



## Walsall Worklessness Briefing

May 2010  
Issue 7

Worklessness as defined by the Social Exclusion Unit is 'all those of working age who are not employed', this includes people who are seeking work as well as people who are not seeking work. The measure of worklessness used is the Department for Work and Pensions' Working Age Client Group, males aged 16 – 64 and females aged 16-59.

The Worklessness Briefing is based on benefit data which is supplied quarterly by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) with a lag of six months, it shows data from November 2009 which is available at May 2010 and relates to claimants on Jobseekers Allowance, Lone Parents, Income Support, Incapacity Benefit, Employment Support Allowance and Other Income Related Benefits.

**Table 1 - Worklessness Figures as at November 2009**

	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Claimant Rate	Number	Claimant Rate	Number	Claimant Rate
England	2,299,610	13.7%	1,864,590	12.3%	4,164,200	13.0%
West Midlands	283,500	16.4%	215,720	13.8%	499,210	15.2%
Black Country	71,630	21.0%	53,180	17.0%	124,810	19.1%
Walsall	16,860	21.6%	12,470	17.2%	29,330	19.5%

Source: DWP/ONS

Please note that these figures have been calculated using the working age population taken from the mid-year ONS population estimates and this provides an indicative trend. It is different to the national indicator 152 as this is based upon a rolling four quarter average of the working age population and this data is provided directly by Central Government.

**Key Points:**

- Worklessness in England stood at 4,164,200 individuals as measured by the DWP Working Age Client Group in November 2009, equating to 13% of the working age population.
- The worklessness rate for the West Midlands was recorded at 15.2%
- The City Region area recorded a worklessness rate of 18.4%
- The number of residents claiming a workless benefit in Walsall was 29,330. This equates to a worklessness rate of 19.5% of the working age population.

**City Region**

The City Region is made up of the eight metropolitan Boroughs of Birmingham, Coventry, Telford and Wrekin, Solihull, Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

**Table 2 - Worklessness Figures in City Region Area as at November 2009**

	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Claimant Rate	Number	Claimant Rate	Number	Claimant Rate
Birmingham	72,390	22.1%	55,600	18.1%	127,990	20.2%
Coventry	17,760	16.9%	14,110	15.4%	31,870	16.2%
Dudley	16,930	17.5%	11,650	13.4%	28,580	15.5%
Sandwell	20,650	22.7%	15,760	18.6%	36,420	20.7%
Solihull	7,990	12.6%	6,370	10.8%	14,350	11.7%
Telford and Wrekin	8,160	15.5%	7,060	14.7%	15,220	15.1%
Walsall	16,860	21.6%	12,470	17.2%	29,330	19.5%
Wolverhampton	17,180	22.8%	13,310	19.5%	30,490	21.2%
City Region	177,920	20.0%	136,320	16.7%	314,250	18.4%

Source: DWP/ONS

## National Indicator 152 – Working Age on Out of Work Benefits

### National Indicator Sets

The National Indicator 152 measures progress on reducing worklessness by measuring the percentage of the working age population who are claiming out of work benefits. Working age benefits include the main out-of-work client group categories (measured on the number of people claiming Jobseekers Allowance, Lone Parents, Income Support, Incapacity Benefit, Employment Support Allowance and other income-related benefits).

**Table 3 - Worklessness Rate By Area Based On NI 152 Methodology**

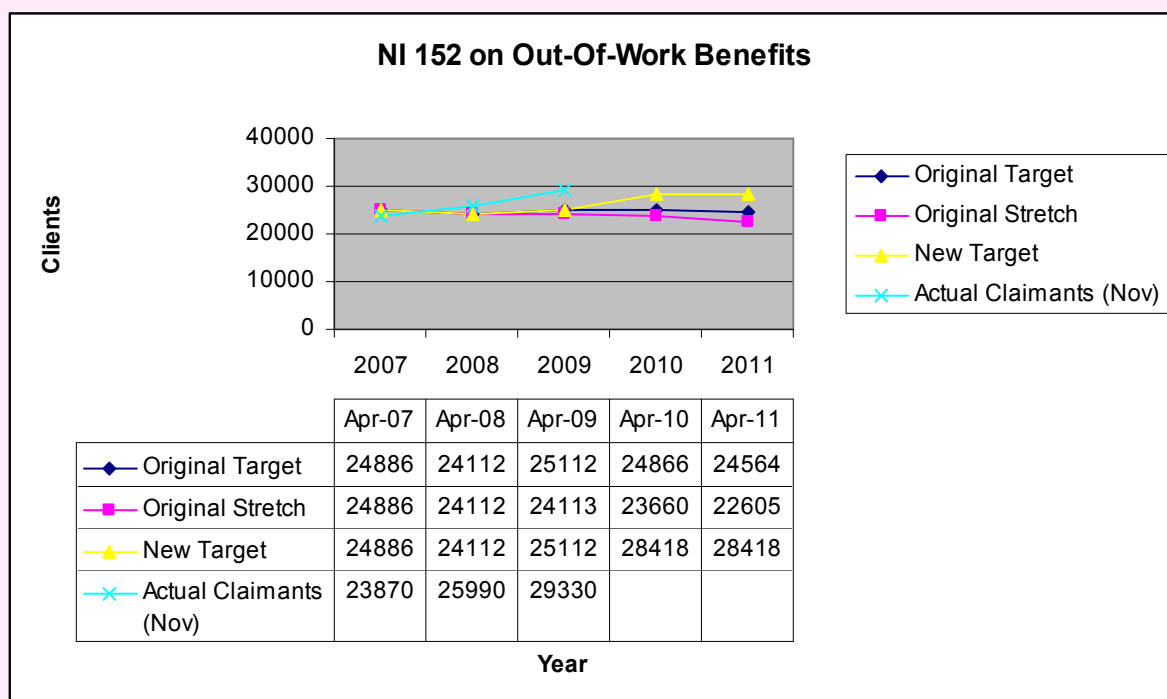
	May 2007	May 2008	May 2009	Nov 2009
<b>England</b>	11.5%	11.2%	12.3%	13%
<b>West Midlands</b>	13.1%	12.8%	14.3%	15.2%
<b>City Region</b>	15.1%	15.1%	17.2%	18.3%
<b>Walsall</b>	16.1%	16.0%	18.0%	19.5%

Source: Figures calculated from available DWP/ONS data 13.05.10 and official hub figures may vary

### Walsall Perspective

- Walsall's NI 152 is being measured by Government Office West Midlands (GOWM) around reducing unemployment and tackling worklessness and is measured by using a rolling four quarter average.
- Due to the economic downturn the NI152 target was successfully renegotiated with GOWM in March 10 and is now expressed as 'minimising the widening of the gap with the West Midlands'. Effectively, this will mean maintaining the gap with the West Midlands at the Aug 09 level of 4.1 percentage points.
- Walsall's worklessness rate at November 2009 was 19.5% which is a gap over the West Midlands of 4.3%. Given that NI152 is a rolling four quarter average Walsall's performance is likely to improve as it includes more quarters of better performance. For example, the number of workless in Walsall fell between August and November 2009 to 29,330.

**Chart 1 – NI 152 Targets**



## Current Initiatives

### Connection to Opportunities (C2O)

The Connection to Opportunities initiative is managed by Advantage West Midlands Partnership Team and has the objective of addressing the severe concentration of worklessness and low skills, which exist across the Borough, particularly in the most deprived areas and those affected by the recent economic down-turn. It aims specifically to engage the most hard to reach individuals.

Walsall Partnership, with support from Walsall Council has developed a programme named “A Passport to Employment”. This will assist individuals in the Borough to identify, improve and develop their employability skills, using volunteering and promoting employment within the voluntary and community sectors. The proposal has been developed in consultation with Walsall Voluntary Action (WVA).

The individual would have an initial self assessment and then, via personalised support, be placed as a volunteer. This will provide additional skills and work experience to support the volunteer back in to employment in the future. Organisations taking part in the project will also be provided with support. Personal achievements will be recorded and will enable further up-skilling to be identified.

For further information please contact Walsall Partnership <http://www.walsallpartnership.org.uk/> or Walsall Voluntary Action <http://www.walsallva.org.uk/>

### Sustainable Urban Development (SUD)

The North Black Country SUDs Package is a £12m European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programme covering some of the most deprived areas in Wolverhampton and Walsall. It is one of six regional SUDs packages and forms part of a £70m regional pot. A similar programme exists in Sandwell and Dudley.

The SUDs programme is administered by Advantage West Midlands and commenced in January 2007 and finishes in December 2015 and is primarily concerned with the creation of employment opportunities and to promote the take up of these opportunities by residents in disadvantaged areas.

In Walsall two projects aimed at addressing worklessness have been developed

- Workwise
- Multi Agency One Stop Shops.

Workwise is a project providing free public transport travel passes to unemployed people attending interviews, and free travel passes for up to 3 months once in employment. The SUDs funded project is an extension to the existing Walsall based service, and now provides Black Countrywide coverage to all eligible residents and began operating in February 2010 until December 2013.

For further information on WorkWise please see the following link [http://www.networkwestmidlands.com/workwise/Walsall\\_index.aspx](http://www.networkwestmidlands.com/workwise/Walsall_index.aspx)

The Multi Agency One Stop Shop project is building on existing activity in Bloxwich, Darlaston, Caldmore and Walsall town centre and seeks to provide additional resources to the service. The proposal has received outline approval and a full application will be submitted shortly, with a provisional start date of July 2010 to December 2013.

For further information on the Bloxwich and Darlaston Multi Agency One Stop Shop please see the following links <http://www.workonthehorizon.org/> or <http://www.darlastonjet.org/>



## JSA Claimant Count

JSA claimant count released on a monthly basis records the number of people claiming JSA and National Insurance credits at Jobcentre Plus local offices. This is not an official measure of unemployment, but it is the only indicative statistic available for areas smaller than Local Authorities.

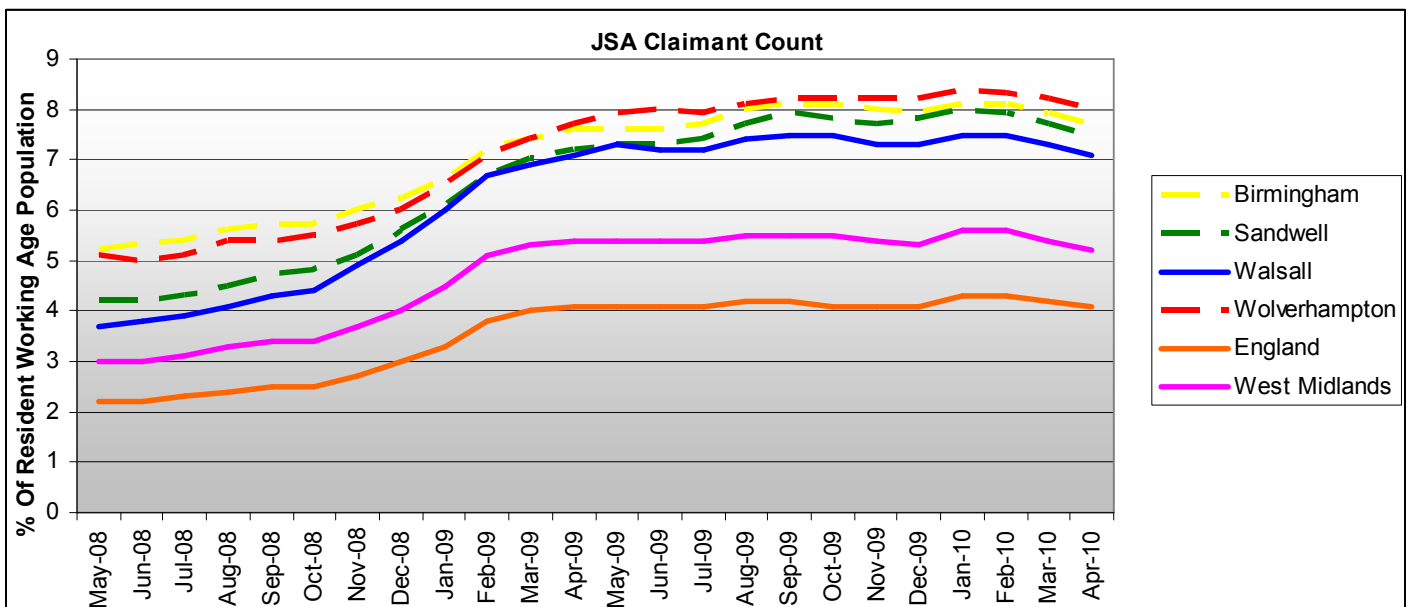
**Table 5 – JSA claimant count figures (Rates are % Of Resident Working Age Population)**

Month	Walsall		West Midlands		England	
	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
May 2008	5,640	3.7	98,232	3.0	693,870	2.2
August 2008	6,115	4.1	108,349	3.3	766,178	2.4
November 2008	7,335	4.9	121,455	3.7	878,047	2.7
February 2009	10,047	6.7	166,448	5.1	1,217,446	3.8
May 2009	10,947	7.3	177,467	5.4	1,311,683	4.1
August 2009	11,068	7.4	181,511	5.5	1,333,857	4.2
November 2009	10,999	7.3	176,696	5.4	1,307,139	4.1
February 2010	11,319	7.5	183,246	5.6	1,370,285	4.3
April 2010	10,673	7.1	172,400	5.2	1,294,911	4.1
% Change May-08 to Apr-10	89.24%	-	75.50%	-	86.62%	-

Source: DWP/ONS

- Walsall JSA figure for April 2010 stood at 10,673 claimants, which was an increase of 89.24% from May 2008 when the economic downturn started to kick in
- Between May 2008 and April 2010 the increase in Walsall's Claimant count of 89.24% was higher than the figure for the West Midlands Region (75.5%) and England (86.62%)
- This suggests that Walsall has been relatively worse hit by the downturn than both the West Midlands Region and England
- Walsall's Claimant Count rates are not as high as Birmingham, Sandwell and Wolverhampton

**Chart 2 – JSA Claimant Count Rates**



Source: DWP/ONS

## Black Country Integrated Employment & Skills (IES) Jobcentre Plus Skills Funding Agency Offer

The diagram below shows the support that is available to residents within the Black Country in regards to skills and employment through different time frames

In Employment	Facing Redundancy	Up to 6 months unemployed	From 6 months of unemployment	12 months of unemployment
<p><b>Train to Gain</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train to Gain is available via the Business Link Brokerage Service.</li> <li>Businesses can access training for their staff to help develop existing employees skills and help improve productivity.</li> <li><a href="http://www.traintogain.gov.uk">www.traintogain.gov.uk</a> for more information</li> </ul>	<p><b>Pre-redundancy and Redeployment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funded by the SFA (Skills Funding Agency)</li> <li>Supports all sectors / employers</li> <li>Supports any individual under threat / notice of redundancy</li> <li>Bespoke offer including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information Advice and Guidance</li> <li>Individual action plan development</li> <li>Personal support and training where required</li> <li>Employment linked training</li> <li>Job search support e.g. CV writing support and interview techniques</li> <li>Business start up advice, support and training where appropriate</li> <li>Links to employers and identified employment opportunities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>SFA – (Skills Funding Agency) Occupational Training</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bespoke flexible, employment focused training and support including IAG (Information Advice and Guidance) individual action plan and personal support</li> <li>Pre-employment training for Local Employer Partnerships (LEP) job vacancies</li> </ul>	<p><b>Flexible New Deal</b></p> <p>Flexible New Deal (FND) started on the 5<sup>th</sup> October 2009. All customers who receive JSA and reach 12 months (52 weeks) of unemployment are referred to FND if they wish to continue to receive JSA whilst unemployed.</p> <p>FND lasts for up to 12 months and provides personalised support to a customer claiming JSA from Specialist Training Providers. In the Black Country District, A4e and Dudley Council (Future Skills) along with their sub contractors deliver the FND provision.</p> <p>Many of the Jobcentre Plus / Skills Funding Agency services available to the JSA customer in the 0 to 12 month period continue to be available to the customer via the FND Contract Holder whilst the customer is on FND.</p> <p>JSA customers who are on FND have to continue to sign on for JSA every 2 weeks via their local Jobcentre.</p>	
<p><b>Future Jobs Fund</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creates extra job opportunities</li> <li>Six months funded salary</li> <li>Focus on age 18-24 JSA (Jobseeker Allowance Customers who have been unemployed for between 26 and 50 weeks)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Rapid Response Service (RRS)</b></p> <p>RRS is administered by Jobcentre Plus (JCP) and offers:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early entry to JCP programmes</li> <li>Guidance on claiming working age benefits</li> <li>Skills Transfer Analysis</li> <li>Job Focused Training</li> <li>Action Fund to pay for one off items to support a return to work</li> <li>Jobsearch support</li> </ul>	<p><b>Next Steps Skills Health Check and Skills Action Plan</b></p> <p>JSA claimants can be referred to Nextsteps (delivered by CSWP via Prospects Services) for a Skills Health Check, a Skills Action Plan and possibly a diagnostic skills assessment.</p>		
<p><b>Recruitment Subsidy</b></p> <p>This is made up of two elements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>£1,000 recruitment subsidy is available to employers who offer eligible 6 month plus JSA customers employment that is expected to last at least 26 weeks &amp; consists of an average of 16 hours work per week</li> <li>Up to £1,500 of Train to Gain support available via the brokerage service</li> </ul>	<p><b>National Apprenticeship Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Redundancy support for Apprentices at risk / who have been made redundant</li> <li>Apprenticeship hardship funds used by provider for up to six months</li> </ul>	<p><b>Work Trials</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides employers with the opportunity to try out a potential employee (usually between 1 and 15 days)</li> <li>At no cost to the employer, the customer remains on welfare benefit for the duration of the Work Trial</li> </ul>		
<p><b>National Apprenticeship Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A mix of on and off the job learning, working towards nationally recognised qualifications.</li> <li>Candidates can search for vacancies and with employers on-line.</li> <li>Available to both adults and young people.</li> <li><a href="http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk">www.apprenticeships.org.uk</a> for more information</li> </ul>		<p><b>Employability Skills Programme (ESP)</b></p> <p>ESP is SFA funded provision which offers literacy, numeracy and ESOL (English as a Second Language) support</p>		
		<p><b>Flexible Routeways (FR)</b></p> <p>ESF funded JCP provision to help JCP customers furthest away from the labour market. Offer includes Work Placements and 1-2-1 specialist support. FR is delivered by the Shaw Trust and their sub contractors.</p>		
		<p><b>Access to Programmes at Day 1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unemployment customers can access a range of Programmes / Initiatives from day 1 of unemployment including Next Steps, Work Trials, Employability Skills Programme, Occupational Training and Flexible Routeways.</li> </ul> <p>Further Programmes / Initiatives available at Day 1 of unemployment from Jobcentre Plus/ SFA include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support Contract (Jobsearch) advice</li> <li>Jobsearch Support for Professionals and Executives via Specialist Private Recruitment Agencies contracted to JCP</li> <li>Travel to Interview Scheme</li> <li>Progress 2 Work (Support for Drug misusers)</li> <li>Access to a Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) and a range of specialist initiatives to help people with disabilities &amp; health problems back into work.</li> <li>Better Off in Work Calculations from a JCP Adviser</li> <li>Inspirations 2012 (Personal Best)</li> <li>Response to Redundancy Programme via SFA contracted providers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Self Employment (3 month / 13 week offer)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Referrals are made to Business Link for advice on self employment</li> <li>When the customer begins trading they will receive a weekly credit of £50 for 16 weeks</li> </ul>	
		<p><b>Rapid Response Service (RRS) for claimants made redundant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early Entry to JCP programmes</li> <li>Guidance on claiming working age benefits</li> <li>Skills Transfer Analysis</li> <li>Job Focused Training</li> <li>Action Fund to pay for one off items to support a return to work</li> <li>Jobsearch support</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mentoring (13 weeks – only for 18 to 24 year olds)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Referrals are made via Nord Anglia to match customers with Mentors</li> </ul>	
		<p><b>Local Employment Partnerships (LEP)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LEP develops Pre-Employment Training (PET) packages with employers to fill their notified vacancies.</li> <li>LEP offers employers a job matching service to fill their notified job vacancies.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Work Experience (13 weeks- only for 18 to 24 year olds)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work Experience placements to last 2 weeks. Referrals are made via Reed in Partnership.</li> </ul>	
			<p><b>Volunteering (6 month / Week 26 offer)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides the customer with work experience via a placement with a voluntary organisation</li> <li>National JCP contract delivered through the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV)</li> </ul>	
			<p><b>Work Focused Training (6 month / Week 26 offer)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SFA funded provision delivered through Colleges</li> <li>Flexibility to attend up to 8 weeks full time training plus part-time training to follow full time training.</li> <li>Employment and skills focus including achievement of full level 2/3 qualifications</li> </ul>	
			<p><b>Recruitment Subsidy (6 month / Week 26 offer)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>£1,000 recruitment subsidy paid to employers</li> </ul>	
			<p><b>Young Persons Guarantee – YPG (6 month / Week 26 offer)</b></p> <p>The YPG target group is 6 month plus unemployed customers aged 18 to 24. The offer includes:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Future Jobs Fund</li> <li>Routes Into Work</li> <li>Work Focused Training via Pertemps PDG</li> <li>Graduate Internships</li> <li>Non Graduate Internships</li> <li>Community Task Force via TBG Learning</li> </ul>	

**Specialist Initiatives** – across the Black Country a range of specialist initiatives are delivered to help fill gaps in the mainstream provision offer. These initiatives are funded in a variety of ways (for example working Neighbourhoods Fund and Connections To Opportunities). Projects such as the Princes Trust Team, Workwise (Travel to Work) and Learn Direct are actively promoted by JCP Advisers to unemployed customers.

**FE (Mainstream) Colleges** – deliver a range of courses and vocational training in specific occupations for example Construction, Tourism, Retail, Engineering, Information Technology and Hairdressing. This provision is promoted by JCP Advisers to unemployed customers.