Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
Economic Regeneration Strategy
2023-2028

Oadby & Wigston | Our borough - the place to be

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A Foreword by the Leader of the Council

Nestled on the southern edge of the city, Oadby and Wigston is small but perfectly placed being located between the M1 to the west and the A6 to the east. Based around three distinct towns, we are a diverse Borough with lots to offer to businesses, visitors and residents in this edge-of-city location.

The Economic Regeneration Strategy aims to promote economic well-being for all. A great deal of research and consultation has been put into the preparation of this document to ensure that the strategy reflects the economic position of the area.

It is our ambition that the Borough of Oadby and Wigston is a place where businesses look to invest, start-up, grow and expand; where there is a wide range of local employment and training opportunities and where our town centres are vibrant and thriving. It is essential that all residents have equal opportunities and can access high-quality employment and training.

Since the last Strategy (which ran from 2015 to 2020) we have experienced several macro-economic changes which have changed the way we live, work, shop and communicate. This includes Britain's exit from the European Union, the global coronavirus pandemic, and the ongoing cost of living crisis. 2020 was an unprecedented year which significantly changed how we all live our lives and how we, our customers and our businesses worked.

Our strategy follows the Council's overarching vision for Oadby and Wigston to be 'our borough – the place to be'. The strategy and its action plan outline specific actions and highlights where we will work in partnership to deliver the vision. The Council fully appreciates the important role played by individuals, businesses and organisations who share our aim to improve the local economy and recognises that this Strategy cannot be delivered, in isolation, by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council.

Cllr Samia Haq, Leader of the Council

The Vision

> "By 2028, Oadby and Wigston will have an inclusive and sustainable economy that fosters innovation, supports local businesses, generates high-quality employment, and enhances the overall quality of life for residents."

Introduction

Oadby and Wigston Borough Council (OWBC) is a small Local Authority situated to the south-east of Leicester City centre but within easy reach of it. It covers the three settlements of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston. The Borough covers 9 ½ sq. miles and is home to around 57,000 people. Whilst small, the Borough includes areas of countryside to the south and has a small section of the Grand Union Canal at Kilby Bridge. The Borough is also home to the Botanic Gardens and a large number of halls of residence, both belonging to the University of Leicester. The Borough hosts Leicester Racecourse to the north of the boundary.

In terms of transport, the A6 runs through the District in Oadby, connecting Leicester with Market Harborough. To the west, there is a train station at South Wigston which is on the Leicester to Birmingham line, served hourly. There are routes out to the west to connect the Borough to M1 at Fosse Park and eastwards towards the A47/A1.

There are thought to be around 2,000 businesses registered in the Borough. The vast majority of these are micro-enterprises and towards the lower employment number end. There are a small number of large employers. The position of the Borough within Leicestershire, its limited easy transport links, built up nature and lack of space for new build means that its business base is fairly static. Ad hoc redevelopments allow for new premises to be built as at South Wigston (Genesis Park) but there is limited scope for new developments. The unit stock is elderly and privately owned with smaller units. There are some start up estates in Wigston and South Wigston. Industrial areas are located at Oadby (around Kenilworth Drive) and in Wigston/South Wigston split across the Chartwell Drive/Cornwall Drive area and an area to the south of Blaby Road.

In terms of employment, there are three Town/District Centres (as defined in the Local Plan) – Oadby, Wigston, and South Wigston. These provide a range of facilities for local communities. There are smaller retail areas scattered across the Borough. There has been limited investment in town centres, although the launch of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund from central Government seeks to address some of this. The Borough is aware of the need to look again at town centre uses and will use the emerging Local Plan to do this. This will help to ensure that our town centres reflect both the needs of communities and the aftermath of the pandemic.

SWOT Analysis of Oadby and Wigston's Economic Prospects

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
• Strategic geographical location close to the City of Leicester and with good transport links to M1/M69 motorways • Commuter links from South Wigston, connecting the Borough to Leicester and Birmingham. • Proximity to and quality of Higher/ Further Educations institutions • Desirable location to live with ten designated Conservation areas. • Highly skilled resident workforce. • Diverse population. • Targeted investment through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.	• High employment in declining sectors. • High levels of commuting out of the Borough to work. • Low levels of inward investment. • High commercial vacancy rates in Wigston town centre. • Lack of space for future provision of employment land. • Densely populated area. • Capacity of the Borough Council to deliver programmes in Economic Regeneration. • Stagnant business base.
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
• Focus on Economic Development by diversifying the work of the Economic Regeneration Team. • Provision of new Economic and Employment Land within the borough. • Seek new funding streams to bring forward the new Masterplans for each town centre. • Build appropriate employment opportunities to increase our graduate retention. • Build a highly skilled workforce through graduate retention.	• Lack of demand for small-scale employment sites. • Ageing population. • More opportunities for businesses in neighbouring authorities. • The need for re-skilling across the borough (and nationwide) to meet the jobs of the future. • Impacts of climate change and future resource needs. • Out-migration of younger people in the borough (especially graduates).

National Economic Drivers

Levelling Up Agenda

Levelling Up is a moral, social and economic programme for the whole of government. It is an ambitious programme which aims to reduce inequality and close the gap in productivity, health, income and opportunity within the United Kingdom, presenting a decade long policy agenda to change the UK's geography and narrow regional inequality through twelve national missions.

Published in February 2022, The Levelling Up White Paper sets out how the government will spread opportunity more equally across the UK.

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a pillar of the Levelling Up Agenda from the UK Government. This is discussed in more depth in the Local Economic Drivers Section.

Regional Economic Drivers
Midlands Engine

The Midlands Engine is a pan-regional, apolitical partnership that convenes, connects and acts as a focal point to drive economic growth – for the greater benefit of people, places and businesses across the Midlands.

It is essential that the Council keeps updated on Midlands Engine's continued work across the region over the course of our five-year Strategy.

Sub-Regional Economic Drivers

Leicester and Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LLEP)

The Future of the LLEP
With the integration of the LEPs into local government, the future of the LLEP will become clearer over the coming years. During the annual review of our action plan, we will consider how we will continue to work with the organisation to achieve our objectives.

LLEP Priorities
Local Enterprise Partnerships lead on economic regeneration priorities as set out by the Government. Accordingly, it is important that our economic regeneration strategy has policies that reflect those of the LLEP. This Economic Regeneration Strategy will look further at the local need of the Borough.

The four pillars and aims of the LLEP Economic Growth Strategy include:

- **Productive**: Increase GVA and productivity, continue to develop a leading science and technology led economy.
- **Innovative**: Global innovation leadership, increase innovation activities across the whole business base.
- **Inclusive**: Create a resilient, adaptive workforce where all residents have access to skills and career progression and are paid the living wage.
- **Sustainable**: Become a leader in zero carbon solutions, with sustainability principles built into everything we do.

The LLEP Economic Growth Strategy also has a key challenge to ensure that local training provision is able to meet both current and future needs and address skills shortages, especially in engineering.

LLEP Business Gateway

The LLEP Business Gateway is a 'one-stop shop' growth hub for all business needs. The gateway provides information on forms of business support available from local and national partners across a wide range of industries and sectors. Information is available on starting a business, growing your business, how to access finance, hiring and training, and premises and investing.

Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan

The Strategic Growth Plan is the overarching plan which sets out the aspirations for delivering growth (housing, economic, infrastructure) in Leicester and Leicestershire until 2050. Nine local authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire and the Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) engaged in the preparation of this Plan.

Local Economic Drivers

The Council's Corporate Plan

The existing Corporate Plan came into effect on 1 April 2019. You can view the full Corporate Plan by clicking on this link.

The objectives set out in the Corporate Plan are:

The building, Protecting and Empowering Communities - "Be Proud of your borough as a place to live"

This objective looks to not only build suitable accommodation to meet the needs of the community, delivering housing, attract people to our borough to live, reducing homelessness and the causes of homelessness, but to also build upon our strong communities, engaging with them and building greater community cohesion.

We also want to protect our communities, not just working with the Police to tackle crime, antisocial behaviour and enforcement, but to address health needs across the borough. We will work with our health partners, including the Fire Service, to improve health equality, meaning nobody should feel excluded and reducing loneliness created by the modern world.

We will empower our communities, generating positive involvement, not only through the work of Councillors within their wards and neighbourhood forums, but to engage a greater proportion of our borough, engaging with those who often feel disenfranchised. We will increase our volunteering opportunities and encourage our communities to get more involved, taking greater responsibility for where they live, work and play.

Growing the Borough Economically - "Realise the aspirations of the borough, benefiting those who live and work here"

This objective aims for our borough to be the best it can be, economically. We will work with businesses – from local sole traders to multinational corporations as to how we can help businesses develop and grow within our borough whilst attracting new organisations to the borough. This will not only provide greater opportunities for employment for our residents and regeneration opportunities, but helps our local

students with opportunities to stay within the borough whereas they may be forced to look further afield for such opportunities.

The borough has a rich array of attractions that should attract people to the borough, but sadly we are not maximising this. We will market the borough as a place that is worth visiting, working with partners to create a "joined-up" approach. We will also identify what areas of demand we are lacking and look to plug those gaps – increasing the reasons to visit the borough. We will also look at our entertainment and night-time economy and look to create a sustainable and enjoyable environment where people can enjoy the borough through a host of opportunities in the evenings.

The Council will look to be more commercial in regards to generating income that can protect frontline services and not have to cut them. We will look to maximise the value our assets can provide and look at ventures that could generate commercial income rather than increase taxes on our communities.

Providing Excellent Services - "Delivering those services needed to the highest standard whilst providing value for money"

This objective for our borough is to put the customer first – getting things right first time and providing services to the highest standards. The Council has always aspired to provide excellent services for all of our customers, be they Residents, Businesses, Partner Organisations or internally, meaning that we need to understand their needs. The Council has already shifted to focussing on outcome delivery, and we will ensure that we will get things right at the first opportunity we have.

The Council will aim to achieve the prestigious and nationally recognised "Customer Service Excellent Award" to demonstrate that we are achieving what we have set out to do. The award is a quality-mark award that rates how the services received by residents are delivered by the Council. We will use this award as a driver of continuous improvement and enable our staff to improve their skills which will enable further improvements in the delivery of services.

We will also be utilising technology to make life safer for our residents or the implementation of smart technology in the homes of the vulnerable to allow them instant access to services, alongside the utilisation of technologies to improve our effectiveness in delivering our services.

The Council's Vision – 'Our Borough, The Place To Be'

The Council's Vision was adopted to reflect the last few years that brought a huge amount of change to how we live, work and spend our time. Adopted in late 2022, the new Vision will be followed by a new Corporate Plan which will set out what the council plans to achieve over the coming years.

The Vision is designed to strengthen the relationship between the council and its residents, businesses, community groups, young people, tenants and more. The details of the adopted Vision can be found here.

To support the vision of 'Our Borough, The Place To Be', there are a number of strategic objectives. These are:

- Our Council

- Our Communities
- Our Economy
- Our Environment
- Our Partners

To meet the objective of 'Our Economy', the vision sets out we want to:

- Support economic growth that is focused on our town centres.
- Make our Borough an inviting place to visit.
- Help to provide good employment opportunities.

Our Strategy aligns with the Corporate Vision and aims to improve economic prospects within the Borough.

Planning Policy

Local Plan (2019 – 2031)
The current Borough of Oadby and Wigston Local Plan was adopted in April 2019. The current Local Plan sets out the policies that the Council uses to manage growth and change as well as determine Planning applications.

The Local Plan helps direct new development to the right places. New development includes, but is not limited to; new housing; new and existing employment land; new community facilities and services; new retail; and new leisure and tourism development.

A Local Plan is not a static document, it is a fluid document that needs to change with the times, therefore it is a document that needs reviewing and updating on a regular basis. The Council has already begun work on the new Local Plan, planning for growth up to 2041. The Council is currently working towards an ambitious timescale and hopes to adopt its New Local Plan by Summer 2026.

Authority Monitoring Report
The Authority Monitoring Report reviews and monitors the Local Plan, it assesses the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which policies in local development documents are being achieved. An Authority Monitoring Report is produced and published each year and covers the period from 1st April to 31st March.

Oadby, South Wigston and Wigston Town Centre Masterplans
Each of the Borough's town centres will benefit from a refreshed masterplan by 2024.. These set out the aims and objectives to position the Council to best inform decisions around development within each town centre in addition to informing potential future bids for Government funding for development and regeneration, should such opportunities arise.

Wigston Town Centre Masterplan was conducted in 2022 and provided the Council with evidence to support applications for funding. The Oadby and South Wigston Masterplans are currently being prepared and have been funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

Once finalised, this suite of documents will feed into the Economic Regeneration Strategy Action Plan and help to inform long-term aspirations of the Council for each town centre.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF or the Fund) is a central pillar of the UK government's ambitious Levelling Up agenda and a significant component of its support for places across the UK. It provides £2.6 billion of new funding for local investment by March 2025, with all areas of the UK receiving an allocation from the Fund through a funding formula rather than a competition.

The Council developed an [investment plan](#) on how Oadby and Wigston will allocate this funding. The Council will start to spend the funds from January 2023.

The government has allocated Oadby and Wigston £1,342,011 for 2022-2025 which will be shared across the three interconnected investment priority themes:

- Communities and Place
- Supporting Local Business
- People and Skills

InvestOW Brand

Our InvestOW brand aims to **promote the Borough and attract new investment to the area.**

Our Business App

The app, named *OW Local,* will be the one-stop-shop for everything Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston related. Residents and visitors can use the app to browse through local businesses and events in the area, check out offers and even purchase directly through the app itself. The app has been created in partnership with Bubltown, an award-winning technology company which has already had major success creating and implementing such projects for councils throughout the country. The app is just one of the tools that we will use to persuade residents and visitors to visit our town centres.

Microsite

This is the home of information to businesses and individuals on the services offered by the council and other authorities (such as Leicestershire County Council and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership). It also acts as a hub for any UKSPF promotional material and gives an overview of the borough. This is updated on an ad-hoc basis when there are new projects that occur.

Business Newsletter

The business newsletter is an email-marketing tool which helps the Council to interact and engage with the business community. We use this method of communication to signpost Oadby and Wigston based businesses to grants, business support, webinars, and networking events. Monthly Business Newsletters are sent by the council to subscribers of the business newsletter.

Current Economic Baseline Figures

Oadby and Wigston over the last ten years:

(Source: How life has changed in Oadby and Wigston: Census 2021, ONS Website, 19 January 2023)

- As of 2021, Oadby and Wigston is the fifth most densely populated of the East Midlands' 35 local authority areas, with around 18 people living on each football pitch-sized area of land.
- Between the last two censuses (held in 2011 and 2021), the population of Oadby and Wigston increased by 2.8%, from around 56,200 in 2011 to around 57,700 in 2021.
- Population growth was lower in Oadby and Wigston than across the East Midlands.
- The share of residents aged between 50 and 64 years increased by 1.1 percentage points between 2011 and 2021.
- Private renting in Oadby and Wigston increased from 9.9% to 16.0%, while the rate of home ownership decreased from 80.8% to 75.2%.
- In Oadby and Wigston, there has been an increase of 13.0% in people aged 65 years and over, and a decrease of 1.7% in people aged 15 to 64 years.

Priority One: Our Town Centres

Aim

Regenerate our three town centres.

Objectives

- To promote, support and undertake the regeneration of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston town centres by encouraging and enabling a variety of projects.

Key Statistics

Figure 1 Wigston Town Centre Footfall (source: Town Centre Manager's KPI Q4 22/23)

Footfall in Wigston has returned to its pre-pandemic (Winter 2019) level in March 2023. It now shows a strong upwards trajectory to continue to reach the highest level in footfall since recording began in May 2018. This could indicate there is a growing drive to shop, experience and eat local, rather than at destination shopping experiences (e.g. Fosse Park or Leicester City Centre).

Challenges

The key challenge for our town centres is the attraction of destination retail outlets in neighbouring local authorities. Competition has dragged retail footfall away from town and district centres into out-of-town retail parks. However, with town centre usage leaning towards services and leisure opportunities, there is the opportunity to overcome the challenges town centres face.

Moreover, in a post-pandemic world, shopping habits have changed and we are seeing the boom in online shopping. This is further exacerbated by the ongoing cost of living where town centre regeneration is needed to raise footfall and support town centre businesses.

Actions

To meet these challenges, we will:

- Continue to work with town centre business groups to develop town centre related initiatives.
  Work with town centre businesses to deliver the UKSPF funded projects.
- Complete Masterplanning refreshes for each town centre.
- Bring forward both employment and residential development sites as defined in the Local Plan.
- Look at the feasibility of introducing a Business Improvement District.

Actions

Priority Two: Our Visitor Economy

Aim

Promote the Borough as an exciting place to visit.

Objectives

- To promote and market the borough as an area that offers opportunities for development, investment and relocation.
- To provide advice on the availability of sites for both businesses wishing to locate in the area and to local businesses requiring 'grow on' space.
- To develop the visitor economy, particularly related to the evening economy and our localised assets.

Key Statistics

Visitor numbers (millions) (Source: Steam Report 2022)

	2019	2022	Change (%)
Blaby District Council	3.41	3.01	-11.7
Charnwood Borough Council	6.06	5.16	-14.9
Harborough District Council	2.79	2.53	-9.3
Hinckley and Bosworth District Council	4.26	3.66	-14.1
Leicester City Council	11.71	9.92	-15.3
Melton Borough Council	1.84	1.62	-11.9
North West Leicestershire District Council	3.46	2.97	-14.0
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	**1.85**	**1.66**	**-10.2**
Leicestershire	23.67	20.61	-12.9
Greater Leicestershire	35.37	30.53	-13.7

Local Authority Share of Visitors (Source: Steam Report 2022)

	2019 (%)	2022 (%)	Change (%)
Blaby District Council	9.6	9.9	2.3
Charnwood Borough Council	17.1	16.9	-1.4
Harborough District Council	7.9	8.3	5.1
Hinckley and Bosworth District Council	12.0	12.0	-0.5
Leicester City Council	33.1	32.5	-1.9
Melton Borough Council	5.2	5.3	2.1
North West Leicestershire District Council	9.8	9.7	-0.3
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	**5.2**	**5.4**	**4.1**

Visitor numbers to Oadby and Wigston had decreased from 1.85 million in 2019 to 1.66 million in 2022. This represents a decline of 10.2%.

However, Oadby and Wigston's share of the totals for Greater Leicestershire saw a slight increase of 4.1%, perhaps owing to the reduction in visitor numbers across the county.

Number of Visitor Days (millions) (Steam Report 2022)

	2019	2022	Change
Blaby District Council	3.81	3.42	-10.2
Charnwood Borough Council	6.94	6.11	-11.9
Harborough District Council	3.24	2.99	-7.7

Hinckley and Bosworth District Council	4.75	4.15	-12.6
Leicester City Council	15.15	13.49	-10.9
Melton Borough Council	2.13	1.94	-9.0
North West Leicestershire District Council	4.14	3.68	-11.1
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	**2.17**	**1.87**	**-13.8**
Leicestershire	27.17	24.16	-11.1
Greater Leicestershire	42.32	37.65	-11.0

Local Authority Share of Visitor Days (Source: Steam Report 2022)

	2019	**2022**	**Change**
Blaby District Council	9.0	9.1	1.0
Charnwood Borough Council	16.4	16.2	-1.0
Harborough District Council	7.7	7.9	3.7
Hinckley and Bosworth District Council	11.2	11.0	-1.8
Leicester City Council	35.8	35.8	0.1
Melton Borough Council	5.0	5.1	2.3
North West Leicestershire District Council	9.8	9.8	-0.1
Oadby and Wigston Borough Council	**5.1**	**5.0**	**-3.1**

Day visitors to the borough were 1.87 million in 2022. This was a decrease of 0.3 million visitors from 2019. We are not alone; all districts in Leicestershire saw a decrease over the same period. In 2022, the district accounted for five percent of the total number of day visitors to Leicestershire. This figure mirrors our percentage of the Leicestershire Population.

Challenges

As a small borough, there is yet to be a capitalisation on key tourist attractions due to the constrained number on offer. Despite this, the share of visitor days matches the share of the population of Leicestershire. This shows we are not comparably worse, but shows there is an opportunity to promote the boroughs key visitor attractions together.

Actions

To meet these challenges, we will:

> Use the business app to bring visitors into the Borough.
- Work with Visit Leicester and other organisations to promote tourism in the Borough.
- Support the representative of Oadby and Wigston Borough at County Wide tourism boards.

Priority Three: Our Businesses

Aim

Support businesses to thrive and overcome barriers to success.

Objectives

- To develop a sustainable and successful business base and encourage and support both established businesses and start-ups.
- To engage with businesses expressing a desire to relocate in order to ensure their continued presence in the borough.
- Regeneration of key employment sites within the borough to enable them to meet the needs of modern business requirements.
- Provide ongoing support for SMEs and for those wishing to start up a business.
- To engage with and support businesses wishing to take on apprentices, and to promote the advantages to businesses of providing apprenticeship, traineeships and work placements opportunities.

Key Statistics

UK Business Count 2022 – Numbers (Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, ONS)

	Oadby and Wigston	Leicestershire	England
Micro Enterprises	2,005	39,850	2,157,245
Small Enterprises	175	3,925	204,960
Medium Enterprises	25	710	36,495
Large Enterprises	5	175	9,345
Total	2210	44,660	2,408,040

UK Business Count 2022 – Percentages (Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, ONS)

	Oadby and Wigston (%)	Leicestershire (%)	England (%)
Micro Enterprises	90.72	89.23	89.59
Small Enterprises	7.92	8.79	8.51
Medium Enterprises	1.13	1.59	1.52
Large Enterprises	0.23	0.39	0.39
Total	100	100	100

In 2022, of the 2210 businesses in the Borough, the majority (90.7%) were microbusinesses (of less than 10 members of staff). This is in line with the England average. The combined SMEs (small and medium businesses, not including micro) make up 9% of businesses.

Percentage of businesses per industry grouping 2022 (Source: Inter-Departmental Business Register, ONS)

	Oadby and Wigston (%)	Leicestershire (%)	England (%)
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	0.5	5.6	3.9
Production	9.3	7.5	5.5
Construction	12.2	14.0	13.6
Motor Trades	3.4	3.5	2.9
Whole Sale	9.0	5.1	4.0
Retail	8.6	7.0	8.1
Transport and Storage	6.1	5.5	5.1
Accommodation and Food Service	5.0	5.2	6.1
Information and Communication	6.3	4.9	7.5
Finance and Insurance	2.0	3.1	2.3
Property	4.3	4.0	4.1
Professional, Scientific and Technical	12	14.6	16.1
Business Administration and Support Services	6.4	7.9	8.5
Public Administration and Defence	0	0.5	0.3
Education	2.0	1.9	1.8
Health	7.9	3.7	3.8
Arts, Entertainments and Recreation	5.0	5.9	6.5

Business Survival Rates (Source: Business Closures and Incorporations – Oadby and Wigston, Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership, LLEP Website)

Business Closures 2011 to 2021

- During the period 2011 to 2021, 65,791 businesses were either dissolved or in liquidation across the LLEP area. Of these, 2,666 (4.1%) were in Oadby and Wigston.
- In 2019, there were 8450 businesses that were either dissolved or in liquidation. Of these, 334 (4%) were in Oadby and Wigston.
- In 2021, there were 11,289 businesses that were either dissolved or in liquidation. Of these, 367 (3.3%) were in Oadby and Wigston.
- Of those 367 businesses, 286 businesses were from the wholesale trade sector, 59 businesses were from the office admin sector and 34 businesses were from the retail trade sector.

Business Incorporations 2011 to 2021

- During the period 2011 to 2021, 97,805 businesses were incorporated. Of these, 5,963 (6.1%) were in Oadby and Wigston.
- In 2021 there were 9,529 businesses that were incorporated. Of these 529 (5.6%) were in Oadby and Wigston. In 2019, the share was 4.7%.

- The figure is a breakdown of the number of incorporated businesses across the Oadby and Wigston district area in 2021 by industry area. The figure contains those industries with the largest numbers of incorporations.
- Of those 529 businesses, 76 businesses were from real estate activities, 72 businesses were from the retail trade sector, 35 businesses were from food and beverage service activities.

Oadby and Wigston's Business Survival Rates 2023

(Source: Labour Market Profiles – Oadby and Wigston, Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership, LLEP Website, May 2023)
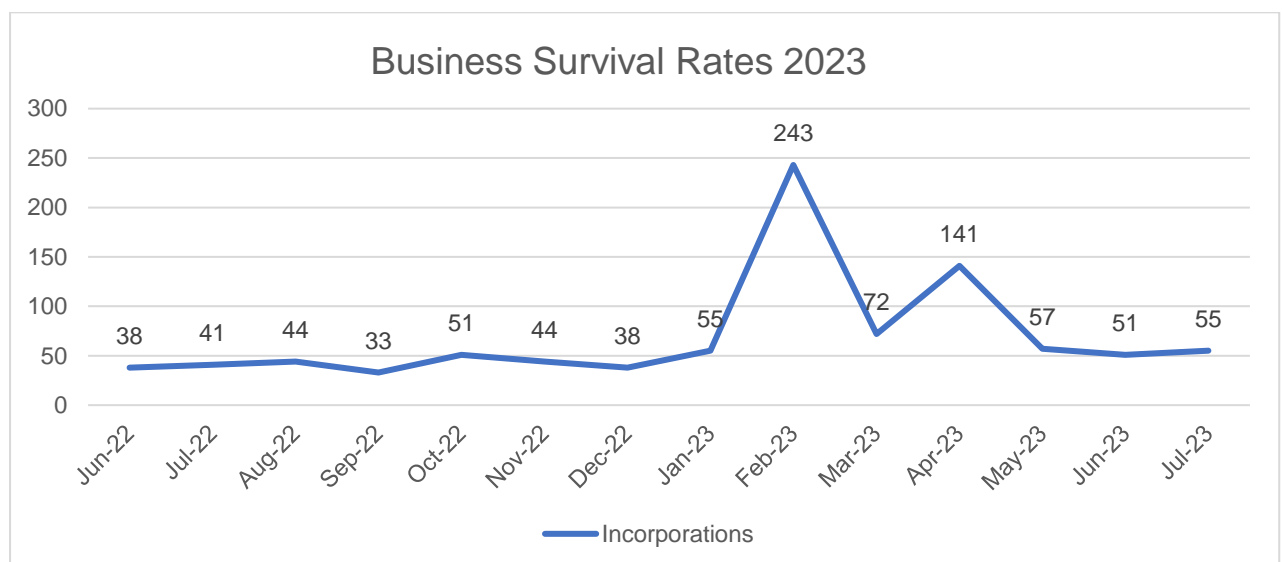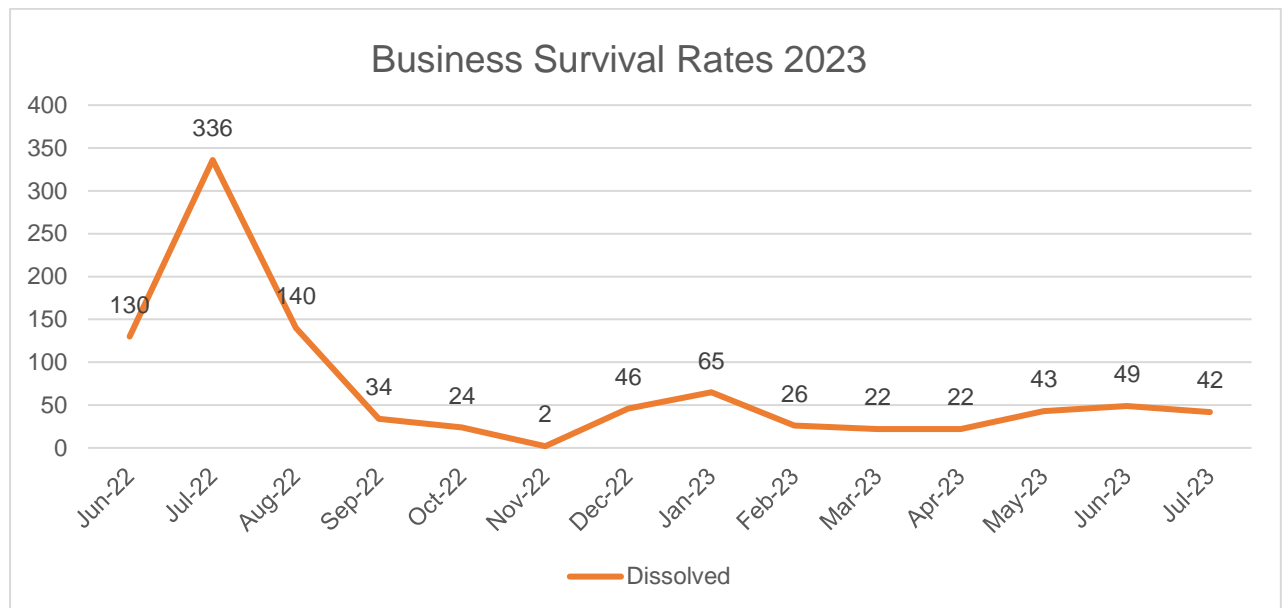
The number of dissolved businesses has remained consistent over the last 12 months. In contrast, incorporations peaked to 243 and 141 in February and April 2023, respectively.

Challenges

With a stagnant business base, the challenge for the Borough is to facilitate growth within its boundaries. We are constrained with the size of our industrial units, with a

lack of space for new developments seen across the rest of the county. This is a challenge as the Borough may not be seen as a place to start a business or move to grow.

The type of businesses we see in Oadby and Wigston is much the same as Leicestershire. Whilst not a challenge, it provides an opportunity for the Borough to learn from best practice on how to support these industries from our neighbouring local authorities.

Actions

To meet these challenges, we will:

- Work with estate agents to promote vacant units and encourage the uptake of these.
- Establish relationships with and an understanding of the needs of both existing and new businesses.
- Signpost access to business support programmes and funding opportunities
- Promote and organise business events particularly through InvestOW.
- Annually publish a business directory.
- Work to enable the provision of courses on the best use of superfast broadband opportunities.
- Provide support in respect to the planning process to help businesses to submit good quality applications.
- Regularly update the InvestOW Microsite and issue the business newsletter.

Priority Four: Our People

Aim

Maximise employment prospects and developing a skilled workforce.

Objectives

- To create widespread employment opportunities
- To work in partnership to upskill the local workforce and to enable the best opportunity to meet the potential offered by local companies.
- To have an emphasis on supporting skills development for young people Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETS) and the unemployed
- To address any mismatch between the requirements of local businesses and the skill sets of the local community.
- To develop the opportunity for local construction jobs as new development sites come forward.
- To ensure local people have access to appropriate transport facilities in order to access employment and education locations.

Key Statistics

Employment and benefits

	Oadby and Wigston	Leicestershire	England
Population 2021 (ONS Population Estimates)	57,800	1,078,600	56,536,400
Working Age Population 2021 (ONS Population Estimates)	34,900	683,900	42,174,700
Unemployment Rate May 2023 (ONS Claimant Count)	3.8%	5.9%	4.6%
Claimant Rate May 2023 (ONS Claimant Count)	2.5%	3.2%	4.0%
Gross Weekly Pay 2022 (ONS Annual Survey)	£593.9	£607.9	£645.8
Economic Activity 2022 (ONS Annual Survey)	84%	79.0%	79.6%
Job Density 2022 (ONS Job Density)	0.65	0.80	0.85

Full-time/Part-time split

	Oadby and Wigston (%)	Leicestershire (%)	England (%)
Working Full-time	63.2	71.0	70.2
Part-time	42.1	29.0	29.8

- Higher percentage of total employee jobs which are part-time in Oadby and Wigston.

Employee Jobs by Industry 2022 (Source: ONS Business Register and Employment Survey)

	Oadby and Wigston (%)	Leicestershire (%)	England (%)
B: Mining and Quarrying	0.0	0.3	0.1
C: Manufacturing	13.2	12.0	7.0
D: Electricity, Gas, Steam And Air Conditioning Supply	0.1	1.0	0.3
E: Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management And Remediation Activities	0.3	0.6	0.7
F: Construction	4.7	4.3	6.2
G: Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	18.4	15.5	13.0
H: Transportation and Storage	2.6	7.6	5.5
I: Accommodation And Food Service Activities	5.3	5.6	7.3
J: Information And Communication	1.8	2.9	4.9
K: Financial And Insurance Activities	2.1	2.5	3.5
L: Real Estate Activities	1.3	1.4	1.9
M: Professional, Scientific And Technical Activities	4.7	9.1	9.7
N: Administrative And Support Service Activities	10.5	7.6	8.6
O: Public Administration And Defence; Compulsory Social Security	4.2	3.9	4.2
P: Education	11.8	10.1	8.2
Q: Human Health and Social Work Activities	13.2	11.1	12.6
R: Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	3.7	2.3	2.7
S: Other Service Areas	2.6	1.9	2.6

Highest Level of Qualifications (Source: ONS – 2021 Census)

All usual residents aged 16 years and over	Oadby and Wigston (%)	Leicestershire (%)	England (%)
No qualifications	18.6	16.7	18.1
Level 1 and entry level qualifications	9.7	9.7	9.7
Level 2 qualifications	12.8	13.6	13.3
Apprenticeship	5.7	6.3	5.3
Level 3 Qualifications	18.5	19.2	16.9
Level 4 Qualifications or above	32.0	32.0	33.9
Other qualifications	2.7	2.3	2.8

Challenges

A significant number of employment opportunities are found outside of the Borough. This is because of our close proximity to Leicester to the north, and good connections

to large industrial sites to the southern border. With many residents commuting out of the borough for work, we also see a weak graduate retention for similar reasons. Providing high quality employment would allow for the borough to grow economically potential industries that have not located themselves in Oadby and Wigston before. In doing this, we will expect to see a rise in the gross weekly pay in the borough, where we are trailing behind Leicestershire and England.

Actions

To meet these challenges, we will:

- Support the organisation of jobs fairs to ensure people have an understanding of local employment and training opportunities.
- Work with local universities, North Warwickshire South Leicestershire College and other further education providers to reflect skills gaps and local business needs.
- Work with construction companies and developers on local sites to encourage them to take on local people for jobs, apprenticeships and work placements.
- Work with local people to access community funds.
- Engage with local transport providers to ensure people can access employment and training both within and outside of the borough.
- Promote digital skills projects.
- Encourage volunteering as a way into paid employment.

Priority Five: Our Environment

Aim

Work with our businesses and partners to collectively reduce our environmental impact.

Objectives

- To support the Council's Climate Change Strategy to encourage businesses to share best practise and foster active environments to include increased cycling and walking.

Actions

To meet these challenges, we will:

- Identify and signpost the support or funding required to help businesses to become more sustainable.
- Collaborate with our partners, sharing ideas and best practice for sustainability.
- Work in accordance with the Climate Change Strategy.

Priority Six: Our Partners

Aim

Develop strong partnerships to deliver a range of projects.

Objectives

- To ensure that a broad range of support packages are available to local businesses, particularly micro and small enterprises.
- To develop strong partnership relationships, which have the capacity to lever in funding where required to deliver both large- and small-scale projects.

Actions

- Support local business support organisations to deliver business support services.
- Work in partnership with DLUHC, LLEP, local education providers, Leicestershire County Council, the other Leicestershire District Councils to help enable economic regeneration opportunities.
- Build a strong working relationship with the University of Leicester to bring about regeneration programmes.
- Support and work with the Town Centre Business Groups in respect to initiatives and events.

Conclusion

The new strategy will assist the council in its important leadership role to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of its area. It will also function as a framework for influencing and supporting various partners and stakeholders, who will be involved in driving economic development and regeneration locally and in particular to help enable the realisation of funding opportunities by demonstrating that the council has ambitious aspirations based on factual evidence.

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