

Cost of Living Update

10th August 2023

- The overall inflation rate fell to 7.9% in June 2023 (from 8.7% in May). Inflation in key categories for the 12 months to 30th June was:
 - Clothing 7.2% (remained steady at 7.1% in May)
 - Transport **-1.8%** (decrease from 1.2% in May)
 - Housing, water and fuel 12.0% (remained steady at 12.1% in May)
 - Food and non-alcoholic beverages 17.3% (decrease from 18.3% in May)

It is important to note that a decrease in the inflation rate does not translate to a reduction in shelf prices, rather a downward trend in inflation indicates a slowing of price rises.

- Road fuel prices have continued to fall nationally, from an absolute peak reached a year ago with the week ending 2nd July 2022 (£1.92 for petrol and £1.99 for diesel), to around £1.46 for petrol and £1.48 for diesel per litre the week ending 8th August 2023. It now costs less to fill a petrol Ford Fiesta (-14%) than 1 year ago and costs less to fill a diesel BMW 3 series (-19%).
- Gas prices rose by 36.1% in the 12-month period to June 2023 and the price of electricity increasing by 17.3% in the same period. During this same period, the price of liquid fuels fell by **-45.6%** and solid fuel prices rose by 32.8%.
- **Homelessness Data has been Updated:** Comparing the most recent data (October-December 2022) with the previous quarter (May-September 2022), the number of households assessed as homelessness increased in East Suffolk (+13 households), Mid Suffolk (+4 households) and Babergh (+1 households), with a decrease in Ipswich (-14 households) and West Suffolk (-26 households). However, when looking at the rate of households assessed as homeless, West Suffolk (1.7 per 100k households) has a higher rate, while Mid Suffolk has the lowest (0.6 per 100k households). The number of households assessed as threatened with homelessness has increased in Ipswich (+76 households), Babergh (+9 households), East Suffolk (+8 households) and Mid Suffolk (+7 households), while decreasing in West Suffolk (-8 households). This is echoed when looking at the rate of households assessed as threatened where Ipswich has the highest rate (3.6 per 100k households) and West Suffolk has the lowest (0.7 per 100k households).
- Job postings in Suffolk from December 2022 to June 2023 increased, with jobs in Human Health & Social Work sector and the Wholesale & Retail sector having the largest quantity of postings.
- The proportion of those age 16yrs+ claiming Universal Credit (UC) increased in the year leading up to June 2023 with 9.5% of Suffolk adults claiming UC (59,299 adults) compared to 8.8% in June 2022 (54,785 adults).
- Following a targeted effort to proactively contact residents who may be eligible to apply for Local Welfare Assistance Schemes (LWAS) from December to January 2023, the monthly LWAS applications since December have remained higher than prior to the targeted efforts. In June 2023, there were 1,321 LWAS applications compared to 565 in June 2022.
- There are more Warm Handover referrals over May-July 2023 with an average of 303 referrals, than the same months last year with an average of 238 referrals.
- The Suffolk crime rate in June 2023 was 6.1 crimes per 100,000 people and remains below both the East of England (7.5 crimes per 100,000 people) and national average (8.6 crimes per 100,000 people). In the year leading to June 2023, the Suffolk crime rate has fluctuated between 5.2 crimes per 100,000 people and 8.6 crimes per 100,000 people. The Suffolk rate has remained below the England average during the same periods but been greater than the East of England average in October 2022 (7.7 crimes per 100,000 East of England vs 8.6 in Suffolk) and December 2022 (6.4 crimes per 100,000 East of England vs 6.7 in Suffolk).
- On a National scale, Citizens Advice (CA) have helped record numbers of people with cost-of-living support in 2023, exceeding the number of people supported in previous years ([CA 2023](#)). This trend is echoed across Suffolk with the number of people helped across enquiries in June 2023 - 25% greater than in June 2022.