

East Cambridgeshire Economic Audit 2013

Overview

East Cambridgeshire is a predominantly rural district located to the north-east of Cambridge. The District covers an area of 655km², and has a population of 84,700 (mid-2012 estimates, CCC). The district contains 3 market towns, and 50 other villages and hamlets varying in size, including the fringe areas of Newmarket.

The nearby city of Cambridge (population 126,500), as a major economic, social and cultural centre, exerts a significant influence over the whole district. The success of the Cambridge economy has caused the district to experience considerable recent pressure for housing growth. However, the pace of economic growth has not matched that of housing growth which has meant a significant recent increase in the level of outcommuting, and the associated problems of congestion and pollution. Rapid population growth has also placed pressure on local infrastructure and service provision – for example, education, transport, health services, recreation and utility services.

Unemployment in the district remains low by regional and national standards. Important sectors include business services, manufacturing, wholesale and haulage. Agriculture is still significant relative to the national average, and stud farming is a key industry in the south of the district around Newmarket. Most of the main settlements in East Cambridgeshire have industrial estates, although the largest concentrations of industrial and commercial operations are in Ely, Littleport, Sutton and close to the A14 at Snailwell.

The district can be broadly divided into two sub-areas. The northern part of the district is characterised by low-lying intensively farmed fenland – with many settlements located on higher ground on the old ‘islands’ in the fen. Flood risk in the area is a key issue, with much of the land at or below sea-level. The area contains the market towns of Ely, Soham and Littleport and a range of scattered villages and hamlets. Compared to the south of the district, incomes are lower and deprivation is more marked. Although it is predominantly an area of fertile agricultural land, it contains the majority of the district’s industry and manufacturing. The area has also been a focus for most of the housing growth in the district over the last 20 years, with large new estates built in the market towns. The main service and commercial centre is Ely (population 19,180), whilst Soham (population 10,720) and Littleport (population 7,880) both serve more local catchments and have lower scales of commercial and retail provision.

The district contains a number of sites of particular importance for biodiversity, including 3 internationally important wildlife sites at the Ouse Washes, Wicken Fen and Chippenham Fen. There are also 20 Sites of Special Scientific Importance and 80 County Wildlife Sites – as well as areas identified as important for wildlife in the Cambridgeshire Biodiversity Action Plan. Many of these wildlife areas also provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and sport – particularly boating and fishing on the fenland rivers and waterways.



Demographic structure

Population: The population of East Cambridgeshire is **84,700** (mid-2012 estimates, CCC). The Table below shows the growth in population and dwellings in the neighbouring districts and Cambridgeshire as a whole. The pace of growth has slowed in recent years but the district remains the fastest growing in Cambridgeshire in terms of dwellings and the second fastest in terms of population.

Population and Dwelling Stock

	Population			Total Dwellings		
	2001 (census)	mid-2012 (CCC)	% Change 2001-2012	2001	2012	% Change 2001-2012
Cambridge City	109,900	126,500	16.2%	43,400	48,600	12.0%
East Cambs	70,900	84,700	15.7%	30,600	36,100	18.0%
Fenland	83,700	95,600	14.5%	36,300	42,300	16.5%
Huntingdonshire	157,200	171,100	9.0%	65,100	72,300	11.2%
South Cambs	130,500	149,300	14.8%	53,600	62,400	16.4%
Cambridgeshire	552,200	627,200	13.5%	229,000	261,700	14.3%

Source: CCC/Census

Skills

Educational Attainment: At GCSE level, 74.5% of pupils attending schools in East Cambridgeshire achieved 5 or more A*-C passes.

Post-16 Education: In 2011 88.4% of students in East Cambridgeshire stayed on in fulltime education at 16+, 0.4% were in full time training, 6.9% in full time employment and 2.6% of leavers were not in education, employment or training (NEET). Source: CCC

Qualification levels: The level of educational achievement of the district's workforce is above the regional and national average at the higher NVQ levels (below).

Qualification levels of 16-64 year olds

Qualification Level	East Cambridgeshire	East Cambridgeshire (%)	East of England	Great Britain
NVQ4 and above	19,583	29.0%	25.7%	27.4%
NVQ3	7,700	11.4%	11.8%	12.4%
NVQ2	10,556	15.6%	16.2%	15.2%
NVQ1	8,844	13.1%	14.6%	13.3%
No qualifications	14,127	20.9%	22.5%	22.5%

Source: ONS (2011)



Economy

Employment sectors: The Table below shows the latest figures for employment by industry in East Cambridgeshire. Major employers in the district include Shropshires (Gs), Turners, DS Smith, JDR Cables, Life Fitness, Thurlow Nunn Standen and Tesco.

Employment by Industry in East Cambridgeshire

Industry	2011	
	Number	%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	1465	3.3
Manufacturing	4609	10.5
Construction	4055	9.2
Wholesale and retail trade	6478	14.7
Transport and storage	1956	4.5
Accommodation and food service	1487	3.4
Information and communication	1945	4.4
Financial and insurance	939	2.1
Professional, scientific and technical	3848	8.8
Administrative and support service	1675	3.8
Public administration and defence	1862	4.2
Education	4957	11.3
Human health and social work	4681	10.7

Source: 2011 Census

Note: % is a proportion of total employee jobs

Business demography: In East Cambridgeshire there were 335 business births and 325 business deaths in 2012. There were 3,665 active businesses in East Cambridgeshire during 2012, an increase of 30 on 2011 (source: ONS Business Demography 2012).

Employment by occupation: The latest employment by occupation figures are shown below. The survey estimates that associate professional and technical occupations are now the highest employers in the district, followed by professional occupations.



Employment by Occupation

Occupation	East Cambridgeshire		East of England	Great Britain
	2011/12	2012/13	2012/13	2012/13
Managers, directors and senior officials	13.0%	9.6%	11.1%	10.2%
Professional occupations	22.3%	15.8%	19.6%	19.6%
Associate professional & technical	13.1%	16.8%	14.8%	14.1%
Administrative & secretarial	7.6%	12.2%	11.4%	10.9%
Skilled trades occupations	9.8%	7.7%	10.6%	10.4%
Caring, leisure and other service occupations	10.3%	14.0%	8.5%	8.9%
Sales and customer service occupations	10.2%	*	7.5%	8.0%
Process plant & machine operatives	*	*	6.2%	6.3%
Elementary occupations	8.0%	10.6%	9.7%	10.9%

Source: ONS Annual Population Survey

Notes: * Sample size too small for reliable estimate. % are for those of 16+.

Economic activity rate: The economic activity rate in East Cambridgeshire (i.e. the labour force as a proportion of the population) fell in 2012 despite slight annual increases at the regional and national level (overleaf).

Activity rates in East Cambridgeshire and comparator areas

Year	East Cambridgeshire	East of England	Great Britain
Jan 10 – Dec 10	87.4%	78.7%	76.2%
Jan 11 – Dec 11	84.0%	79.6%	76.6%
Jan 12 – Dec 12	81.6%	80.3%	77.3%

Source: Nomis local area labour force survey

Gross weekly pay for full-time employees: Median gross weekly earnings in East Cambridgeshire increased by £33.20 (7.4%) in 2013 (below). Using this measure, East Cambridgeshire remains the fourth highest earning district in the county.

Median gross weekly earnings by workplace – all full-time workers

	2011 (£)	2012 (£)	2013 (£)
East Cambridgeshire	462.80	445.90	479.10
Cambridge City	553.00	585.90	573.90
Fenland	400.50	415.50	446.20
Huntingdonshire	497.90	488.60	519.30
South Cambridgeshire	586.00	606.20	599.50
East of England	494.50	495.20	505.00

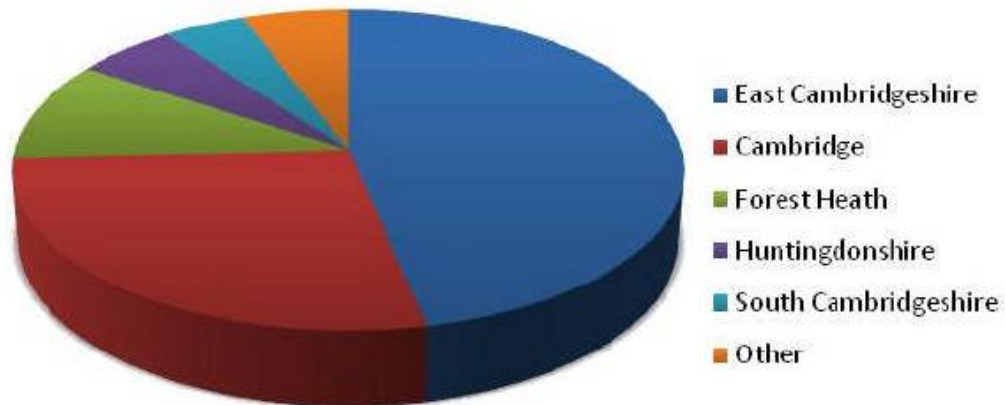
Source: ONS annual survey of hours and earnings - workplace analysis



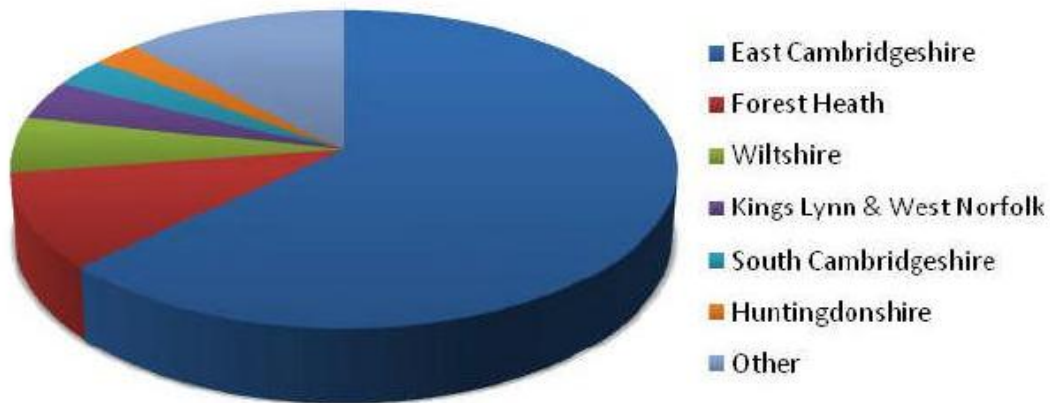
Transport and spatial connectivity

Commuting: there are significant levels of commuting in and out of the district, with 47% of employed residents out-commuting, and 37% in-commuting. Figures 2.1 and 2.2 show the workplace of residents and the origin of the district's working population. It is unclear why the data indicates significant inward commuting from Wiltshire residents.

Outward commuting flows (2011)



Inward commuting flows (2011)



Source: *Commuting patterns from the Annual Population Survey, Great Britain, 2010 and 2011*



Station usage: East Cambridgeshire has 5 railway stations: Ely, Littleport, Shippea Hill, Kennett and Dullingham, but the latter three have very limited services. Usage of all stations increased over the monitoring year with the exception of Shippea Hill which saw a reduction in usage once more (below).

Station Usage in East Cambridgeshire Stations and Comparators

Station	Entries & Exits		
	2009 -10	2010 -11	2011 -12
Ely	1,579,948	1,731,956	1,824,034
Littleport	149,428	178,254	199,798
Shippea Hill	942	812	378
Kennett	14,542	18,878	20,234
Dullingham	24,308	26,476	27,466
Cambridge	7,661,146	8,245,416	8,823,274
Waterbeach	266,020	301,376	312,220
Huntingdon	1,542,100	1,629,780	1,673,204

Source: Office of Rail Regulator (ORR)

Employment space

Overall, there was a gain of 6.29ha of employment land and 1393 sqm of employment floorspace.

Employment completions (monitoring year)

	Change in employment floorspace (sq m)	Change in employment land (hectares)
Employment gains	3560	3.32
Employment losses	-2698	-0.72
Losses to extensions/redevelopments within site curtilage	-330	-0.77
Gains from extensions/redevelopments within site curtilage	861	-
Losses due to changes of use between "B" uses	-696	-0.74
Gains due to changes of use between "B" uses	696	0.74
TOTAL	1393	6.29



Town Centre Retail Vacancy Rates

The table below shows the retail vacancy rates in the Market Towns as recorded in the 2013 Town Centre Survey. Vacancy rates remain low for all three centres when compared to the national average – average vacancy rate in the UK's top 650 centres was 14.1% in 2013 according to a report by the Local Data Company.

Retail vacancy rates in East Cambridgeshire Market Towns

Settlement	Number of vacant units	Percentage of total units
Ely	10	4.1%
Soham	2	3.0%
Littleport	2	3.7%

Broadband Connectivity

As part of the Connecting Cambridgeshire broadband project 34 cabinets in East Cambs have been upgraded to provide fibre to the cabinet serving 5,000 residential and business premises across the district as part of a total of 64 cabinets across the wider intervention area that includes upgrades in:

Buckden	Kings Ripton	Soham
Downham	Little Thetford	Somersham
Ely	Littleport	Sutton
Haddenham	Mepal	Warboys
Hilton	Papworth Everard	Wilburton
Huntingdon	Peterborough – Hampton Hargate and Vale, Fengate	Witchford

If you would like any more information or further stats or background on East Cambridgeshire a business location then please contact the business development team via:

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