

Colchester Quarterly Economic Report

Issue 5: September 2010



Background information

The production of this quarterly economic report for Colchester aims to give a better understanding of the Borough's economic makeup and performance and in comparison to national and local trends.

The report also aims to inform policy-making through providing an objective Understanding of Colchester's communities of interest and geography.

These quarterly reports typically examine recent data on a range of variables which include:

- Regional changes, including GDP
- The demographics of recession impacts
- Jobs advertised and sought through Jobcentre Plus
- Unemployment
- Worklessness
- Levels of 16-19 year olds Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)
- Housing market data
- News from the business and economy

In addition, each report will provide a topical focus or briefing section highlighting particular issues or economic developments.

Thanks go to Essex County Council, Connexions Integrated Youth Services and Jobcentre Plus (Essex District and Colchester offices) for providing data towards this report.

For more information or questions about this report, please contact Cheryl Pashley in the Research and Engagement team at Colchester Borough Council (01206) 505390.

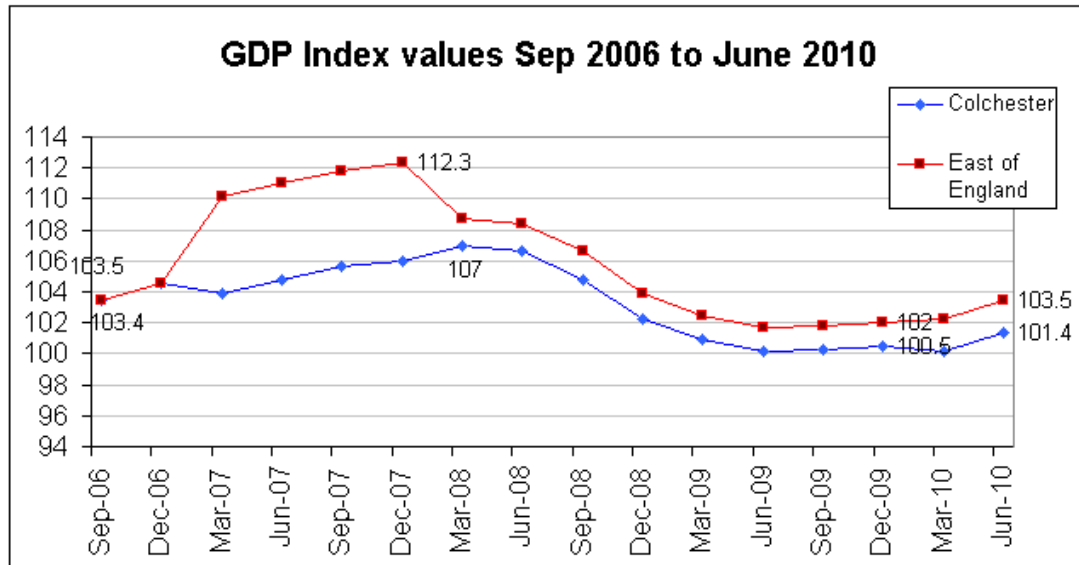
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GDP Index values

The GDP Index values are calculated with a baseline value of 100 for January 2005, and show change over time for economic output. The GDP measure used for this is output and production and value added through production of good and services.

This quarterly data produced by the ONS is preliminary, and may be subject to revision, but it does give an indicative view of change in GDP as a measure of inflation.

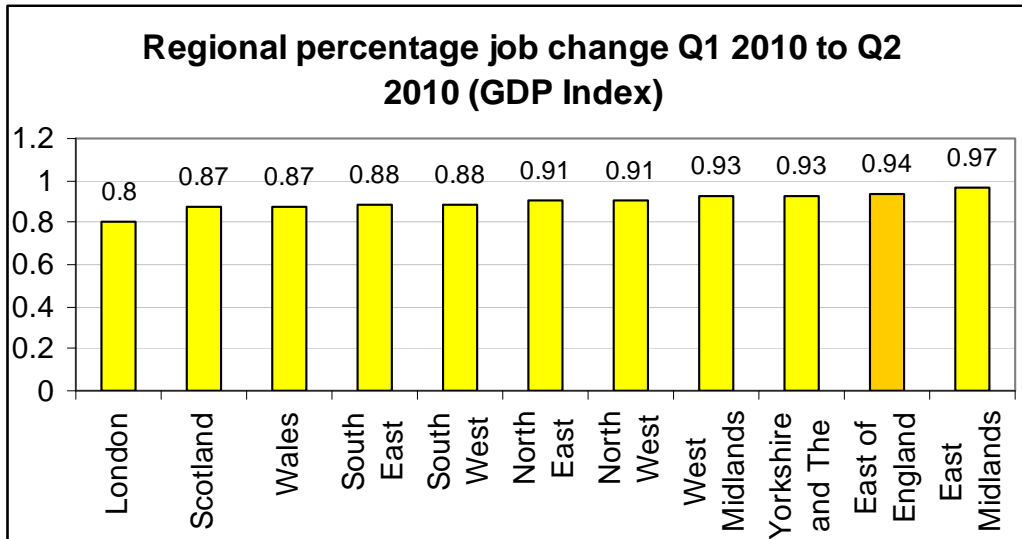
Figure 1



ONS regional GDP data accessed from Gavurin recession map, © Crown Copyright, 2010

- As figure 1 shows, values are marked for September 2006 through to June 2010, as well as at the highest GDP index value over this time for both geographies. A higher GDP value represents greater economic output.
- Although the GDP Index value for Colchester in September 2006 was very similar to the East of England, the regional GDP increased at a far higher rate between December 2006 and December 2007, with a peak value of 112.3. Colchester also saw a GDP increase for this period, but at a much steadier level, with a December 2007 value of 106.
- Between December 2007 and March 2008, the East of England saw a substantial decrease in GDP index value, falling from 112.3 to 108.7. In the same period, Colchester GDP increased slightly from 106 to 107.
- Since March 2008, both geographical areas have seen an overall decrease in the GDP Index, in line with national recession trends. Since September 2009, this has started to recover slightly in both geographies.
- Between March 2010 and June 2010, both geographies saw their largest GDP index value increase since the recession. Colchester's value rose 0.9 to 101.4, and the East of England value rose 1.5 to 103.5.

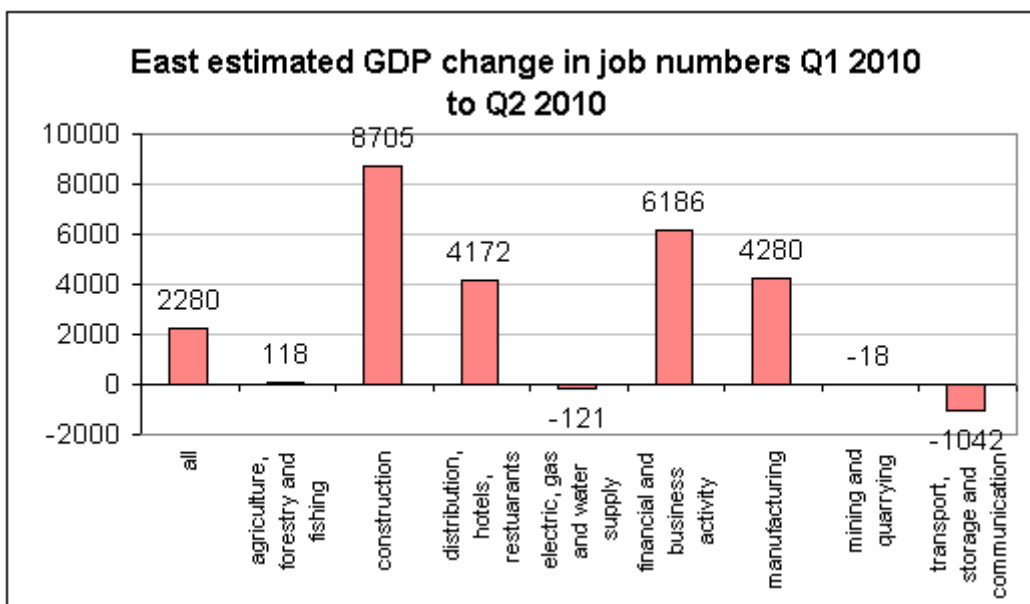
Figure 2



ONS regional GDP data accessed from Gavurin recession map, © Crown Copyright, 2010

- As figure 2 shows, the regional job change estimates have the largest positive value since the recession period. The East of England had the second highest GDP increase, at 0.94% behind the East Midlands 0.97%.
- Between quarters two and three in 2009, the East was predicted a job loss of 0.4%. The data for the third to the fourth quarters of 2009 showed a predicted job increase of 0.12%. Although very small, this showed a positive shift in the regional economy. Data for quarters 1 to 2 in 2010 shows a predicted 0.94% increase, which indicates an increase in recession recovery.

Figure 3



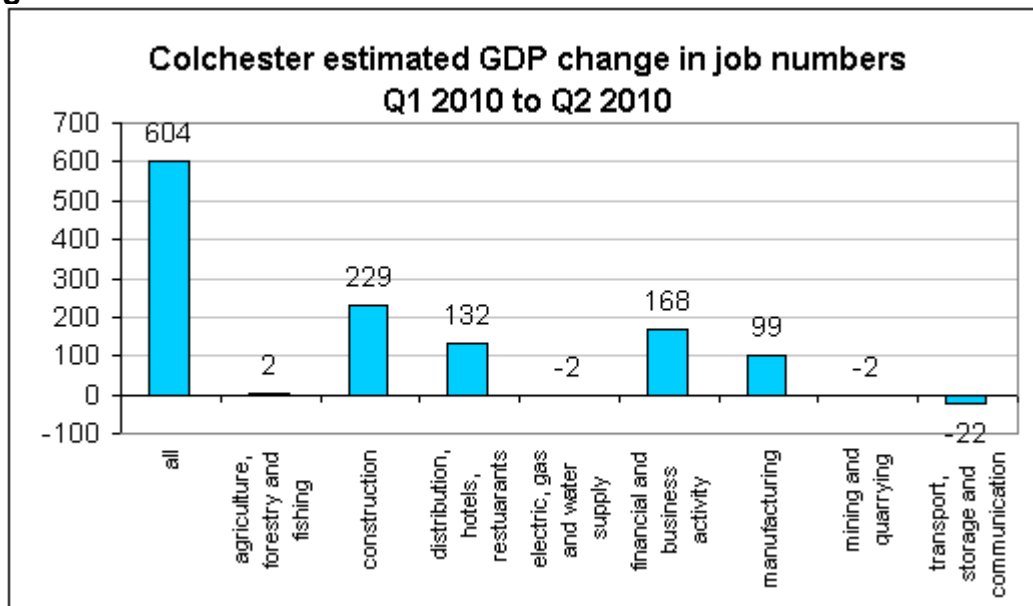
ONS regional GDP data accessed from Gavurin recession map, © Crown Copyright, 2010

- Based on the ONS calculations for change in GDP between the first and second quarter of 2010, figure 3 shows that the East was predicted an increase of 2,280 jobs. This was slightly less than the 2756 predicted for quarters three to four. The largest increase was expected

to be within the construction industry, (8705 jobs) followed by the financial and business activity at 6,186 jobs. Previous reports identified distribution including hotels and restaurants (2,316 jobs) followed by manufacturing (863 jobs).

- Some sectors however were still estimating job losses. For example, the electric gas and water supply industries were predicted to lose 121 jobs whilst transport, storage and communication estimated a considerable 1,042 jobs lost.

Figure 4

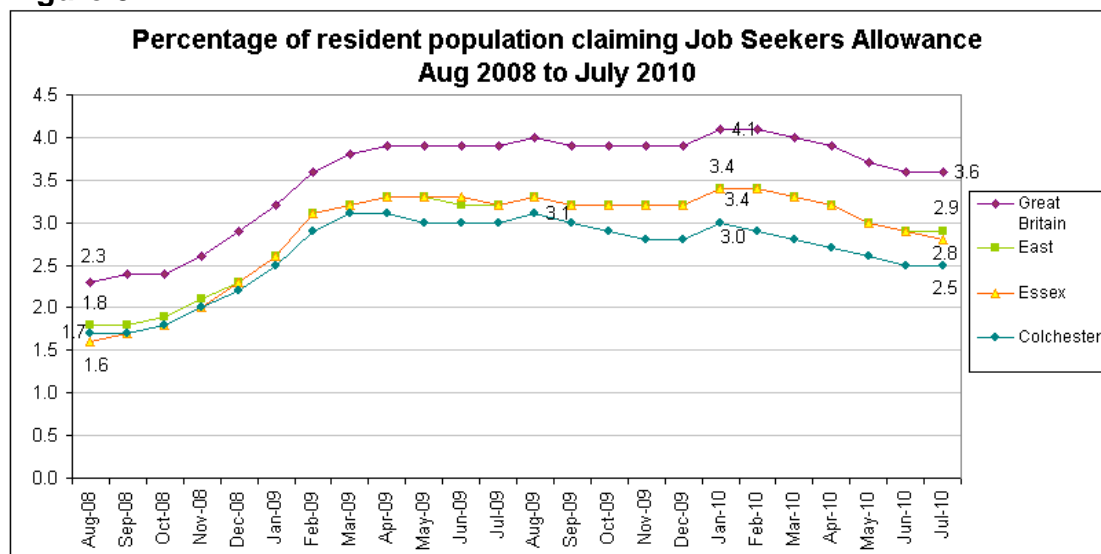


ONS regional GDP data accessed from Gavurin recession map, © Crown Copyright, 2010

- As figure 4 shows, based on the ONS calculations for change in GDP between the first and second quarters in 2010, Colchester was predicted an increase of 604 jobs. This was a considerable increase from the 2009 third to fourth quarters prediction of 87 jobs. The largest increase was expected to be in construction, at 229 jobs followed by financial and business activity (168 jobs). Some sectors were still estimating job losses, although small, with transport, storage and communication predicted to lose 22 jobs. Mining and quarrying and electricity gas and water supply both predicted to lose two jobs.

Unemployment indicators: Job Seekers Allowance and Worklessness

Figure 5



Nomis web data ONS claimant count as a percentage of the working age population © crown copyright, 2010

- The last report showed in January 2010 there was an increase in the percentage of the population claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) after a period of decrease at the end of 2009. This showed that 3% of Colchester's population were JSA claimants at this time. This is likely to be due to the decrease in seasonal Christmas positions.
- Since January 2010, the Colchester JSA claimant has again seen a decrease in all areas, leading to a July 2010 figure for Colchester of 2.5%, this is the lowest value since January 2010, and lower than any of the other geographies.
- Where Colchester had very similar percentages of JSA claimants to Essex and the East in January 2008 (between 1.5% and 1.8%). Colchester's claimant level, although increased throughout the recession, has increased at a lower level than Essex or the East of England since December 2008, with highest values of 3.1% compared to 3.6% for Essex and the East.
- In July 2010, Colchester had 2.5% of the working age population claiming JSA, while Essex had 2.8%, the East had 2.9% and Great Britain had 3.6%.

Figure 6

Employment and unemployment (Jan 2009-Dec 2009)				
view time-series compare other areas query dataset...				
	Colchester (numbers)	Colchester (%)	East (%)	Great Britain (%)
All people				
Economically active [†]	96,500	76.8	79.4	76.7
In employment [†]	89,700	71.2	74.3	70.7
Employees [†]	79,400	63.3	63.8	61.4
Self employed [†]	9,900	7.5	10.1	9.0
Unemployed (model-based) [§]	6,200	6.5	6.3	7.7

Source: ONS annual population survey

* Sample size too small for reliable estimate

† numbers are for those aged 16 and over, % are for those aged 16-64

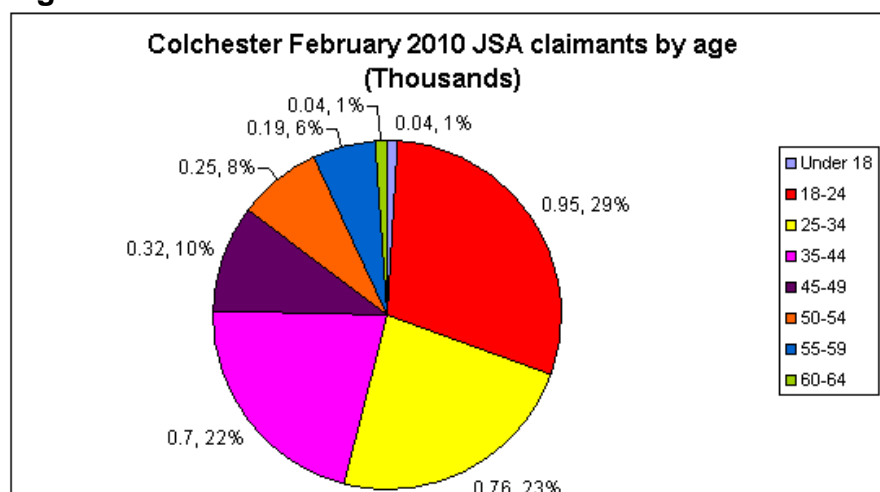
§ numbers and % are for those aged 16 and over, % is a proportion of economically active

Important note

11 Aug 2010: The population figures used to calculate residence-based proportions (rates) have changed from working age (16-59f/64m) to aged 16-64 for both males and females. This change affects rates for all dates. So rates for all dates will differ to those downloaded previously.

- The Annual Population Survey (figure 6) data estimates that between January 2009 and December 2009, 76.8% of Colchester’s population were economically active, which is only slightly higher than the national figure of 76.7%, but lower than the East (79.4%). People not classed as economically active will include retired people, students, and people looking after the home or children and not looking for a job.
- Included in the economically active, 6.5% of the working age population were estimated to be unemployed (but wanting a job) in Colchester. This was lower than the estimated 7.7% of the working age population in Great Britain, but higher than the 6.3% for the East of England. This is also higher than the 5.6% estimated in April’s economic report using data from July 2008 to June 2009.

Figure 7

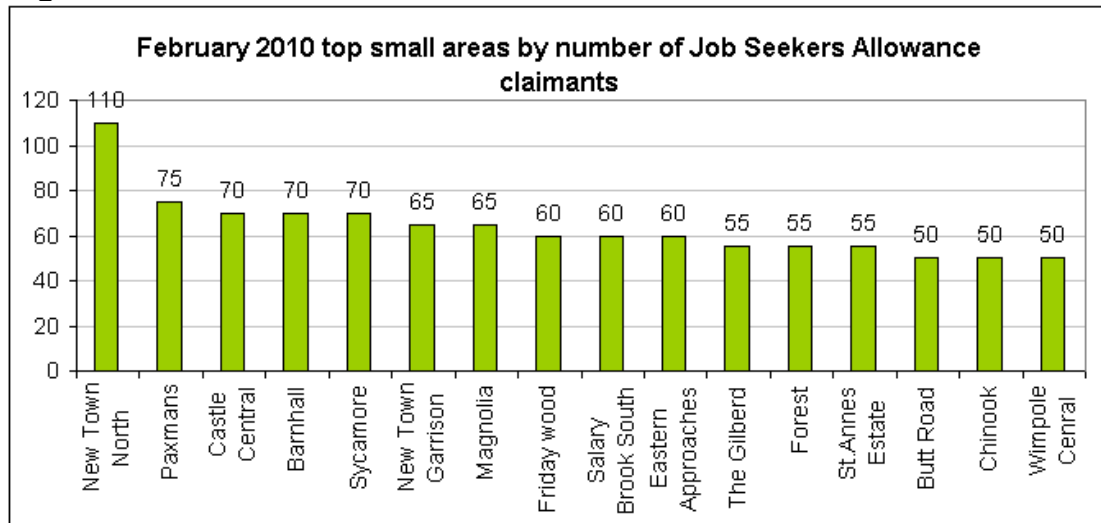


Data source DWP information directorate © crown copyright, 2010

- As figure 7 shows, in February 2010, the largest numbers of Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimants were aged 18 to 24, at 950 claimants (29%) this is down slightly from the August 2009 figure of 990 (30%). This was followed by 25 to 34 year olds, which accounted

for 23% of February 2010 claimants (760, a reduction from the 790 recorded in August 2009).

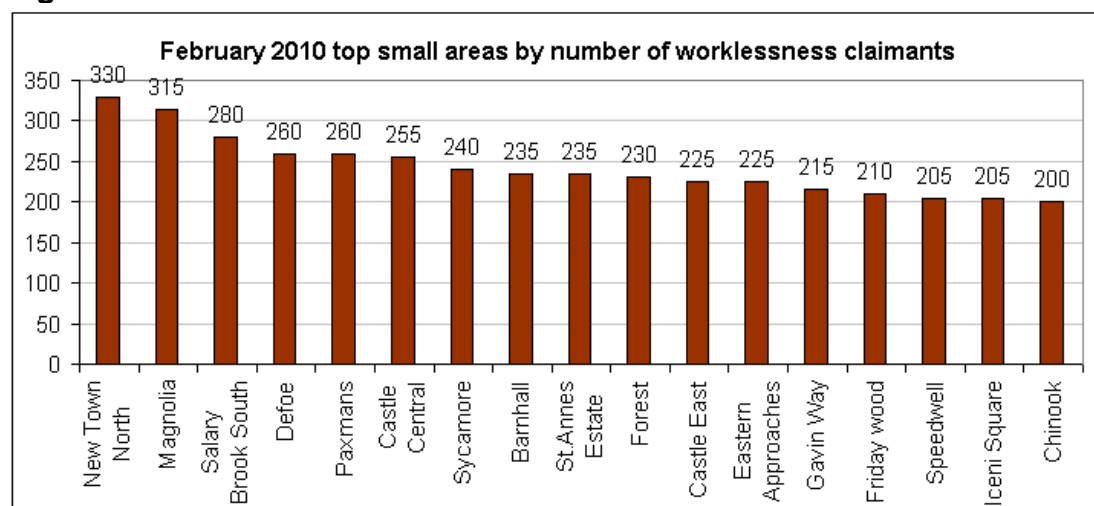
Figure 8



Data source DWP information directorate © crown copyright, 2010

- As figure 8 shows, in the February 2010 Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimant data, there were 13 small areas in Colchester with 55 or more JSA claimants, down from 15 in August 2009 (April report).
- Of the top small areas by number of JSA claimants, seven small areas kept the same value between August 2009 and February 2010. Three small areas shown had a reduced number of JSA claimants (New Town North, Salary Brook South and Wimpole Central) and six small areas had an increased number (Castle Central, Barnhall, Sycamore, Magnolia, Friday Wood and Butt Road). The highest of these increases was in Barnhall, which rose from 50 claimants in August 2009 to 70 in February 2010.
- Berechurch North went from the third highest JSA claimants, at 65 in August 2009 to only 35 claimants in February 2010. The top two small areas for claimant numbers remained the same for both dates.

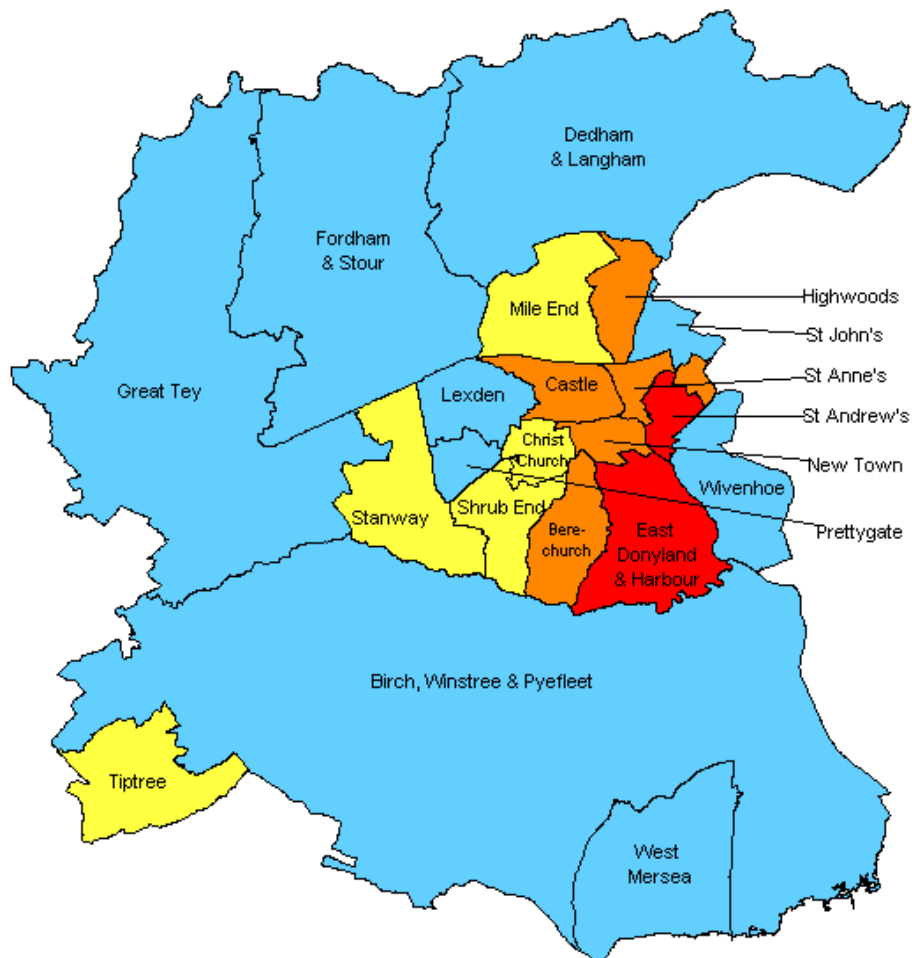
Figure 9



Data source DWP information directorate © crown copyright, 2010

- In the February 2010 workless figures, there were 16 small areas with 205 or more worklessness residents, this figure decreased from 17 in August 2009 as figure 9 illustrates.
- Between August 2009 and February 2010, six of the top small areas saw a decrease in worklessness numbers. A further seven of the top small areas also saw an increase in worklessness numbers and 3 small areas stayed the same. The largest increase was in Sycamore, which saw an increase of 15 claimants, and the largest decrease.

Figure 10



JSA Claimants - July 2010
 Percentage of Working Age Population

3.61 to 4.45	(2)
2.78 to 3.61	(5)
1.95 to 2.78	(5)
1.12 to 1.95	(9)

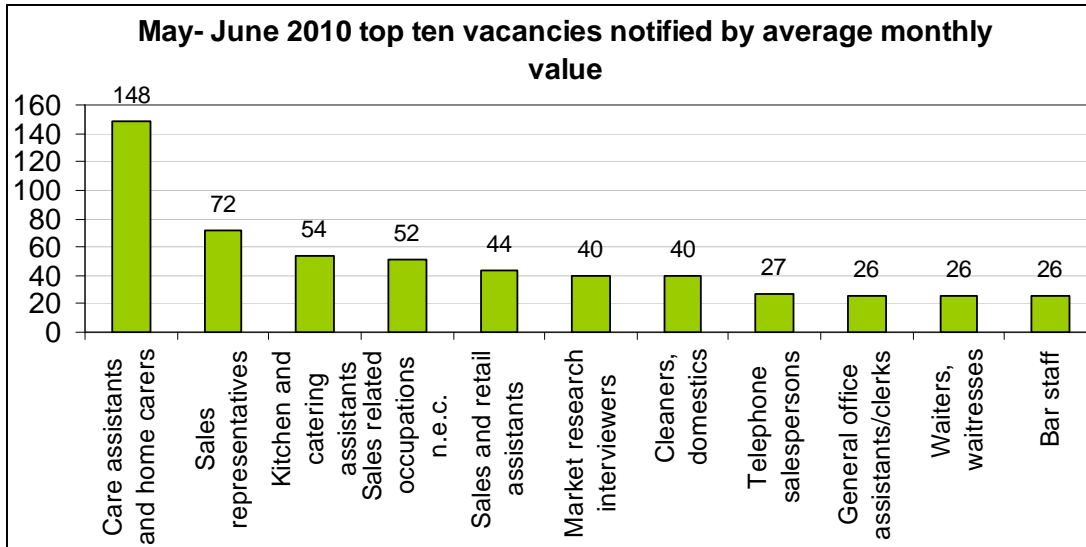
Nomis web data ONS claimant count as a percentage of the working age population © crown copyright, 2010
 NB This data falls across current ward boundaries and so will not necessarily match up to other data sets.

- Figure 10 shows the percentage of working age population claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) in July 2010 at Middle Layer Super Output area (MLSOA) level.

- St Andrews and East Donyland and Harbour were the top two MSOA's, where there was between 3.61% and 4.45% of the working age population claiming JSA.
- There were four MSOA's in the next category, where between 2.78% and 3.61% of the working age population claiming JSA, which were Highwoods, St Annes, Castle, New Town and Berechurch.

Job Centre Plus data: Vacancies and Job Seekers

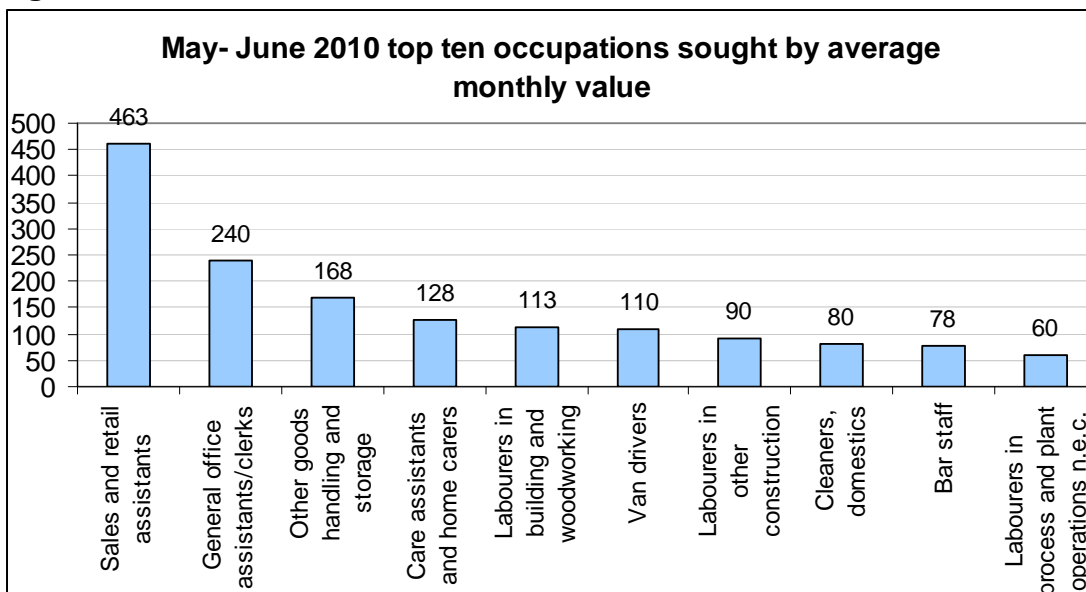
Figure 11



Data source, Job Centre Plus, Colchester branch site level vacancies, August 2010

- With an average of 148 vacancies registered a month between May and June 2010, care assistants and home carers had the top number of vacancies, followed by sales representatives with an average of 72 vacancies a month. These are the same top two vacancies that were reported in the April economic report.

Figure 12



Data source, Job Centre Plus, Colchester branch site level vacancies, August 2010

As shown in figure 12, between November 2009 and February 2010, an average of 463 people a month were searching for sales and retail assistant jobs through the Job Centre Plus. An average of 240 people a month were seeking general office assistant/ clerk work, (which had reduced) and 168 on average were looking for other good handling and storage work. These are the same top three occupations sought as shown in the April report.

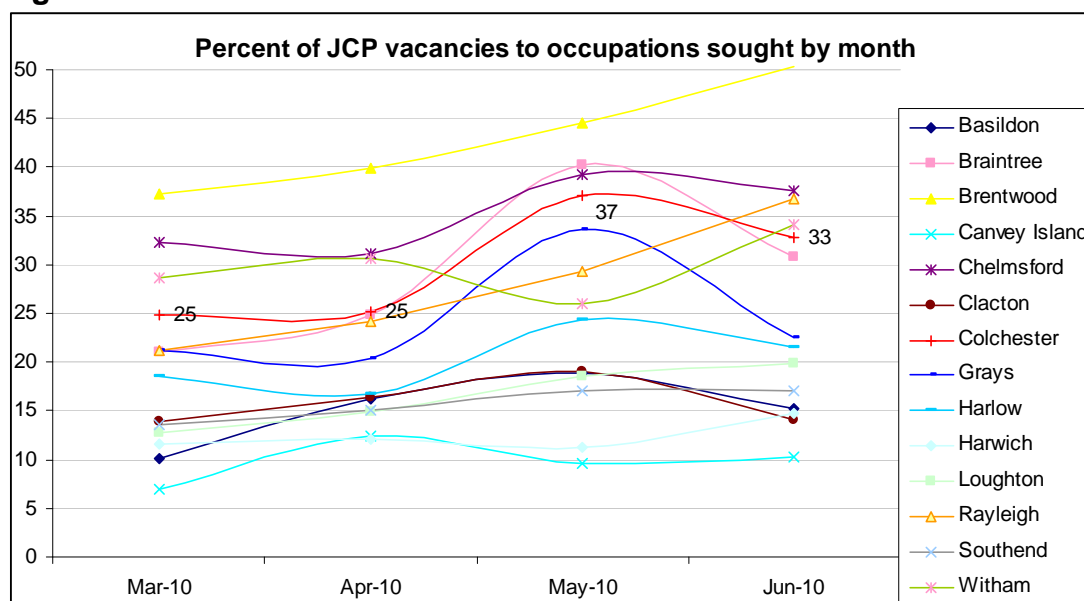
Figure 13

	February 2010 percentage	June 2010 vacancies	June 2010 occupancy sought	June 2010 percentage*
Basildon	9.9	926	4915	18.84028
Braintree	23.7	1071	2665	40.18762
Brentwood	36.4	428	960	44.58333
Canvey Island	5.6	107	1105	9.683258
Chelmsford	29	1301	3315	39.24585
Clacton	21	428	2250	19.02222
Colchester	21.2	1192	3215	37.07621
Grays	10.9	1236	3675	33.63265
Harlow	19.6	724	2975	24.33613
Harwich	10.5	63	560	11.25
Loughton	18.1	286	1545	18.51133
Rayleigh	13.7	347	1185	29.2827
Southend	11.5	843	4950	17.0303
Witham	21.3	201	775	25.93548

Data source, Job Centre Plus, Colchester branch site level vacancies, August 2010

- Those figures which are highlighted in figure 13 show an increase in the percentage of jobs to job seekers. Between February and June 2010, only Clacton Job Centre Plus (JCP) saw a decrease in the number of jobs available for the number of job seekers.
- In Colchester, the proportion of vacancies advertised through the Job Centre Plus was 37.1% of job seekers, which is a large increase from 21.2% of the job seekers which were registered in February 2010. Of the areas shown, Colchester had the fourth highest proportion of jobs to job seekers, which is an increase from ranking fifth in February 2010 and seventh in November 2009.
- Some of the increase of jobs to job seekers may be linked to the regional increase in GDP values.
- Although this data shows the percentage of jobs to job seekers, these figures will not necessarily translate into employment, as the difference in the types of occupations sought and vacancies advertised shows.

Figure 14



Data source, Job Centre Plus, Colchester branch site level vacancies, August 2010

- Figure 14 shows the percentage of jobs to Job seekers in Colchester and other Essex districts registered through the Job Centre Plus. At the most recent point of January 2010, Colchester has the fifth highest percentage of jobs to job seekers, behind Brentwood, Chelmsford, Rayleigh and Witham, at 33%. This was considerably higher than the 21.2% shown in February 2010.
- Since March 2010 in Colchester, there has been an increase in the percentage of jobs to job seekers, to a peak of 37% in May 2010.

16-19 year olds Not in Employment, Education or Training

Figure 15

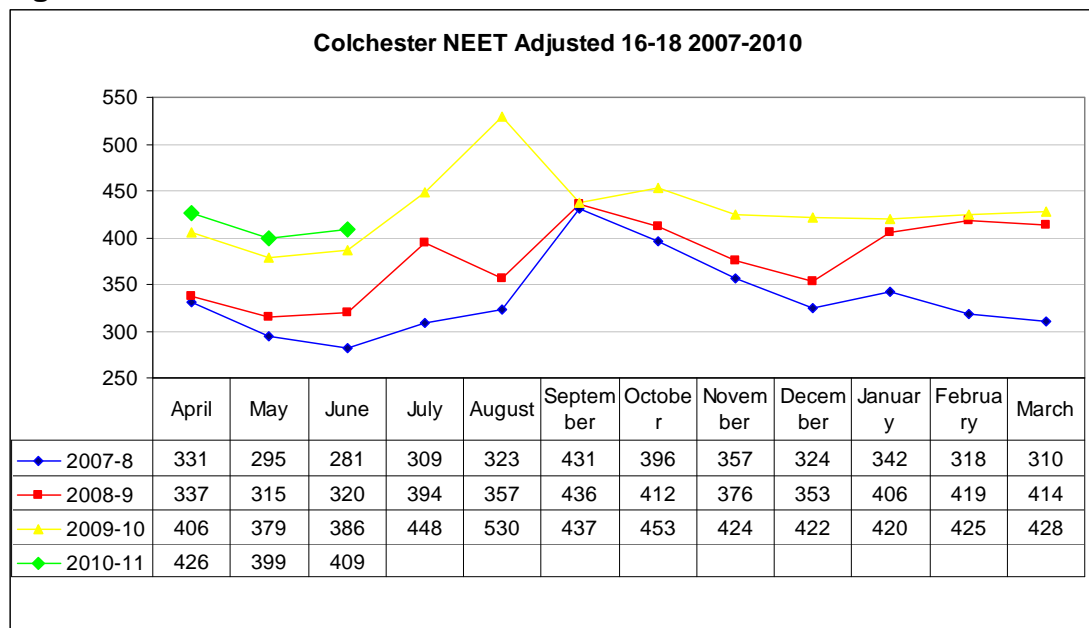
District	NEET % as at June 09	NEET % as at June 10	Change June 09 to June 10	NEET Numbers as at June 10	NEET Numbers as at March 10
Basildon	10.90%	14.10%	3.20%	492	539
Tendring	14.00%	12.60%	-1.40%	377	455
Braintree	11.80%	11.10%	-0.70%	245	276
Rochford	6.00%	10.40%	4.40%	107	113
Maldon	8.30%	10.00%	1.70%	76	90
Essex	7.00%	7.00%	0.00%	2411	2656
Colchester	5.80%	6.00%	0.20%	409	428
Brentwood	4.20%	5.50%	1.30%	92	88
Harlow	4.90%	5.20%	0.30%	128	113
Castle Point	6.00%	4.30%	-1.70%	155	179
Chelmsford	3.60%	4.00%	0.40%	231	223
Uttlesford	3.20%	4.00%	0.80%	52	50
Epping Forest	2.40%	2.20%	-0.20%	63	91

Colchester 14 to 19 Area Planning Group (APG) NEET data set, provided by NE Area Integrated Youth Services, © Essex County Council (August 2010)

As Figure 15 shows, in June 2010, Colchester had 6% of its 16 to 19 year old population who were classed as NEET. This was lower than the Essex average of 7%, and placed Colchester sixth out of the twelve districts, but higher than the previous year where 5.8% of the relevant population were NEET.

In terms of numbers of NEET 16 to 19 year olds, Colchester had the second highest number of the twelve districts, higher than the third ranking in March 2010 at 409 NEET, only Basildon had a higher level of NEET in June 2010, at 492.

Figure 16



Colchester 14 to 19 Area Planning Group (APG) NEET data set, provided by NE Area Integrated Youth Services, © Essex County Council (August 2010)

- For all three annual periods, the adjusted NEET figure is shown on a monthly basis in figure 16. Across the three years, the lowest adjusted NEET figures were given for the period of April 2007 to March 2008, where the highest NEET figure given was 431 in September 2007 and the lowest NEET figure was 281 in June 2007.
- Year on year the adjusted NEET figure for each month has increased.
- The starting months of the period April 2010 to March 2011 shown on the chart above identify a higher NEET figure for Colchester than any other year, indicating that this trend is set to continue.
- The most recent data for June 2010 shows 409 NEET young people in Colchester.

Figure 17

Top ten wards by percentage of Colchester Connexions NEET who are resident	
Ward	% of Colchester Connexion's NEET
St Andrew's	10.97%
Berechurch	10.20%
Harbour	8.93%
Shrub End	8.67%
St Anne's	8.16%
New Town	7.91%
Highwoods	5.87%
Castle	5.36%
West Mersea	4.34%
Lexden	3.83%

Colchester 14 to 19 Area Planning Group (APG) NEET data set, provided by NE Area Integrated Youth Services, © Essex County Council (August 2010)

The top ten wards by the percentage of NEETs covered by Colchester Connexions who are resident there are shown in figure 17 above. In June 2010, St Andrew's had the largest percent of Colchester Connexions registered NEET, at 10.97%, followed by Berechurch at 10.2% this had changed from March 2010, where Berechurch had the largest percent of the Colchester Connexions NEET, at 9.5%, followed by St Andrew's with 8.6%, with both wards also seeing an increase.

Housing Data

The following figures relate to the most recent three months for which data is available, which covers February 2010 to July 2010. This data is provided via the Hometrack system.

The simple average house price in **Colchester (Borough)** is currently **£233,400** (based on sales and valuations over the last 3 months), compared to a regional average of **£259,700**

The lower quartile house price in **Colchester (Borough)** is currently **£150,700** (based on sales and valuations over the last 3 months), compared to a regional average of **£156,000**.

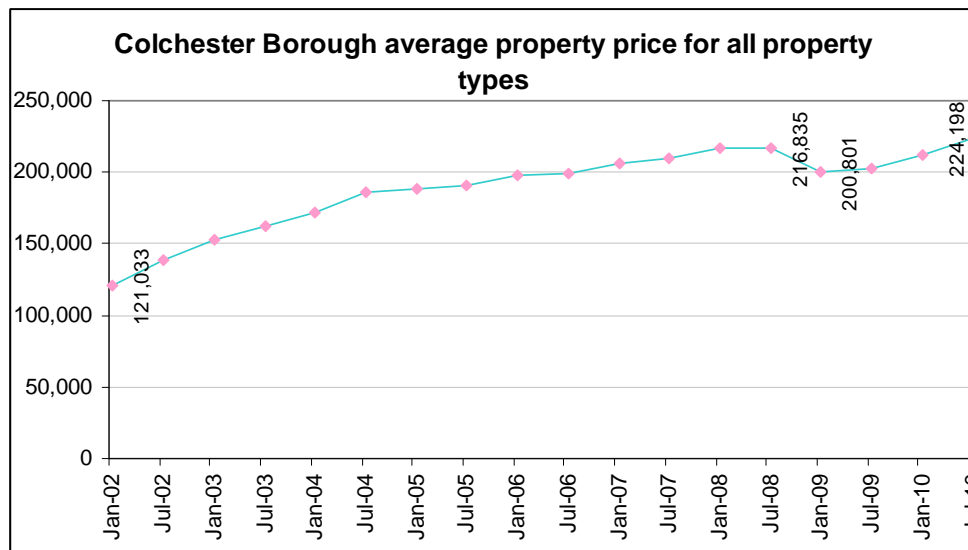
The number of bedrooms is a key determinant of price, current average prices in **Colchester (Borough)** by bedrooms count and property type are as follows;

- 1 bedroom flat - **£90,300**
- 2 bedroom flat - **£118,100**
- 2 bedroom house - **£156,400**
- 3 bedroom house - **£204,300**
- 4 bedroom house - **£309,800**

The average price of a new build flat in **Colchester (Borough)** is currently **£119,500**, compared to a regional average of **£160,600**

The average price of a new build house in **Colchester (Borough)** is currently **£220,800**, compared to a regional average of **£258,800**

Figure 18

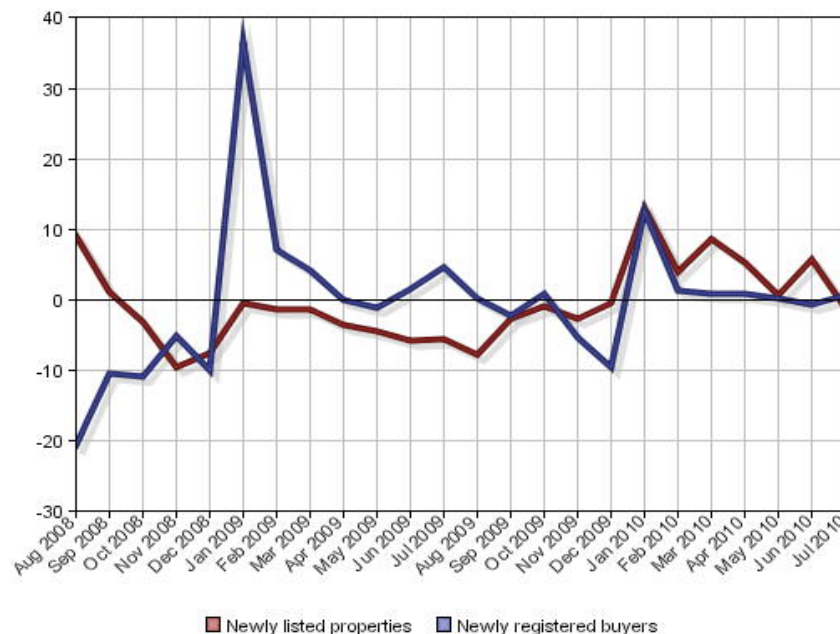


Data source- Hometrack

Since January 2002, the average property price in Colchester has seen an overall increase from £121,033 to £224,198 in July 2010. Over this time period there was a steady increase in average property price, but between July 2008 and January 2010, the average price decreased by 8% from £216,835 to £200,801. It took until July 2010 for the average price to recover back to above this.

Figure 19

Change in supply and demand



Note

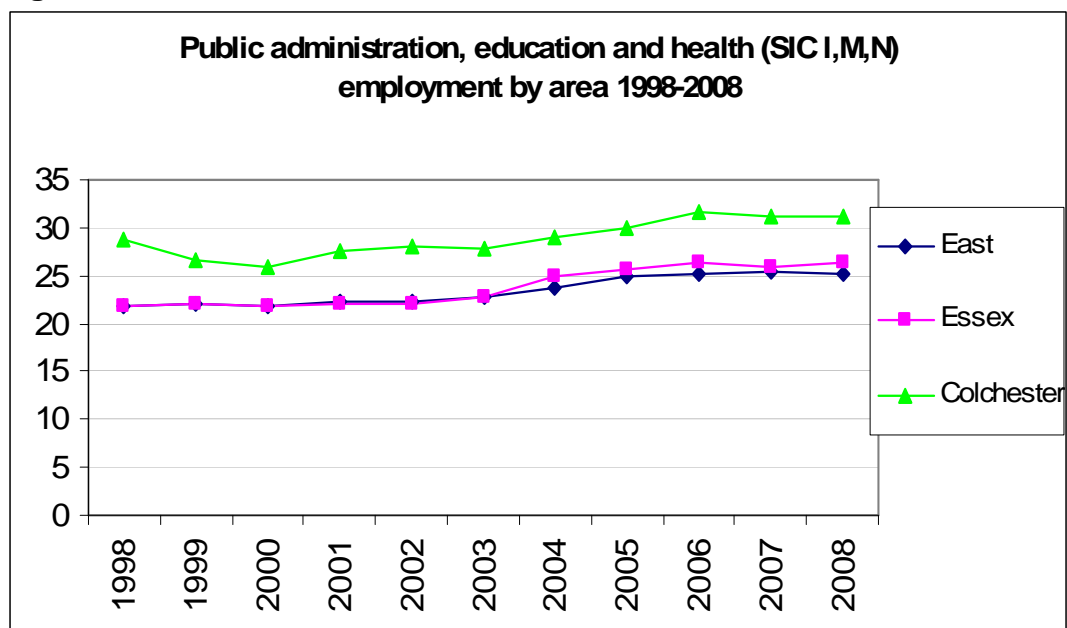
This graph compares the percentage change in the number of new properties being registered for sale each month against the percentage change in the number of new buyers registering. The data comes from Hometrack's monthly survey of estate agents and is based at postcode district level (e.g. SE5 or NE12).

In January 2009, there was a sharp increase of 40% newly registered buyers but this was against a December 2008 8% reduction of registrations, with no increase in January 2009.

Although the trend shows fluctuations, with high peaks of newly registered buyers from August 2008, since February 2010, this has levelled off reflecting the national trend that there has been a fall in the number of first time buyers due to mortgage availability. At the same time, there have been monthly percentage increases in registered properties. In other periods where this has been the case, the value of houses has decreased due to the change in both supply and demand.

The public sector and economic resilience

Figure 20



Source: Annual Business Inquiry ©Crown Copyright ONS data is shown for 1998 to 2008. Figures shown in this charts are averages across all business sizes.

- Colchester had a significantly more dominant public sector in 2008 at 31.1%, than Essex (26.4) and the East of England (25.1%), amounting to nearly one in three people employed in industry according to this measure. Growth in the public sector has occurred in all areas since 1998.
- This factor will create greater exposure to the effect of any future public spending reductions from the perspective of employment, spend and local supply chains. At the end of June 2010 the Government announced spending cuts in most departments and suggested budgets are reduced by over a quarter over the next four years, which amounts to 600,000 job losses nationally¹.
- Local Futures point out that the wider economic affects of public sector job losses will be felt locally in terms of a reduction or cessation in public sector contracts and the demand for local goods and services

¹ Local Futures (2010) *Barometer: the geography of public sector cuts* © The local futures group.

'both from the public sector itself and public sector workers via consumption economies'². The impact of public spend in the borough given that it employs one third of the working population (one fifth in the UK) is clearly significant with local spend supporting in particular retail, leisure, hospitality and personal services. It is estimated that for every £1 spent on public services £1.64 is returned to the local economy³. Colchester has targeted interventions such as promoting 'Buy Local' to further increase the multiplier effect of local procurement and purchasing as an effective means of keeping more money in the local economy.

- According to research by Oxford Economics due to the factors listed above, at least 2.3 million private sector jobs will be at risk nationally as a result of the cuts.
- Research undertaken by Centre for Cities has shown that a robust private sector could go some way in compensating for this contraction in the public sector⁴.

Centre for cities have completed a Haven Gateway comparative analysis using the same city methodology, finding that;

- If Colchester was included in England's list of 56 cities, it would rank as one of the country's most buoyant economies.
- Between 1998 and 2008, the number of private sector jobs in Colchester grew by 11.5 percent (which would have been the ninth highest percentage growth of any city in England).
- Judging by the increase in JSA claimants between February 2008 and June 2010, both Colchester and the Haven Gateway area have performed relatively well during the recession.

² Oxford Economics, 2010.

³ CLES (2008) Creating resilient local economies: exploring the economic footprint of public services

⁴ Webber, C and Swinney, P (2010) *Private sector cities: a new geography of opportunity* © Centre for Cities.

The 2011 Census

The Census has occurred every 10 years in England and Wales since 1801, aside from 1941 when we were at war. The last Census was in 2001 and the next will take place on **27 March 2011**.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) organise the Census to get an accurate count of the population at one single point in time. The results of the Census will help us to know how many people live in Colchester and how we tailor our services to support our communities.

Colchester Borough Council has been working with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) for a year now preparing for the 2011 Census and 2010 promises to be even busier. *But why is the 2011 Census so important?*

More than £100 billion a year is allocated to primary care trusts (PCTs) and local authorities using census-based population data, around £25 billion of this going to local authorities via the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The accuracy with which each local authority's allocation is calculated is directly influenced by the accuracy of census estimates. This in turn relies on high return rates for all areas and communities - and rigorous attention to detail and quality.

The Census Office estimates that local authorities lose approximately £500 per person, per year for every person who does not complete their Census form. This is why Colchester Borough Council will be doing everything possible to promote the 2011 Census and encouraging our customers to complete it.

Linking unemployed people into jobs. The new Sainsbury store development, Tollgate, Stanway

- Enterprise and Tourism negotiated a section 106 agreement through Planning to ensure that local jobseekers were able to gain employment in the new larger store under construction at Tollgate. This planning gain agreement is believed to be the first of its type in Essex. The agreement has brought Jobcentre Plus fully into working with Sainsbury's and has strengthened CBC's close partnership with Colchester Jobcentre.
- Of the additional 150 jobs which will be available in the new Store which opens on the 1 December, Sainsbury's agreed to reserve 30 vacancies at the start for Jobcentre Plus "hardest to help customers"; these jobseekers are being recruited via three JCP training courses, guaranteed interviews and Work Trials.
- The first course under the *Routes into Work* (for 18-24 year olds) programme finished on 3/09/10. All 19 candidates were offered Work Trials by Sainsbury's with 18 actually starting on Monday 6/09/10.

- The next courses under *Skills for Jobs* (retail pre-employment training) are due to start on Monday 13/09/10. This is aimed primarily at candidates aged 25 and over. A second course under this banner also commencing on the same date consists predominately of Colchester JCP referrals.
- Overall, Sainsbury's are using Jobcentre Plus to advertise their jobs and to cascade vacancies through partners to target jobseekers (e.g. Seetec, Signpost). This process is working well. Store jobs on their internet site are receiving an excellent response and being filled quickly to the point that Sainsbury's have not needed to undertake any marketing or advertising activities themselves.
- To-date Sainsbury's have filled 92 vacancies out of a probable total of 160 (which includes some Christmas temps).

Colchester's Star to rise in the East this Christmas!

- Local people and visitors alike are being wooed to Colchester as the town goes all out to impress this Christmas!
- A new 3-year contract has just been signed with Blachere Illuminations, a French-based company, which specialises in festive lighting all over the world including the Champs Elysée in Paris and Regent Street in London.
- The new scheme will see wider coverage of Christmas lighting around the town in 2010 themed around stars celebrating Colchester's heritage as *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star* was written in West Stockwell Street by sisters Jane and Ann Taylor around 1796.
- Also being planned is a TV advertising campaign as the town's retailers work in partnership with the Council to get the message out that Colchester's the place to be this Christmas!
- The Council's Parking Services team has also joined in the campaign with special seasonal offers of just 50p to park in Colchester after 3pm on Wednesday late night shopping days and 50p all day on 27th and 28th December to make sale shopping even more of a bargain.
- The company's illuminations are patented to give over 320° of light (compared with 30° for a standard LED). This means that the light emitted from their schemes can be seen from nearly every angle, rather than from head-on only.
- Blachere also prides itself on environmentally friendly lighting as its technology is up to 90% more energy efficient than incandescent bulbs which radiate very little heat, low urban light pollution and are mercury-free unlike fluorescent lamps.
- 2009 saw the end of the contract for the Christmas lights commissioned by the former Town Centre Partnership (TCP). The Council took responsibility for delivering the lights in 2008 and 2009 following the cessation of the TCP in 2008.

The Tour of Britain Comes to Colchester

- The Tour of Britain, the UK's biggest professional bicycle race and the centrepiece of the British cycling calendar, is coming to Colchester on Friday 17th September 2010.
- Some of the world's top cyclists, who compete in major international competitions like the Tour de France and Giro d'Italia, will compete on our roads for the right to wear the yellow jersey. Over the past five years, Olympic, World and Commonwealth Champions have ridden The Tour of Britain.
- But it's not just for the Pros ... Colcestrians were able to take part too in what promises to be a great day for local businesses and families alike! To help celebrate this momentous event Colchester Borough Council and Essex County Council organised a massive Cycling Festival in Colchester Castle Park.

New look to our Business Pages

- After consultation with local business groups to find out what Colchester businesses want from our website, the Business pages on www.colchester.gov.uk are currently undergoing a transformation, giving a new look and new content, including an events search facility to enable businesses to search or browse for training courses, workshops and networking events, pulling everything together in one place. The new pages are due to be launched by the end of September.