

## Great Yarmouth and Waveney March 2010



Information is taken from local news sources in addition to word of mouth. Where names of businesses are not included, this indicates sensitivity, and/or the business wishing to remain anonymous

## Summary

Business confidence ↑

Unemployment ↓

Redundancies ↓

Notified vacancies to Job Centre Plus ↓

House Prices ↑↓

Positive economic indicators for March, with good news across a range of key sub-regional sectors.

Business confidence is improving, with the vast majority of business announcements during the month good news.

Positive news came particularly from the energy and engineering sectors.

However jobs are under threat at the Norbert Dentressangle factory in Oulton Broad, and CHC is considering moving its helicopter base from Great Yarmouth to Norwich, which would deal a significant blow to the town's offshore sector.

In Lowestoft, Hoseasons says 40 jobs are at risk as the company is integrated into its new US owner's other business Holiday Cottages Group.

On a more positive note, medical products firm Aeropak is expanding and Pontin's, Waveney – holiday centre - looks poised to undergo a £10m upgrade that should create 160 full-time jobs.

Unemployment in both Great Yarmouth and Waveney edged down on February's figures.

However vacancies at Job Centres in both areas fell compared with February, suggesting further reductions in unemployment will be challenging.

House prices increased in Suffolk in February, in line with national trends, but fell slightly in Norfolk.

## Conclusion

Signs of growth and expansion in some key sectors, including tourism, energy and engineering. However the recovery remains patchy, with job losses a real possibility in some key businesses across the sub-region.

## Trading Climate & Confidence Levels

**Key Facts** Jobs at risk at pea processing business Norbert Dentressangle factory, Oulton Broad. Seajacks, Gorleston has signed a design deal to double its fleet. CHC helicopter company is considering moving its base of operations to Norwich. Hoseasons, Lowestoft have confirmed up to 40 jobs are at risk. Pontin's, Waveney poised to undergo a £10m upgrade, creating 160 jobs.

### **Agriculture & Food Processing**

Norbert Dentressangle factory, Oulton Broad – cold storage factory, employs 61 people – could see staff facing possible redundancy after the closure of Bird's Eye pea growing and processing operation in Norfolk and Suffolk. The factory would freeze an average of 30,000 tonnes of peas a year while operating 24 hours a day from mid-June.

Adnams, Southwold – beer and wine producer – 2009 profits were up 53 percent to £3.2m, a massive improvement on last year's trading figures but still below the £4.2m made before the downturn started in 2008. Overall sales were up by nine percent, with turnover at £51.3m. Strengths in the business came from sale of take home beers, up 22 percent.

The firm's new Adnams Cellar & Kitchen stores had also now broken even, with a 34 percent rise in turnover in the second year of trading.

### **Construction**

Persimmon – parent company of Lowestoft-based regional arm Persimmon Homes Anglia which itself employs 55 people – plans for new developments in Norfolk and Suffolk this year following improvements in the housing market. The national company reported pre-tax profits of £77.8m last year, compared with £780m loss in 2008 when results were affected by write-downs due to lower property valuations. The firm sold 8,976 properties in 2009, down from 10,202 the previous year, at an average selling price of £160,513, compared to £172,994 in 2008. Persimmon Homes Anglia took on additional staff in the later half of 2009 due to the growing demand for homes.

### **Energy**

Seajacks, Gorleston - operates self propelled, dynamically positioned, jack up platforms in the core market of the North Sea – has signed a design deal to double its fleet. The company has commissioned Dutch design group CustoMSC to draw up plans for “two or more” new vessels before selecting a shipyard to build them.

Petrofac - international provider of facilities solutions to the oil & gas production and processing industries, employs 158 workforce in Norfolk including offices in Great Yarmouth – saw profits rise by 33 percent to £233.5m last year compared to 2008, while revenues rose by 10 percent to £2.42bn. The company said it had

taken in more than £4.6bn of orders in 2009, compared to £1.9bn the year before.

CHC, Great Yarmouth – helicopter company with a fleet of five helicopters, employs 70 staff – is considering moving its base of operations to Norwich International Airport. The company which ferries workers from Great Yarmouth to North Sea oil and gas platforms is considering moving due to the cost of building a new runway at North Denes. As well as the loss of jobs, there are fears that the move would mean fewer offshore workers would stay in Great Yarmouth hotels and guest houses if they landed elsewhere in the region. Great Yarmouth Borough Council and partners are working closely with CHC to try to persuade the company to stay, by pointing out that the town will be at the centre of ambitious plans to expand offshore wind turbines and carbon capture sites.

The creation of a “green investment bank”, announced in the Budget, to stimulate billions of pounds of private finance for low-carbon industries such as offshore windfarms could create hundreds of new jobs in Norfolk and Suffolk. The new bank would control £2bn in assets and “unlock billions more” from the private sector for green energy and transport development. Investment will focus in particular towards offshore wind energy, with £60m going to develop ports which will be the site of turbine manufacturing.

Abermed, Great Yarmouth – occupational health group, giving assistance to North Sea energy workers – has set its sights on growth in the wake of being bought by one of its international clients. The company was purchased by the American International SOS group which had previously not had a foothold in the UK. Its turnover for the year ending April 2009 was just under £16m and its clients include Shell, Perenco and Amec but also food manufacturing firms and the public sector.

Gardline Hydro, Great Yarmouth – marine surveying company, part of Gardline Marine Sciences) – has secured a major contract to map the seabed at the planned wind farm site, the Atlantic Array in the Bristol Channel.

### **Engineering**

CLS Offshore, Great Yarmouth – providing a range of products and services to the oil & gas and renewable energy industry, employs over 150 people - has installed the first of 100 wind turbines for the £780m Thanet windfarm, off the Kent coast, through a deal with the green power specialists Vestas. The firm has invested £250,000 to train 50 technicians at facilities in the UK and Denmark to meet Vestas’ standards. CLS saw its turnover rise from £8m in 2007-08 to £10m last year and predicted a rise in revenues in 2010. The firm has recognised that decommissioning of redundant offshore platforms will form part of its continued growth.

Goodchild Marine Services, Burgh Castle – boatbuilding and repair company – has won a contract to build two pilot launches worth £17m for use on the Thames

Estuary. Names Estuary Elan and Estuary Elite, the vessels will provide three years of work for Goodchild and will be the first launches of their type built in Britain.

SLP Engineering, Lowestoft – gas and oil rigs, wind energy – a number of potential buyers have been found for the firm but administrators have confirmed 100 redundancies this month with a warning of more to follow.

### **Manufacturing**

Aeropak, Great Yarmouth – manufactures medical products including Bazuka verruca treatments, painkilling cream Ibugel and Adios slimming pills, employs 45 people – is set for continued growth following a £300,000 investment in a new testing laboratory. Four new jobs will be created as part of the investment. The company now makes five million products a year, up from two million four years ago.

Siemens – German manufacturing giant – has revealed that it is going to develop an £80m offshore wind turbine facility in the UK to meet future demand, which could create up to 700 jobs and has visited Lowestoft.

### **Tourism**

A Portrait of the Waveney Valley – new book which captures images of the countryside and settlements along the River Waveney has been released and it is hoped it will boost tourism in the area.

The Waterside, Rollesby Broad – broadland attraction which offers boating, fishing and wildlife spotting and a new tearoom and restaurant. The attraction will create about 10 full-time and part-time jobs.

The launch of the Strategy for Seaside Success: Securing the Future of Seaside Economies was announced this month. The government strategy would allow Great Yarmouth to flourish all year round through a £200,000 job creation scheme (from a £5m national fund). The launch also saw the announcement that measures will be brought in to bring unused properties and coastal land back into use, support for non-seasonal festivals and the extension of the Sea Change funding programme.

Pontin's, Waveney – holiday centre - looks poised to undergo a £10m upgrade that should create 160 full-time jobs. Proposals announced include:

- Creating up to 400 new self-catering apartments
- Upgrading existing accommodation
- Creating a new Ocean Spa
- Improving the centre's swimming and leisure facilities, restaurants and landscaping. If the proposals get the go ahead, the work could start as early as the autumn.

Hoseasons, Lowestoft – tourism company – have confirmed up to 40 jobs are at risk nationally as the company is integrated into the new owner's own business. Bosses at US travel giant Wyndham Worldwide, which bought Hoseasons for £51m in February, plan to merge Hoseasons with Holiday Cottages Group (HCG), the country's biggest holiday cottage company, which it also owns. Only a small number of the redundancies are expected to be in Lowestoft – 10 or fewer.

### **Other**

Silverton Aggregates, Great Yarmouth – material supplies business, employs five people – has opened in the town and are optimistic that more jobs will be created in the next few months.

Comet, Lowestoft – electrical store – will be closing with 12 staff being made redundant. Comet said affected employees would be found other positions within the company where possible. The unit is being taken over by UK specialist retailer in electronic components, Maplins, who have conducted their own recruitment for staff.

The Quiz, Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft – fashion concession store – more than 300 applicants were chasing jobs at the new stores.

The Aid and Assist project, Lowestoft – charity which repairs and restores furniture for low income families – has been given a grant (£800 from the Hedley Foundation) to extend its training for adults with learning difficulties.

Women in Rural Enterprise (WiRE) - a new networking group aimed at women running rural businesses has been set up in Waveney for Bungay, Beccles, Halesworth and the surrounding areas.

Iceni Marine Services, Great Yarmouth – provide crew transfer and associated services - have invested £800,000 in a new service boat in the hope to capitalise on the boom in the offshore windfarm industry. The company have increased their staff to five and expect their turnover to rise.

Riverside Print Finishing, Beccles - independent print finishing business - up to 25 staff were facing redundancy after bosses announced it was folding but now one of the town's biggest employers has stepped in with the offer of work to six of those who faced losing their jobs. Clowes will take on the distribution side of the business.

### **April Headlines**

Adnams, Southwold – brewer – is set to start producing gin, vodka and whisky alongside its traditional cask and bottled beers

Vauxhall Holiday Park, Great Yarmouth – about 400 holiday homes and more than 200 camping and caravan pitches - saw a seven percent increase in bookings last year, and this year they are set to rise to 10 percent

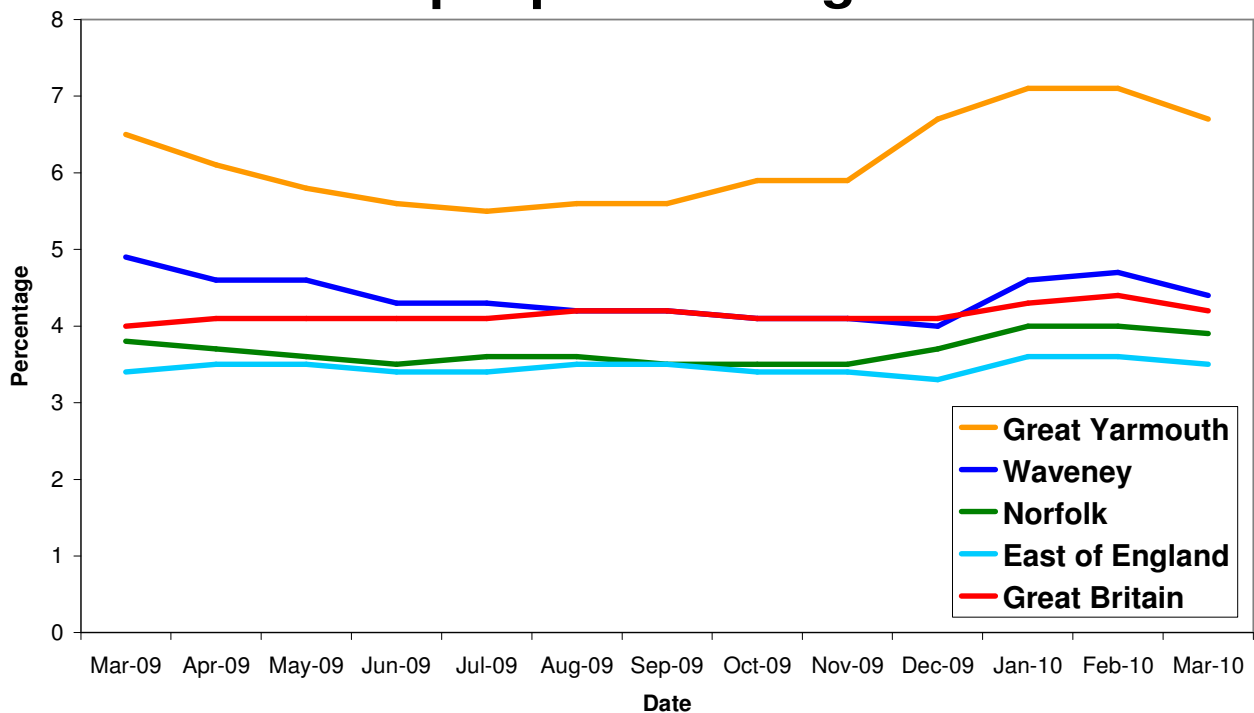
Great Yarmouth College – has warned that a funding reduction of about £1m could mean, at worst, up to 50 full-time posts being made redundant – about one eighth of its workforce.

## Unemployment

### Key Facts

- Norfolk JSA claimant count was 19,341 in March, down 579 or 2.91% since February 2010 but up by 661 on the year, a 3.5% increase since March 2009.
- Great Yarmouth JSA claimant count was 3,670 in March, down 196 or 5.07% since February 2010 but up by 120 on the year, a 3.4% increase since March 2009.
- Waveney JSA claimant count was 2,905 in March, down 180 or 5.83% since February 2010 but down by 320 on the year, a 9.9% decrease since March 2009.

## All people claiming JSA



Source: Nomis, Official Labour Market Statistics

Area	Count	%age of working age population	Change in count year on year	%age change in count year on year
Great Yarmouth	3,670	6.7	120	3.4%
Waveney	2,905	4.4	-320	5.8%

Source: Job Centre Plus



## Redundancies

### Key Facts

**There have been 342 redundancies notified to Norfolk Job Centre Plus between July 2008 and 31 March 2010 for Great Yarmouth. This accounts for five percent of the total notified to Norfolk Job Centre Plus a rise of one percent since February.**

*Source: Job Centre Plus*

## Job Adverts (EDP)

Date	Pages	Public Sector Jobs (council, education, NHS, healthcare)	Private Sector Jobs	Third Sector Jobs
4 <sup>th</sup> March 2010	7	66 (49.62%)	56 (42.11%)	11 (8.27%)
11 <sup>th</sup> March 2010	10	81 (41.97%)	103 (53.37%)	9 (4.66%)
18 <sup>th</sup> March 2010	7 and a 1/2	80 (44.2%)	95 (52.49%)	6 (3.31%)
25 <sup>th</sup> March 2010	7	70 (44.30%)	81 (51.27%)	7 (4.43%)

*Unless figure or positions stated each advert is counted as one position*

## Job Adverts (Yarmouth Mercury)

Date	Pages	Public Sector Jobs (council, education, NHS, healthcare)	Private Sector Jobs	Third Sector Jobs
5 <sup>th</sup> March 2010	1/2	4 (44.44%)	4 (44.44%)	1 (11.11%)
12 <sup>th</sup> March 2010	1	5 (41.67%)	6 (50%)	1 (8.33%)
19 <sup>th</sup> March 2010	1	4 (33.33%)	7 (58.33%)	1 (8.33%)
26 <sup>th</sup> March 2010	1	1 (12.5%)	5 (62.5%)	2 (25%)

## Job Adverts (Lowestoft Journal)

Date	Pages	Public Sector Jobs (council, education, NHS, healthcare)	Private Sector Jobs	Third Sector Jobs
5 <sup>th</sup> March 2010	No data			
12 <sup>th</sup> March 2010	2 and a 1/2	22 (51.16%)	21 (48.84%)	0
19 <sup>th</sup> March 2010	2	6 (19.35%)	24 (77.42%)	1 (3.23%)
26 <sup>th</sup> March 2010	2	8 (33.33%)	13 (54.17%)	3 (12.5%)

3,712 jobs in Norfolk were notified to Job Centre Plus. Of these 69 percent were full time positions. Notified vacancies were up 2 percent from February's total.


- Great Yarmouth had 401, an increase of 14 percent since last year but a decrease of 36 percent from February.

3,282 jobs in Suffolk were notified to Job Centre Plus. Notified vacancies were down 14.1 percent from February's total.

- Lowestoft had 338 (of these 71.9 percent were full time positions), a decrease of 10.8 percent since last year and a 33.20 percent decrease from February.

## Norfolk JCP Figures

Industry	Norfolk	
	March 09	March 10
Agriculture, hunting and forestry	28	45
Manufacturing	60	152
Electricity, gas and water supply	10	9
Construction	58	145
Wholesale and retail trade	194	442
Hotels and restaurants	250	302
Transport, storage and communication	52	149
Financial intermediation	39	89
Real estate, renting and business activities	1,155	1,366
Public administration/defence/compulsory social security	153	133
Education	84	134
Health and social work	455	376
Other community, social and personal service activities	332	368
Column Total	2,870	3,710

 Industry sectors with falls in job vacancies

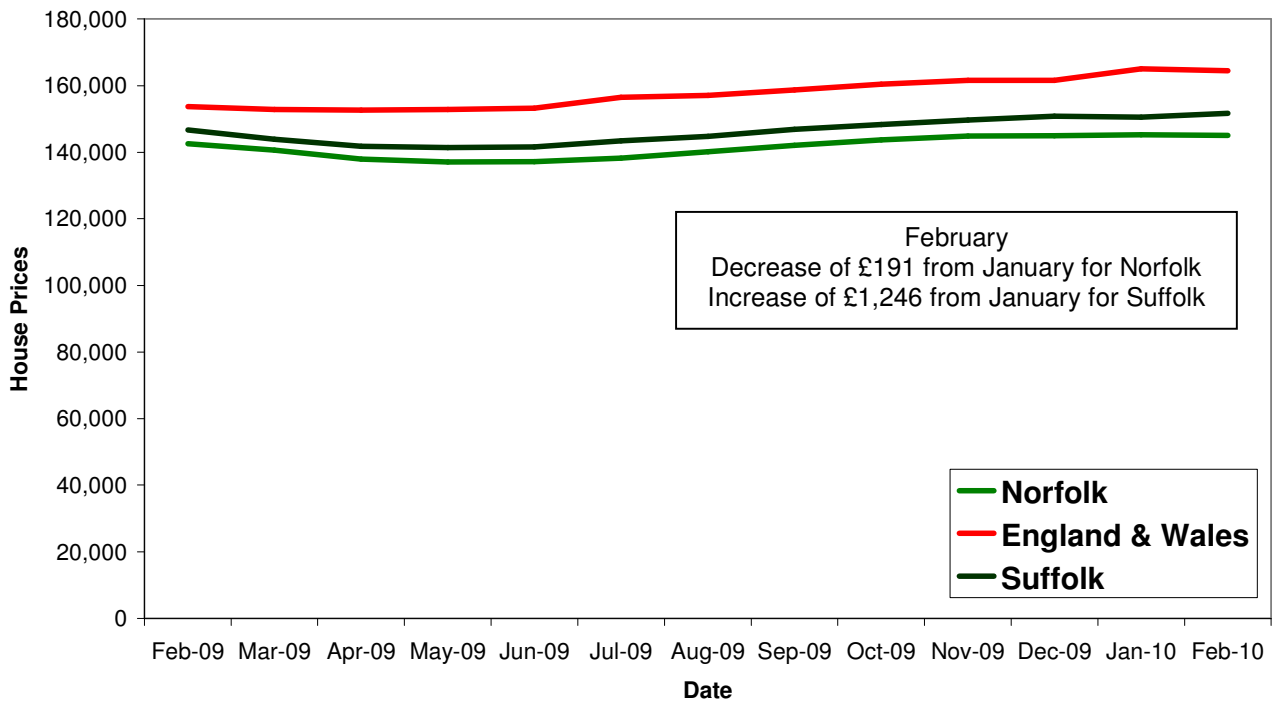
## Housing

### Key Facts

- **UK house prices increased by 1.1% in March**, partly offsetting February's fall. This was the eighth rise in the past nine months, taking the average price to 9.1% above the low point reached last April.
- **Average House price £168, 521**

Source: Halifax House Price Index

## House Price Trends



Source: Land Registry, Crown Copyright