Gloucestershire COUNTY COUNCIL

Unemployment Bulletin

Issue 219 October 2026

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Note on claimant count rates:
From Jan-26 data onwards, ONS have updated local authority, regional and national population estimates, used to calculate rates, to the most recent 2024 mid-year estimates.

Produced by:
Data, Analysis & Insights Team
Planning, Performance and Insight
Gloucestershire County Council
November 2026

Claimant Count measures the number of people claiming unemployment-related benefits. It includes people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) and Universal Credit claimants who are required to search for work. Claimant Count rates are expressed as a percentage of the resident population aged 16 to 64. The measure is based on administrative benefit data and should not be interpreted as a measure of unemployment.

Claimant Count is simply a count of people claiming relevant benefits, so it is subject to changes in benefit rules and welfare to work schemes.

INTRODUCTION

The Unemployment Bulletin provides a monthly update on unemployment data for Gloucestershire, the South West region and the United Kingdom. It is produced by the Data, Analysis & Insights Team in the County Council's Planning, Performance and Insight function. The data are sourced from the Office for National Statistics via Nomis (www.nomis.co.uk). All data are rounded to the nearest 5 and may not precisely add to the sum of the number of people claiming JSA, and the number of people claiming Universal Credit required to seek work, due to independent rounding.

PART 1: SUMMARY

The claimant rate in Gloucestershire increased to 2.7% in October 2026. The South West rate increased to 2.8%, whilst the UK rate increased to 3.9%. Gloucestershire's rate was 0.1% lower than the South West average of 2.8%, but 1.2% lower than the UK average of 3.9%.

The claimant count in Gloucestershire in October 2026 increased by 305 people. The amount of people claiming in October was 2.9% higher than the number in September. This compares to a 2.8% increase in the South West and a 2.1% increase in the UK.

DISTRICTS AT A GLANCE

At a glance unemployment information grouped by district. Includes:

Claimant count: Total number of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance and Universal Credit who are not in work in October 2026

Claimant count change on previous month: How much larger/smaller October's claimant count is compared to September expressed as a %

Claimant rate: The % of working age population claiming Job Seekers Allowance and Universal Credit who are not in work in October 2026

Highest claiming ward: The ward with the highest claim count in that district and the rate

CHELTENHAM BOROUGH

Claimant count:	2,165
Claimant count change on previous month:	3.1%
Claimant rate:	2.8%
Highest claiming ward(s)	Hesters Way (5.5%)

GLOUCESTER CITY

Claimant count:	3,180
Claimant count change on previous month:	2.1%
Claimant rate:	3.6%
Highest claiming ward(s)	Barton and Tredworth (5.8%)

COTSWOLD DISTRICT

Claimant count:	1,075
Claimant count change on previous month:	2.9%
Claimant rate:	2.1%
Highest claiming ward(s)	Watermoor (4.5%)

STROUD DISTRICT

Claimant count:	1,590
Claimant count change on previous month:	5.0%
Claimant rate:	2.1%
Highest claiming ward(s)	Stroud Central (5.9%)

FOREST OF DEAN

Claimant count:	1,370
Claimant count change on previous month:	1.1%
Claimant rate:	2.6%
Highest claiming ward(s)	Cinderford West (4.9%)

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH

Claimant count:	1,480
Claimant count change on previous month:	3.9%
Claimant rate:	2.5%
Highest claiming ward(s)	Tewkesbury South (4.2%)

PART 2: UK, SW AND GLOUCESTERSHIRE INDICATORS

The unemployment situation in Gloucestershire compared to the South West and the UK.

Claimant Rate

Figure 1: Claimant Rate for Gloucestershire, the South West and UK over the past year

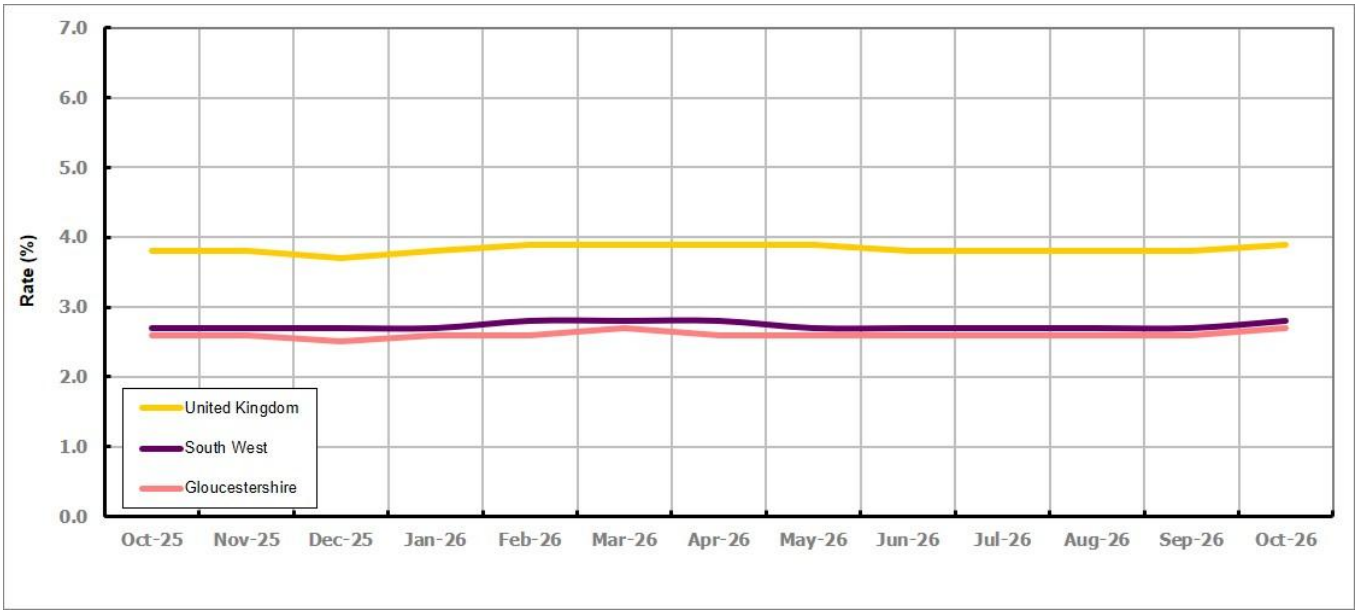


Figure 1 shows the claimant rate for Gloucestershire at 2.7% in October 2026. The Gloucestershire rate has been lower than the South West average since October 2025. On average, it has been approximately 1.2% lower than the UK average since the same month of the previous year.

Claimant Count

Table 1: Analysis of UK, South West and Gloucestershire Claimant Counts

Area	Claimant Count in October 2026	% change on September 2026	Consecutive months increasing
UK	**1,707,320**	2.1%	2
South West	**98,895**	2.8%	2
Gloucestershire	**10,865**	2.9%	1

Table 1 shows that in October 2026, the number of claimants in Gloucestershire was 2.9% higher than the number in September 2026.

PART 3: LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT ANALYSIS

Claimant Rate and Claimant Count

Figure 2: Claimant Rate (%) across Gloucestershire – October 2026

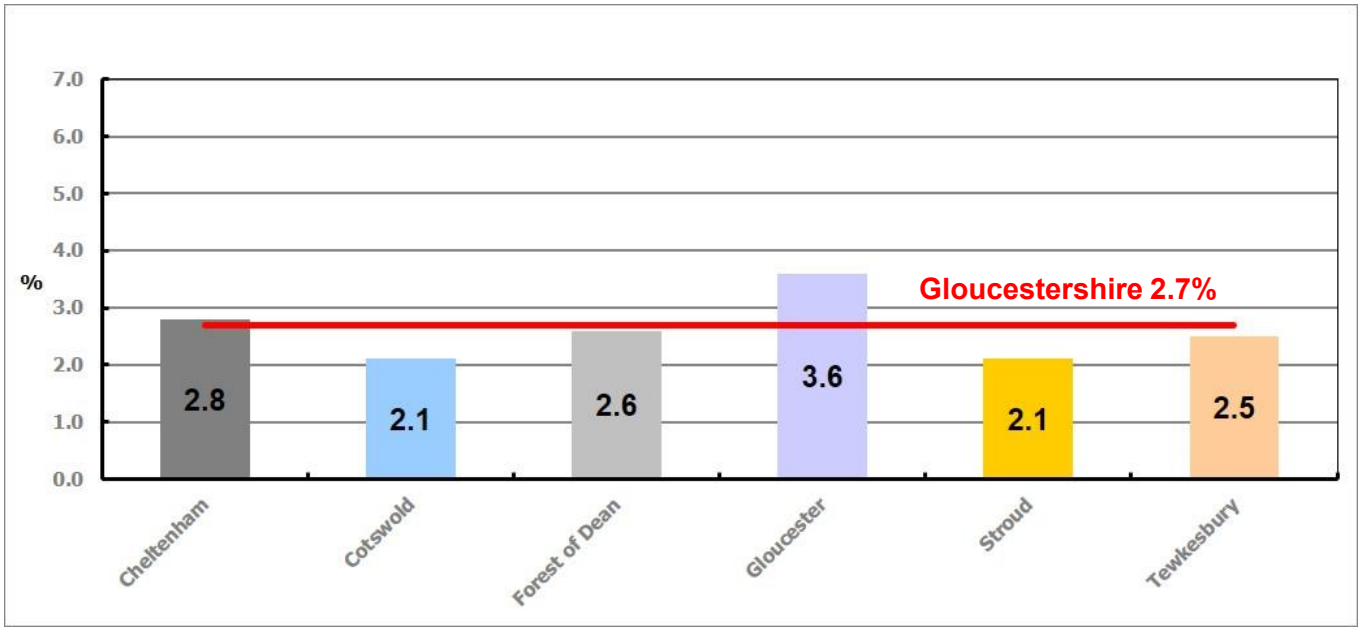


Figure 2 shows the claimant rate for October 2026 in Gloucestershire. Between September and October 2026 the rate increased in all districts except Forest of Dean which saw no change.

Table 2: Analysis of Gloucestershire and District Claimant Counts

Total	Oct 26 Number	Oct 26 Rate	Sep 26 Number	Sep 26 Rate	Monthly change	%monthly change	Monthly change of rate
Gloucestershire	10,865	2.7	10,560	2.6	305	2.9%	0.1
Cheltenham	2,165	2.8	2,100	2.7	65	3.1%	0.1
Cotswold	1,075	2.1	1,045	2.0	30	2.9%	0.1
Forest of Dean	1,370	2.6	1,355	2.6	15	1.1%	0.0
Gloucester	3,180	3.6	3,115	3.5	65	2.1%	0.1
Stroud	1,590	2.1	1,515	2.0	75	5.0%	0.1
Tewkesbury	1,480	2.5	1,425	2.4	55	3.9%	0.1

Table 2 shows the change in the claimant count in October compared to September 2026. All districts saw an increase in the number of claimants.

Table 3: Analysis of Male Gloucestershire and District Claimant Counts

Male	Oct 26 Number	Oct 26 Rate	Sep 26 Number	Sep 26 Rate	Monthly change	%monthly change	Monthly change of rate
Gloucestershire	5,910	3.0	5,765	2.9	145	2.5%	0.1
Cheltenham	1,230	3.2	1,185	3.1	45	3.8%	0.1
Cotswold	525	2.1	525	2.1	0	0.0%	0.0
Forest of Dean	745	2.9	735	2.9	10	1.4%	0.0
Gloucester	1,860	4.2	1,835	4.1	25	1.4%	0.1
Stroud	785	2.2	735	2.0	50	6.8%	0.2
Tewkesbury	765	2.6	745	2.6	20	2.7%	0.0

Table 3 shows the change in the male claimant count in October compared to September 2026. All districts saw an increase in the number of male claimants, except Cotswold which saw no change.

Table 4: Analysis of Female Gloucestershire and District Claimant Counts

Female	Oct 26 Number	Oct 26 Rate	Sep 26 Number	Sep 26 Rate	Monthly change	%monthly change	Monthly change of rate
Gloucestershire	4,955	2.4	4,795	2.3	160	3.3%	0.1
Cheltenham	935	2.4	915	2.4	20	2.2%	0.0
Cotswold	550	2.0	520	1.9	30	5.8%	0.1
Forest of Dean	625	2.4	620	2.3	5	0.8%	0.1
Gloucester	1,320	3.0	1,280	2.9	40	3.1%	0.1
Stroud	805	2.1	780	2.1	25	3.2%	0.0
Tewkesbury	715	2.3	680	2.2	35	5.1%	0.1

Table 4 shows the change in the female claimant count in October compared to September 2026. All districts saw an increase in the number of female claimants.

PART 4: LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT AND WARD ANALYSIS

This section covers the six districts and a comparison of their constituent wards.

4.1 Cheltenham Borough

Claimant Rate and Claimant Count

Figure 3: Cheltenham Borough claimant rate over the last year

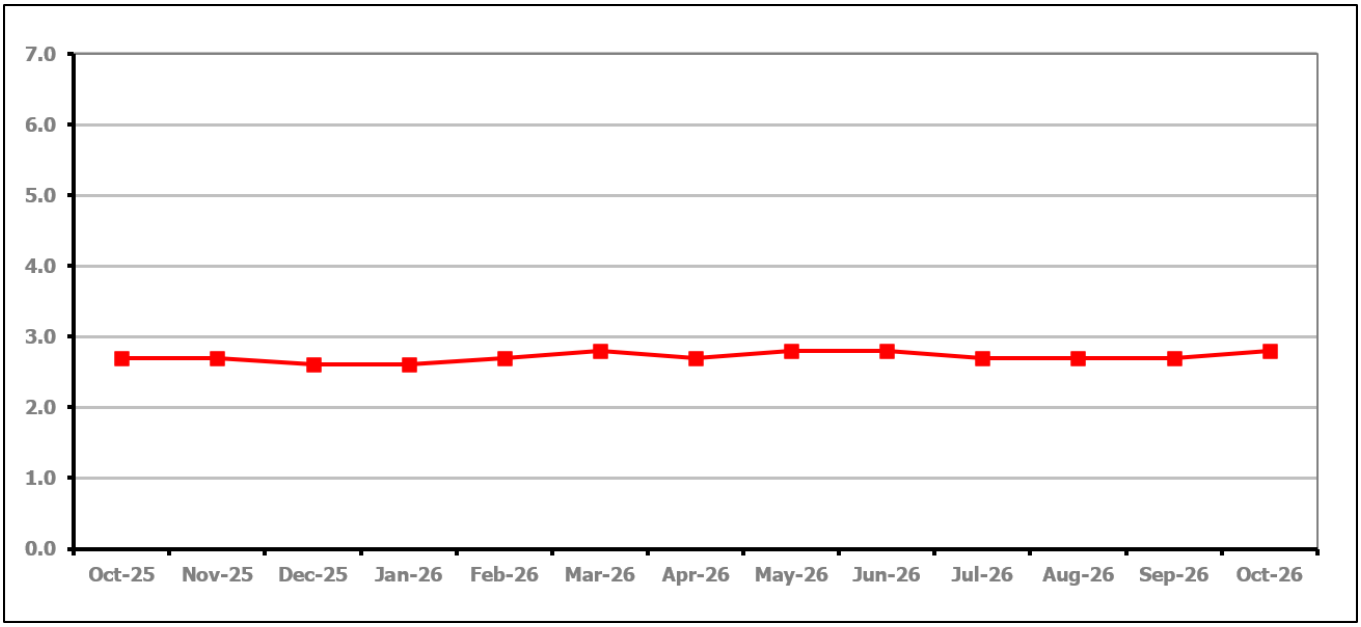


Figure 3 shows the claimant rate in Cheltenham increased to 2.8% in October 2026.

Figure 4: Claimant rates across Cheltenham Borough wards – October 2026

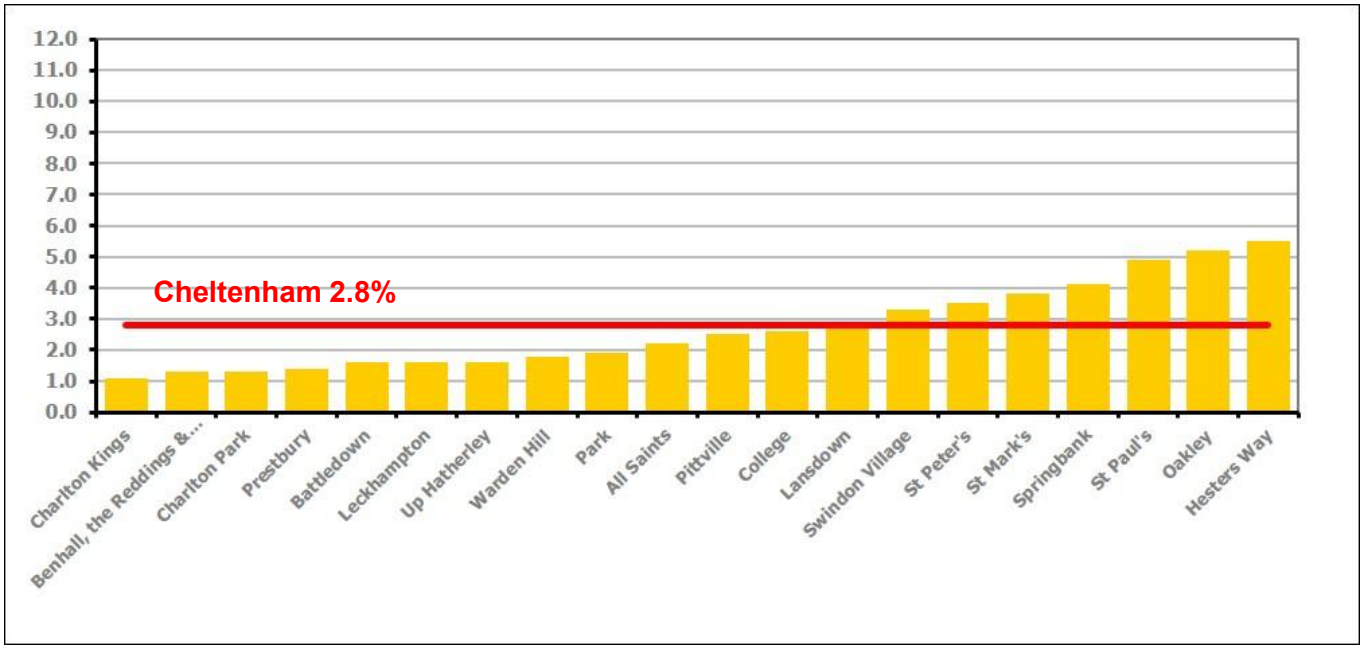


Figure 4 shows the claimant rates for Cheltenham Borough wards. The red line represents the average claimant rate across the Borough of 2.8%. Seven wards lie above the average.

PART 4: LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT AND WARD ANALYSIS

4.1 Cheltenham Borough continued…

Table 5: Analysis of Claimant Count at Cheltenham Borough ward level - October 2026

District	Ward	Rate	Rank*
Cheltenham	Charlton Kings	1.1	4
Cheltenham	Benhall, the Reddings & Fiddler's Green	1.3	11
Cheltenham	Charlton Park	1.3	11
Cheltenham	Prestbury	1.4	17
Cheltenham	Battledown	1.6	27
Cheltenham	Leckhampton	1.6	27
Cheltenham	Up Hatherley	1.6	27
Cheltenham	Warden Hill	1.8	42
Cheltenham	Park	1.9	48
Cheltenham	All Saints	2.2	68
Cheltenham	Pittville	2.5	83
Cheltenham	College	2.6	87
Cheltenham	Lansdown	2.8	98
Cheltenham	Swindon Village	3.3	114
Cheltenham	St Peter's	3.5	121
Cheltenham	St Mark's	3.8	122
Cheltenham	Springbank	4.1	123
Cheltenham	St Paul's	4.9	129
Cheltenham	Oakley	5.2	134
Cheltenham	Hesters Way	5.5	135

lowest 10% of county
first quartile of county
second quartile of county
third quartile of county
fourth quartile of county
highest 10% of county

* 1 = “best” and 138 = “worst”

Table 5 shows overall claimant rates for Cheltenham Borough wards and their position relative to all wards in Gloucestershire.

PART 4: LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT AND WARD ANALYSIS

4.2 Cotswold District

Claimant Rate and Claimant Count

Figure 5: Cotswold District claimant rate over the last year

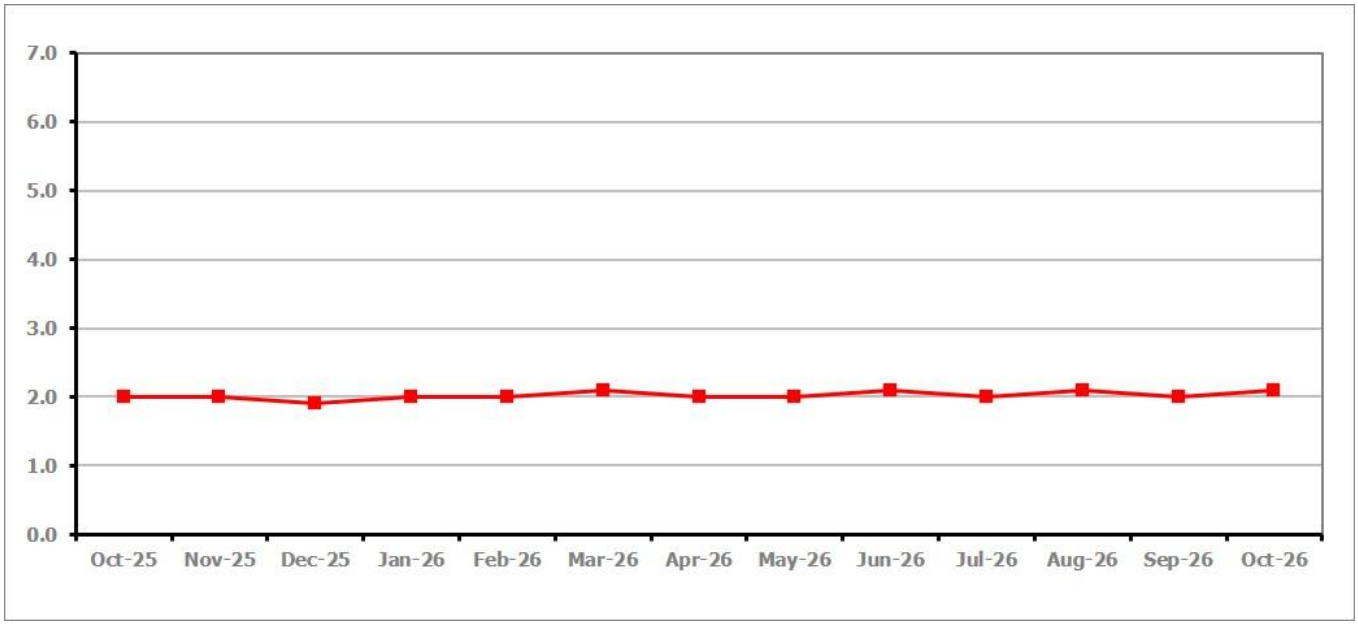


Figure 5 shows the claimant rate in Cotswold District increased to 2.1% in October 2026.

Figure 6: Claimant rates across Cotswold District wards – October 2026

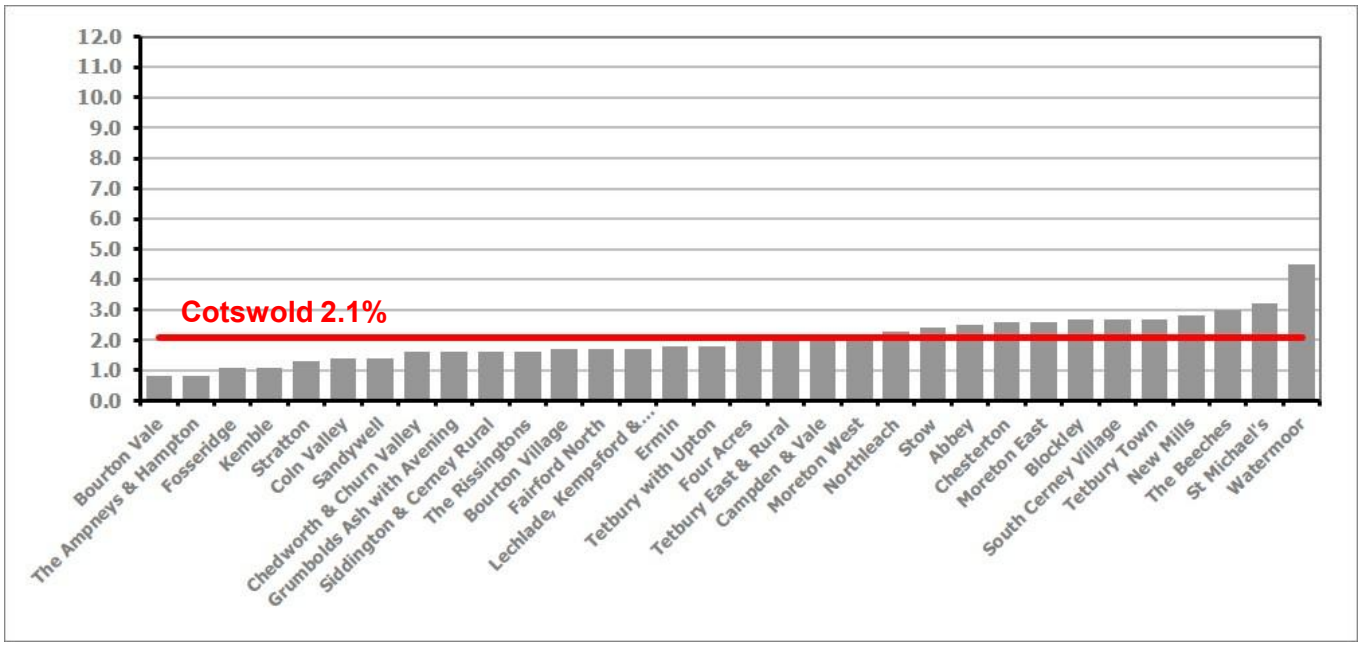


Figure 6 shows the claimant rates for Cotswold District wards. The red line represents the average claimant rate across the District of 2.1%. Twelve wards lie above the average.

PART 4: LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT AND WARD ANALYSIS

4.2 Cotswold District continued…

Table 6: Analysis of Claimant Count at Cotswold District ward level - October 2026

District	Ward	Rate	Rank*
Cotswold	Bourton Vale	0.8	1
Cotswold	The Ampneys & Hampton	0.8	1
Cotswold	Fosseridge	1.1	4
Cotswold	Kemble	1.1	4
Cotswold	Stratton	1.3	11
Cotswold	Coln Valley	1.4	17
Cotswold	Sandywell	1.4	17
Cotswold	Chedworth & Churn Valley	1.6	27
Cotswold	Grumbolds Ash with Avening	1.6	27
Cotswold	Siddington & Cerney Rural	1.6	27
Cotswold	The Rissingtons	1.6	27
Cotswold	Bourton Village	1.7	37
Cotswold	Fairford North	1.7	37
Cotswold	Lechlade, Kempsford & Fairford South	1.7	37
Cotswold	Ermin	1.8	42
Cotswold	Tetbury with Upton	1.8	42
Cotswold	Four Acres	2.0	55
Cotswold	Tetbury East & Rural	2.0	55
Cotswold	Campden & Vale	2.1	61
Cotswold	Moreton West	2.1	61
Cotswold	Northleach	2.3	72
Cotswold	Stow	2.4	77
Cotswold	Abbey	2.5	83
Cotswold	Chesterton	2.6	87
Cotswold	Moreton East	2.6	87
Cotswold	Blockley	2.7	95
Cotswold	South Cerney Village	2.7	95
Cotswold	Tetbury Town	2.7	95
Cotswold	New Mills	2.8	98
Cotswold	The Beeches	3.0	106
Cotswold	St Michael's	3.2	111
Cotswold	Watermoor	4.5	128

lowest 10% of county
first quartile of county
second quartile of county
third quartile of county
fourth quartile of county
highest 10% of county

* 1 = “best” and 138 = “worst”

Table 6 shows overall claimant rates for Cotswold District wards and their position relative to all wards in Gloucestershire.

PART 4: LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT AND WARD ANALYSIS

4.3 Forest of Dean District

Claimant Rate and Claimant Count

Figure 7: Forest of Dean District claimant rate over the last year

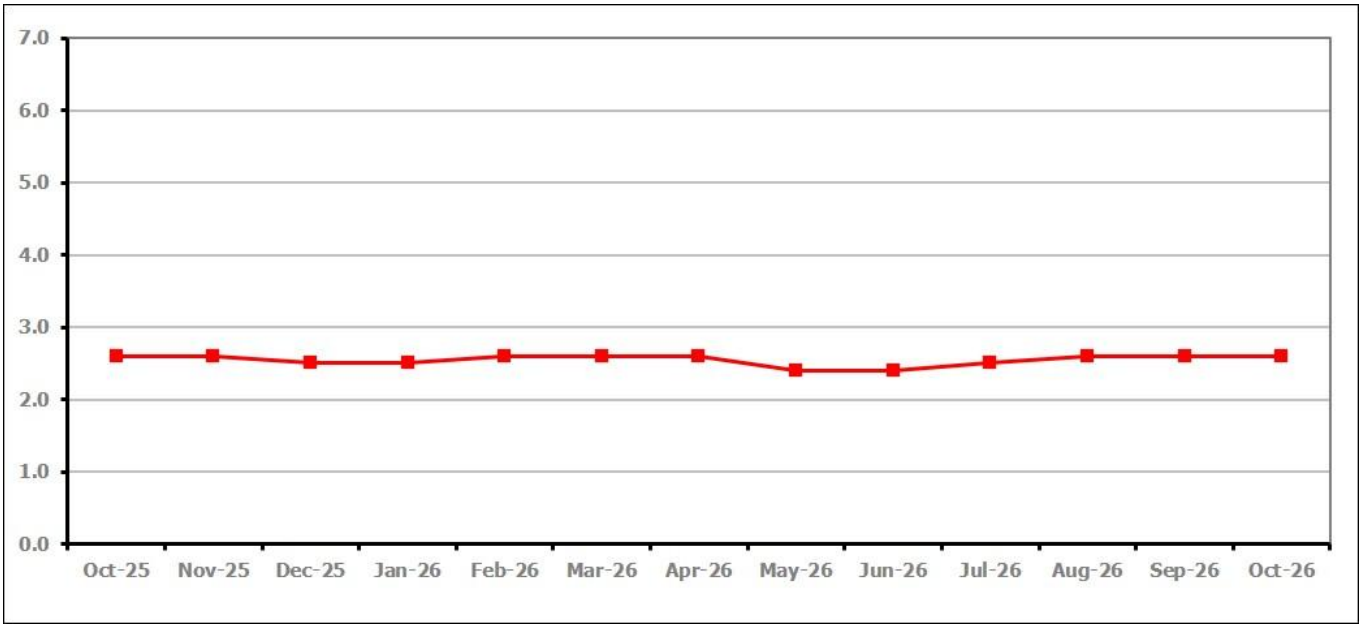


Figure 7 shows the claimant rate in the Forest of Dean remained at 2.6% in October 2026.

Figure 8: Claimant rates across Forest of Dean District wards – October 2026

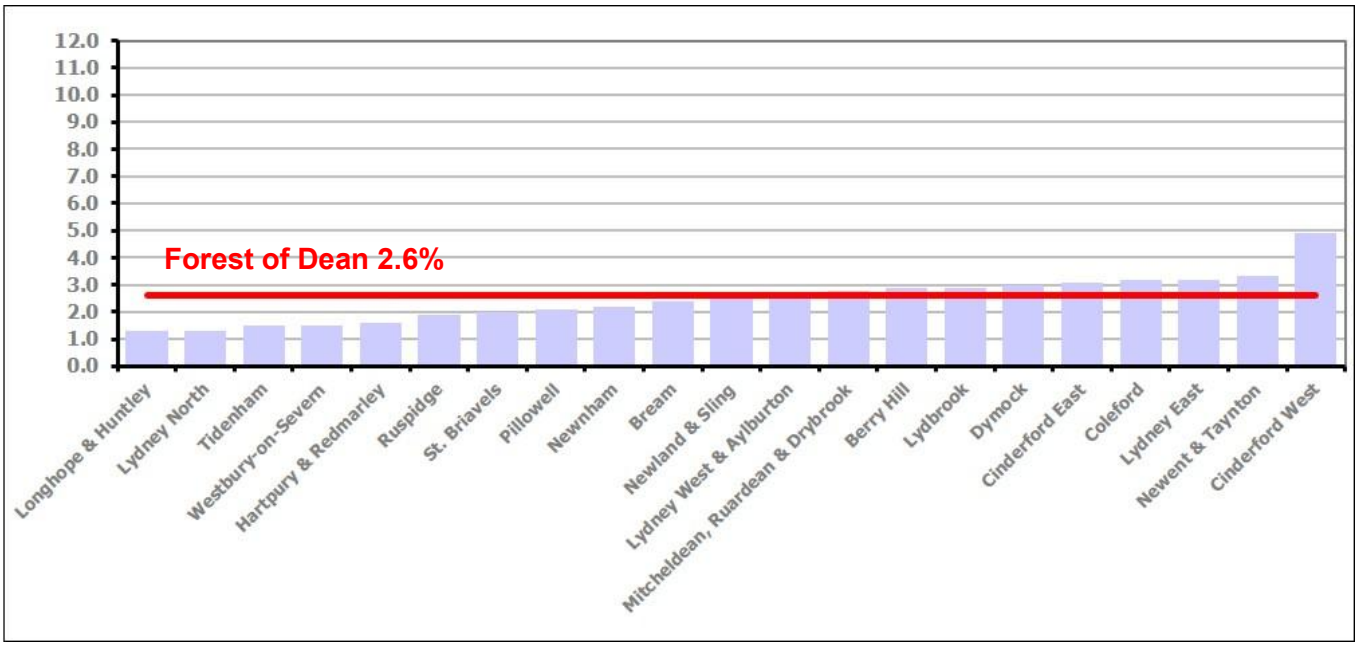


Figure 8 shows the claimant rates for the Forest of Dean District wards. The red line represents the average claimant rate across the District of 2.6%. Nine wards lie above the average.

PART 4: LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT AND WARD ANALYSIS

4.3 Forest of Dean District continued…

Table 7: Analysis of Claimant Count at Forest of Dean District ward level - October 2026

District	Ward	Rate	Rank*
Forest	Longhope & Huntley	1.3	11
Forest	Lydney North	1.3	11
Forest	Tidenham	1.5	22
Forest	Westbury-on-Severn	1.5	22
Forest	Hartpury & Redmarley	1.6	27
Forest	Ruspidge	1.9	48
Forest	St. Briavels	2.0	55
Forest	Pillowell	2.1	61
Forest	Newnham	2.2	68
Forest	Bream	2.4	77
Forest	Newland & Sling	2.5	83
Forest	Lydney West & Aylburton	2.6	87
Forest	Mitcheldean, Ruardean & Drybrook	2.8	98
Forest	Berry Hill	2.9	101
Forest	Lydbrook	2.9	101
Forest	Dymock	3.0	106
Forest	Cinderford East	3.1	109
Forest	Coleford	3.2	111
Forest	Lydney East	3.2	111
Forest	Newent & Taynton	3.3	114
Forest	Cinderford West	4.9	129

lowest 10% of county
first quartile of county
second quartile of county
third quartile of county
fourth quartile of county
highest 10% of county

* 1 = “best” and 138 = “worst”

Table 7 shows overall claimant rates for the Forest of Dean District wards and their position relative to all wards in Gloucestershire.

PART 4: LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT AND WARD ANALYSIS

4.4 Gloucester City

Claimant Rate and Claimant Count

Figure 9: Gloucester City claimant rate over the last year

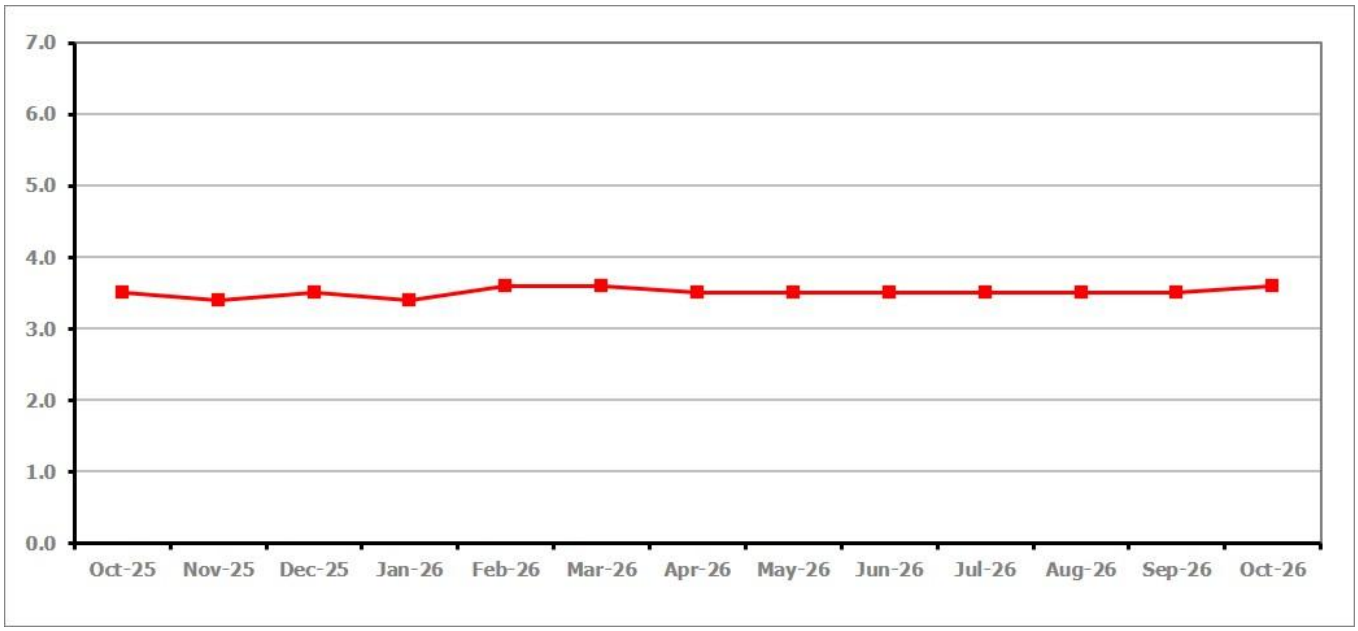


Figure 9 shows the claimant rate for Gloucester City increased to 3.6% in October 2026.

Figure 10: Claimant rates across Gloucester City wards - October 2026

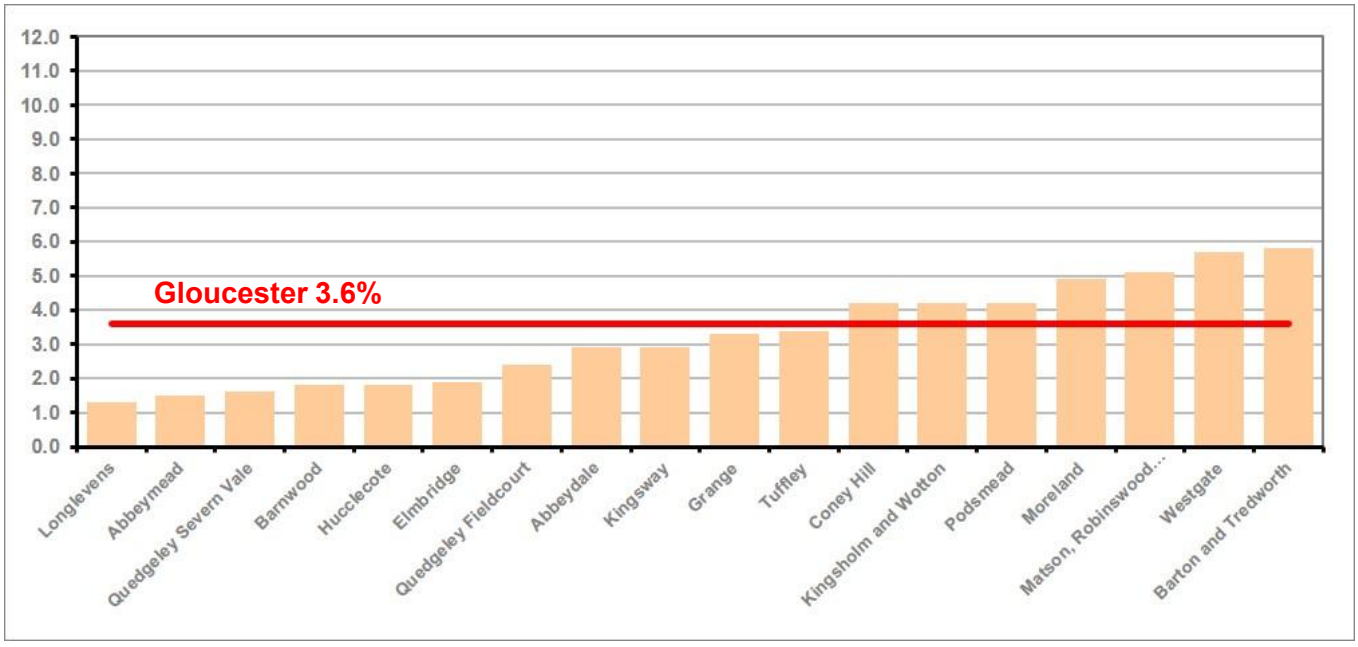


Figure 10 shows the claimant rates for Gloucester City district wards. The red line represents the average claimant rate across the City of 3.6%. Seven wards lie above the average.

PART 4: LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT AND WARD ANALYSIS

4.4 Gloucester City continued…

Table 8: Analysis of Claimant Count at Gloucester City ward level - October 2026

District	Ward	Rate	Rank*
Gloucester	Longlevens	1.3	11
Gloucester	Abbeymead	1.5	22
Gloucester	Quedgeley Severn Vale	1.6	27
Gloucester	Barnwood	1.8	42
Gloucester	Hucclecote	1.8	42
Gloucester	Elmbridge	1.9	48
Gloucester	Quedgeley Fieldcourt	2.4	77
Gloucester	Abbeydale	2.9	101
Gloucester	Kingsway	2.9	101
Gloucester	Grange	3.3	114
Gloucester	Tuffley	3.4	117
Gloucester	Coney Hill	4.2	124
Gloucester	Kingsholm and Wotton	4.2	124
Gloucester	Podsmead	4.2	124
Gloucester	Moreland	4.9	129
Gloucester	Matson, Robinswood and White City	5.1	133
Gloucester	Westgate	5.7	136
Gloucester	Barton and Tredworth	5.8	137

lowest 10% of county
first quartile of county
second quartile of county
third quartile of county
fourth quartile of county
highest 10% of county

* 1 = “best” and 138 = “worst”

Table 8 shows overall claimant rates for Gloucester City wards and their position relative to all wards in Gloucestershire.

PART 4: LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT AND WARD ANALYSIS

4.5 Stroud District

Claimant Rate and Claimant Count

Figure 11: Stroud District claimant rate over the last year

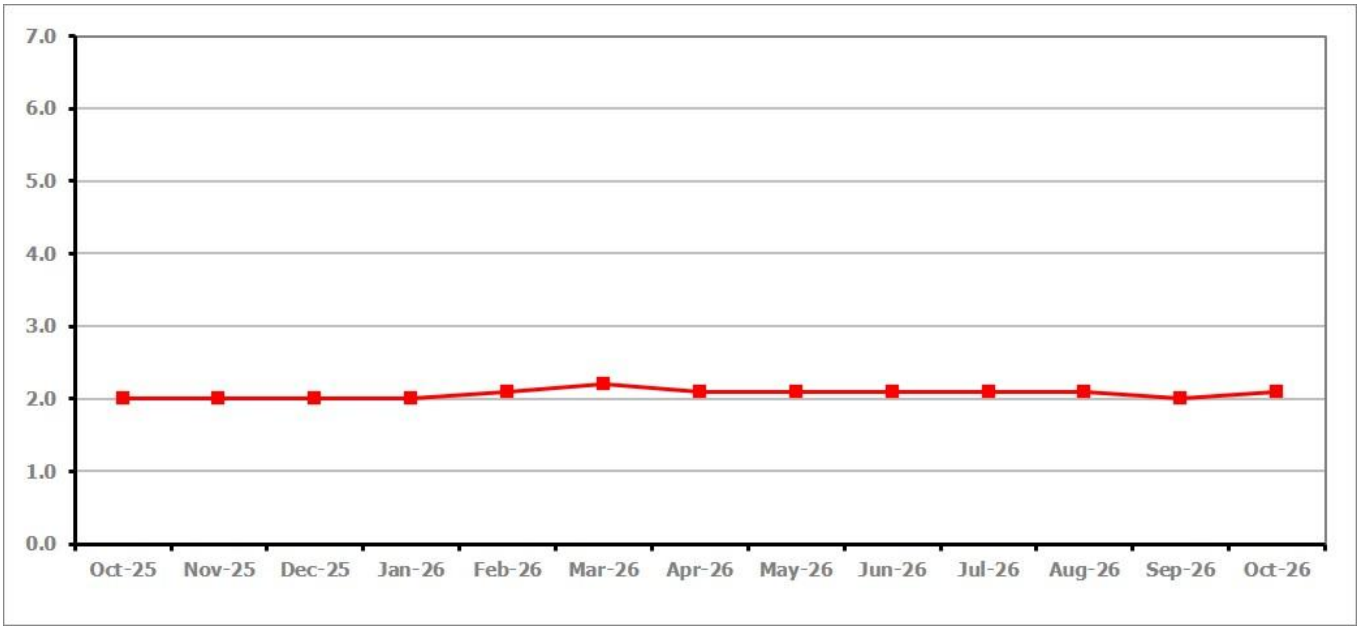


Figure 11 shows the claimant rate for Stroud increased to 2.1% in October 2026.

Figure 12: Claimant rates across Stroud District wards - October 2026

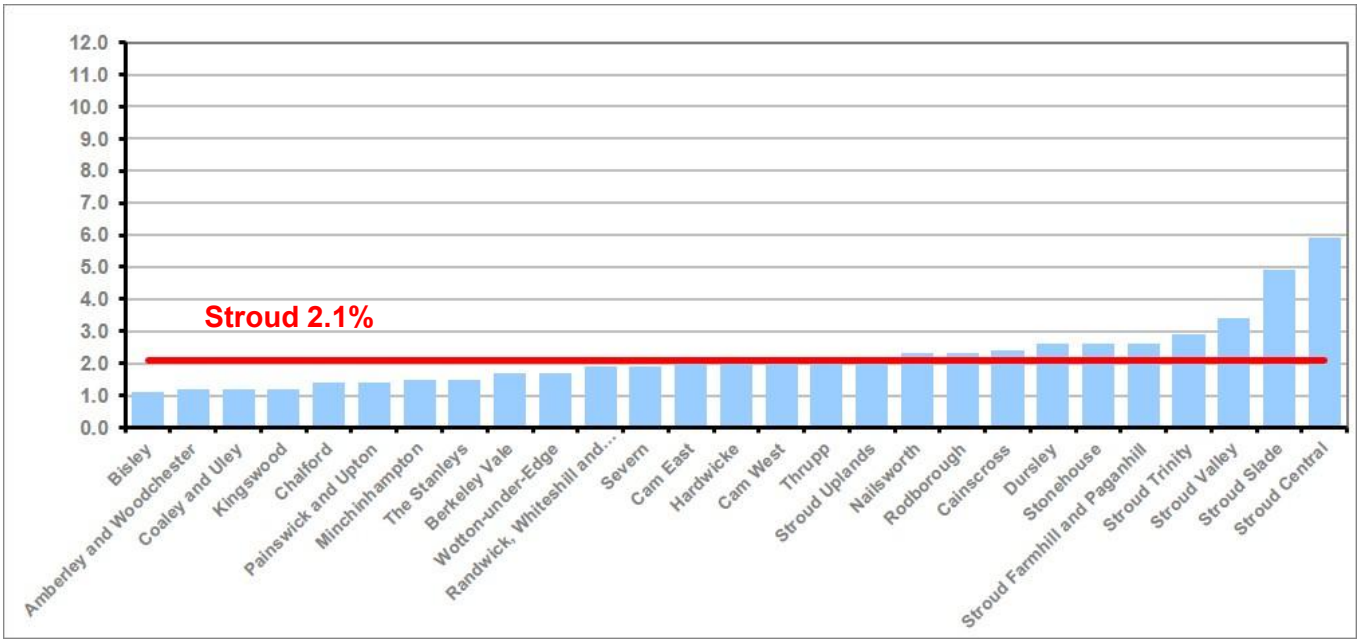


Figure 12 shows the claimant rates in Stroud District wards. The red line represents the average claimant rate across the District of 2.1%. Eleven wards are above the average.

PART 4: LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT AND WARD ANALYSIS

4.5 Stroud District continued…

Table 9: Analysis of Claimant Count at Stroud District ward level - October 2026

District	Ward	Rate	Rank*
Stroud	Bisley	1.1	4
Stroud	Amberley and Woodchester	1.2	8
Stroud	Coaley and Uley	1.2	8
Stroud	Kingswood	1.2	8
Stroud	Chalford	1.4	17
Stroud	Painswick and Upton	1.4	17
Stroud	Minchinhampton	1.5	22
Stroud	The Stanleys	1.5	22
Stroud	Berkeley Vale	1.7	37
Stroud	Wotton-under-Edge	1.7	37
Stroud	Randwick, Whiteshill and Ruscombe	1.9	48
Stroud	Severn	1.9	48
Stroud	Cam East	2.0	55
Stroud	Hardwicke	2.0	55
Stroud	Cam West	2.1	61
Stroud	Thrupp	2.1	61
Stroud	Stroud Uplands	2.2	68
Stroud	Nailsworth	2.3	72
Stroud	Rodborough	2.3	72
Stroud	Cainscross	2.4	77
Stroud	Dursley	2.6	87
Stroud	Stonehouse	2.6	87
Stroud	Stroud Farmhill and Paganhill	2.6	87
Stroud	Stroud Trinity	2.9	101
Stroud	Stroud Valley	3.4	117
Stroud	Stroud Slade	4.9	129
Stroud	Stroud Central	5.9	138

lowest 10% of county
first quartile of county
second quartile of county
third quartile of county
fourth quartile of county
highest 10% of county

* 1 = “best” and 138 = “worst”

Table 9 shows overall claimant rates for Stroud District wards and their position relative to all wards in Gloucestershire.

PART 4: LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT AND WARD ANALYSIS

4.6 Tewkesbury Borough

Claimant Rate and Claimant Count

Figure 13: Tewkesbury Borough claimant rate over the last year

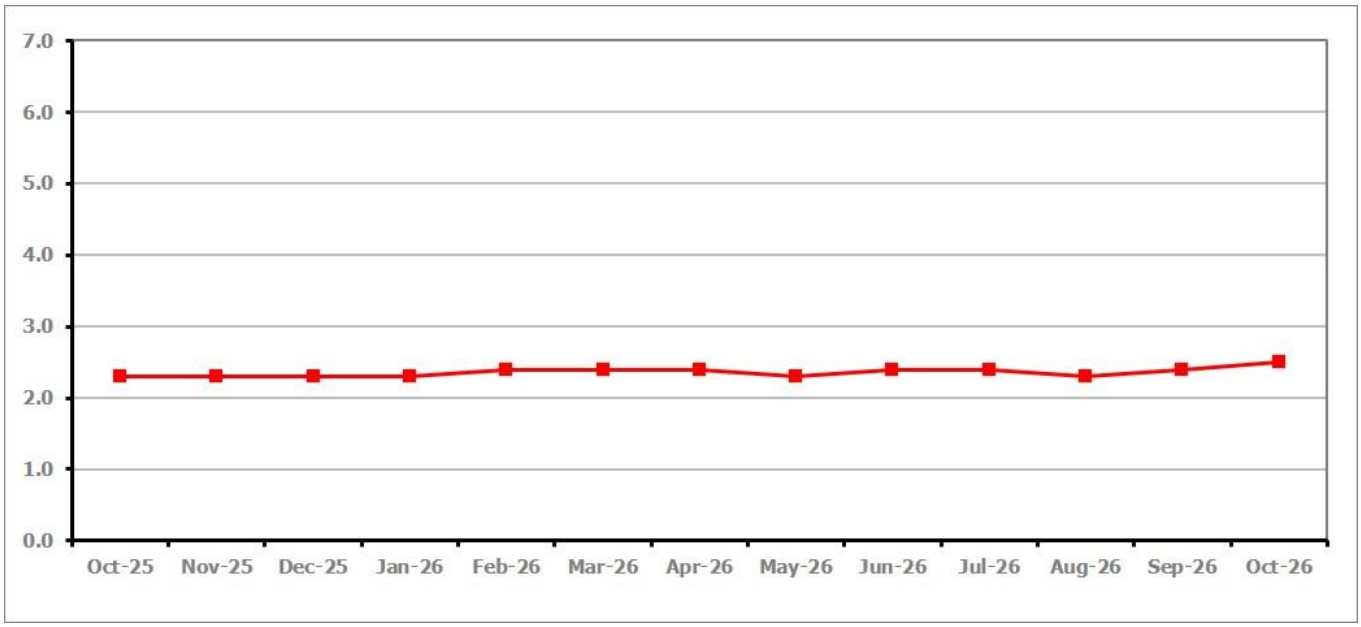


Figure 13 shows the claimant rate for Tewkesbury Borough increased to 2.5% in October 2026.

Figure 14: Claimant rates across Tewkesbury Borough wards - October 2026

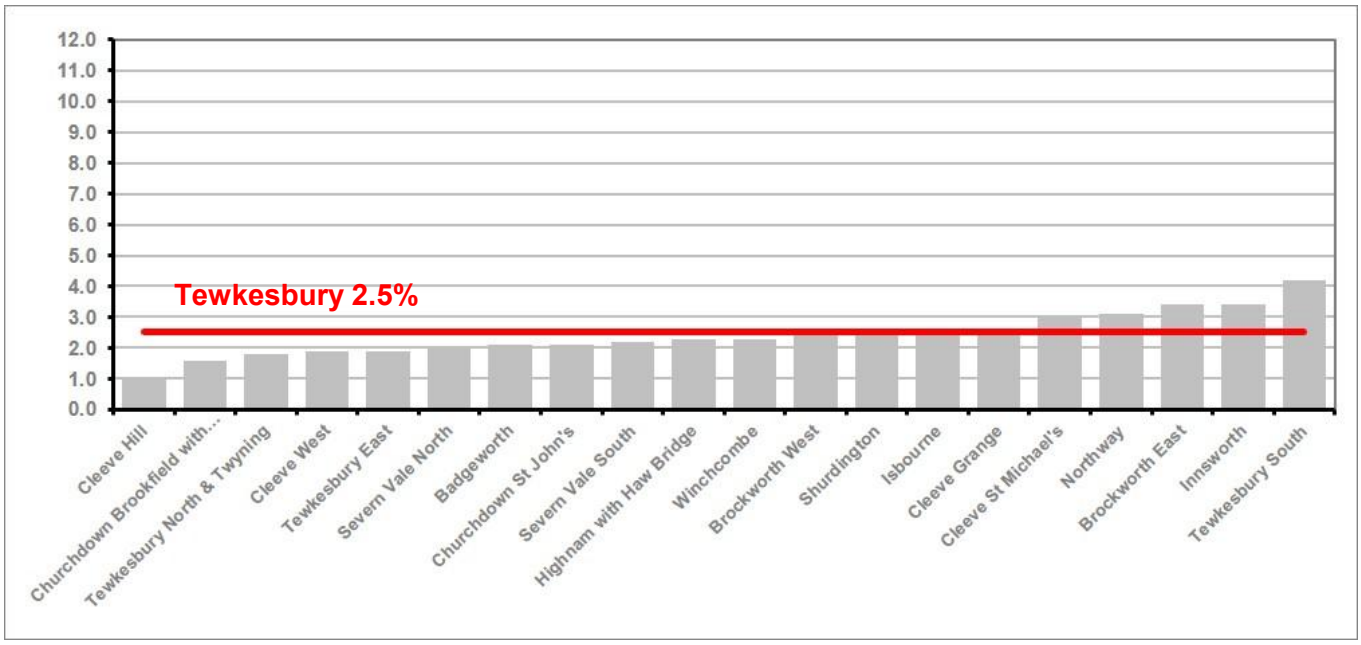


Figure 14 shows the claimant rates in Tewkesbury Borough wards. The red line represents the average claimant rate across the District of 2.5%. Six wards are above the average.

PART 4: LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT AND WARD ANALYSIS

4.6 Tewkesbury Borough continued…

Table 10: Analysis of Claimant Count at Tewkesbury Borough level - October 2026

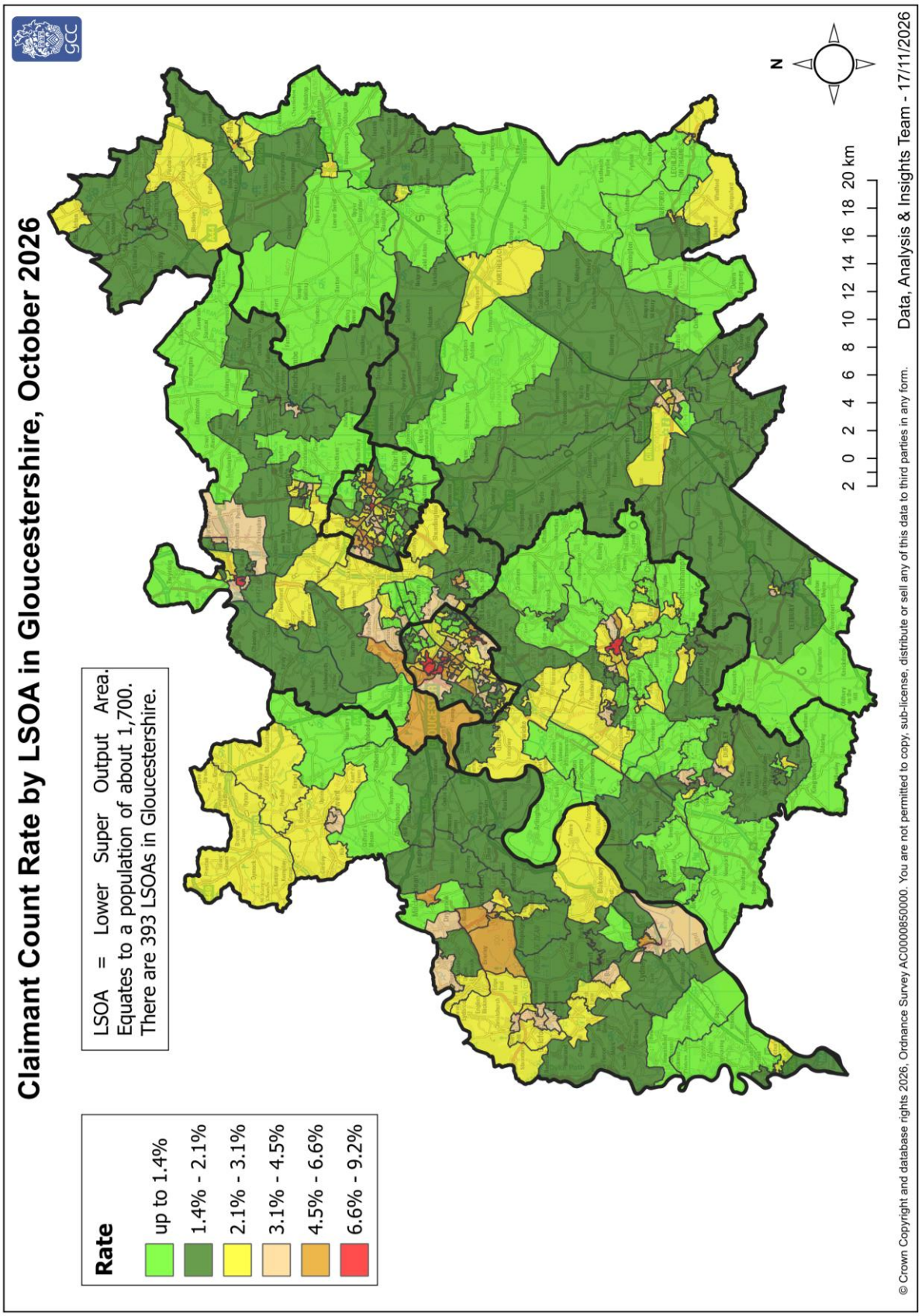
District	Ward	Rate	Rank*
Tewkesbury	Cleeve Hill	1.0	3
Tewkesbury	Churchdown Brookfield with Hucclecote	1.6	27
Tewkesbury	Tewkesbury North & Twyning	1.8	42
Tewkesbury	Cleeve West	1.9	48
Tewkesbury	Tewkesbury East	1.9	48
Tewkesbury	Severn Vale North	2.0	55
Tewkesbury	Badgeworth	2.1	61
Tewkesbury	Churchdown St John's	2.1	61
Tewkesbury	Severn Vale South	2.2	68
Tewkesbury	Highnam with Haw Bridge	2.3	72
Tewkesbury	Winchcombe	2.3	72
Tewkesbury	Brockworth West	2.4	77
Tewkesbury	Shurdington	2.4	77
Tewkesbury	Isbourne	2.5	83
Tewkesbury	Cleeve Grange	2.6	87
Tewkesbury	Cleeve St Michael's	3.0	106
Tewkesbury	Northway	3.1	109
Tewkesbury	Brockworth East	3.4	117
Tewkesbury	Innsworth	3.4	117
Tewkesbury	Tewkesbury South	4.2	124

lowest 10% of county
first quartile of county
second quartile of county
third quartile of county
fourth quartile of county
highest 10% of county

* 1 = “best” and 138 = “worst”

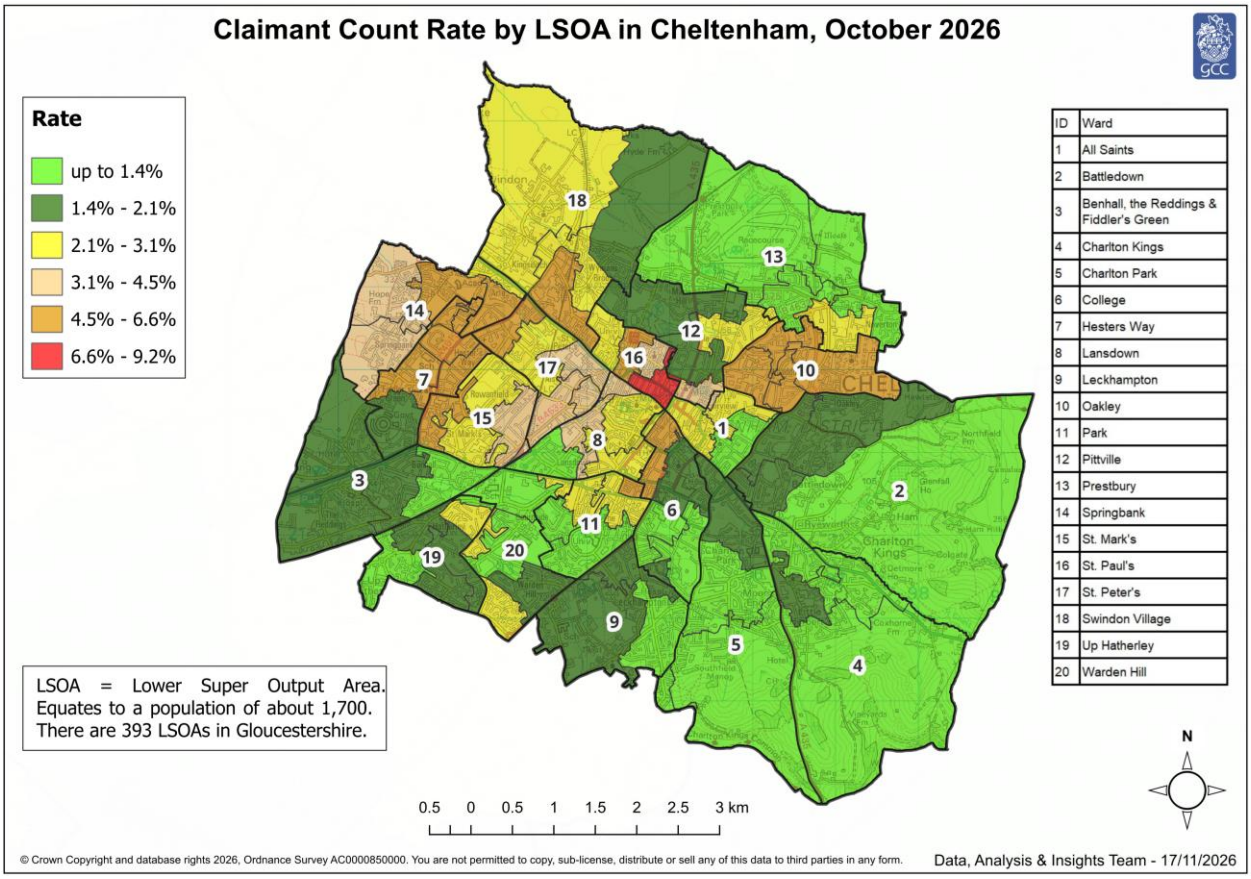
Table 10 shows overall claimant rates for Tewkesbury Borough wards and their position relative to all wards in Gloucestershire.

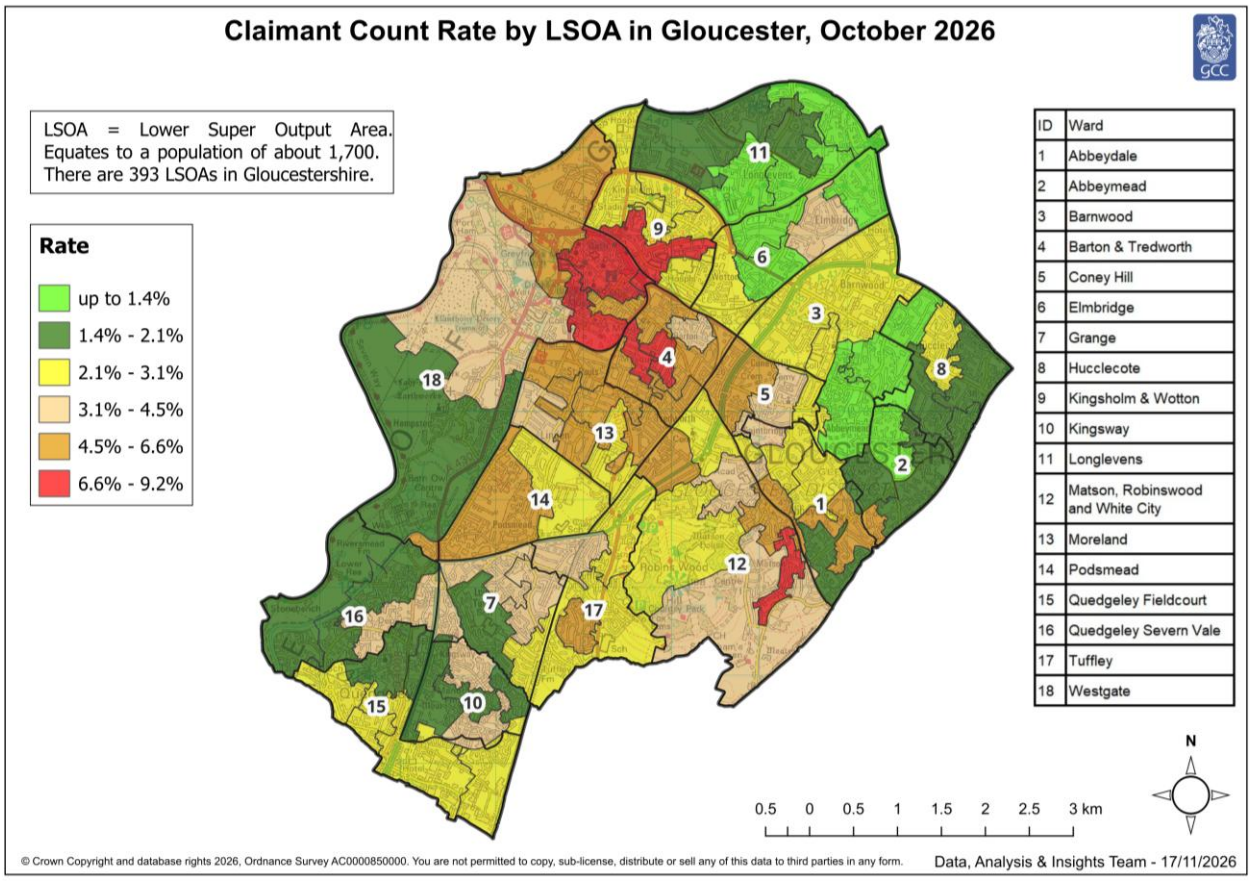
PART 5: MAP SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF CLAIMANT RATE ACROSS GLOUCESTERSHIRE



From January 2026, these maps show the 2021 LSOA boundaries. Rate category ranges have been reset in January 2026, and will remain fixed for subsequent months to allow month on month claimant count rate comparisons.

PART 5: MAP SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF CLAIMANT RATE ACROSS GLOUCESTERSHIRE





From January 2026, these maps show the 2021 LSOA boundaries. Rate category ranges have been reset in January 2026, and will remain fixed for subsequent months to allow month on month claimant count rate comparisons.

PART 6: YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT (18-24 year olds)

Youth Claimant Rate and Claimant Count

Figure 15: Claimant Count for Gloucestershire over the last year

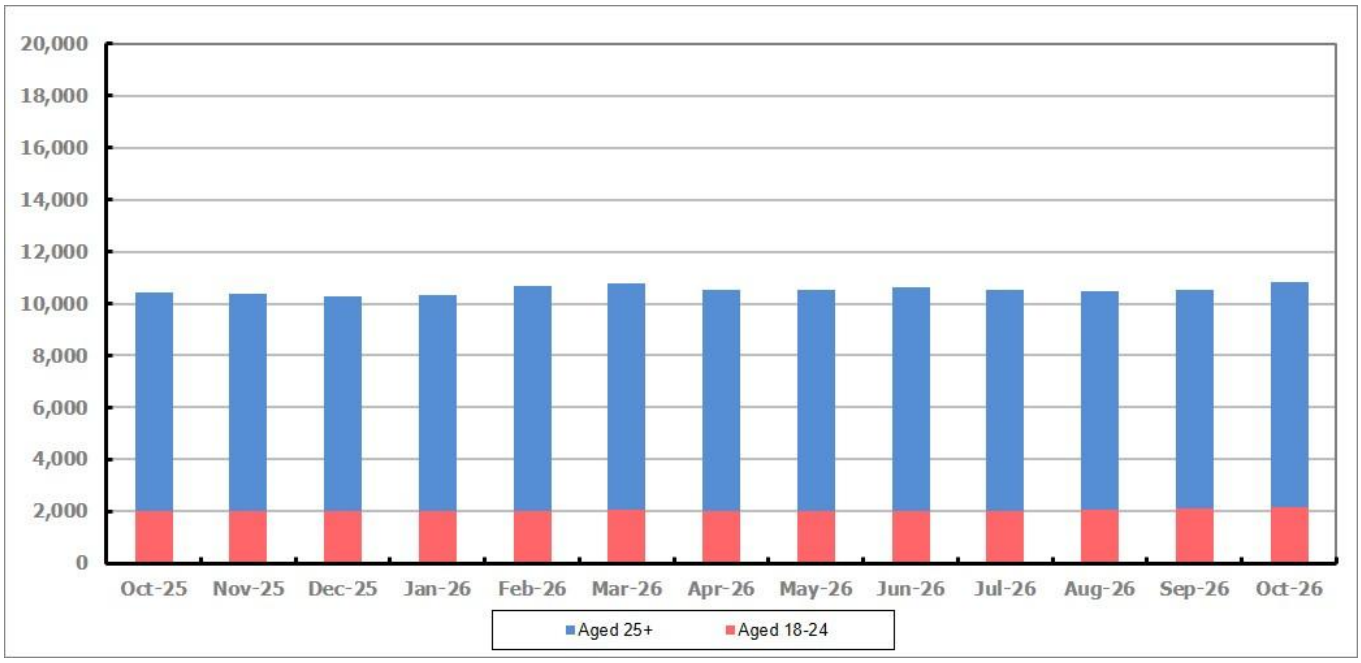


Figure 15 shows that in October 2026, 2,160 people aged 18-24 were claiming Job Seekers Allowance and Universal Credit who were not in work in Gloucestershire, this represents 19.9% of total working age claimants.

PART 7: YOUNG PEOPLE NOT IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING (NEET) IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Data provided by Gloucestershire Youth Support Team on the situation of young people (16-18) in Gloucestershire who are not in education, employment or formal training.

Gloucestershire Youth Support Team is required to report performance on the Academic Year 12 and 13 (16/17 age) against nationally defined criteria for counting the NEET group to the Department for Education (DfE) on a monthly basis. The NEET group includes young people actively seeking education, employment or training as well as those young people who are either not yet ready or who are unable to access these opportunities because of their personal circumstances. The figures quoted below include young people in both of these categories.

(End of) October 2026

Academic Year 12-13 Summary

	NEET	Cohort	%
Cheltenham	73	2580	2.83%
Cotswold	37	1788	2.07%
Forest	62	1852	3.35%
Gloucester	129	3687	3.50%
Stroud	69	2836	2.43%
Tewkesbury	70	2320	3.02%
Total	440	15063	2.92%
Monthly Change **	175	150	1.14%
Previous Month	265	14913	1.78%

16-18 Age Summary

	NEET	Cohort	%
Cheltenham	101	3637	2.78%
Cotswold	58	2583	2.25%
Forest	85	2580	3.29%
Gloucester	212	5237	4.05%
Stroud	104	4100	2.54%
Tewkesbury	101	3259	3.10%
Total	661	21396	3.09%
16-18 Adjust NEET*			3.29%
Monthly Change **	152	-483	0.76%
Previous Month	509	21879	2.33%

The academic year 12-13 group contains a proportion of young people who turn 18 in the academic year but were 17 on the 31st August the previous academic year so are entitled to learning through RPA (raising participation age).

Please note all figures quoted above are subject to change before the submission date to the DfE which usually happens in the second or third week of the month for the previous month.

If you would like to receive any further information on Gloucestershire's NEET strategy, then please contact lynne.speak@gloucestershire.gov.uk.

(*) Adjustment includes a proportion of young people aged 16-18 whose outcomes are not-known to Gloucestershire Youth Support Team.

(**) Change in monthly rate.