

## UNEMPLOYMENT

This article shows levels and trends of unemployment in Herefordshire. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) supplies data on numbers and rates of unemployment, the age of those who are unemployed and duration of their unemployment<sup>1</sup>. The following is a summary of the key information from **January 2007**. All figures are unadjusted for seasonal variation unless otherwise stated.

- 1,634 people were unemployed and claiming benefit in Herefordshire during January 2007. This is an increase of 113 people on the numbers seen in the previous quarter, October 2006 (1,521). The number of claimants is lower than the 1,768 in January 2006.
- Numbers of monthly unemployment claimants have been adjusted to account for seasonal variations, which show overall trends in unemployment levels (see Figure 1).
- Unemployment rates show the percentage of the working age population claiming unemployment benefits. Herefordshire's unemployment rate for January 2007 was 1.6%, which is an increase on last quarter (1.5%), but lower than the level recorded in January 2006 (1.7%). Unemployment rates for the West Midlands region are much higher (3.4%) which is an increase from both last quarter and this time last year. Similarly, rates for England increased last month (from 2.5% to 2.6%) and also show a rise from January 2006. Table 1 shows a brief summary of current unemployment numbers and rates.
- In January 2007, 71% of unemployment claimants in Herefordshire were male, with the unemployment rate amongst males has rising to 2.1% from 1.9% in October 2006 but down overall from January 2006 (2.4%). Female unemployment rates are lower and have risen slightly from 0.9% to 1.0% over the last quarter.
- The overall number of claimants in Hereford City has decreased this year, dropping from 797 to 732. In Bromyard, Ledbury, Leominster and Ross-on-Wye these numbers have also decreased over the year. Unemployment in Kington has varied little, remaining low throughout the last year.
- Numbers claiming unemployment related benefits in the Hereford Parliamentary Constituency have decreased over the last year, falling from 1,145 in January 2006 to 1,043 in January 2007. The number of claimants in Herefordshire's other Parliamentary Constituency, Leominster, has varied little (as shown in Table 1). Unemployment rates remain higher in the Hereford Constituency than in Leominster (1.9% compared to 1.3% in January 2007).
- The majority of all claimants have been unemployed for less than 6 months (77%) and around half of all claimants are aged between 25 and 49 (52%) (See Table 3).

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<sup>1</sup> Unemployment as measured by Claimant Count i.e. those claiming unemployment-related benefits at Employment Service local offices. Rates are the number of claimants resident as a % of the working age population resident in that area (16-64 yr M/16-59 yr F).

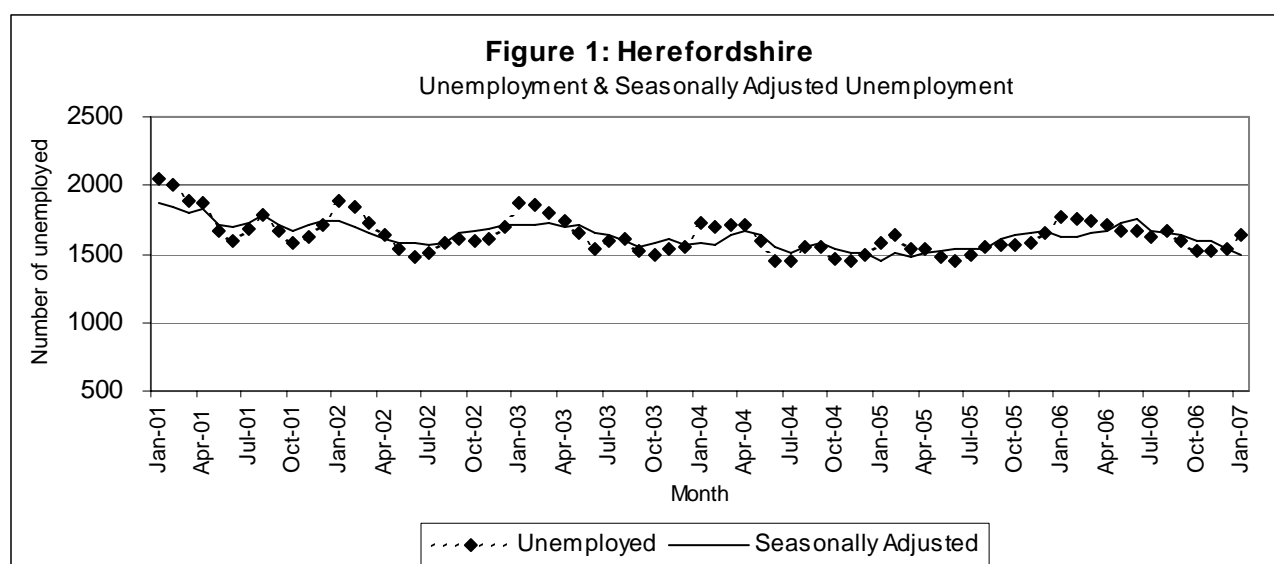
**Table 1: Unemployment – January 2007**

Area		Total January 2007	Male January 2007	Female January 2007	Previous Month December 2006	Previous Quarter October 2006	Previous Year January 2006
Herefordshire	No.	1,634	1,159	475	1,539	1,521	1,768
	%	1.6	2.1	1.0	1.5	1.5	1.7
West Midlands	%	3.4	4.9	1.8	3.3	3.3	3.3
England	%	2.6	3.6	1.4	2.5	2.5	2.5
<b>Main Towns<sup>2</sup></b>							
Hereford City		732	534	198	698	690	797
Bromyard & surrounds		54	42	12	48	52	62
Kington & surrounds		22	13	9	21	20	18
Ledbury & surrounds		48	37	11	46	41	57
Leominster		158	107	51	136	144	178
Ross-on-Wye		127	78	49	117	135	160
Hereford	No.	1,043	741	302	992	989	1,145
	%	1.9	2.6	1.1	1.8	1.8	2.1
Leominster	No.	660	460	200	610.0	588	677
	%	1.3	1.7	0.8	1.2	1.1	1.3

Sources: Office for National Statistics Monthly Unemployment Claimant Counts, Herefordshire Council Research Team

- **Bromyard & surrounds** = Parishes of Bromyard & Winslow, Stoke Lacey, Avenbury, Pencombe with Grendon Warren, Ullingswick, Little Cowarne, Felton and Ocle Pychard.
- **Kington & surrounds** = Parishes of Kington, Kington Rural and Lower Harpton.
- **Ledbury & surrounds** = Parishes of Ledbury, Eastnor and Donnington.

Figure 1 shows unemployment figures with those adjusted for seasonal variations, which show that generally number of claimants has started to fall over the past few months.



Source: Office for National Statistics Monthly Unemployment Claimant Counts (NOMIS). Herefordshire Council Research Team

<sup>2</sup> Unemployment figures are now produced for 2003 ward boundaries so some of the figures for the market towns include a larger geographic area than those reported previously. See Table 1.

**Table 2: Unemployment for Wards for January 2007**

Number of claimants and unemployment rate (% of working age population) for January 2007 and 2006

2003 Wards	January 2007		January 2006		Change
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	
Aylestone	47	1.4	63	1.8	↓
Backbury	18	1.1	13	0.8	↑
Belmont	177	3.0	211	3.6	↓
Bircher	8	0.5	13	0.9	↓
Bringsty	11	0.6	17	1.0	↓
Bromyard	54	1.6	62	1.9	↓
Burghill, Holmer & Lyde	18	0.9	29	1.5	↓
Castle	14	0.7	15	0.8	---
Central	67	4.2	64	4.0	---
Credenhill	21	1.1	26	1.3	---
Frome	22	1.1	21	1.1	---
Golden Cross with Weobley	28	1.7	27	1.6	---
Golden Valley North	20	1.2	20	1.2	---
Golden Valley South	22	1.3	15	0.9	↑
Hagley	25	1.2	25	1.2	---
Hampton Court	14	0.9	13	0.8	---
Hollington	18	1.5	19	1.6	---
Hope End	34	1.1	25	0.8	↑
Kerne Bridge	18	1.1	13	0.8	↑
Kington Town	22	1.3	18	1.0	↑
Ledbury	48	0.9	57	1.1	---
Leominster North	79	2.5	83	2.6	---
Leominster South	79	2.5	95	3.0	↓
Llangarron	18	1.0	14	0.7	↑
Mortimer	19	1.0	21	1.1	---
Old Gore	13	0.7	22	1.2	↓
Pembridge & Lyonshall with Titley	17	1.0	12	0.7	↑
Penyard	15	0.8	20	1.1	↓
Pontrilas	19	1.0	21	1.1	---
Ross-on-Wye East	41	1.7	69	2.8	↓
Ross-on-Wye West	86	2.7	91	2.8	---
St Martins & Hinton	193	3.1	190	3.0	---
St Nicholas	70	1.9	94	2.5	↓
Stoney Street	20	1.2	27	1.7	↓
Sutton Walls	21	1.2	13	0.7	↑
Three Elms	120	1.9	106	1.7	---
Tupsley	58	1.1	69	1.3	---
Upton	19	1.2	12	0.7	↑
Valletts	28	1.5	23	1.2	↑
Wormsley Ridge	13	0.8	18	1.1	↓

Source: Office for National Statistics Monthly Unemployment Claimant Counts (NOMIS).

↑ = An increase in unemployment      ↓ = A decrease in unemployment  
 --- = Less than 0.2 percentage point change in employment rate

### **Summary for 2003 Wards**

In January 2007, 13 of the 40 wards have experienced a decrease in unemployment. 10 wards have seen an increase and the remaining 17 wards show little change in their unemployment rates.

The wards with the highest unemployment are St Martins & Hinton, Belmont and Ross-on-Wye West as shown by both high numbers of people claiming unemployment and a high unemployment rate (% of working age population in the ward who are claiming). Numbers of claimants in both St Martins & Hinton and Ross-on-Wye West show little change on those seen last year, whereas unemployment in Belmont ward has decreased.

Hereford's Central ward has the highest unemployment rate of 4.2% but with relatively low numbers of unemployed (67 claimants). The rate appears high due to the low numbers of people who live in the Central ward caused by there being higher concentrations of businesses rather than housing.

### **Summary for Lower Super Output Areas (SOA – Lower Level)**

Statistics relating to small areas have traditionally been released on a ward basis but boundaries change periodically so monitoring trends over time is difficult. Ward population sizes vary enormously and wards are designed for electoral representation rather than representing the demography of an area, so they are often inappropriate for other use. The Office for National Statistics have produced different levels of 'output area geographies', for more information about these see the 'New Output Geographies' article in the May 2004 Quarterly Economic Report.

To show the spatial distribution of unemployment in Herefordshire, lower level 'super output areas' (SOAs) have been used (there are 116 of these, each with a population of about 1,500). Map 1, on the following page, shows the proportion of the county's unemployment claimants in each of these areas.

There are higher proportions of unemployment claimants in parts of Hereford City, Ross-on-Wye, Bromyard and in the areas (SOAs) around the centre of Leominster. The Golden Post area of Newton Farm has the highest proportion of unemployment claimants (3.5% of all claimants in January 2007).

There are three other SOAs, that have high proportions of all claimants in Herefordshire. One just outside Hereford City, which includes the areas of Rotherwas and Holme Lacey accounting for 1.1% of all claimants. The others areas are Kingsbridge, which covers Kingstone and the region to the south, and the Leystone area, which contains the villages of Moreton-on-Lugg and Marden, these area accounts for 1.2% and 1.0% of all claimants respectively.



**Table 3: Age & Duration of Unemployment – January 2007**

DURATION		AGE			Totals	
		Under 25 years	Between 25 & 49 years	50 years and over	No.	%
Less than 6 months	No.	410	605	215	1,230	76.6
	%	25.5	37.7	13.4		
Between 6 & 12 months	No.	40	150	40	230	14.3
	%	2.5	9.3	2.5		
More than 12 months	No.	10	85	50	145	9.0
	%	0.6	5.3	3.1		
Totals	No.	460	840	305	1,605	100.0
	%	28.7	52.3	19.0		

Source: Office for National Statistics Monthly Unemployment Claimant Counts (NOMIS).

\*Overall figure different from Table 1 due to rounding of smaller data sets.

- The highest proportion of unemployment claimants were those aged between 25 and 49 years who have been unemployed for less than 6 months (38%), a slight decrease from 39% last quarter (October 2006).
- The majority of claimants have been unemployed for less than 6 months (77%), which is a decrease from 80% in January the previous year (2006). Consequently, the proportions of those claiming for more than 6 months increased from 19% in January 06 to 23% in January 07.
- A little over half of all claimants are aged between 25 and 49 years (52%), showing a slight decrease compared to the previous quarter.
- Youth unemployment (those aged under 25 years) has decreased between January 2006 and January 2007, dropping from 31% to 28% over the year.

**For further information on the data in this article, please contact the Research Team on 01432 383634 or e-mail [researchteam@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:researchteam@herefordshire.gov.uk)**