Gloucestershire COUNTY COUNCIL

Unemployment Bulletin

Issue 218 September 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
October 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 September 2026. The South West rate remained at 2.7%, whilst the UK rate increased to 3.9%. Gloucestershire's rate was the same as the South West average of 2.7%, but 1.2% lower than the UK average of 3.9%.

The claimant count in Gloucestershire in September 2026 increased by 240 people. The amount of people claiming in September was 2.3% higher than the number in August. This compares to a 2.1% increase in both the South West and 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 September 2026

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

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

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

CHELTENHAM BOROUGH

Claimant count:	2,125
Claimant count change on previous month:	3.2%
Claimant rate:	2.8%
Highest claiming ward(s)	Hesters Way (5.6%)

GLOUCESTER CITY

Claimant count:	3,170
Claimant count change on previous month:	2.9%
Claimant rate:	3.6%
Highest claiming ward(s)	Barton and Tredworth (5.8%)

COTSWOLD DISTRICT

Claimant count:	1,070
Claimant count change on previous month:	-0.5%
Claimant rate:	2.1%
Highest claiming ward(s)	Watermoor (4.4%)

STROUD DISTRICT

Claimant count:	1,555
Claimant count change on previous month:	-0.3%
Claimant rate:	2.1%
Highest claiming ward(s)	Stroud Central (5.7%)

FOREST OF DEAN

Claimant count:	1,380
Claimant count change on previous month:	3.0%
Claimant rate:	2.6%
Highest claiming ward(s)	Cinderford West (4.7%)

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH

Claimant count:	1,450
Claimant count change on previous month:	4.3%
Claimant rate:	2.4%
Highest claiming ward(s)	Tewkesbury South (4.4%)

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

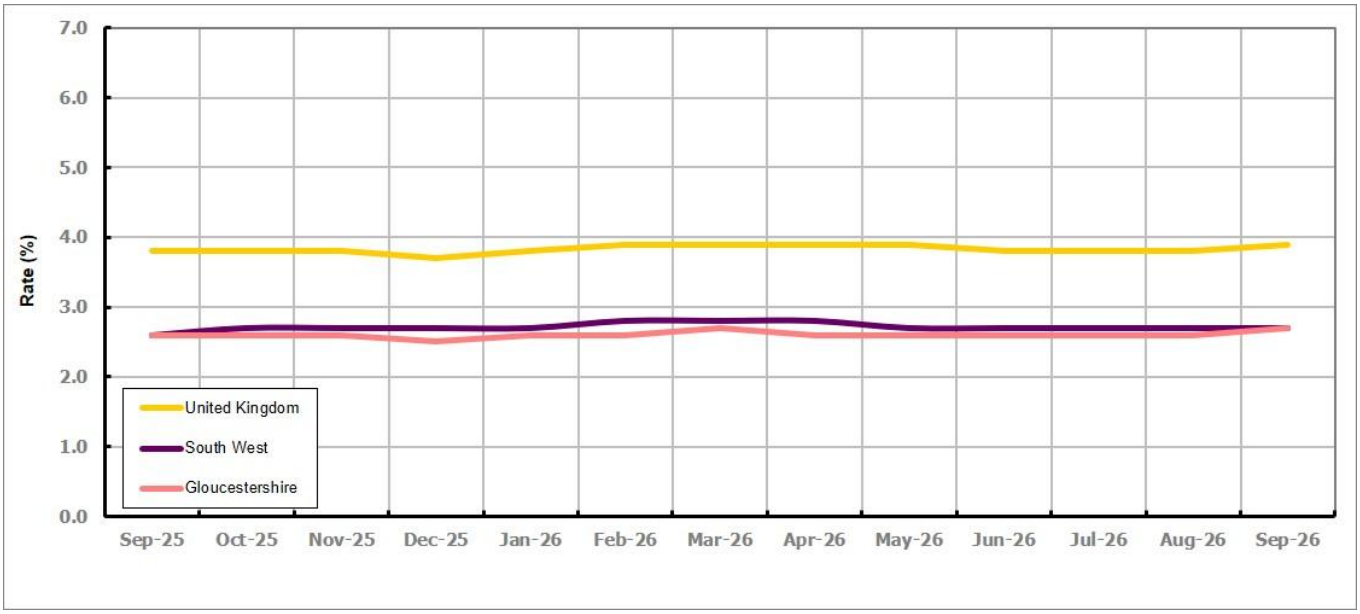


Figure 1 shows the claimant rate for Gloucestershire at 2.7% in September 2026. The Gloucestershire rate had been lower than the South West average since October 2025, but increased to the same level in September 2026. On average, it has been approximately 1.2% lower than the UK average since the same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

Claimant Count

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

Area	Claimant Count in September 2026	% change on August 2026	Consecutive months increasing
UK	**1,702,905**	2.1%	1
South West	**97,965**	2.1%	1
Gloucestershire	**10,750**	2.3%	0

Table 1 shows that in September 2026, the number of claimants in Gloucestershire was 2.3% higher than the number in August 2026.

PART 3: LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT ANALYSIS

Claimant Rate and Claimant Count

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

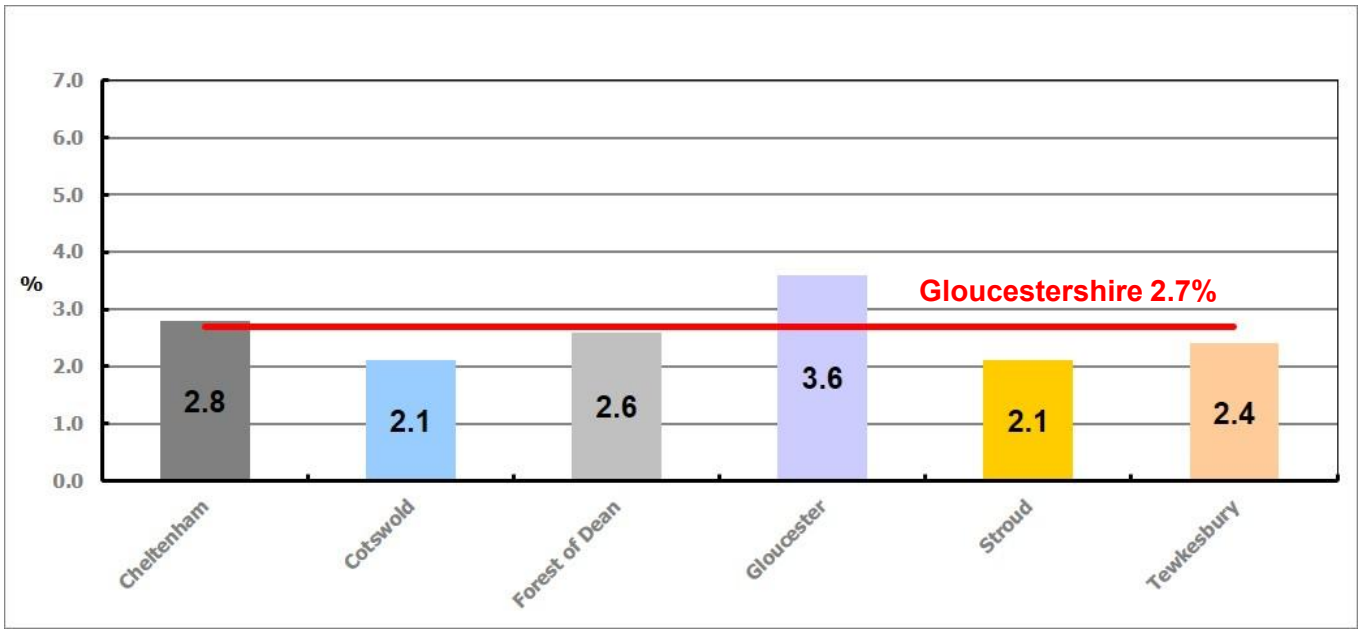


Figure 2 shows the claimant rate for September 2026 in Gloucestershire. Between August and September 2026 the rate increased in all districts except Cotswold, Forest of Dean and Stroud which saw no change.

Table 2: Analysis of Gloucestershire and District Claimant Counts

Total	Sep 26 Number	Sep 26 Rate	Aug 26 Number	Aug 26 Rate	Monthly change	%monthly change	Monthly change of rate
Gloucestershire	10,750	2.7	10,510	2.6	240	2.3%	0.1
Cheltenham	2,125	2.8	2,060	2.7	65	3.2%	0.1
Cotswold	1,070	2.1	1,075	2.1	-5	-0.5%	0.0
Forest of Dean	1,380	2.6	1,340	2.6	40	3.0%	0.0
Gloucester	3,170	3.6	3,080	3.5	90	2.9%	0.1
Stroud	1,555	2.1	1,560	2.1	-5	-0.3%	0.0
Tewkesbury	1,450	2.4	1,390	2.3	60	4.3%	0.1

Table 2 shows the change in the claimant count in September compared to August 2026. All districts saw an increase in the number of claimants, except Cotswold and Stroud which saw a decrease.

Table 3: Analysis of Male Gloucestershire and District Claimant Counts

Male	Sep 26 Number	Sep 26 Rate	Aug 26 Number	Aug 26 Rate	Monthly change	%monthly change	Monthly change of rate
Gloucestershire	5,860	2.9	5,745	2.9	115	2.0%	0.0
Cheltenham	1,195	3.1	1,180	3.1	15	1.3%	0.0
Cotswold	545	2.2	530	2.1	15	2.8%	0.1
Forest of Dean	745	2.9	725	2.8	20	2.8%	0.1
Gloucester	1,865	4.2	1,805	4.1	60	3.3%	0.1
Stroud	760	2.1	790	2.2	-30	-3.8%	-0.1
Tewkesbury	755	2.6	715	2.5	40	5.6%	0.1

Table 3 shows the change in the male claimant count in September compared to August 2026. All districts saw an increase in the number of male claimants, except Stroud which saw a decrease.

Table 4: Analysis of Female Gloucestershire and District Claimant Counts

Female	Sep 26 Number	Sep 26 Rate	Aug 26 Number	Aug 26 Rate	Monthly change	%monthly change	Monthly change of rate
Gloucestershire	4,890	2.4	4,765	2.3	125	2.6%	0.1
Cheltenham	925	2.4	880	2.3	45	5.1%	0.1
Cotswold	530	2.0	545	2.0	-15	-2.8%	0.0
Forest of Dean	640	2.4	615	2.3	25	4.1%	0.1
Gloucester	1,305	2.9	1,275	2.9	30	2.4%	0.0
Stroud	795	2.1	770	2.0	25	3.2%	0.1
Tewkesbury	700	2.2	680	2.2	20	2.9%	0.0

Table 4 shows the change in the female claimant count in September compared to August 2026. All districts saw an increase in the number of female claimants, except Cotswold which saw a decrease.

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

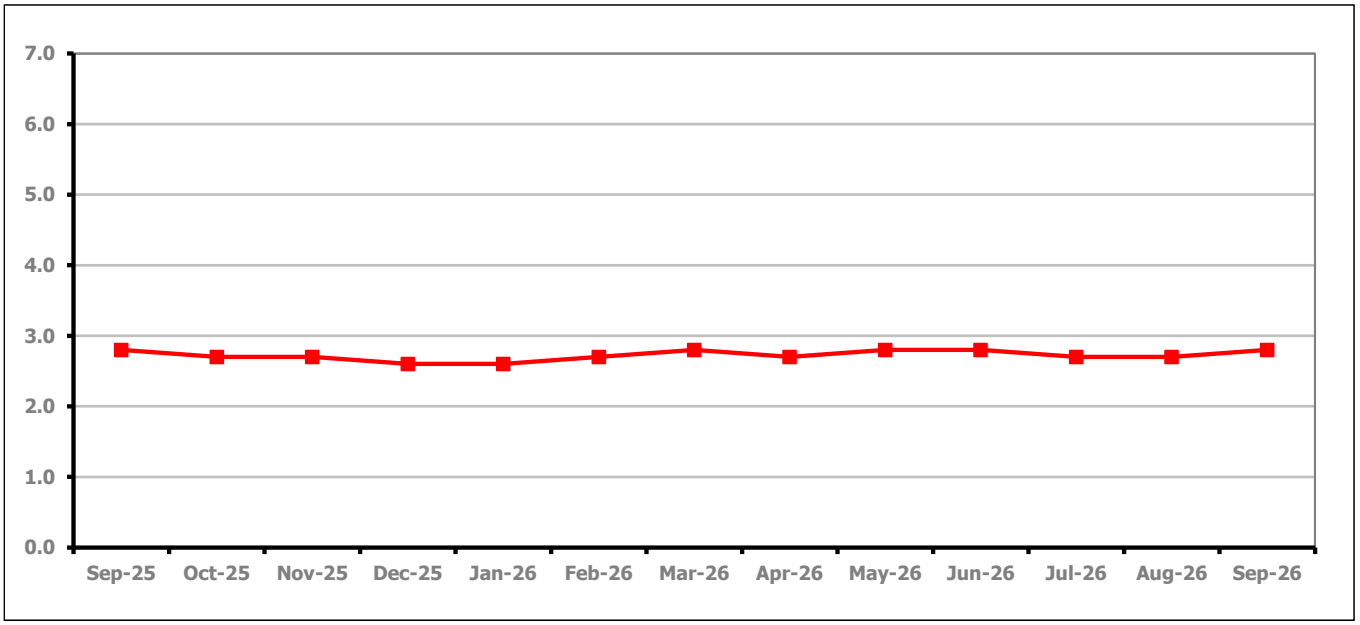


Figure 3 shows the claimant rate in Cheltenham increased to 2.8% in September 2026.

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

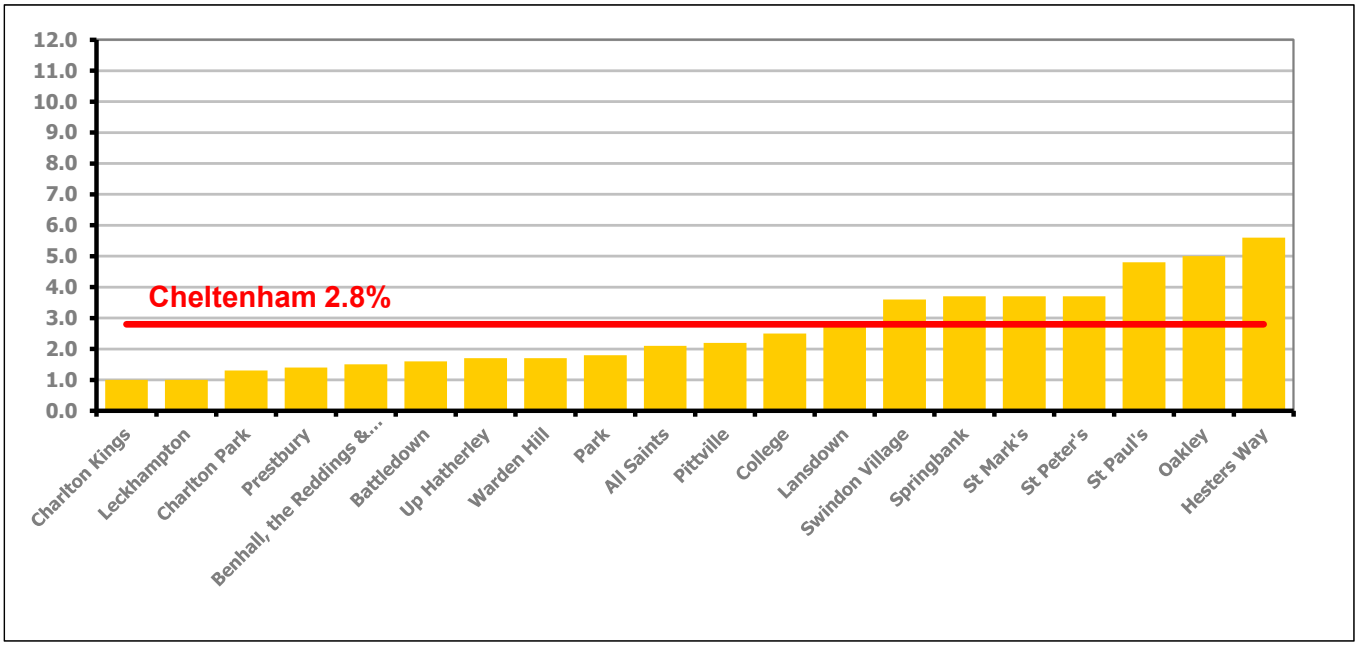


Figure 4 shows the claimant rates for Cheltenham Borough wards. The red line represents the average claimant rate across the Borough of 2.8%. Seven wards lie above the average.

PART 4: LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT AND WARD ANALYSIS

4.1 Cheltenham Borough continued…

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

District	Ward	Rate	Rank*
Cheltenham	Charlton Kings	1.0	2
Cheltenham	Leckhampton	1.0	2
Cheltenham	Charlton Park	1.3	13
Cheltenham	Prestbury	1.4	16
Cheltenham	Benhall, the Reddings & Fiddler's Green	1.5	21
Cheltenham	Battledown	1.6	28
Cheltenham	Up Hatherley	1.7	33
Cheltenham	Warden Hill	1.7	33
Cheltenham	Park	1.8	43
Cheltenham	All Saints	2.1	62
Cheltenham	Pittville	2.2	68
Cheltenham	College	2.5	86
Cheltenham	Lansdown	2.8	100
Cheltenham	Swindon Village	3.6	120
Cheltenham	Springbank	3.7	121
Cheltenham	St Mark's	3.7	121
Cheltenham	St Peter's	3.7	121
Cheltenham	St Paul's	4.8	130
Cheltenham	Oakley	5.0	131
Cheltenham	Hesters Way	5.6	136

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

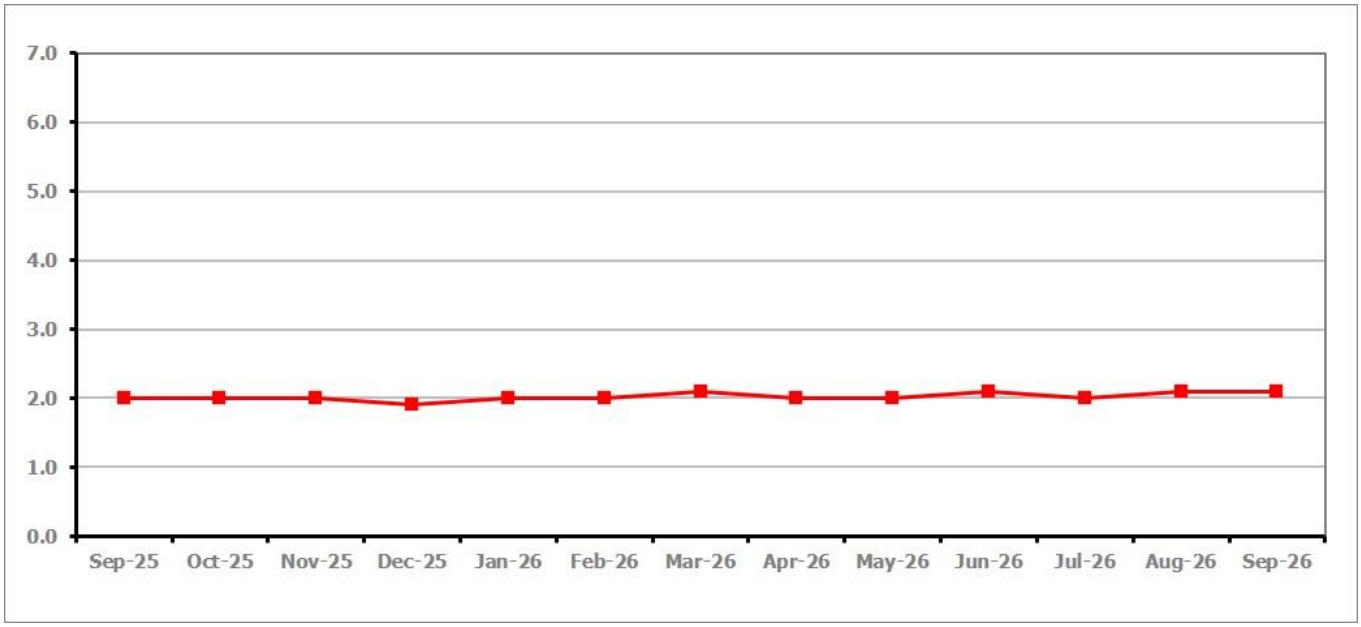


Figure 5 shows the claimant rate in Cotswold District remained at 2.1% in September 2026.

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

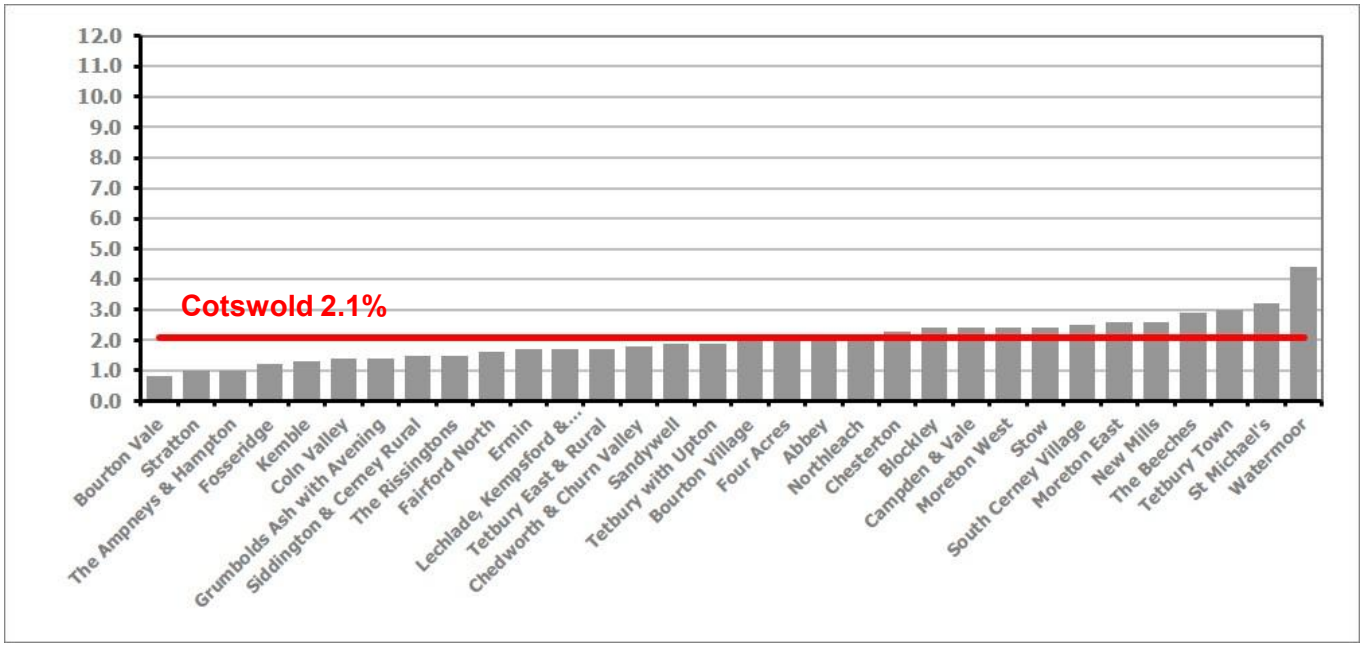


Figure 6 shows the claimant rates for Cotswold District wards. The red line represents the average claimant rate across the District of 2.1%. Twelve wards lie above the average.

PART 4: LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT AND WARD ANALYSIS

4.2 Cotswold District continued…

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

District	Ward	Rate	Rank*
Cotswold	Bourton Vale	0.8	1
Cotswold	Stratton	1.0	2
Cotswold	The Ampneys & Hampton	1.0	2
Cotswold	Fosseridge	1.2	9
Cotswold	Kemble	1.3	13
Cotswold	Coln Valley	1.4	16
Cotswold	Grumbolds Ash with Avening	1.4	16
Cotswold	Siddington & Cerney Rural	1.5	21
Cotswold	The Rissingtons	1.5	21
Cotswold	Fairford North	1.6	28
Cotswold	Ermin	1.7	33
Cotswold	Lechlade, Kempsford & Fairford South	1.7	33
Cotswold	Tetbury East & Rural	1.7	33
Cotswold	Chedworth & Churn Valley	1.8	43
Cotswold	Sandywell	1.9	48
Cotswold	Tetbury with Upton	1.9	48
Cotswold	Bourton Village	2.0	54
Cotswold	Four Acres	2.0	54
Cotswold	Abbey	2.1	62
Cotswold	Northleach	2.1	62
Cotswold	Chesterton	2.3	71
Cotswold	Blockley	2.4	77
Cotswold	Campden & Vale	2.4	77
Cotswold	Moreton West	2.4	77
Cotswold	Stow	2.4	77
Cotswold	South Cerney Village	2.5	86
Cotswold	Moreton East	2.6	92
Cotswold	New Mills	2.6	92
Cotswold	The Beeches	2.9	103
Cotswold	Tetbury Town	3.0	105
Cotswold	St Michael's	3.2	113
Cotswold	Watermoor	4.4	126

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

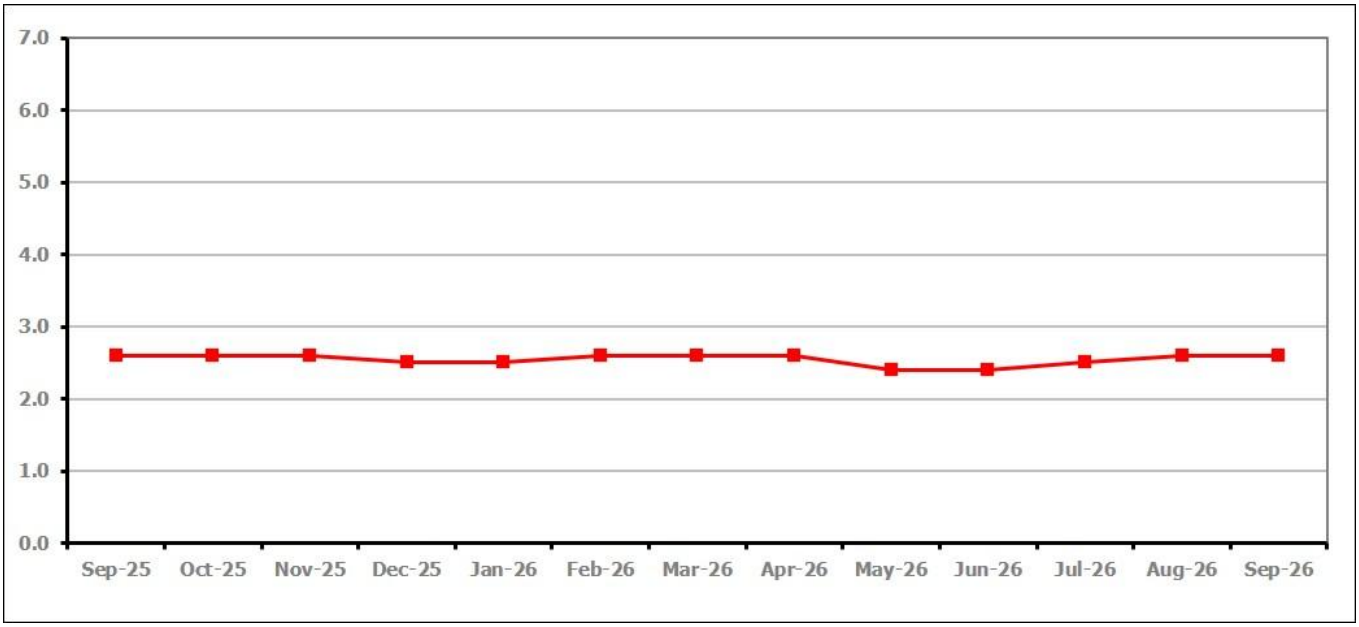


Figure 7 shows the claimant rate in the Forest of Dean remained at 2.6% in September 2026.

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

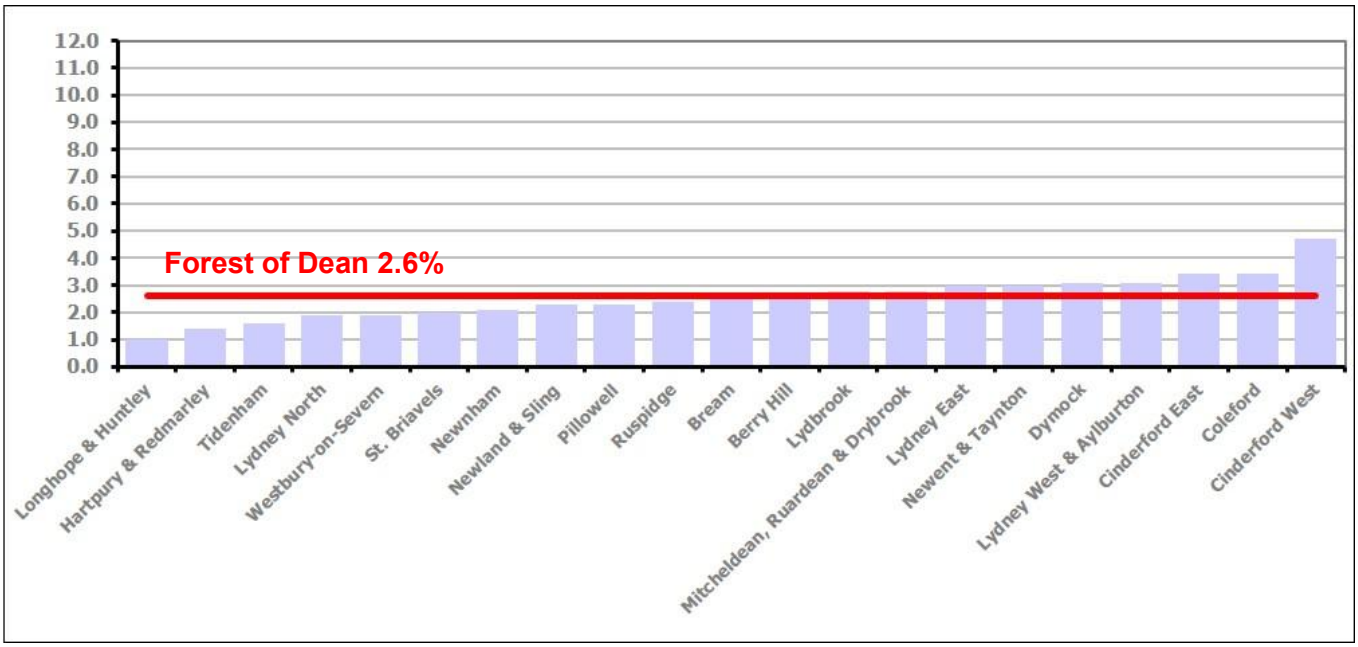


Figure 8 shows the claimant rates for the Forest of Dean District wards. The red line represents the average claimant rate across the District of 2.6%. Ten wards lie above the average.

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 - September 2026

District	Ward	Rate	Rank*
Forest	Longhope & Huntley	1.0	2
Forest	Hartpury & Redmarley	1.4	16
Forest	Tidenham	1.6	28
Forest	Lydney North	1.9	48
Forest	Westbury-on-Severn	1.9	48
Forest	St. Briavels	2.0	54
Forest	Newnham	2.1	62
Forest	Newland & Sling	2.3	71
Forest	Pillowell	2.3	71
Forest	Ruspidge	2.4	77
Forest	Bream	2.5	86
Forest	Berry Hill	2.7	97
Forest	Lydbrook	2.8	100
Forest	Mitcheldean, Ruardean & Drybrook	2.8	100
Forest	Lydney East	3.0	105
Forest	Newent & Taynton	3.0	105
Forest	Dymock	3.1	110
Forest	Lydney West & Aylburton	3.1	110
Forest	Cinderford East	3.4	118
Forest	Coleford	3.4	118
Forest	Cinderford West	4.7	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

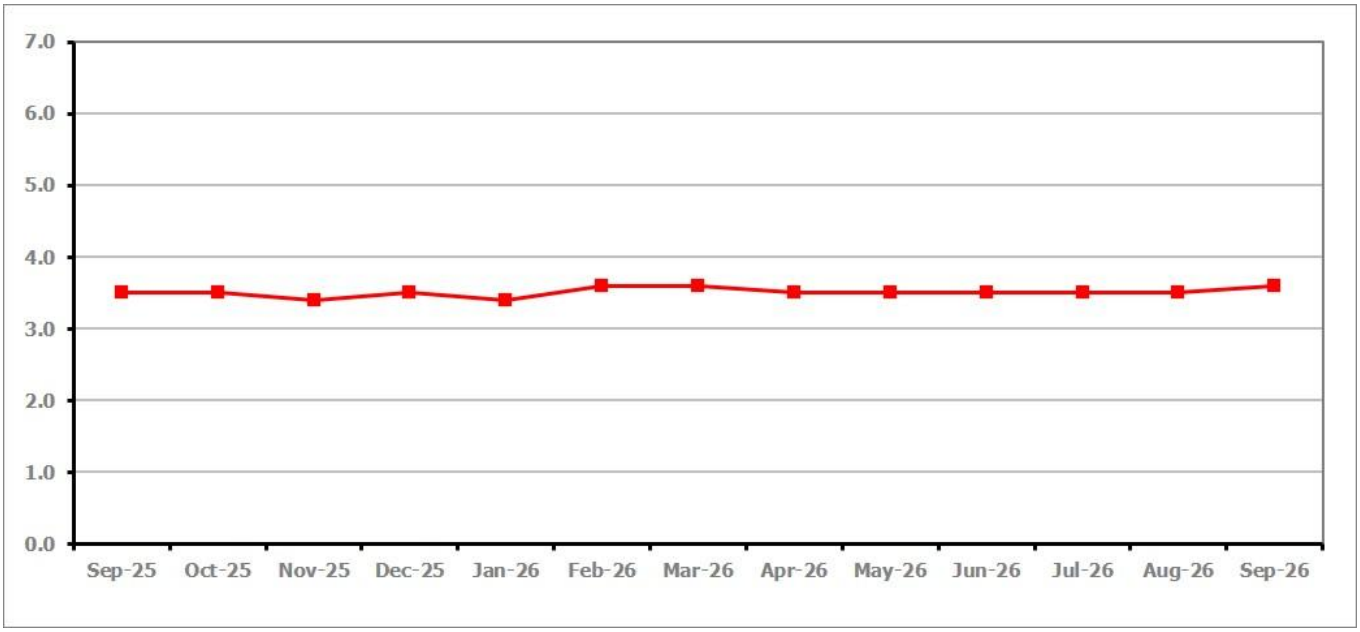


Figure 9 shows the claimant rate for Gloucester City increased to 3.6% in September 2026.

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

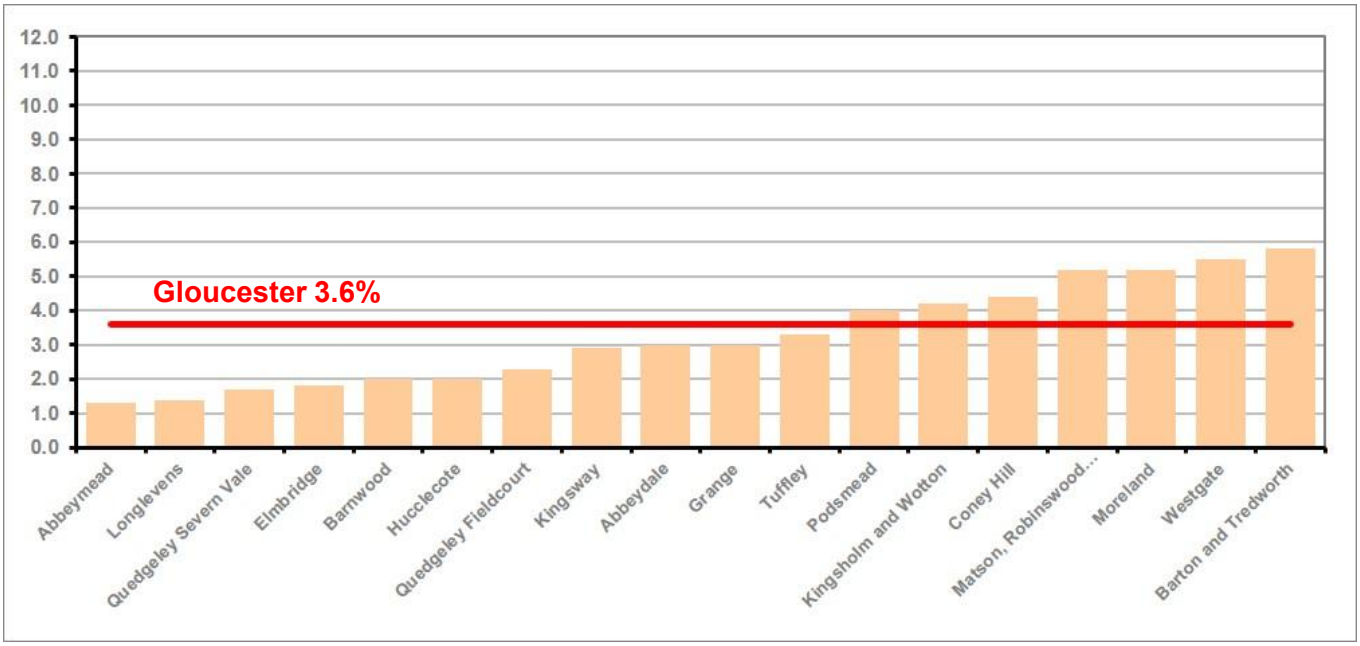


Figure 10 shows the claimant rates for Gloucester City district wards. The red line represents the average claimant rate across the City of 3.6%. Seven wards lie above the average.

PART 4: LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT AND WARD ANALYSIS

4.4 Gloucester City continued…

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

District	Ward	Rate	Rank*
Gloucester	Abbeymead	1.3	13
Gloucester	Longlevens	1.4	16
Gloucester	Quedgeley Severn Vale	1.7	33
Gloucester	Elmbridge	1.8	43
Gloucester	Barnwood	2.0	54
Gloucester	Hucclecote	2.0	54
Gloucester	Quedgeley Fieldcourt	2.3	71
Gloucester	Kingsway	2.9	103
Gloucester	Abbeydale	3.0	105
Gloucester	Grange	3.0	105
Gloucester	Tuffley	3.3	115
Gloucester	Podsmead	4.0	124
Gloucester	Kingsholm and Wotton	4.2	125
Gloucester	Coney Hill	4.4	126
Gloucester	Matson, Robinswood and White City	5.2	133
Gloucester	Moreland	5.2	133
Gloucester	Westgate	5.5	135
Gloucester	Barton and Tredworth	5.8	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 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

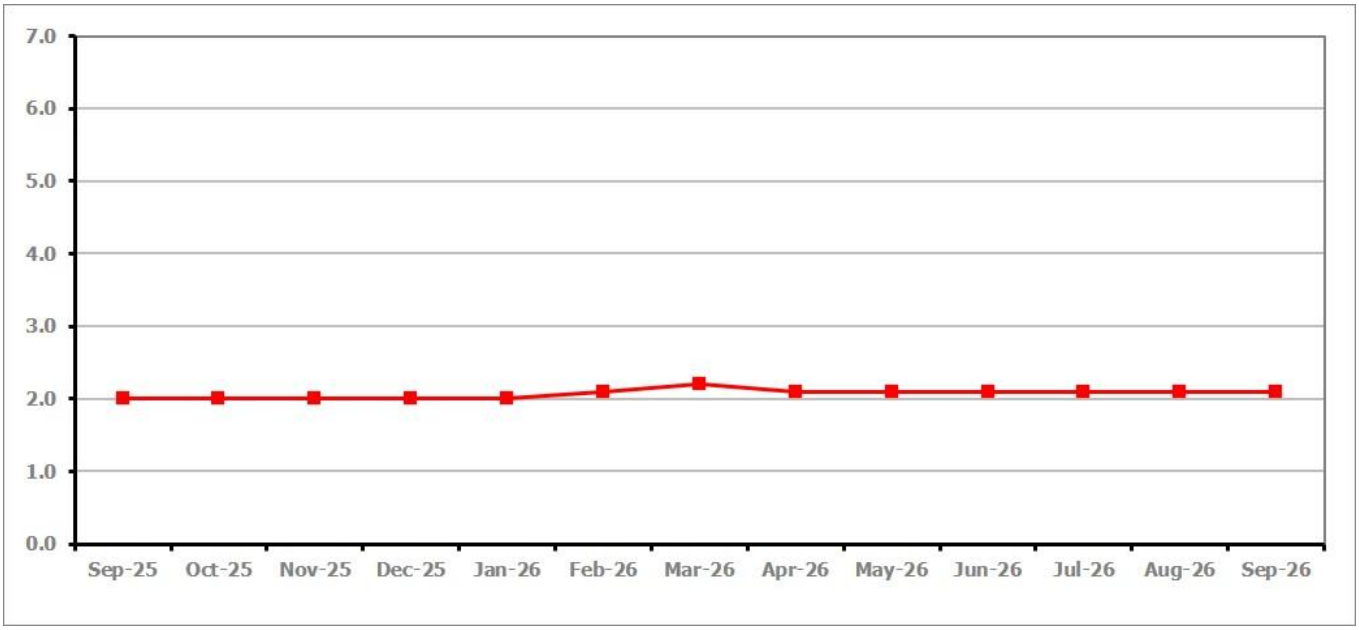


Figure 11 shows the claimant rate for Stroud remained at 2.1% in September 2026.

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

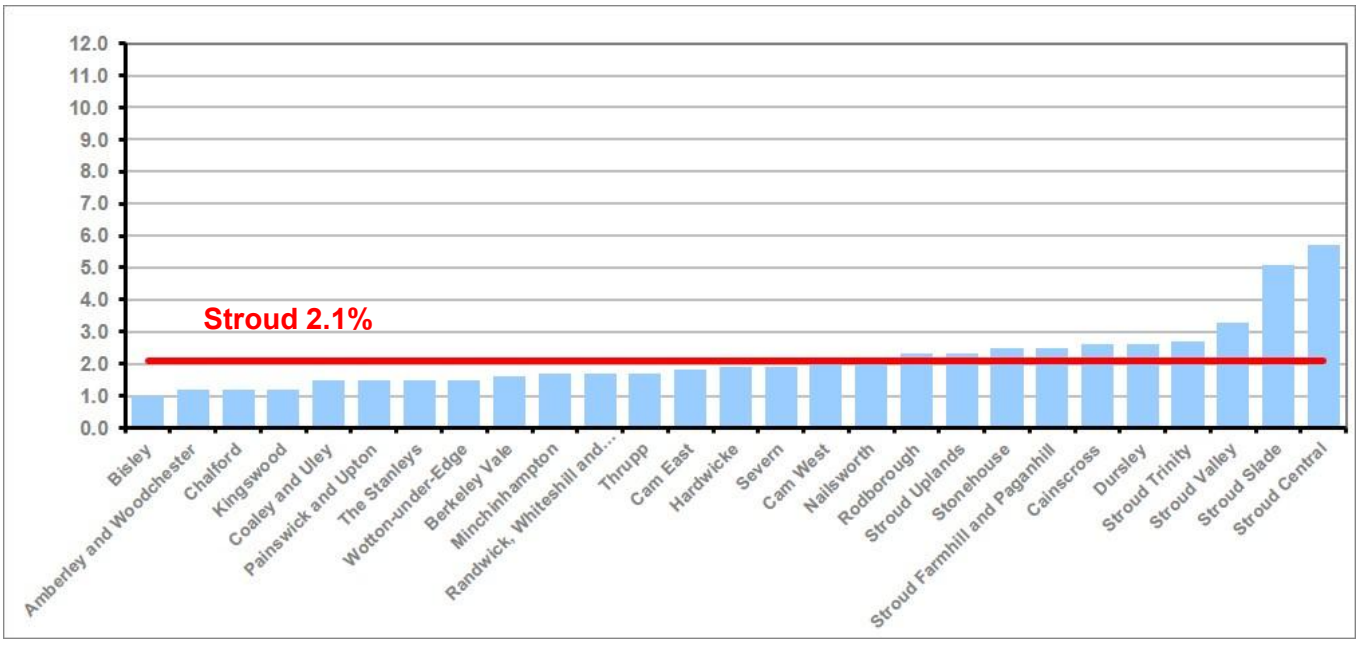


Figure 12 shows the claimant rates in Stroud District wards. The red line represents the average claimant rate across the District of 2.1%. Eleven wards are above the average.

PART 4: LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT AND WARD ANALYSIS

4.5 Stroud District continued…

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

District	Ward	Rate	Rank*
Stroud	Bisley	1.0	2
Stroud	Amberley and Woodchester	1.2	9
Stroud	Chalford	1.2	9
Stroud	Kingswood	1.2	9
Stroud	Coaley and Uley	1.5	21
Stroud	Painswick and Upton	1.5	21
Stroud	The Stanleys	1.5	21
Stroud	Wotton-under-Edge	1.5	21
Stroud	Berkeley Vale	1.6	28
Stroud	Minchinhampton	1.7	33
Stroud	Randwick, Whiteshill and Ruscombe	1.7	33
Stroud	Thrupp	1.7	33
Stroud	Cam East	1.8	43
Stroud	Hardwicke	1.9	48
Stroud	Severn	1.9	48
Stroud	Cam West	2.1	62
Stroud	Nailsworth	2.2	68
Stroud	Rodborough	2.3	71
Stroud	Stroud Uplands	2.3	71
Stroud	Stonehouse	2.5	86
Stroud	Stroud Farmhill and Paganhill	2.5	86
Stroud	Cainscross	2.6	92
Stroud	Dursley	2.6	92
Stroud	Stroud Trinity	2.7	97
Stroud	Stroud Valley	3.3	115
Stroud	Stroud Slade	5.1	132
Stroud	Stroud Central	5.7	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 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

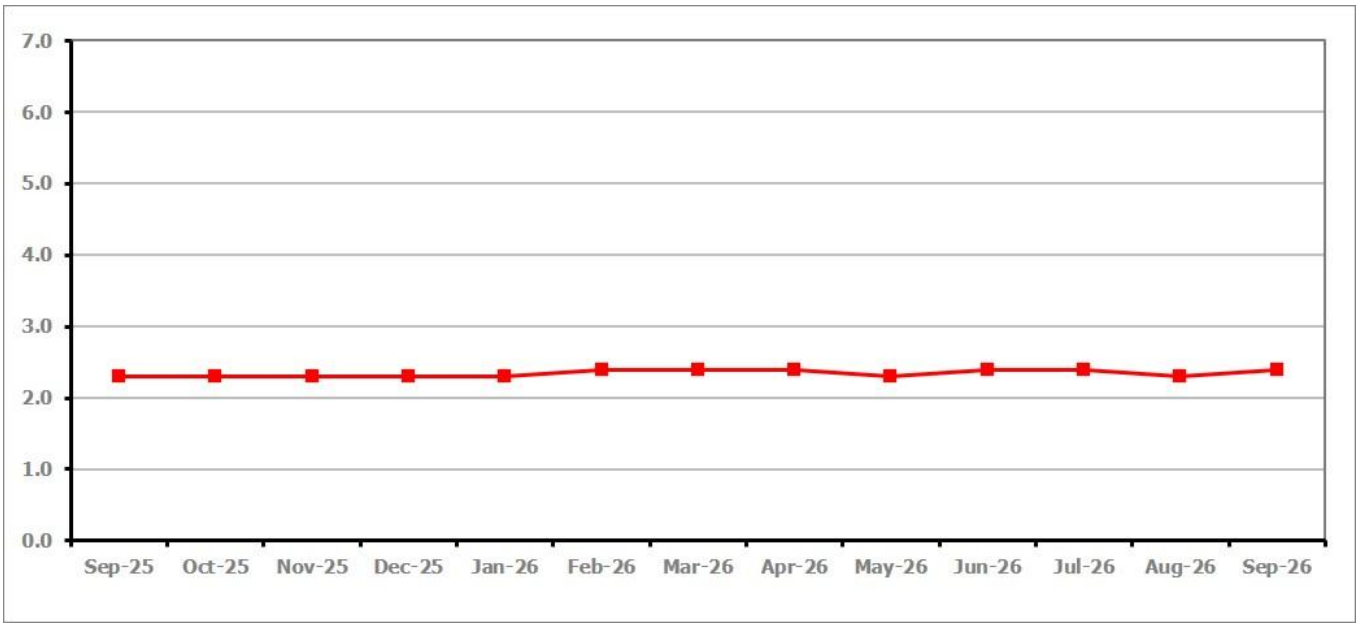


Figure 13 shows the claimant rate for Tewkesbury Borough increased to 2.4% in September 2026.

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

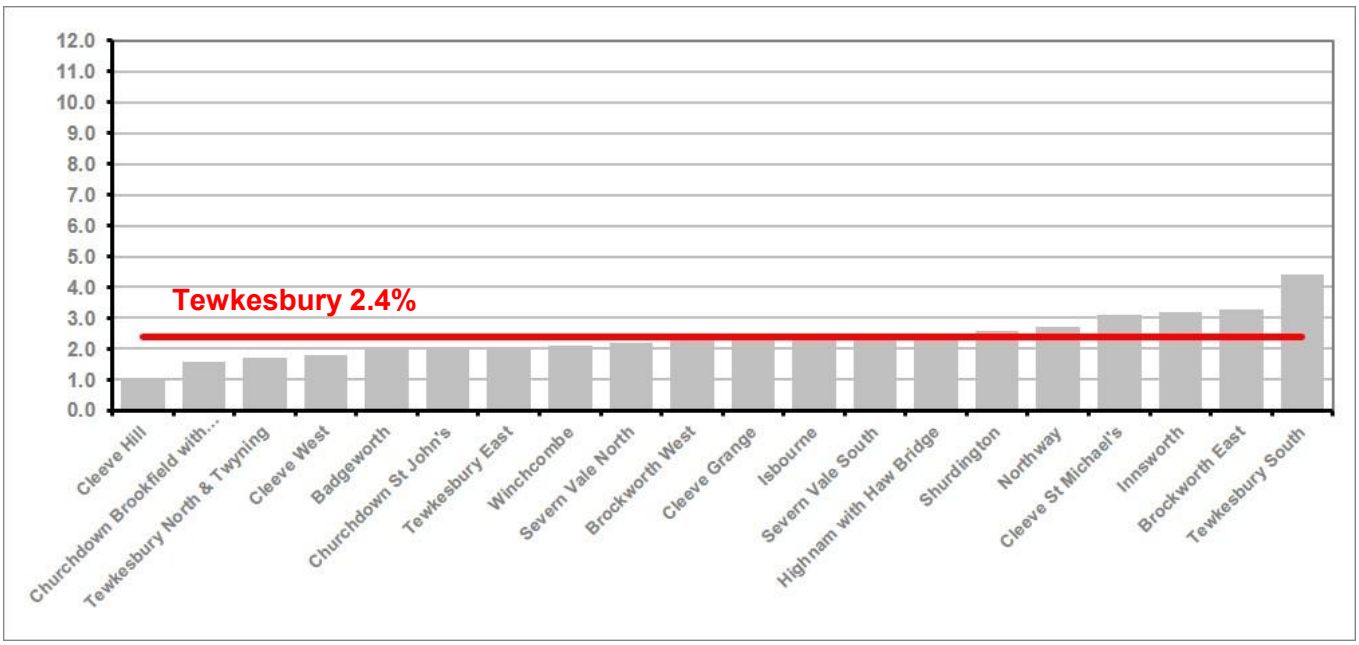


Figure 14 shows the claimant rates in Tewkesbury Borough wards. The red line represents the average claimant rate across the District of 2.4%. Seven wards are above the average.

PART 4: LOCAL AUTHORITY DISTRICT AND WARD ANALYSIS

4.6 Tewkesbury Borough continued…

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

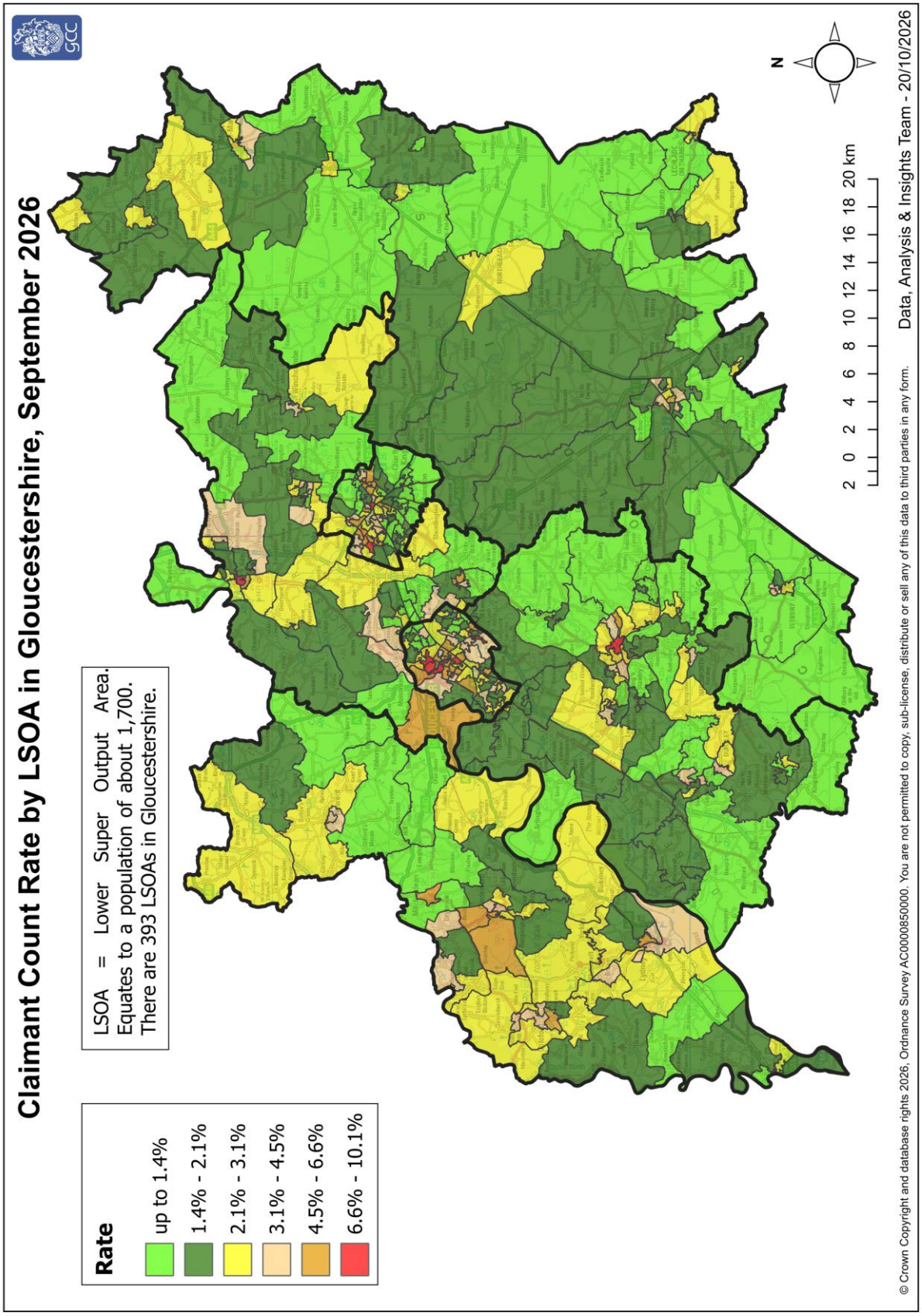
District	Ward	Rate	Rank*
Tewkesbury	Cleeve Hill	1.0	2
Tewkesbury	Churchdown Brookfield with Hucclecote	1.6	28
Tewkesbury	Tewkesbury North & Twyning	1.7	33
Tewkesbury	Cleeve West	1.8	43
Tewkesbury	Badgeworth	2.0	54
Tewkesbury	Churchdown St John's	2.0	54
Tewkesbury	Tewkesbury East	2.0	54
Tewkesbury	Winchcombe	2.1	62
Tewkesbury	Severn Vale North	2.2	68
Tewkesbury	Brockworth West	2.4	77
Tewkesbury	Cleeve Grange	2.4	77
Tewkesbury	Isbourne	2.4	77
Tewkesbury	Severn Vale South	2.4	77
Tewkesbury	Highnam with Haw Bridge	2.5	86
Tewkesbury	Shurdington	2.6	92
Tewkesbury	Northway	2.7	97
Tewkesbury	Cleeve St Michael's	3.1	110
Tewkesbury	Innsworth	3.2	113
Tewkesbury	Brockworth East	3.3	115
Tewkesbury	Tewkesbury South	4.4	126

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”

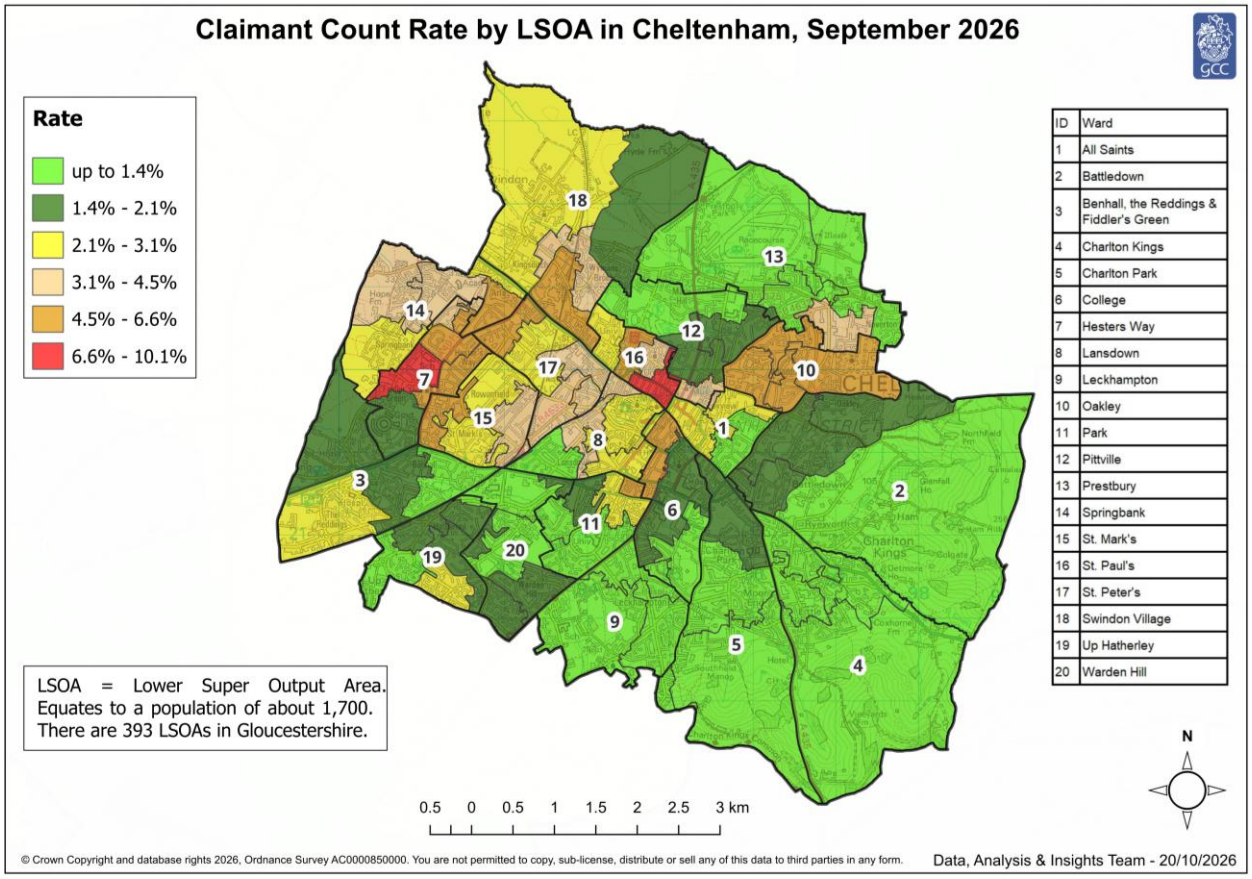
Table 10 shows overall claimant rates for Tewkesbury Borough wards and their position relative to all wards in Gloucestershire.

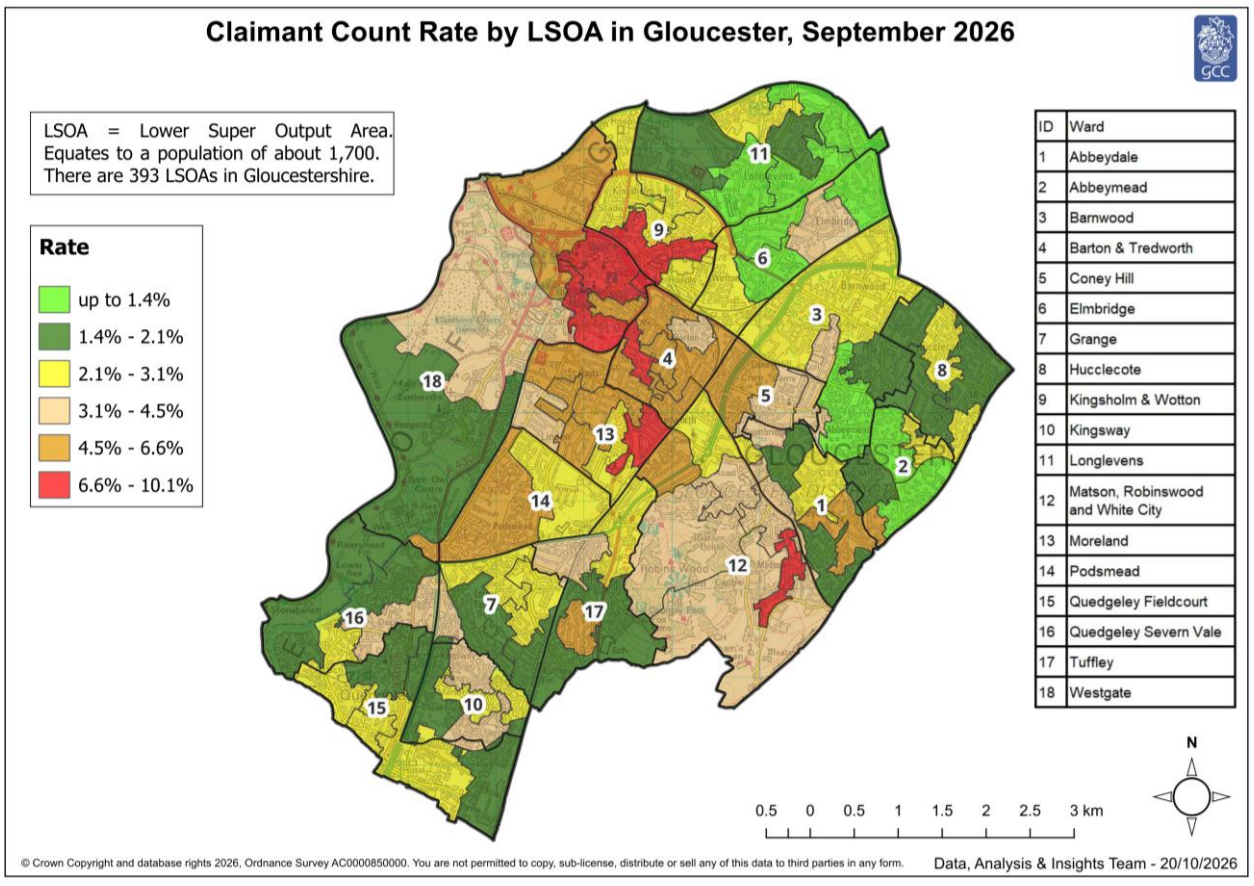
PART 5: MAP SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF CLAIMANT RATE ACROSS GLOUCESTERSHIRE



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

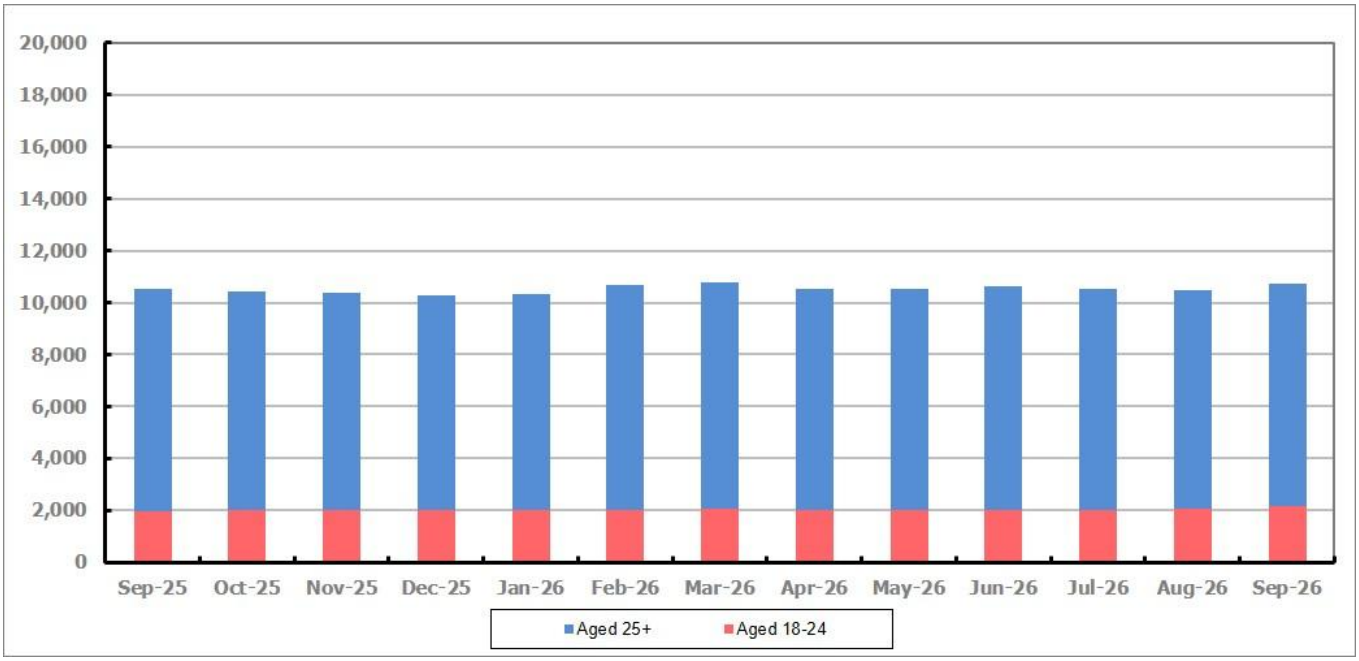


Figure 15 shows that in September 2026, 2,145 people aged 18-24 were claiming Job Seekers Allowance and Universal Credit who were not in work in Gloucestershire, this represents 20.0% of total working age claimants.

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) September 2026

Academic Year 12-13 Summary

	NEET	Cohort	%
Cheltenham	47	2556	1.84%
Cotswold	22	1749	1.26%
Forest	36	1834	1.96%
Gloucester	86	3664	2.35%
Stroud	38	2809	1.35%
Tewkesbury	36	2301	1.56%
Total	265	14913	1.78%
Monthly Change **	-277	-72	-1.84%
Previous Month	542	14985	3.62%

16-18 Age Summary

	NEET	Cohort	%
Cheltenham	82	3717	2.21%
Cotswold	45	2615	1.72%
Forest	60	2635	2.28%
Gloucester	176	5371	3.28%
Stroud	74	4202	1.76%
Tewkesbury	72	3339	2.16%
Total	509	21879	2.33%
16-18 Adjust NEET*			2.43%
Monthly Change **	-33	6894	-1.29%
Previous Month	542	14985	3.62%

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.