payments, modernising the tax and customs system and reducing regulatory burdens).
  - **2. Unlocking access to finance** through a stronger British Business Bank.
  - **3. Revitalising high streets** and supporting local enterprise, tackling crime and shoplifting.
  - **4. Future-proofing business skills** to maximise digital technologies and AI.
  - **5. Opening up opportunities** through international trade, boosting exports, giving smaller firms a fair chance at winning government contracts, and launching a new Business Growth Service.
- **For more information** [click here](#).
- **As part of the Governments Industrial Strategy the [Professional and Business Services Sector Plan](#)** has been published. [Other sector plans](#) exist for most of the eight strategically important sectors.
- **Second reading of the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill** took place in the House of Commons on 2 September 2025.
- **Government publishes [policy paper](#) on Implementing the Employment Rights Bill**, to provide clarity for workers and businesses on how and when Government will engage and consult on those details.
- Chancellor of the Exchequer announces late date of **26 November for the Autumn 2025 Budget**. Weak economic growth and high borrowing costs point to further tax rises and possible cuts. Adding further pressure on Reeves, a £9.9 billion fiscal buffer in March may have moved to a £20 billion "black hole".

## How to read 'traffic lights':



Refers to decline or growth relative to the previous period (GVA, PMI business activity and business prices indicators, job postings, business investment, retail and house sales).

In the case of inflation, PAYE employment & earnings and consumer sentiment, it refers to the direction of travel relative to the previous period.

For claimant count unemployment indicators the change refers to the rate not the level. For example, a decrease in youth unemployment would see a downward green arrow.



Little or no change on previous period.

† The local estimate is preliminary and it needs to be treated with a high degree of caution since it is based on the sectoral mix of the Portsmouth economy and the national sectoral impacts.

## Sources:

The primary data sources are the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and HMRC, while additional data comes from several commercial sources such as S&P Global, Lightcast, CBI, BCC, HM Land Registry, the Bank of England and Winchester BID.

Monthly/Quarterly data for Business Activity, Jobs & Earnings, Unemployment and Sentiment & Investment.

In the case of several monthly indicators, the South East is used as a proxy geography for Winchester and Hampshire.

Estimates of payrolled employees and their pay from HMRC Pay As You Earn (PAYE) Real Time Information are preliminary but seasonally adjusted. Employment figures differ from the ONS Labour Force Survey (LFS) data. Moreover, median pay figures differ from the ONS Average Weekly Earnings (AWE) and are based on gross earnings which do not cover other sources of income, such as self-employment.

For further information on Winchester's labour market see Quarterly Labour Market Updates and Monthly Ward Claimant Count Reports available at:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/business/ebis/reports>

Produced by Winchester City Council in partnership with the Economy Intelligence Team

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