QUARTERLY ECONOMIC REVIEW OCTOBER 2008

Welcome to the seventh edition of the Wiltshire Quarterly Economic Review (QER) for October 2008, produced by the Economic Research & Intelligence Unit, Wiltshire County Council. It forms part of a series of reviews that are intended to provide information on the Wiltshire economy. We hope you find this publication useful and would appreciate any feedback that you may have.

The QER will contain quarterly economic indicators in every issue (i.e. employment rates, economic activity rates, unemployment rates, property prices), subject to availability. The indicators that are released on an annual basis will be included as and when they are made available. It is intended to include, whenever possible and if appropriate, information for the following geographies: national; regional; county; and districts, as well as comparative information from the previous four quarters. The primary aim of this document is to make sure that the latest economic data is made available to WSEP (Wiltshire Strategic Economic Partnership) partners, as soon as possible. Detailed analysis is usually reserved for the annual Economic Assessment.

Items in the October 2008 issue include:

Quarterly Indicators

- National Economic Update
- Employment
- Economic Activity
- Unemployment
- Job Vacancies
- Property Market
- Job Losses & Gains

Annual Indicators

- Qualifications

For releases of datasets not included in this issue please refer to previous Quarterly Economic Reviews and the Economic Assessment 2006-07.

All previous Economic Assessments and Quarterly Economic Reviews are available in the library section of the Wiltshire & Swindon Intelligence Network: http://www.intelligencenetwork.org.uk/

Some of the items summarise larger datasets. Should you require more detailed information please contact the Economic Research & Intelligence Unit at Wiltshire County Council, Environmental Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8JN:

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NATIONAL ECONOMIC UPDATE[1]

- The Government's target measure of inflation (Consumer Price Index Inflation) was 5.2% in September, up from 4.7% in August. The largest upward effect came from housing and household services because of rises in average gas and electricity bills. There were further upward pressures from recreation & culture, clothing & footwear and air & sea fares.

- The volume of retail sales in the three months to September 2008 was 0.1% higher than in the previous three months. Total sales volume in the three months to September was 2.3% higher than in the same period ending a year earlier. Sale for predominately food stores fell by 0.1%, whilst sales volume for predominately non-food stores increased by 3.0%.

- In the third quarter of 2008, GDP decreased by 0.5%, compared to no movement in the previous quarter. Total production output decreased by 1.0% in the third quarter compared with a fall of 0.7% in the previous quarter. Manufacturing fell by 1.0% and made the largest contribution to the slowdown. Mining & Quarrying and Electricity, gas and Water output also decreased.

- For the three months to August 2008, the employment rate was 74.4%, down 0.4 from the previous quarter and 0.1 over the year. The unemployment rate over the same period was 5.7%, up 0.5 since the previous quarter and 0.4 over the year. In September 2008 the number of claimants of Jobseekers Allowance increased by 31,800 since the previous month and by 104,900 over the year.

[1] Royal Bank of Scotland, Office for National Statistics, BBC.

LABOUR MARKET

This section provides an overview of headline key labour market indicators. The indicators normally used are: employment rate; unemployment rate (Claimant Count & ILO Unemployment); economic activity/inactivity rate; and Jobcentre Plus vacancies.

Employment

The employment rate is defined as the proportion of an economy's working age population that is in employment. It provides an indication of the level of engagement the area's residents are having with the labour market and the ability of an economy to create jobs. Table 1 shows the employment rate in Wiltshire during the period January 2006 to December 2007 to be 79.2%, above both the regional and national averages (78.2% and 74.4% respectively). Compared to the same period ending a year earlier (January 2006 to December 2006) the rate was 2.2 percentage points lower, which contrasts with small increases at both national and regional levels. North Wiltshire (82.3%) was the district with the highest employment rate, followed by Salisbury (82.0%), West Wiltshire (75.8%) and Kennet (75.2%). Both Kennet (3.5 percentage points) and West Wiltshire (9.7 percentage points) experienced a fall in employment rates compared to the same period ending a year earlier, whilst North Wiltshire and Salisbury both experienced an increase in employment rates.

Table 1: Employment Rate (%) of working age population

Area	Jan 2006 - Dec 2006	Apr 2006 - Mar 2007	Jul 2006 - June 2007	Oct 2006 - Sept 2007	Jan 2007- Dec 2007
Great Britain	74.3	74.3	74.4	74.3	74.4
South West	77.9	77.7	78.2	78.5	78.2
Swindon	79.8	82.1	83.9	83.8	84.6
Wiltshire	81.4	80.6	80.0	79.9	79.2
Kennet	78.7	80.5	78.3	76.4	75.2
North Wiltshire	80.6	78.2	80.7	81.9	82.3
Salisbury	79.6	79.8	80.2	82.9	82.0
West Wiltshire	85.5	84.0	80.0	77.3	75.8

Source: Annual Population Survey~, 2008
~The APS is a new survey which supersedes the existing two datasets: the local area Labour Force Survey and the quarterly Labour Force Survey.

Economic Activity

The economic activity rate is a good indicator of the health of the labour market in an area. Persons are economically active if they are either employed or unemployed in a particular period. Economically active people can thus be defined as those who supply or want to supply their labour to produce goods and services for the economy. The rates are calculated by expressing the number of persons in the labour force (the labour force is the sum of employed and unemployed persons) as a percentage of the working age population. The economic activity rate in Wiltshire for the period January 2007 to December 2007 was 82.5%, above both the regional (81.5%) and national (78.6%) averages. Salisbury had the highest level of economic activity (86.3%), followed by North Wiltshire (85.8%), West

Wiltshire (79.0%) and Kennet (77.1%). North Wiltshire and Salisbury both experienced an increase in rates for the period ending December 2007, compared to the period ending December 2006, whilst Kennet and West Wiltshire both experienced a decrease in activity rates. (Table 2)

Table 2: Economic activity rate (%) of working age population

Area	Jan 2006 - Dec 2006	Apr 2006 - Mar 2007	Jul 2006 - June 2007	Oct 2006 - Sept 2007	Jan 2007- Dec 2007
Great Britain	78.6	78.6	78.6	78.6	78.6
South West	81.0	81.0	81.4	81.7	81.5
Swindon	83.8	85.5	86.4	86.1	87.1
Wiltshire	84.1	83.6	82.6	82.6	82.5
Kennet	82.2	83.4	79.9	77.9	77.1
North Wiltshire	84.2	82.1	84.1	85.1	85.8
Salisbury	81.9	82.9	83.5	86.4	86.3
West Wiltshire	87.4	86.0	82.0	79.5	79.0

Source: Annual Population Survey~, NOMIS 2008
~The APS is a new survey which supersedes the existing two datasets: the local area Labour Force Survey and the quarterly Labour Force Survey.

Table 3 shows the proportion of economically inactive people who want or do not want a job. In Wiltshire, 29.7% (approximately 13,700 people) of inactive people wanted a job, a larger proportion than the regional (27.2%) and national (25.0%) averages. West Wiltshire had the largest proportion of inactive people wanting a job, 32.4% (approximately 5,000 people), followed by Salisbury, 29.8% (approximately 2,700 people). Kennet, 28.1% (approximately 2,900 people) and North Wiltshire, 27.1% (approximately 3,000 people) had a smaller proportion of inactive people who wanted a job.

Table 3: % of economically inactive who want/do not want a job, January–December 2007

	Great Britain	South West	Swindon	Wiltshire	Kennet	North Wiltshire	Salisbury	West Wiltshire
Want a job	25.0	27.2	28.3	29.7	28.1	27.1	29.8	32.4
Do not want a job	75.0	72.8	71.7	70.3	71.9	72.9	70.2	67.6

Source: Annual Population Survey~, NOMIS 2008
~The APS is a new survey which supersedes the existing two datasets: the local area Labour Force Survey and the quarterly Labour Force Survey

Unemployment

The Claimant Count is based on the number of people claiming Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) and is taken from monthly records. People claiming JSA must declare they are out of work, available for, capable of, and actively seeking employment during the week in which the claim is made. Claimant Count rates express the number of JSA claimants as a percentage of working age people in an area. Table 4 shows the Claimant Count for Wiltshire in September 2008 was 1.3%, below both the regional (1.6%) and national (2.5%) averages. The Claimant rate in the County had increase since September 2007, in line with the regional and national averages. West Wiltshire (1.8%, 1,300 claimants) continued to be the district with the highest claim rate followed by North Wiltshire (1.2%), Kennet (1.0%) and Salisbury (1.0%). All of the districts experienced an increase in claim rate since the same period ending a year earlier.

Table 4: Claimant Count, working age population

Area	Sept 2007		June 2008		July 2008		August 2008		Sept 2008	
	No.	*Rate*	*No.*	*Rate*	*No.*	*Rate*	*No.*	*Rate*	*No.*	*Rate*
Great Britain	804,078	2.2	809,957	2.2	843,888	2.3	894,678	2.4	914,931	2.5
South West	39,094	1.3	40,964	1.3	43,610	1.4	48,017	1.6	49,241	1.6
Swindon	1,935	1.6	2,376	2.0	2,567	2.2	2,611	2.2	2,682	2.3
Wiltshire	2,462	0.9	2,890	1.1	3,092	1.1	3,364	1.3	3,460	1.3
Kennet	347	0.7	382	0.8	385	0.8	416	0.9	470	1.0
North Wiltshire	745	0.9	759	1.0	876	1.1	1,016	1.3	996	1.2
Salisbury	489	0.7	567	0.8	615	0.9	662	1.0	695	1.0
West Wiltshire	881	1.2	1,182	1.6	1,216	1.6	1,270	1.7	1,299	1.8

Source: Claimant Count, NOMIS, 2008

The figures in Table 5 are based on the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) definition of unemployment, which includes all those who are looking for work, whether or not they are on unemployment benefits. The contrast between the claimant count rate and the unemployment rate suggests that there is a difference in unemployment numbers, representing a few thousand working age people who could possibly be regarded as part of the 'hidden unemployed'. The 'hidden unemployed' do not claim or may not be entitled to Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) and are therefore excluded from official unemployment statistics that are based on the Claimant Count.

The table below contains a series of moving averages between January 2006 and December 2007. During the period January 2007 to December 2007 the unemployment rate in Wiltshire was 4.0%, marginally below the regional (4.1%) average and further below the national (5.3%) average. The rate in the County was higher than the previous reported year (October 2006 to September 2007) and the same period ending a year earlier (January 2006 to December 2006), in line with the regional trend; nationally however, the rate fell slightly in both periods.

Salisbury was the district with the highest unemployment rate and at 5.0% it was above the regional average but below the national average. West Wiltshire (4.1%) and North Wiltshire (4.0%) also had high levels of unemployment compared to Kennet, where the unemployment rate was only 2.3%. Unemployment rates in Salisbury and West Wiltshire were higher than the same period ending a year earlier, whilst in Kennet and North Wiltshire they were lower.

Table 5: Unemployment (%) working age population

Area	Jan 2006 - Dec 2006		Apr 2006 - Mar 2007		Jul 2006 - June 2007		Oct 2006 - Sept 2007		Jan 2007- Dec 2007	
	No	*Rate*	*No*	*Rate*	*No*	*Rate*	*No*	*Rate*	*No*	*Rate*
Great Britain	1,529,500	5.5	1,566,800	5.5	1,552,100	5.4	1,546,200	5.4	1,532,000	5.3
South West	92,700	3.8	99,300	4.0	97,200	3.9	97,600	3.9	101,300	4.1
Swindon	4,600	4.7	4,000	3.9	3,000	2.9	2,700	2.6	3,000	2.9
Wiltshire	7,300	3.3	7,800	3.6	7,000	3.2	7,000	3.2	8,700	4.0
Kennet	1,500	4.2	1,300	3.5	#	#	#	#	800	2.3
North Wiltshire	2,900	4.3	3,100	4.8	2,700	4.1	2,500	3.8	2,700	4.0
Salisbury	1,600	2.9	2,000	3.7	2,100	3.9	2,300	4.0	2,800	5.0
West Wiltshire	1,400	2.1	1,400	2.2	1,500	2.4	1,600	2.7	2,400	4.1

Source: Annual Population Survey, NOMIS, 2008
Data for Kennet district have been excluded since the estimates are unreliable.

Job Vacancies

Jobcentre Plus Notified Vacancy Statistics have traditionally served as a proxy for economic activity over time and provide micro level information, for example snapshot information on vacancy levels in a particular location and for specific occupations. However, it should be noted that Jobcentre Plus only handles a certain proportion of vacancies in the economy. Measures of Jobcentre Plus market share will always be inexact but recent estimates from surveys suggest that it is between 1/3 and 1/2.

Table 6 contains a count of the current vacancies notified to job centres in September 2008, and shows that 1,694 vacancies were notified in that month. The largest requirement was for Elementary occupations (527), Sales & Customer Service (225), Associate Professional & Technical occupations (201). There were also relatively high levels of labour demand for Skilled Trade occupations (195), Administrative & Secretarial occupations (182), Process, Plant & Machine (157). The largest demand in each of the districts was for elementary occupations.

Table 6: Labour Demand – No. Vacancies Notified by Occupation, Sept 2008

Occupation	Kennet	North Wiltshire	Salisbury	West Wiltshire	Wiltshire	Swindon
Managers and Senior Officials	15	27	18	27	87	64
Professional Occupations	5	13	13	11	42	39
Associate Professional & Technical Occupations	18	56	69	58	201	165
Administrative & Secretarial Occupations	24	39	56	63	182	91
Skilled Trade Occupation	35	41	84	35	195	131
Personal Service Occupations	14	27	20	17	78	64
Sales and Customer Service Occupations	49	42	83	51	225	210
Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	28	75	13	41	157	122
Elementary Occupations	94	155	176	102	527	345
Total	**282**	**475**	**532**	**405**	**1,694**	**1,231**

Source: Jobcentre Plus Vacancies, NOMIS 2008
Changes to Jobcentre Plus vacancy handling procedures may result in a drop of around 5% for inflows of newly notified vacancies.

In September 2008 there were 1,760 vacancies in the County remaining unfilled. The largest numbers of vacancies unfilled were in Elementary occupations (438). Sales & Customer Service occupations (246), Skilled Trade occupations (200) and Associate Professional & Technical occupations (163) also had significant levels of unfilled vacancies. In Kennet, North Wiltshire and Salisbury the largest share of unfilled vacancies was for Elementary occupations whilst in West Wiltshire, the largest share of unfilled vacancies was for Personal Service occupations.

Table 7: No. Vacancies Unfilled by Occupation, Sept 2008

Occupation	Kennet	North Wiltshire	Salisbury	West Wiltshire	Swindon	Wiltshire
Managers and Senior Officials	14	31	21	25	53	91
Professional Occupations	6	11	15	5	59	37
Associate Professional & Technical Occupations	13	59	45	46	153	163
Administrative & Secretarial Occupations	20	30	49	44	62	143
Skilled Trade Occupation	36	44	69	51	134	200
Personal Service Occupations	19	78	39	150	151	286
Sales and Customer Service Occupations	14	76	69	87	168	246
Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	45	58	14	39	164	156
Elementary Occupations	95	119	143	81	285	438
Total	**262**	**506**	**464**	**528**	**1,229**	**1,760**

Source: Jobcentre Plus Vacancies, NOMIS 2008
Changes to Jobcentre Plus vacancy handling procedures may lead to a reduction in the recorded stocks of unfilled vacancies but in due course these are expected to reflect more accurately job opportunities available via Jobcentre Plus

EDUCATION

GCSE

The data below shows the percentage of pupils achieving GCSE or equivalent grades in Wiltshire compared to the regional and national averages. In 2008, 64.7% of pupils achieved five or more GCSE's or equivalent graded A*-C, above the regional (63.0%) and national average (64.6%). The proportion of pupils in Wiltshire (98.7%) achieving at least one GCSE or equivalent graded A*-G was marginally higher than the regional (98.5%) and national (98.6%) average. However, the County had a significantly larger proportion of pupils who achieved at least five GCSE or equivalent grades A*-G including English and Mathematics compared to the national average (91.8% compared to 87.0%) (Table 8).

Table 8:% of Pupils Achieving GCSE or Equivalent Grades A*-G, 2008

Area	% of Pupils Achieving 5+ GCSE or Equivalent at Grades A*-C	% of Pupils Achieving at least 1+ GCSE or Equivalent at Grades A*-G	% of Pupils Achieving 5+ GCSE or Equivalent at Grades A*-G Including English & Mathematics
Swindon	52.5	98.2	86.9
Wiltshire	64.7	98.7	91.8
South West	63.0	98.5	91.0
England	64.6	98.6	87.0

Source: Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2008

Qualifications (Working Age Population)

The Annual Population Survey (APS) data below show the proportion of working age people qualified to NVQ Level 3+ and 4+. For the period January to December 2007, the data show that 28.7% of people in the County were qualified to NVQ Level 4+, below the regional average (29.1%) but above the national average (28.6%). 48.1% of people were qualified to NVQ Level 3+, again below the regional (49.2%) and above the national average (46.4%).

North Wiltshire (33.7%) had significantly higher proportions of its working age population qualified to NVQ Level 4+ compared to the County, regional and national averages. At 25.4%, the proportion of people qualified to NVQ level 4+ in Kennet, was below the County, regional and national averages. North Wiltshire (54.0%) had a significantly larger proportion of its population qualified to NVQ Level 3+ compared to the Wiltshire average.

Table 9: % of working age people with NVQ Level 3 and 4, Jan-Dec 2007

Area	% of working age people with NVQ Level 4+	% of working age people with NVQ Level 3+
Great Britain	28.6	46.4
South West	29.1	49.2
Kennet	25.4	45.7
North Wiltshire	33.7	54.0
Salisbury	26.7	46.2
West Wiltshire	27.1	44.9
Swindon	23.5	41.8
Wiltshire	28.7	48.1

Source: Annual Population Survey, NOMIS, 2008

PROPERTY

This section examines residential and commercial property prices. It also contains an overview of office, industrial and employment land availability in Wiltshire.

Commercial Property Review

Wiltshire

Office

During the period August 2007 – August 2008, the overall availability of office floorspace within Wiltshire increased by 11.11% from a total of 494,029 sq ft to 548,936 sq ft; whilst the number of individual units available actually fell from 121 to 94. At District level, both Salisbury and West Wiltshire saw rises in the availability of office premises in line with the trend at County level – Salisbury experienced a dramatic rise of 99.86%, whilst West Wiltshire saw a more moderate increase of 6.36%. Conversely, Kennet and North Wiltshire both witnessed notable declines in the availability of office premises across the August 2007 – August 2008 period; with available office floorspace falling by 29.28% and 20.05% respectively.

The extremely sharp rise in office premises availability seen in Salisbury between August 2007 and August 2008 can be principally attributed to the entrance of 66,062 sq ft of floorspace coming onto the market at Solstice Park together with 23,641 sq ft of floorspace becoming available at Minton Distribution Park in Amesbury, and very few properties being taken up across this period. In West Wiltshire, the total number of office units available within the District actually fell across the August 2007 – August 2008 period from 45 to 32, but despite the take-up of a number of smaller units, the availability of office premises rose due to the entrance of 80,000 sq ft of floorspace onto the market at the Ashville Centre-Hampton Park West in Melksham.

The decline in the availability of office premises seen within Kennet can be attributed to the take up of several units with floorspace in excess of 1,000 sq ft across the period, and little new property entering the market. These include Nursery Farm in Pewsey (1,023 sq ft), Puckshipton House, also in Pewsey (2,015 sq ft), 47 Kingsbury Street in Marlborough (2,396 sq ft) Red Cross House, Gains Lane in Devizes (3,899 sq ft) and the Old Sawmill in Savernake (4,750 sq ft). The decline in available office floorspace in North Wiltshire similarly is due to few new properties becoming available across the period and the take up of 35,000 sq ft of floorspace at Chorum in Chippenham, as well as a number of units with between 2,000 sq ft and 5,000 sq ft of floorspace at The Stables in Chippenham (2,300 sq ft), The Strand in Calne (2,323 sq ft), Showell Nurseries near Chippenham (2,651 sq ft), 1-3 Patford Street in Calne (2,681 sq ft), Methuen South in Chippenham (3,509 sq ft) and Greenways Business Park in Chippenham (4,738 sq ft).

Table 10: Office Availability in Wiltshire, August 2007 – August 2008

Area	August 2007 Sq Ft	August 2008 Sq Ft
North Wiltshire	161,411 sq ft (38)	129,053 sq ft (26)
Kennet	23,189 sq ft (14)	16,399 sq ft (11)
West Wiltshire	229, 875 sq ft (45)	244,489 sq ft (32)
Salisbury	79,555 sq ft (24)	158,995 sq ft (22)
Wiltshire	494,029 sq ft (121 units)	548,936 sq ft (91 units)

Figures in parentheses represent the number of sites
Source: Evolutive, Wiltshire County Council, 2008

Industrial

Between August 2007 and August 2008, the number of industrial units available across Wiltshire fell quite sharply from 165 to 104, with total available industrial floorspace falling by 21.25% from 761,877 sq ft to 599,947 sq ft. This trend was matched in all but one of the Districts, with the availability of industrial premises falling by 78.21% in Kennet, 32.51% in Salisbury and 29.10% in North Wiltshire, whilst in West Wiltshire it rose by 11.45%.

The dramatic decline seen in the availability of industrial premises in Kennet can largely be attributed to the take up of units (totalling 52,031 sq ft) at the Garden Trading Estate in Devizes, as well as 8,206 sq ft of floorspace at Avonside –High Street in Pewsey, 5,956 sq ft of floorspace at Lydeway Garage near Devizes, 4,981 sq ft of floorspace at the Barset Business Centre in Pewsey, 4,500 sq ft of floorspace at Hopton Industrial Estate in Devizes and various other smaller units. Also of significance is the fact that only 1 new property entered the market across the August 2007 – August 2008 period.

The reduction in the availability of industrial premises within Salisbury across the August 2007-August 2008 period can be explained chiefly by the take-up of 36,500 sq ft of floorspace at Minton Distribution Park in Amesbury, and a number of smaller units with between 1,000 and 2,000 sq ft of floorspace exiting the market across the District during this time. In August 2007 there were 14 such properties, compared to just 5 in August 2008. The take up of units at Bunas Business Park near Salisbury (4,342 sq ft), Downton Business Centre (4,348 sq ft) and Semley Industrial Estate (4,623 sq ft) will have also contributed to the decline in industrial premises availability, as will the lack of new industrial property moving onto the market during the period.

The decrease in the availability of industrial premises within North Wiltshire is down to the take up of 14,645 sq ft of floorspace at Whitehill Industrial Estate in Wootton Bassett as well as a number of units at Glenmore Business Park on the Bumpers Farm Industrial Estate in Chippenham, together totalling 13,343 sq ft, whilst very few new properties entered the market. In contrast, the increase seen in industrial floorspace availability within West Wiltshire is due to 80,000 sq ft of floorspace becoming available at Hampton Park West in Melksham and 75,387 sq ft of floorspace entering the market at the West Wilts Trading Estate in Westbury. The entrance of these properties onto the market offset the decline in industrial floorspace induced by the take up of various smaller units with less than 2,000 sq ft of floorspace each across the period (in August 2007 there were 23 such properties, compared to just 13 in August 2008).

Table 11: Industrial Availability in Wiltshire,

Area	August 2007 Sq Ft	August 2008 Sq Ft
North Wiltshire	152, 589 sq ft (44)	108,184 sq ft (29)
Kennet	105,336 sq ft (22)	229,53 sq ft (10)
West Wiltshire	292,741 sq ft (52)	326,255 sq ft (36)
Salisbury	211,212 sq ft (47)	142,554 sq ft (29)
Wiltshire	761,877 sq ft (165 units)	599,947 sq ft (104 units)

Figures in parentheses represent the number of sites
Source: Evolutive, Wiltshire County Council, 2008

Employment Land Availability

In the period August 2007 to August 2008, employment land availability across Wiltshire fell slightly by 7.08%, from 146.9 acres to 136.5 acres, with the total number of sites declining from 11 in August 2007 to 10 in August 2008. At District level, change was quite mixed with employment land availability remaining static within both Kennet and West Wiltshire across the August 2007 – August 2008 period, but decreasing sharply within North Wiltshire (61.24%) and rising slightly in Salisbury (5.24%).

The notable decrease in the availability of employment land seen in North Wiltshire is explained by the take up of 10.5 acres of land at Chippenham Business Park and a further 5.3 acres of land at Bristol Road, with no new employment land entering the market across the period. By comparison, the slight increase seen in the availability of employment land in Salisbury District is due to 5.4 acres of land becoming available at Pembroke Park in Salisbury and 3 acres of land entering the market at Beaumont Business Centre in Mere, whilst no land was taken up during this time.

Table 12: Employment Land Availability in Wiltshire, August 2007 – August 2008

Area	August 2007 Acres	August 2008 Acres
North Wiltshire	25.8 (3 sites)	10 (1 site)
Kennet	2.5 (1 site)	2.5 (1 site)
West Wiltshire	15.6 (3 sites)	15.6 (3 sites)
Salisbury	103 (4 sites)	108.4 (5 sites)
Wiltshire	146.9 (11 sites)	136.5 (10 sites)

Figures in parentheses represent the number of sites
Source: Evolutive, Wiltshire County Council, 2008

Average Commercial Rents

During the period Summer 2007 to Summer 2008, average commercial rents for office premises rose quite notably in both Trowbridge and Chippenham, with rises of 9.76% (from £9.73 per sq ft to £10.68 per sq ft) and 9.09% (from £11.00 per sq ft to £12.00 per sq ft) respectively. In Devizes, average commercial rents for office premises remained virtually static over the period, increasing by just 0.14% (from £7.11 per sq ft to £7.12 per sq ft). In contrast, the average commercial rent figure for office premises in Salisbury fell across the Summer 2007 – Summer 2008 period by 3.61%, from £8.30 per sq ft to £8.00 per sq ft.

The quite notable rise in average commercial rents for office premises in Trowbridge can largely be attributed to entrance onto the market of a unit at the Medical Centre on Wiltshire Drive with a rental price in excess of £24 per sq ft. The take up of units at Castle Chambers on Market Street and also St Georges Street, with rents of less than £8 per sq ft will have also contributed to the rise in average commercial rents for office premises. The rise seen in average commercial office rents in Chippenham across the Summer 2007 to Summer 2008 period is explained by the take up of five properties at Bumpers Farm, Market Place, New Road, Griffin Estate and Showell Nurseries all with rents of less than £10 per sq ft, rather than by any properties yielding higher rents entering the market.

In contrast, the slight decline in average commercial rents for office premises witnessed in Salisbury can be explained by a rise in the number of properties with rents of less than £8 per sq ft. There were five such properties in Summer 2007, compared to 8 a year later.

With respect to average commercial rents for industrial premises across the period Summer 2007 to Summer 2008, all centres witnessed a rise in rental prices with the exception of Salisbury, which experienced a decline. Average commercial industrial rents rose by 16.19% in Chippenham (from £6.30 per sq ft to £7.32 per sq ft), by 11.01% in Devizes (from £5.63 per sq ft to £6.25 per sq ft), and by 11.95% in Trowbridge (from £4.10 per sq ft to £4.59 per sq ft). By comparison, the average commercial rent figure for industrial premises in Salisbury fell by 5.66% from £6.36 per sq ft to £6 per sq ft.

The significant rise in average commercial rents for industrial premises experienced in Chippenham across the Summer 2007 to Summer 2008 period can be attributed to the entrance onto the market of a unit at Glenmore Business Park with a rental figure of £8.07 per sq ft, as well as the take up of a number of units with rental figures of less than £6.85 per sq ft. In Summer 2008 there were no units available with a rental price of less than £6.85 per sq ft, compared to 12 being available in Summer 2007.

The notable increase in average commercial rents for industrial units in Devizes is down to the take up of 4 units across the period with rents of less than £6 per sq ft, rather than the entrance of more expensive properties onto the market. In Trowbridge, the increase seen in average commercial rents for industrial premises is explained by two properties with rents of more than £6 per sq ft becoming available at the Midlands Industrial Estate, Holt and the White Horse Business Park, as well as the take up of three properties with rental figures of less than £4 per sq ft at Manor Park Industrial Park, Dunkirk Business Park and Ham Green.

The decline seen in average commercial rents in Salisbury is principally due to the take up of units at Volpoint House (£11.74 per sq ft), Churchfields Industrial Estate (£9.93 per sq ft) and Glenmore Business Park (£9.88 per sq ft) and no similarly priced new property entering the market.

Table 13: Average Commercial Rents, (£ per sq. ft per annum),

Area	June/July/August 2007		June/July/August 2008	
	Office	Industrial	Office	Industrial
Chippenham	11.00	6.30	11.00	6.30
Devizes	7.11	5.63	7.11	5.63
Salisbury	8.30	6.36	8.30	6.36
Trowbridge	9.73	4.10	9.73	4.10

Figures in parentheses represent the number of sites
Source: Evolutive, Wiltshire County Council, 2008

Residential Property

The Land Registry deals with the sale of all properties in England and Wales. It holds the most comprehensive information published on residential property transactions and prices. The data in Table 14 shows the average house price in England & Wales for the second quarter of 2008 to be £219,262. The average house price in Wiltshire was £237,805, above both the regional and national averages. Salisbury (£266,815) was the district with the highest overall house price for the quarter April to June 2008, followed by Kennet (£266,331), North Wiltshire (£233,649) and West Wiltshire (£202,913).

In the second quarter of 2008 average house prices in England & Wales were around 1.4% higher than a year earlier, whilst house prices in Wiltshire were around 0.3% higher. Within Wiltshire, house prices in North Wiltshire (0.6%), West Wiltshire (1.6%) and Salisbury (2.3%) stood above the levels of the previous year. In Kennet, however, house prices were 6.7% lower than the levels of a year earlier.

Turing to the more recent past, house prices in England & Wales in the period April to June 2008 were 0.5% higher than in last reported quarter. House prices in Wiltshire were 2.0% higher than in the last reported quarter with house prices in Kennet and Salisbury increasing, whilst in North and West Wiltshire house prices fell. The largest decrease was seen in North Wiltshire, -2.5%; whilst the largest increase was seen in Kennet, 11.7%. Whilst there is much speculation and media coverage, land registry data show that, nationally, house prices had begun to stagnate but had not fallen significantly up to the second quarter of the year and whilst the volume of sales has fallen, the volume of sales was not significantly below other periods with low levels of sales (January/February 2005). It is important to note that the level of housing sales tends to fluctuate throughout the year, with sales invariably being lower in some quarters than others.

Table 14: Average house price (£)

Area	April-June 2007	July-Sept 2007	Oct-Dec 2007	Jan-March 2008	April-June 2008
England & Wales	£216,285	£230,474	£222,256	£218,112	£219,262
South West	£225,810	£240,359	£234,847	£225,348	£225,929
Wiltshire	£237,058	£256,550	£249,324	£233,248	£237,805
Swindon	£174,224	£174,742	£178,105	£173,768	£173,074
Kennet	£285,425	£293,551	£273,767	£238,458	£266,331
North Wiltshire	£232,211	£252,118	£248,800	£239,760	£233,649
Salisbury	£260,880	£291,424	£287,823	£255,730	£266,815
West Wiltshire	£199,625	£216,438	£209,372	£205,587	£202,913

Source: Residential Property Price Data, Land Registry 2008

JOB LOSSES AND GAINS

Table 15: Job Losses

Company	Location	Activity	Date Reported	No. of Jobs Losses	Comment
Lafarge	Westbury	Cement Manufacturer	19/09/08	-65	65 jobs axed as part of the operations in Westbury to close.
Dyson	Malmesbury	Manufacturer	10/10/08	-64	30 day consultation starting at the end of October to review jobs in R&D. Potentially 64 jobs to be lost
Wavin Plastics	Chippenham	Manufacturer	25/09/08	-44	Jobs lost in manufacturing, production and admin departments
H & H Celon	Westbury	Concrete Factory	12/09/08	-40	48 people made redundant as factory closes
Trumac	Westbury	Vehicle Manufacturer	15/09/08	-30	Firm gone into administration - further 60 employees maybe at risk if no purchaser can be found
Avon Automotives	Chippenham	Vehicles	25/09/08	-20	Loss of 20 jobs
Chemring Energetics Ltd	Corsham	Weapon Defence company	13/06/08	-19	Firm restructuring - but redundancies offset by increase at other sites
Hiflex Fluidpower	Salisbury	Manufacturing hoses and fittings	28/08/08	-15	Firm gone into administration
G Plan Upholstery	Melksham	Furniture Firm	22/08/08	-14	Small number of redundancies as result of downturn in orders and weak outlook.
Tuffnels	Westbury	Parcel Delivery Service	21/08/08	-7	7 redundancies as firm moved to Bristol depot

Source: Extracted from the local press. This is not an exhaustive list of all job gains in Wiltshire & Swindon reported in the last few months.

Table 16: Job Gains

Company	Location	Activity	Date Reported	No. of Jobs Gained	Comment
Sainsbury’s	Trowbridge	Retail	18/07/08	350	Sainsbury’s looking to move to Ushers site

Source: Extracted from the local press. This is not an exhaustive list of all job gains in Wiltshire & Swindon reported in the last few months.

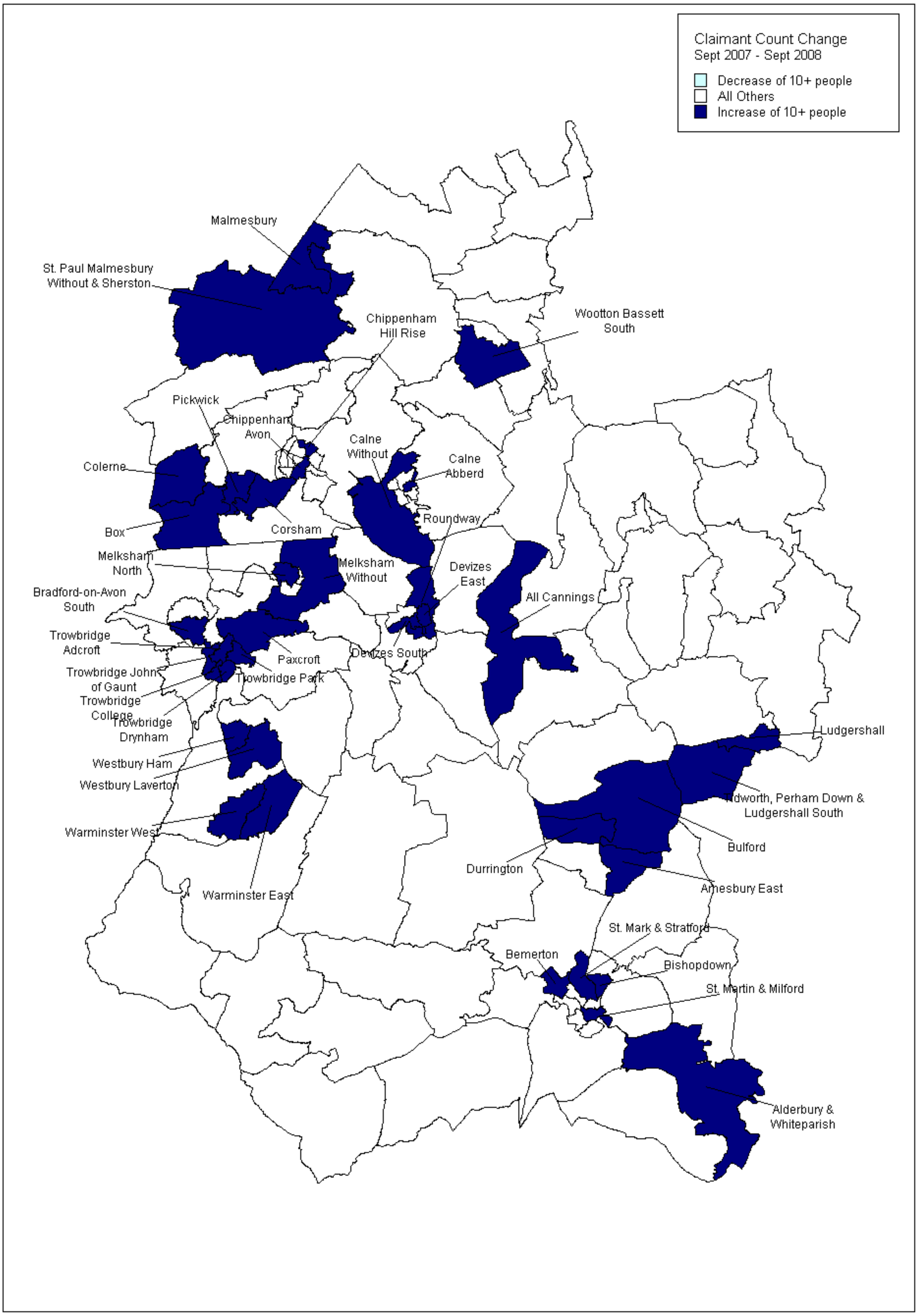
SUMMARY – KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS

	Population Growth % 2001-2006	GVA Per Head (£) 2005	GVA Growth (%) per annum 1995-2005	Economic Activity Rate (%) Jan 07–Dec 07	Employment Rate (%) Jan 07–Dec 07	Claimant Count Rate (%) June 2008	Change in Employment (%) 2005-2006	Average Price (£) of Residential Property Jan 08-Mar 08
Great Britain *	2.48	18,267	5.6	78.6	74.4	2.5	-0.7	£219,262
South West	3.66	16,688	5.9	81.5	78.2	1.6	0.0	£225,929
Wiltshire	3.32	15,778	4.9	82.5	79.2	1.3	0.5	£237,805
Swindon	-	27,354	6.1	87.1	84.6	2.3	-1.4	£173,074
Kennet	2.51	-	-	77.1	75.2	1.0	0.6	£266,331
North Wiltshire	4.17	-	-	85.8	82.3	1.2	6.1	£233,649
Salisbury	1.23	-	-	86.3	82.0	1.0	-2.3	£266,815
West Wiltshire	4.95	-	-	79.0	75.8	1.8	-2.2	£202,913

Source: NOMIS, ONS, Land Registry, 2008

** England (Not Great Britain) is the national geographical area for residential property and GVA statistics.*

APPENDIX 1: ANNUAL UNEMPLOYMENT CHANGE



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