

Economic indicators suggest that the performance of the North Kent economy continues to improve although there is some variation across the area. The less frequently reported quarterly indicators show the total unemployment rate and the out-of-work benefit claimant rate to be above the national average in TGK, with trends over the last two years generally consistent with those in the wider benchmark areas. More recent monthly JSA claimant counts show these to be stabilising in TGK overall and the number of vacancies has increased. However, this masks variation at district level with Gravesham & Medway generally showing more positive trends than Dartford and particularly Swale, where JSA claimant rates have risen and vacancies have decreased.

Total Employment Rates		Compared to:		
		Previous quarter	Previous Year	Two years ago
Thames Gateway Kent	70.8%	↑	↑	↑
Kent & Medway	71.4%	=	↓	↓
Greater South East	71.8%	=	=	↑
Great Britain	70.3%	↑	↑	=

Source: Annual Population Survey, Jul 2011-Jun 2012; Apr 2011-Mar 2012; Jul 2010-Jun 2011; Jul 2009-Jun 2010

- The total employment rate in TGK is lower than in Kent & Medway (K&M) and the Greater South East (GSE), but above the Great Britain (GB) average.
- The rate in TGK now higher than over the last two years, which is similar to the position nationally, whereas it has remained the same as last quarter for K&M and the GSE.

% Economic Inactive wanting a job		Compared to:		
		Previous quarter	Previous Year	Two years ago
Thames Gateway Kent	7.9%	↑	↑	↑
Kent & Medway	7.1%	↑	↑	↑
Greater South East	5.6%	=	↑	↑
Great Britain	5.6%	=	↓	↓

Source: Annual Population Survey, Jul 2011-Jun 2012; Apr 2011-Mar 2012; Jul 2010-Jun 2011; Jul 2009-Jun 2010

- The percentage of residents of working age who are economic ally inactive and want a job is higher in TGK compared to in K&M, the GSE and GB at large.
- This percentage is now higher in TGK compared to two years ago, similar to the position for K&M. For both the GSE and GB the percentage is the same as last quarter.

Total Unemployment Rates		Compared to:		
		Previous quarter	Previous Year	Two years ago
Thames Gateway Kent	9.7%	↓	↓	↑
Kent & Medway	7.9%	↓	↓	↑
Greater South East	7.5%	=	↑	↑
Great Britain	8.2%	=	↑	↑

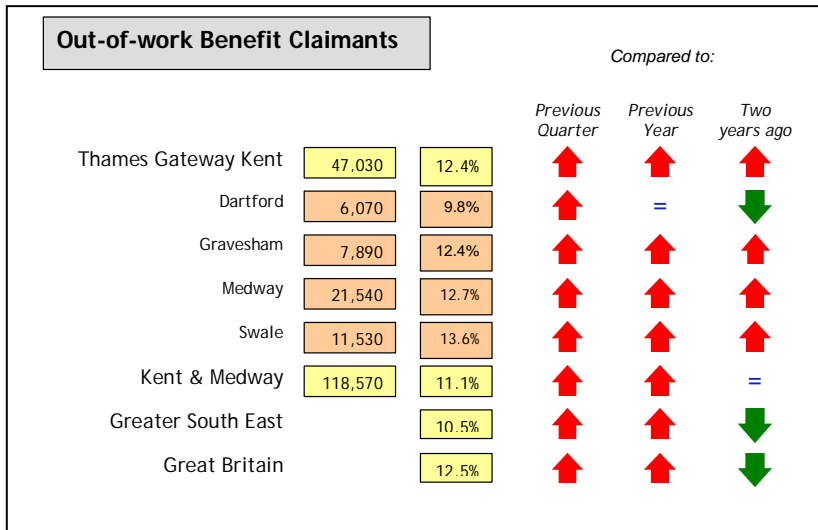
Source: Annual Population Survey, Jul 2011-Jun 2012; Apr 2011-Mar 2012; Jul 2010-Jun 2011; Jul 2009-Jun 2010

- The total unemployment rate is higher in TGK than in K&M, GSE and GB as a whole.
- Unemployment rates in both TGK and K&M are now lower compared to last quarter and a year ago, whereas they are the same as last quarter in GSE and GB.

JSA Claimant Rates			Compared to:		
			Previous Month	Previous Quarter	Previous Year
Thames Gateway Kent	14,349	3.8%	=	↓	↓
Dartford	1,731	2.8%	=	↓	↓
Gravesham	2,462	3.9%	↓	↓	↓
Medway	6,808	4.0%	↓	↓	↓
Swale	3,348	4.0%	↑	↑	=
Kent & Medway	34,726	3.3%	=	↓	↓
Greater South East		3.2%	=	=	↓
Great Britain		3.8%	=	=	=

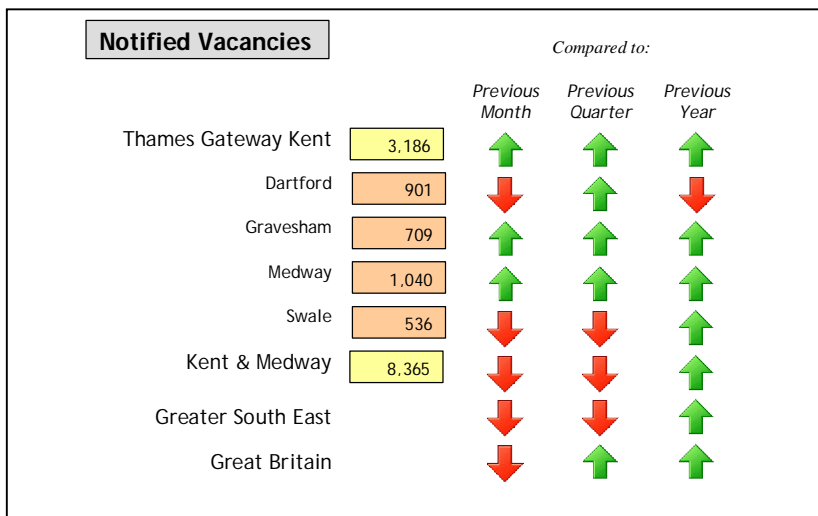
Source: Job Centre Plus, JSA Claimant Counts, Nov 2012; Oct 2012; Aug 2012; Nov 2011

- The Job Seeker Allowance (JSA) claimant rate is slightly higher in TGK than in K&M and the GSE, but on a par with the national GB rate. Rates have remained fairly stable at the TGK level over the last month, after decrease over the previous year, which is in line with wider benchmark areas.
- Across TGK Dartford has a considerably lower rate than elsewhere in North Kent and is also below the rate for the benchmark areas as well. The rates in Gravesham and Medway have continued to fall since last month, whereas Swale has had a rise to above the level of last quarter.



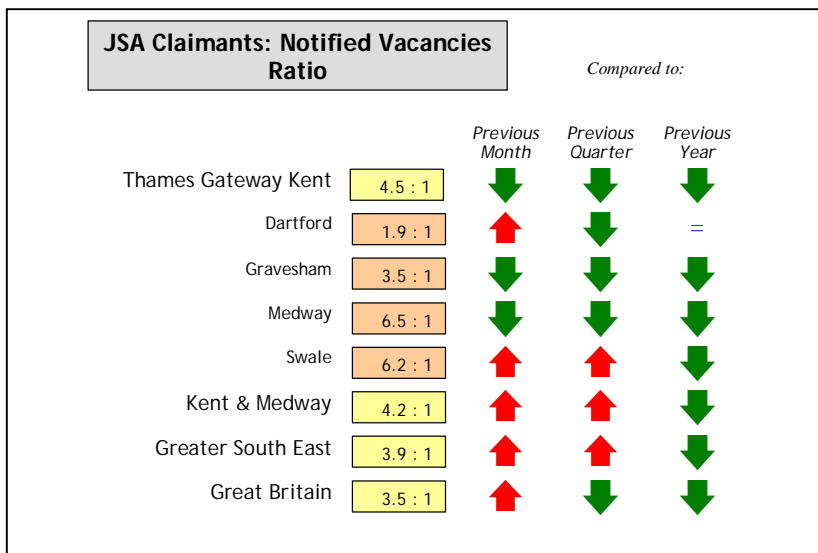
Source: DWP Work & Pensions Benefits Longitudinal Study; Feb 2012; Nov 2011; Feb 2011; Feb 2010

- The overall out-of-work benefit claimant rate is higher in TGK than in K&M and the GSE and on a par with the GB average
- Across TGK, Swale has the highest rate - well above the TGK and GB average - whereas in Dartford the rate is considerably lower.
- The rate is higher in TGK compared to a year ago, similar to the position for K&M, the GSE and GB at large. Within TGK only Dartford has bucked the overall trend, with the position being same as a year ago.



Source: Job Centre Plus, Nov 2012; Oct 2012; Aug 2012; Nov 2011

- Notified vacancies have increased overall in TGK since last month, which is in line with trends over the last year. This contrasts with decreases in K&M, the GSE and Great Britain at large.
- Within TGK trends have been more mixed: Gravesham and Medway have increased consistently over the last year, while trends in Dartford and Swale have been more volatile with vacancies decreasing since last month.



Source: Job Centre Plus, JSA Claimant Counts; Nov 2012; Oct 2012; Aug 2012; Nov 2011

- The ratio of claimants to vacancies in TGK has fallen since last month and this contrasts to increases in the wider benchmark areas. This is due to higher numbers of vacancies, as claimants have remained stable in TGK and in the wider areas.
- TGK has seen a consistent downward trend overall over the last year. While this is also apparent for Gravesham and Swale within North Kent, the picture has been more volatile for Swale and Dartford. In Swale this reflects greater volatility for both JSA claimants and vacancies, whereas in Dartford it is due more to the latter.

