

LMI Bulletin

North East and Cumbria



Issue No: 490

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NATIONAL AND REGIONAL NEWS

[Vacancies and jobs in the UK & Regional Labour Market](#)

The latest ONS labour market figures (published 18th Jan) show the continuing demand for labour with vacancies again increasing in the last quarter of 2021. Over the last year, the largest increases have been in hospitality (accommodation & food services), health and care, as well as administration and business support.



Change on year in job vacancies in the UK Oct-Dec 2020 to Oct-Dec 2021 (ONS Vacancy Survey)



The figures for the current demand for staff – a three month average for October to December 2021 - show that the sectors with the highest demand are health care (up 67,000 from 2019 levels) and hospitality (up 80,000 from 2019).



Current vacancy numbers in the UK Oct-Dec 2021 (ONS Vacancy Survey)



While the demand for people increases, the number of people in employment in the North East has been falling for the last four quarters. Unemployment also increased in the last quarter, but we will need to see further data that does not include the most recent covid measures to see if this is a trend or a blip.

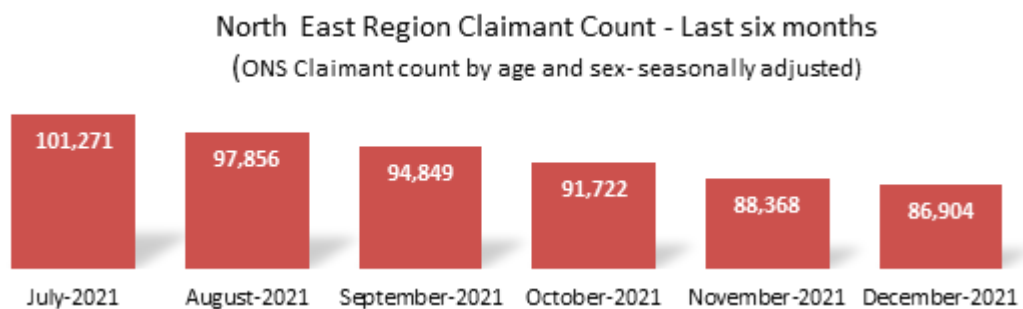
The other consideration in terms of availability for work is the increase in the number of people who are economically inactive – this means the people who are not in work or looking for work in the age group 16-64. This figure increased for the third quarter in a row in the North East and sits at 406,000. IES identify three groups most affected¹

- The increase in the number of long-term long-term sick



- The decrease of older people in the labour market through early retirement
- The increase in in young people who are NEET

The other and final stat to throw at you is the claimant count – this is the people claiming UC or JSA and looking for work. This has continued to fall although at 87,000 is still much higher than it was in December 2019, 74,000.



North East Manufacturing

A positive report on North East manufacturing from Make UK, the manufacturer employers' body and BDO. The North East had the highest manufacturing output in the UK in the last quarter of 2021. The report describes this as a positive sign for employment in the region. In terms of the national picture, manufacturing vacancies increased by 15% in the last quarter across the UK.

HGV Bootcamps

The shortage of HGV drivers was a thing that started in the Summer and may still be a bit of a thing although Logistics UK has said ([BBC 6/12/2021](#)) that the pressure is easing. The short-term issue of inability to sit tests through covid restrictions and people leaving the cab for good through the downturn plus the reduction of overseas workers, compounded a longer term inability to attract new people to a life on the road breaking your teeth on a chocolate bar.



One of the Government's responses was the addition of HGV short courses to the bootcamps. People that successfully complete the HGV courses are guaranteed a job interview with an employer, and the first drivers are expected to be on the road from March 2022. The shortage has led to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Dept of Transport getting involved in [improving the state of the nation's lorry parks](#).

National Apprenticeship Week

Below are some of the latest apprenticeship data with which we can welcome the National Apprenticeship Week which is starting on Monday, 7th of February. These include the headlines from the 2020 to 2021 academic year, as well as some of the provisional figures for the first quarter of the 2021/22 academic year.

Between August and October 2021:

- More people (over 130,000) started an apprenticeship compared to the same period in 2020/21 (91,100)
- Most apprenticeship starts were by people aged 25+ (49,800)
- The number of higher apprenticeships continues to grow (38,200)
- Most starts were in Advanced (Level 3) apprenticeships (56,300)

In the 2020/2021 academic year (August to July):

- More people (98,800) started higher apprenticeships than intermediate level (84,100). Most started on an advanced level (138,500)
- For the first time, over 50% of starts were by people aged 25+ whereas the under 19s fell for the fourth year and accounted for just 20%
- Levy funded apprenticeships accounted for just under 64% of starts
- Health, public services and care occupations had the largest number apprenticeship starts for the first time (30.3%) with business administration and law in second spot (29.8%)



North East businesses in better shape than last year - but concerns grow

The latest North East England Chamber of Commerce quarterly economic survey - which is the largest independent North East business survey – shows a mixed picture regarding the region’s economic and business landscape.

The positive news is that overall, North East companies had a much stronger performance compared to 12 months ago, with over half of companies surveyed (out of 170) operating at full capacity in the last quarter. However, despite these signs of growth, employers are still having difficulties attracting, recruiting and retaining staff, with more businesses trying to recruit full-time staff compared to three months ago. At the same time, firms are also struggling with increased costs and supply chain disruptions.

These challenges were previously identified in the NatWest North East Business Activity Index – which measures the month-on-month change in the combined output of the region’s manufacturing and service sectors – which was published earlier in January.

You can read the full report here: [ES-Q4-2021.pdf \(neechamber.co.uk\)](https://www.neechamber.co.uk/ES-Q4-2021.pdf)

One in five shops in North East are vacant, new study suggests

According to a new report by the British Retail Consortium (BRC) and the Local Data Company, the North East was the region with the highest number of vacant shops in the UK at the end of 2021, with one in five shops being empty. Another recent study showed that Newcastle city centre has suffered the most during the pandemic.

Not surprisingly, these findings confirm that retail is a sector which has been greatly impacted by new covid restrictions and lockdowns, mostly due to remote and hybrid working which keeps people away from the city centre and high streets and served as a



catalyst for increased online retail which has grown from under 20% of total retail in Feb 2020 to 26% in Dec 2021.

NORTHUMBERLAND, TYNE & WEAR AND COUNTY DURHAM

Apprenticeship vacancies and events in Northumberland

Northumberland County Council is currently advertising 60 apprenticeship roles and will be attending a range of events during the National Apprenticeship week to engage with those interested in the opportunities.

- **Tuesday February 8** - 11am to 2pm - Northumberland College, Ashington
- **Tuesday February 8** - 9.30am to 4pm - Berwick Town Hall, Berwick
- **Thursday February 10** - 10am to 4pm - Alnwick Gardens Careers Event
- **Wednesday February 16** – 10am to 2pm - St James Park, Newcastle

<https://tinyurl.com/2p8zrsfr>

The below virtual events will also be taking place throughout the week:

- **Wednesday 9 February** – 9am to 7pm - Northumberland County Council Apprenticeships (multiple sessions available) <https://tinyurl.com/2p9dnzrs>
- **Thursday February 10** - 5.45pm to 7pm - Northumberland Healthcare Trust virtual event: <https://tinyurl.com/8jcdjyf2>

Number of companies in Northumberland hits record high

Northumberland welcomes some positive news regarding its business activity, with the 2021 figures showing an increase in the number of businesses registered in the county, compared to 2020. Most new companies are operating in the retail sector, which was closely followed by food and drinks services.

Green Economy

This is a training programme in Pegswood, just outside Morpeth helping young people aged 16-24 develop skills in the greener part of the green economy. The programme is



led by [Groundwork North East & Cumbria](#) and is part-funded by the [North East](#) Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) Local Growth Fund VCSE Capital Grant programme, which aims to help communities across the region recover from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

National Grid promotes the vital role of apprenticeships

On a similar tone, it is very encouraging to see local people taking on green apprenticeship opportunities, such as the ones offered by National Grid. Among the jobs it has created at its North Sea Link site in Blyth, the energy company has also taken on local apprentices for its net zero projects.

BT Group creates 150 new North East jobs

The company's North Tyneside – and soon renovated - office will create more than 150 full-time roles at its mobile operator, EE.

Newcastle's growing tech sector

The increasing digitalisation, as well as the move to a green economy are the major current trends which are changing the UK's jobs market, and there is plenty of evidence that the North East is already reaping the benefits in both areas. Although our latest editions have been paying tribute to the region's "success story" in the green energy sector, the following stories highlight the opportunities which this time are coming from the North East's tech sector.

Considering that the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (NELEP) has already established digital as one of the key sectors that can drive the region's economic growth, it is very encouraging to see examples of how this is being fulfilled.*

IT job vacancies surpass pre-pandemic levels in the UK

Recent job market research shows that the number of IT vacancies across the UK is higher than before the pandemic.

Over 50% of all new IT vacancies in England came from technology, media and telecoms (TMT) companies in 2021. Sky and Amazon were among some well-known



employers who have had the most job openings, with JPMorgan being on the top of the list.

Newcastle has one of fastest growing tech sectors in UK,

Government says

The Government has published its new Levelling Up Power Tech League, which ranks the UK cities' tech sectors and Newcastle was among the top 10 cities with the fastest growing digital sectors. According to the figures, the city's tech sector has more than 1,300 job opportunities, with an average advertised salary of £46,536.

Newcastle was already ranked as the country's ninth most important tech hub in Tech Nation's report earlier this year.

The findings are based on a number of factors, including venture capital (VC) funding, the number of available jobs, the average salary and the number of the tech companies which are worth more than \$1 billion (known as tech 'unicorns') in the area.

Considering the overall and increasing shift to digitalisation in every aspect of our lives and across all sectors, with the number of IT job openings being higher than ever, these findings are particularly positive for the region.

200 jobs as tech provider Version 1 moves to Newcastle

More recent announcements confirm the above findings, and further highlight the significance of the North East's digital sector, which is attracting a growing number of new investments. One of them comes from the Irish tech company - which is considered to be among the major employers in Europe - Version 1, which is opening a new office in the region, bringing hundreds of digital jobs to Newcastle in the next two years.

The company will initially focus on recruiting for mid to senior roles such as:

- Java Developers



- Performance Testers
- Senior Front-end Engineers
- Recruitment Marketing Specialists

The full list of vacancies can be found on the company's website, here: [Careers at Version 1 | Join our Great Place to Work - Version 1](#)

It will also be great to see the company fulfil its plans to bring its Accelerate Academy training facility to the North East, in order to help people develop the relevant skills in demand.

Cyber security firm Arctic Wolf picks Newcastle for European HQ

Newcastle has also been chosen by another - this time coming from overseas- tech company, as the base for its UK headquarters and together with the new office, the city will also welcome the creation of 30 new jobs. Arctic Wolf specialises in cyber security and is also planning to create hundreds of more jobs in the next three years.

It is also worth mentioning that other international tech companies, such as Xplor and Monsterlab already paved the way for these developments when they opened new offices in Newcastle last year. Both companies are planning to create new jobs in the coming years, and based on recent announcements, we should expect hundreds of them coming from Monsterlab by 2024.

The numbers in terms of job creation are expected to grow even further, thanks to the global digital company [Accenture](#) which will create thousands of jobs across the North of England, as it will be expanding to cities including Newcastle. It has been said that this development is a result of a growing demand for services in areas such as cloud engineering, cybersecurity, data and intelligent operations.

On this note, using Labour Insight - a software tool which analyses online job adverts - we have found that machine learning and artificial intelligence were among the skills in



greatest demand for digital roles across the North East in 2021. Other skills included programming languages such as Python and SQL, as well as data analysis and systems management. (Source: Labour Insight, Burning Glass Technologies).

Newcastle recruitment startup launches services to support early years tech talent

A new platform developed by the tech recruitment company [Haystack](#) aims to support people who have or less than one year's experience, or no experience to find entry level tech roles in engineering, data and design.

*(You can read the North East's Digital Strategy, "Digital for Growth" which was developed by the NELEP here: [Digital - North East Local Enterprise Partnership \(northeastlep.co.uk\)](https://northeastlep.co.uk))

£300m scheme to transform Tyneside waterfront with arena, conference and exhibition centre gets under way

NewcastleGateshead Quays site will be a new arena, conference and exhibition centre which is currently being developed at the riverside and is expected to create 2,000 new jobs from the construction phase through to its completion in 2024. The work is being carried out by BAM Construction.

“Game-changing” £100m Sunderland recycling plant to create 100 local skilled jobs

A new recycling factory that will be based at the Port of Sunderland will create around 100 new jobs when operational by 2024. The construction work is expected to start this year.



North East firm Paragon to create 160 jobs

Sunderland will also see the creation of hundreds of roles by the end of the year in customer communications. These will range from operational roles such as team leaders, supervisors and operations staff to IT and account management posts.

County Durham growth fund helps firms create more than 250 new jobs

17 local businesses from a range of sectors will be supported by County Durham growth fund, which is set up by County Durham Council, leading to the creation of 278 jobs. Some of the companies include (but are not limited to):

- Aztec Diamond (equestrian equipment and clothing specialist)
- CoreHaus (modular housebuilder)
- Finnmark Sunas (Finish sauna specialists)
- Teescraft Engineering Ltd.

TEES VALLEY

Amazon

This is no secret anymore, but it was officially announced just after Christmas that the latest (can't say last) Amazon Fulfillment Centre in the North East was the building that is being built at the Wynyard site just off the A19. According to the Northern Echo, once this opens, Amazon will have created 5,000 permanent and 4,000 seasonal positions in the North East in the last two years.

NHS 111 recruitment | Health Careers

Also at Wynyard in early January was, and still is, an appeal from the NHS for 111 Health Adviser/Call Takers.



Introduction to DEC

The Darlington Economic Campus (DEC) is the Civil Service, bringing together the five departments and the Office for National Statistics into what will be a single location with around 750 jobs.

Digital exclusion

Job searching greatly benefits from having digital skills – while not prepared to stick our collective neck out and say essential, it is the case that the skills to use technology in job search – accessing job sites, creating a CV, uploading a CV are expected. There is still a great deal of digital exclusion with an estimated third of people claiming benefits having a very low level of digital engagement. However, digital exclusion can come not just from a lack of digital skills but a more fundamental lack of access to technology.

Huawei has donated 100 refurbished laptops and devices to The Hope Foundation in Teesside to distribute to a number of organisations in the area including Ageing Better Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland Mind, NHS Paediatrics & Diabetes, SFTV Hartlepool and Ubuntu CIC.

To know more about digital exclusion, look at the Lloyds Consumer Digital Index and for a detailed look at the digital skills that Lloyds has identified in their hierarchy of needs – foundation, life skills and work skills, see the Essential Digital Skills report on the same page

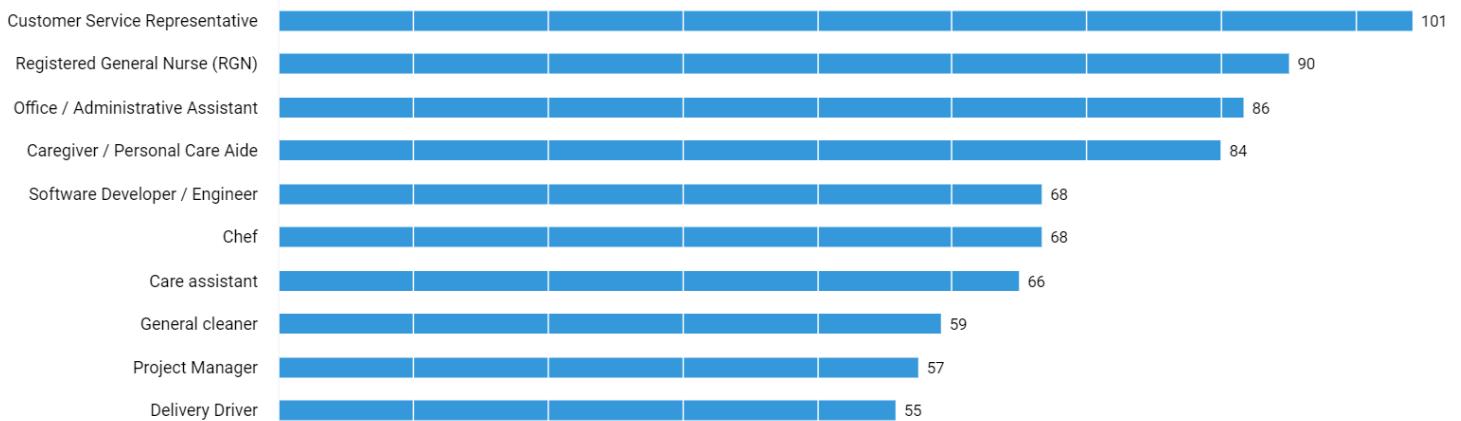
[UK Consumer Digital Index 2021 | Lloyds Bank](#)



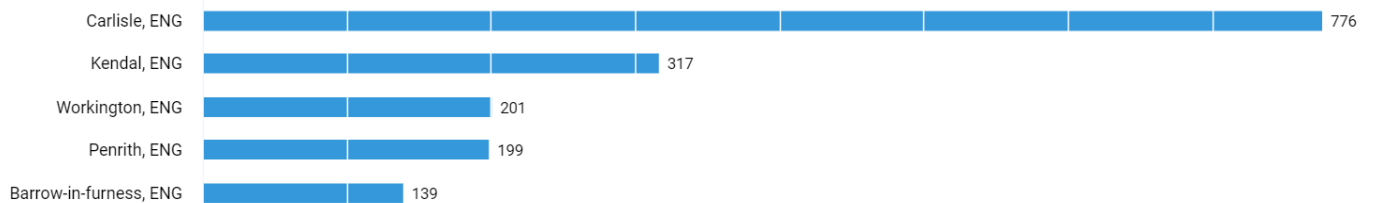
Vacancy information for Cumbria in January

There were more than 2,900 vacancies advertised online in Cumbria in January.

Top 10 occupations most frequently advertised online



Areas with the most online job openings



Source: Labour Insight (Burning Glass Technologies) – Data for January 2022



European Union

European
Social Fund

Produced by Education Development Trust.



For more information, please contact imi@educationdevelopmenttrust.com

