Huntingdonshire Profile

Patterns of economic activity and nature of economy	Overall employment rate (aged 16-64)	High (71%) but falling **amber**
	Average employee earnings (workplace)	Average (£489) but falling **amber**
	Jobs density	Average (0.74) but falling **amber**
Entrepreneurial culture	Level of self employment	Low (14%) but rising **amber**
	New business registrations per 10,000 adults	Average (51.2) and rising **green**
Skills levels and aspirations	16-19 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET)	Low (4.5%) and falling **amber**
	Population aged 19-59/64 qualified to at least level 2 or higher	Average (73%) but falling **amber**
Patterns of unemployment and deprivation	People aged 16-64 on out of work benefits	Low (7.5%) but rising **amber**
Housing affordability	Ratio of median house price to median earnings	Average (6.8) but becoming less affordable **amber**

Key Issues

- High levels of traffic congestion which is considered to be constraining economic growth
- A workforce with a significant proportion of high level occupations employed in generally lower value industries
- A significant wage disparity between male and female residents
- A below average proportion of residents qualified to degree level or above
- Pockets of deprivation including high benefit claimant rates in particular areas as well as educational disadvantage, concentrations of young people ‘NEET’ and income deprivation

ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

	Cambridge City			East Cambridgeshire			Fenland			Huntingdonshire			South Cambridgeshire		
	Performance against Cambridgeshire average	Performance against national average	Direction of travel	Performance against Cambridgeshire average	Performance against national average	Direction of travel	Performance against Cambridgeshire average	Performance against national average	Direction of travel	Performance against Cambridgeshire average	Performance against national average	Direction of travel	Performance against Cambridgeshire average	Performance against national average	Direction of travel
PEOPLE															
Overall employment rate (aged 16-74)	Worse	Similar	↑	Better	Better	↑	Similar	Similar	↑	Better	Better	↓	Better	Better	↑
People aged 16-64 on out of work benefits	Better	Better	↓	Better	Better	→	Worse	Similar	↑	Similar	Better	↓	Better	Better	→
Proportion of population aged 19-59/64 qualifed to at least level 2 or higher	Better	Better	↑	Better	Better	↑	Worse	Worse	↓	Similar	Similar	↓	Better	Better	↑
Proportion of population aged 19-59/64 qualifed to at least level 4 or higher	Better	Better	↑	Better	Better	↓	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Similar	↑	Better	Better	↓
5+ A*-C grades at GCSE inc English and Maths	Worse	Worse	↓	Similar	Similar	↓	Worse	Worse	↑	Similar	Similar	↓	Better	Better	↑
BUSINESS															
New business registration rate (2011)	Better	Similar	↑	Better	Similar	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Better	Similar	↑	Better	Better	↑
Percentage of small businesses in an area showing employment growth (discontinued) (2008)	Better	Better	→	Similar	Similar	→	Similar	Similar	→	Similar	Similar	→	Similar	Similar	→
Labour productivity (2010)	Similar	Better	↓	Similar	Similar	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Similar	Better	↑	Better	Better	↑
Jobs density (2011)	Better	Better	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↓	Similar	Similar	↓	Better	Better	↓
Median earnings of employees in the area (2012)	Better	Better	↑	Worse	Worse	↓	Worse	Worse	↑	Similar	Similar	↓	Better	Better	↑
PLACE															
CO2 emissions per head (2009)	Better	Better	↑	Similar	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Similar	Worse	↑	Similar	Worse	↑
Housing affordability	Worse	Worse	↓	Similar	Worse	↑	Better	Better	↑	Better	Similar	↓	Similar	Worse	↑
GVA per capita (2010)	Better	Better	↓	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Similar	↑	Better	Better	↑
Place Survey results	Better	Better	-	Better	Better	-	Worse	Similar	-	Better	Better	-	Better	Better	-

	Forest Heath			St Edmundsbury			North Hertfordshire			Uttlesford		
	Performance against Cambridgeshire average	Performance against national average	Direction of travel	Performance against Cambridgeshire average	Performance against national average	Direction of travel	Performance against Cambridgeshire average	Performance against national average	Direction of travel	Performance against Cambridgeshire average	Performance against national average	Direction of travel
PEOPLE												
Overall employment rate (aged 16-74)	Better	Better	↑	Better	Better	↓	Better	Better	↑	Better	Better	↑
People aged 16-64 on out of work benefits	Similar	Better	↓	Similar	Better	↑	Similar	Better	↓	Better	Better	↑
Proportion of population aged 19-59/64 qualifed to at least level 2 or higher	Similar	Similar	↑	Better	Better	↑	Better	Better	↑	Better	Better	↑
Proportion of population aged 19-59/64 qualifed to at least level 4 or higher	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Similar	↑	Better	Better	↑	Worse	Similar	↓
5+ A*-C grades at GCSE inc English and Maths	Worse	Worse	↓	Similar	Similar	↑	Better	Better	↑	Better	Better	↑
BUSINESS												
New business registration rate (2011)	Similar	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Better	Better	↑	Better	Better	↑
Percentage of small businesses in an area showing employment growth (discontinued) (2008)	Better	Similar	→	Better	Similar	→	Similar	Similar	→	Better	Better	→
Labour productivity (2010)	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Better	↑	Better	Better	↑	Similar	Similar	↑
Jobs density (2011)	Worse	Similar	↓	Better	Better	↑	Worse	Worse	→	Similar	Better	↑
Median earnings of employees in the area (2012)	Worse	Worse	↓	Worse	Worse	↓	Similar	Similar	↑	Similar	Better	↑
PLACE												
CO2 emissions per head (2009)	Better	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↓	Better	Better	↑	Worse	Worse	↑
Housing affordability	Similar	Similar	↓	Similar	Similar	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Worse	Worse	↓
GVA per capita (2010)	Worse	Worse	→	Better	Better	↑	Worse	Worse	↑	Similar	Better	↓
Place Survey results	Worse	Similar	-	Better	Better	-	Better	Better	-	Better	Better	-

KEY

(green)	Better than average
(orange)	Similar to average
(red)	Worse than average
↑→↓	Direction of travel

Huntingdonshire SWOT

Strengths

- A large working age population.
- High levels of resident satisfaction, both with the area and the council, and high levels of volunteering among residents.
- A well skilled adult population, with higher than average proportions qualified to NVQ levels 1, 2 and 3.
- A diverse economy with significant hi-tech employment, industrial strengths in manufacturing.
- Increase in total jobs from 2003 to 2011.
- The local authority is positively committed to supporting sustainable growth.

Weaknesses

- Out commuting of higher skilled workers.
- A relatively large benefit claiming population reducing the overall economic activity rate in the district.
- Eleven of Huntingdonshire's Lower Super Output Areas are ranked as within the 20% most deprived in the country in terms of education, skills and training.
- The current infrastructure deficit is considered to be constraining the delivery of sustainable growth.
- Relatively poor accessibility of jobs for residents outside the market town areas reflects the district's rural nature.
- Relatively low new business registration rate compared with national figures although this was similar to the Greater Cambridge area.
- Pockets of low income in north Huntingdon and north of Ramsey despite relatively high resident wages across the rest of the district.
- Pockets of educational disadvantage and significant concentrations of young people not in education, employment or training despite relatively high attainment levels across the district.

Opportunities

- A relatively skilled workforce currently working within lower value industries.
- Small concentrations of creative industries around St Neots and St Ives.
- Business population dominated by smaller businesses, and relatively high business density.
- Large long term gain in business floorspace.
- Within Huntingdonshire there are a range of immediately available development opportunities.
- Well developed business networking community.
- Potential for Alconbury as an employment site of national significance.
- Potential for the area's manufacturing cluster to make an increased contribution to GVA.
- Increased availability of next generation broadband access, which could have a positive impact on future business growth and the ability of residents to work from home.

Threats

- Unemployment generally low, yet Jobseeker's Allowance claimant rates show that the recession has reinforced disparities within the district.
- Reasonable housing affordability compared to the sub-region, but high compared to nationally.

Labour market, prosperity and crime

A relatively large working age population

- Huntingdonshire is the most populous of the county's districts, with a population of around 170,000.
- A relatively high proportion (almost 65%) of the population is of working age, compared with other districts in the county.

Relatively high resident wages but overall lower prosperity with pockets of low income in north Huntingdon and north of Ramsey

- Median pay among Huntingdonshire residents is above the regional and national averages and has increased steadily since 2002, but fell slightly in 2011.
- Household income is highest in the west and south of the district, with pockets of low income in north Huntingdon and north of Ramsey.
- The East of England Forecasting Model estimates that labour productivity is roughly equivalent to Cambridgeshire and England. GVA per capita (a measure of general prosperity) in Huntingdonshire is lower than the average of Cambridgeshire but similar to that of the UK.

Significant level of wage disparity between male and female residents

- Female full-time working residents earn around 27% less than males, one of the largest disparities in the county and greater than within England as a whole where the gap is 20%.

Out commuting of higher skilled workers

- The differential between resident and workplace earnings in Huntingdonshire suggests high levels of out-commuting to higher paid, higher value jobs.

High levels of resident satisfaction, both with the area and the council, and high levels of volunteering among residents

- The 2008 Place Survey recorded that 88% of Huntingdonshire residents were satisfied with their local area as a place to live, second highest in the county and above the national average of 80%.
- Huntingdonshire was also one of the few Cambridgeshire districts with above average levels of satisfaction with the way the council runs things.
- The survey also revealed a relatively high proportion of Huntingdonshire residents had given unpaid help at least once per month over the last 12 months.

Relatively low crime rate

- Cambridgeshire Police collate data for the county's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships.
- Across Cambridgeshire the highest numbers of crimes are recorded in Cambridge City and Huntingdonshire. However, per 1,000 residents, the crime rate in Huntingdonshire is relatively low compared to the Cambridgeshire average.

Skills levels and education

A well skilled adult population

- Higher than county average proportions of Huntingdonshire residents aged 19-59/64 are qualified to NVQ levels 1, 2 and 3.
- Compared to national and county averages, Huntingdonshire has a low proportion of the working age population qualified to NVQ level 4+. In Huntingdonshire this proportion is 33.7% of residents, compared to 40.1% for Cambridgeshire and 35.0% for England.
- A similar proportion to that of the county as a whole has no qualifications, although this is less than the regional and national figure.
- The proportion qualified to NVQ level 2 and above has steadily increased over the last ten years, although this figure has remained relatively unchanged since 2008.
- 2005/06 Learning and Skills Council figures showed Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire to have the greatest volume and percentage of learners entering full-time Higher Education of all Cambridgeshire districts.

Relatively high attainment levels, but with pockets of educational disadvantage

- Attainment levels are fairly average among 16-19 and 14-16 year olds with 52% of 15 year olds reaching level 3 by age 19, compared with 48% nationally.
- Achievement at GCSE level is just below regional and national averages with 56% of pupils achieving 5+ GCSEs graded A*-C including Maths and English, compared with 59% nationally and 58% regionally.
- Yet there are significant concentrations of young people not in education, employment or training, suggesting distinct pockets of deprivation within the district. Eleven of Huntingdonshire's Lower Super Output Areas are ranked as being within the 20% most deprived in the country in terms of education, skills and training (based on school attainment, pupil absence and proportions staying in education post 16). [Map 1]

Patterns of unemployment and deprivation

Generally low unemployment, yet the recession has created disparity within the district

- The unemployment rate among the economically active across Huntingdonshire is relatively low at 3.6% of the resident population aged 16-74 (compared with a national level of 5.2%), but is one of the highest in the county.
- Although the Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) claimant rate increased with the onset of the recession, the percentage point increase from January 2008 to December 2012 has been lower than seen nationally. However, the highest increases in JSA claimant rates between 2011 and 2013 were concentrated in those areas which already had the highest rates Within Huntingdonshire this showed in wards around St Neots and St Ives. [Map 2]

A relatively large benefit claiming population

- In total 7.5% of the working age population claim out of work benefits, compared to 12% nationally. Although this is lower than the national figure, it is the second highest rate in Cambridgeshire and represents around 8,200 people, the largest number of benefits claimants in any district in the county. Around half of these people claim Incapacity Benefit/Employment and Support Allowance (IB/ESA). As a proportion of the working age population, there has been a slight upward trend in IB/ESA claimants since 2001; this contrasts with a steady decrease seen nationally.

Generally low levels of fuel poverty

- Fuel poverty is influenced by three factors: low incomes, high fuel costs and thermal efficiency of the housing stock. Levels of fuel poverty in Huntingdonshire are generally quite low, but there are areas of Somersham, Ramsey, Elton and Folksworth and Kimbolton and Staughton where more than 20% of households are in fuel poverty (DECC 2009).

Nature of the economy

A relatively skilled workforce working within lower value industries

- 59% of workers are employed in high value occupations, around 4 percentage points higher than the national average.
- GVA per capita and labour productivity are very similar to national levels. Compared to Cambridgeshire, labour productivity in Huntingdonshire is again similar, but GVA per capita is slightly lower than the county.
- The average full-time wage in Huntingdonshire is lower than the national average but about equivalent to the East of England average.

A diverse economy with industrial strengths in manufacturing

- The professional, scientific and technical sector accounts for the largest number of businesses in Huntingdonshire, however the health and manufacturing sectors account for the largest numbers of jobs.
- The Annual Business Inquiry shows notable employment within the manufacturing sector- specifically in the manufacture of plastic products and knowledge intensive technical testing and analysis (the latter over 11 times the national average and employing over 1,000 people).

11% of Huntingdonshire jobs are in the hi-tech community

- Huntingdonshire accounts for almost 14% of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's hi-tech employment with an estimated 7,100 jobs located in the district – the third largest share behind Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire.
- The highest concentrations of jobs are around Huntingdon, St Neots and St Ives. [Maps 3 and 4]
- Hi-tech employment accounts for just under 11% of Huntingdonshire's total employment.

Creative industry strengths

- The Creative Industry mapping exercise completed for the GCP in 2008 found a cluster of creative industries around St Neots and St Ives. [Map 5]

Public sector employment lower than Greater Cambridgeshire but higher than England

- Public sector employment forms around 31% of total workplace employment, slightly above the national average of 30% but below, Greater Cambridge's figure of 32%.
- Health sector employment was significantly higher than other Greater Cambridge districts. .

Relatively high business density

- In 2012 Huntingdonshire had 7,770 local units in VAT and/or PAYE based enterprises, and the district had around 81,000 total jobs in 2011.
- A high density of businesses is crucial in creating the levels of agglomeration required to enable effective knowledge flow between people and firms, important for the growth of any successful economy.
- Business density is relatively high in Huntingdonshire having increased rapidly between 2004 and 2009. Although all Greater Cambridge districts suffered a fall in business density between 2009 and 2011, Huntingdonshire's overall increase from 2004 to 2012 was the second highest in this region.

Business population dominated by smaller businesses, and jobs density increasing

- With 81,000 jobs, the district has a jobs density figure of 0.74 (slightly below the national average), meaning the district's labour demand is not as high as its available workforce. Huntingdonshire had the third highest increase in jobs across Greater Cambridgeshire from 2003 to 2011 and this is part of the reason why Huntingdonshire's jobs density increased in this period.
- Employment growth of small businesses is between the regional and national averages, with nearly 14% of small businesses showing employment growth in 2008, compared with 14.2% nationally.
- Huntingdonshire has a higher than average proportion of smaller businesses employing 0-9 people, at around 85% of all local units.

Relatively low new business registration rate compared to national rate

- The birth rate of new enterprises (measured as births per 100 active enterprises) was similar in Huntingdonshire to that across the Greater Cambridge area; yet lower than the national rate.
- Furthermore, self employment levels among residents are among the lowest in the Greater Cambridge area, which suggests that there may be relatively few businesses sitting below the VAT/PAYE threshold.

Business development, infrastructure and housing

Reasonable housing affordability

- The average house price in Huntingdonshire in Aug 2012 to Jan 2013 was £211,527.
- The most affordable ward in the sub-region is in Huntingdonshire: Upwood and the Raveleys Ward has a lower quartile house price to lower quartile income ratio of 6.2. Kimbolton and Staughton ward is the least affordable in Huntingdonshire, where the house price to income ratio is 11.43.

High volume of house sales and continued increase in number of new dwellings

- The volume of house sales per month in Huntingdonshire is consistently the highest in the sub-region.
- Huntingdonshire is the only Cambridgeshire district to have seen a steady increase in the number of dwelling completions from 2001 to 2012. All other districts saw a significant fall in the number of dwellings completed over 2008-2010.

Large long term gain in business floorspace; the majority for office or storage and distribution uses

- The majority of the total net increase in business floorspace between 1999 and 2012 occurred in Fenland, Huntingdonshire and South Cambridgeshire; however between 2011 and 2012 Huntingdonshire's net increase in business floorspace was just 59sqm. This was because gains in net floorspace in light industry and storage and distribution were counteracted by a large loss in general industry floorspace.
- Across Greater Cambridge, Huntingdonshire has the highest total amount of commercial and industrial floorspace (the majority classed as factories and warehouses) and the highest number of commercial and industrial properties, split fairly equally between retail, offices, factories and warehouses.

Moderate increase in town centre and out of centre retail space, and small long term gain in town centre office space

- From 1999 to 2012, town centres in Huntingdonshire have seen a small net gain in office space and a moderate increase in retail floorspace, matched by an increase in retail space out of centre.

Increased availability of next generation broadband access

- A high proportion of Huntingdonshire wards, particularly in the north of the district, are at risk of not receiving next generation broadband access through likely future market rollout. However Cambridgeshire County Council has received a grant to provide high speed broadband access throughout the county, with the aim of delivering 100% broadband coverage by 2015, with a minimum of 90% being superfast broadband.

High levels of traffic congestion on the A14 and within the town centre

- The A14 corridor was identified as one of six priority transport corridors for intervention in the East of England, following an investigation of the direct costs of transport congestion (i.e. lost travel time) and the foregone wider economic benefits (i.e. agglomeration and labour force impacts).
- The A14 and A428 are the major trunk roads serving the growth areas, with the A1123 and other local roads also acting as important links. At times these are subject to severe congestion, and are having a negative impact on the economy.
- Huntingdon has the highest average traffic flow per road of all urban centres within Cambridgeshire.

Poor accessibility of jobs reflecting the district's rural nature

- Accessibility of jobs by travel modes other than by car for residents outside the market towns in Huntingdonshire is relatively low but still average for this type of district, when compared with similar areas across the country.

Future prospects

High forecast population growth, when accounting for employment growth at Alconbury Enterprise Zone

- The district's population is forecast to grow by 31,000 between 2011 and 2031, with around a fifth of the expected population growth being linked to employment growth at Alconbury Enterprise Zone. Most of that population increase is anticipated to come from the population aged 65 and over.

Future employment demand in associate technical and professional occupations

- Occupational forecasts for Cambridgeshire based on the East of England Forecasting Model estimate that over the next five years expansion demand is likely to be strongest in:
    - Caring personal service occupations
    - Managers and senior officials
    - Associate technical and professional occupations
    - Professional occupations
    - Sales and customer service occupations
- All other occupations are projected to experience very little, or negative expansion demand.

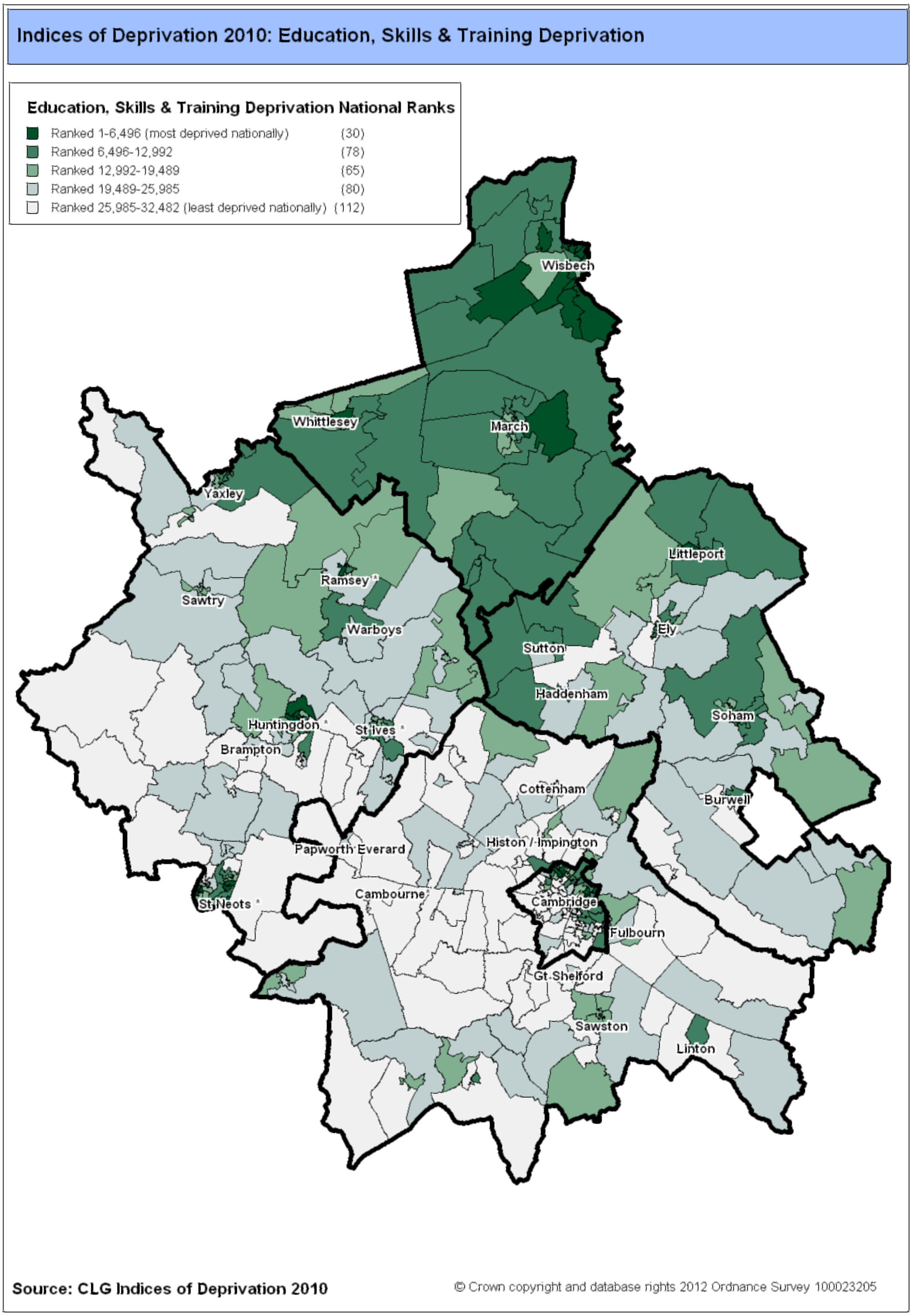
High forecast levels of employment growth, taking account of the Enterprise Zone at Alconbury

- The East of England Forecasting Model scenarios taking account of the Enterprise Zone at Alconbury forecast that of the Cambridgeshire districts, Huntingdonshire will see the third highest level of employment growth in percentage terms between 2011 and 2031. As with the population forecast, a significant amount of the growth in employment is expected to take place at Alconbury.

Appendices

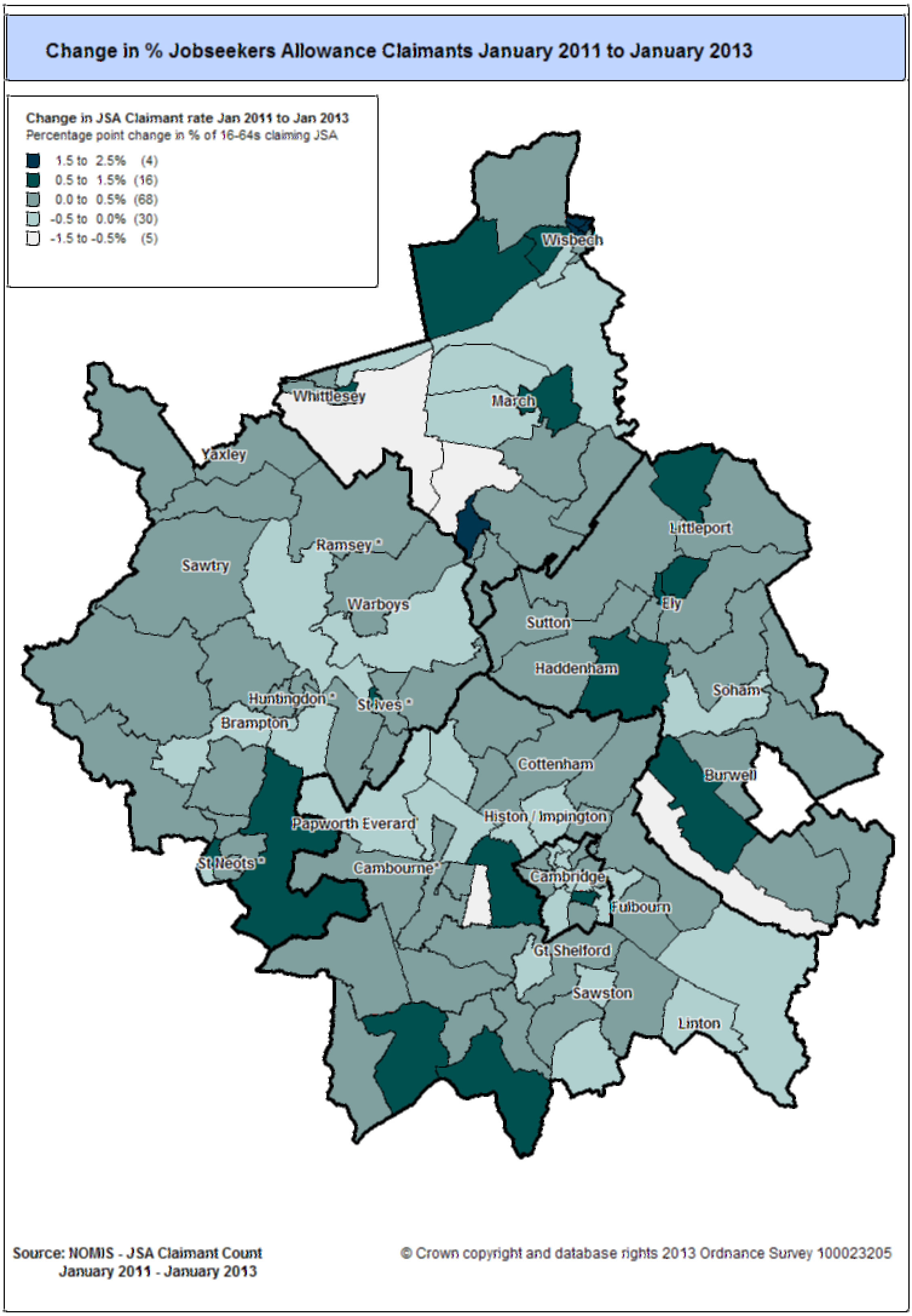
Map 1: Education, Skills and Training Deprivation

Source: CLG ID2010

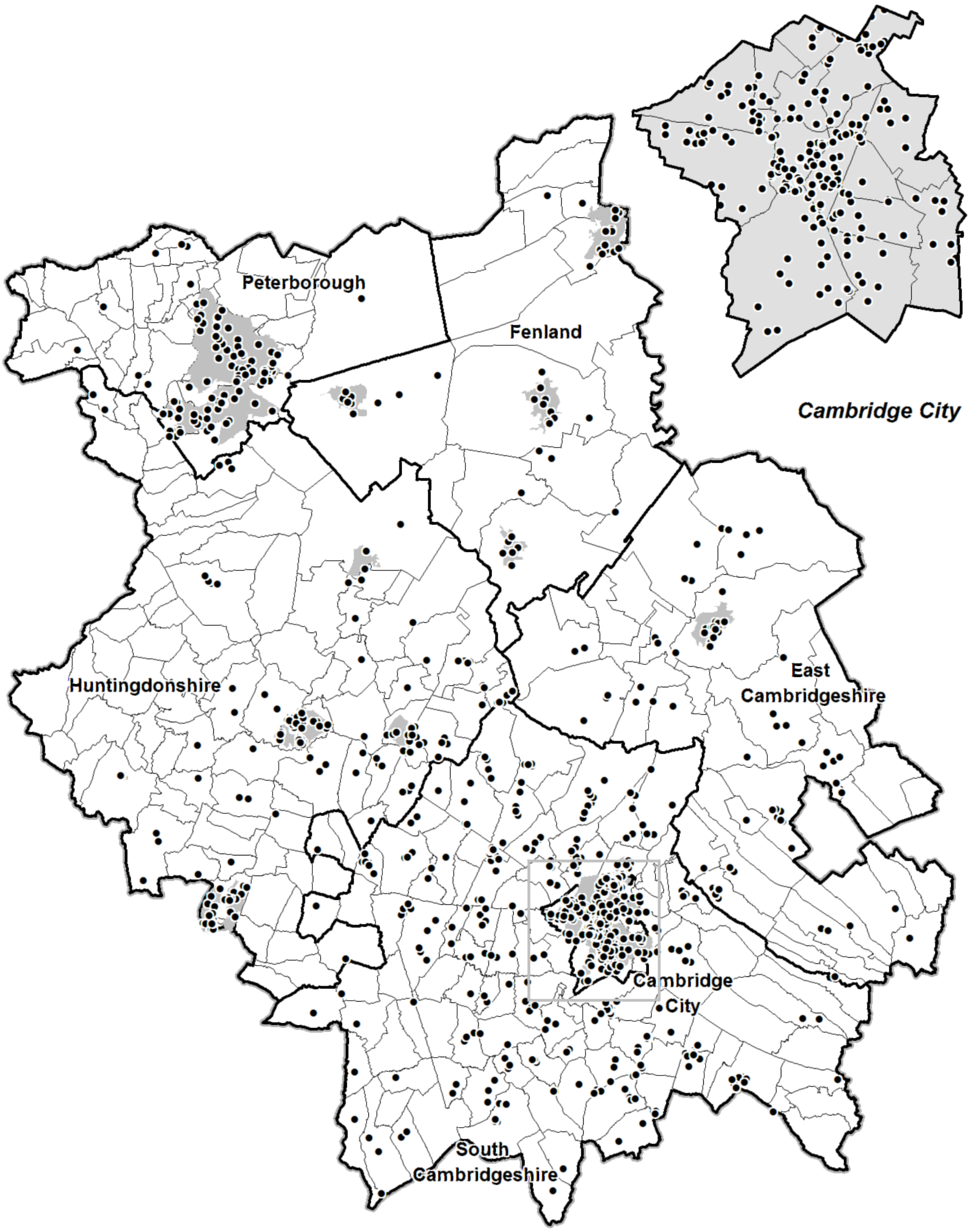


Map 2: Percentage point change in the JSA claimant rate, by ward, –January 2011 - 2013

Source: Nomis - JSA Claimant Count, –January 2011 - 2013

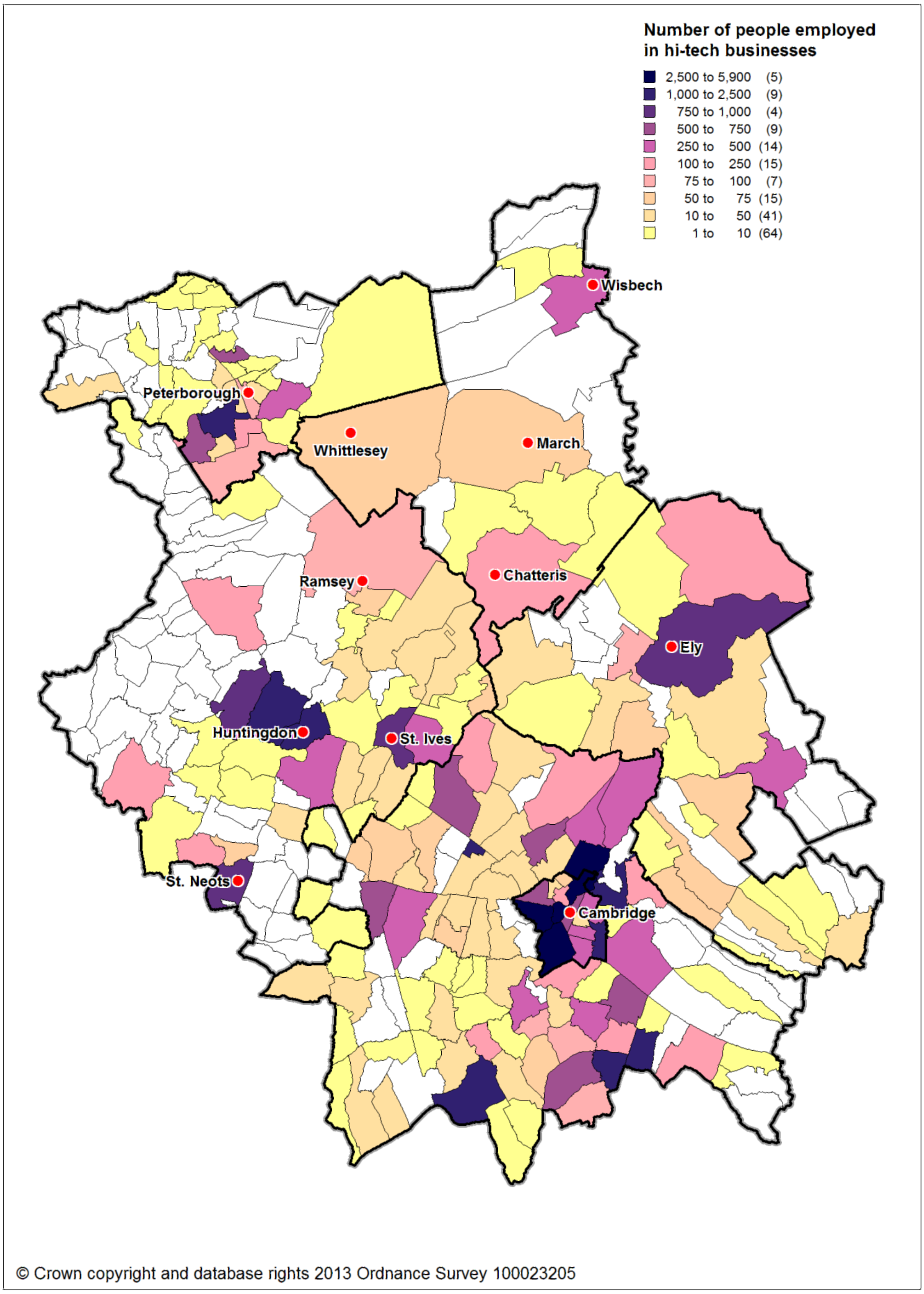


Map 3: All Hi-tech 'Community' Businesses in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough 2010
Source: Cambridgeshire County Council Research Group



Map 4: Employment in the Hi-tech 'Community', 2010

Source: Cambridgeshire County Council Research Group



Map 5: Creative Industry Businesses across Greater Cambridge

Source: GCP Creative Industries Strategy and Action Plan (2009)