

Statistical bulletin

Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 17 October 2024

Early data on the UK economy and society. These faster indicators are created using rapid response surveys, novel data sources and innovative methods. These are official statistics in development.

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1 . Main points

- Overall retail footfall in the week to 13 October 2024 decreased by 1% when compared with both the previous week and the equivalent week of 2023 (MRI OnLocation). [Section 3: Consumer behaviour](#).
- The seasonally adjusted Direct Debit failure rate decreased by 4% in September 2024 compared with the previous month but was 4% higher than in September 2023 (Vocalink and Pay.UK). [Section 3: Consumer behaviour](#).
- The number of firms reporting an increase in turnover in September 2024, when compared with the previous month, was broadly equal to the number of firms reporting a decrease (HM Revenue and Customs Value Added Tax returns). [Section 4: Business and workforce](#).
- The total number of online job adverts on 11 October 2024 decreased by 2% from the level in the previous week and was 14% below the equivalent period of 2023 (Adzuna). [Section 4: Business and workforce](#).
- Approximately 1 in 5 (19%) trading businesses reported an increase in the prices of goods or services bought in September 2024 when compared with August 2024, while fewer than 1 in 10 (8%) reported an increase in the prices of goods or services sold ([initial results from Wave 118 of the Business Insights and Conditions Survey](#)).
- The System Average Price (SAP) of gas increased by 1% in the week to 13 October 2024 when compared with the previous week but fell by 19% compared with the equivalent week of 2023; the System Price of electricity decreased by 7% compared with the previous week and fell by 8% compared with the equivalent week of 2023 (National Gas Transmission, Elexon). [Section 5: Energy](#).
- The daily average number of UK flights in the week to 13 October 2024 decreased by 2% when compared with the previous week but was 3% higher than the equivalent week of 2023 (EUROCONTROL). [Section 6: Transport](#).
- The total number of Energy Building Performance Certificates (EPCs) for new dwellings across England and Wales in the week to 13 October 2024 was 16% lower when compared with the equivalent period of 2023 (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government). [Section 7: Housing](#).

These are [official statistics in development](#), and we advise caution when using the data. The data sources used to compile these indicators are regularly reviewed to ensure they are representative and relevant, which may mean indicators change at short notice. Read more in [Section 10: Data sources and quality](#).

2 . Latest indicators at a glance

Notes:

1. Card spending over time is pushed upwards by the impacts of both inflation on value of transactions and cash-to-card conversion.
2. Revolut adjustments to user count are at an aggregate level and as such age bands may not adjust evenly.
3. Indicators with SA in the title have been seasonally adjusted.

3 . Consumer behaviour

Monthly Direct Debit average transaction amount and failure rate

The monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount are anonymised and aggregated datasets made available to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) by Pay.UK and Vocalink. The data are unadjusted for inflation and reflect economic activity in nominal terms.

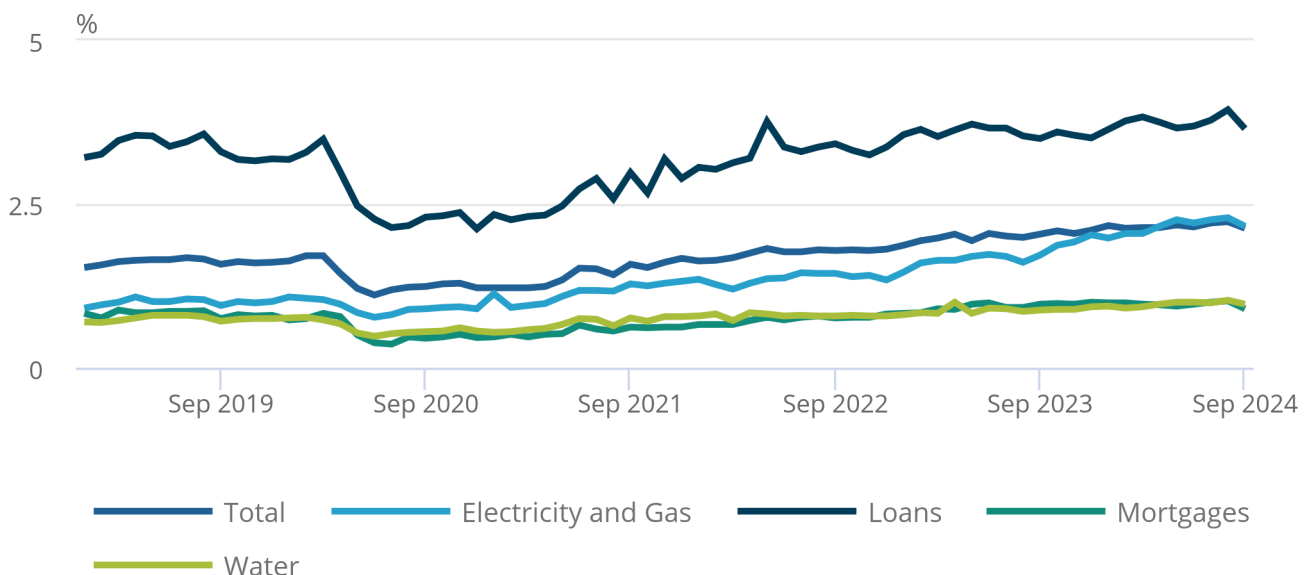
For further details on what is covered within this indicator, see our [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology](#).

Figure 1: The total Direct Debit failure rate decreased by 4% in September 2024 when compared with August 2024, but increased by 4% when compared with September 2023

Direct Debit failure rate, UK, January 2019 to September 2024, seasonally adjusted

Figure 1: The total Direct Debit failure rate decreased by 4% in September 2024 when compared with August 2024, but increased by 4% when compared with September 2023

Direct Debit failure rate, UK, January 2019 to September 2024, seasonally adjusted



Source: Pay.UK and Vocalink

Notes:

1. Data include both individual and business Direct Debit transactions.
2. The total series covers all Direct Debit failure comprising data beyond the five categories published in our Monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount dataset.
3. The underlying failure rates are low, so month-to-month volatility is expected within this series.

The seasonally adjusted “Total” Direct Debit failure rate decreased by 4% in September 2024, when compared with August 2024. This rise was a result of decreases in failure rates for “Electricity and Gas” by 4%, “Loans” by 4%, “Mortgages” by 8% and “Water” by 5%.

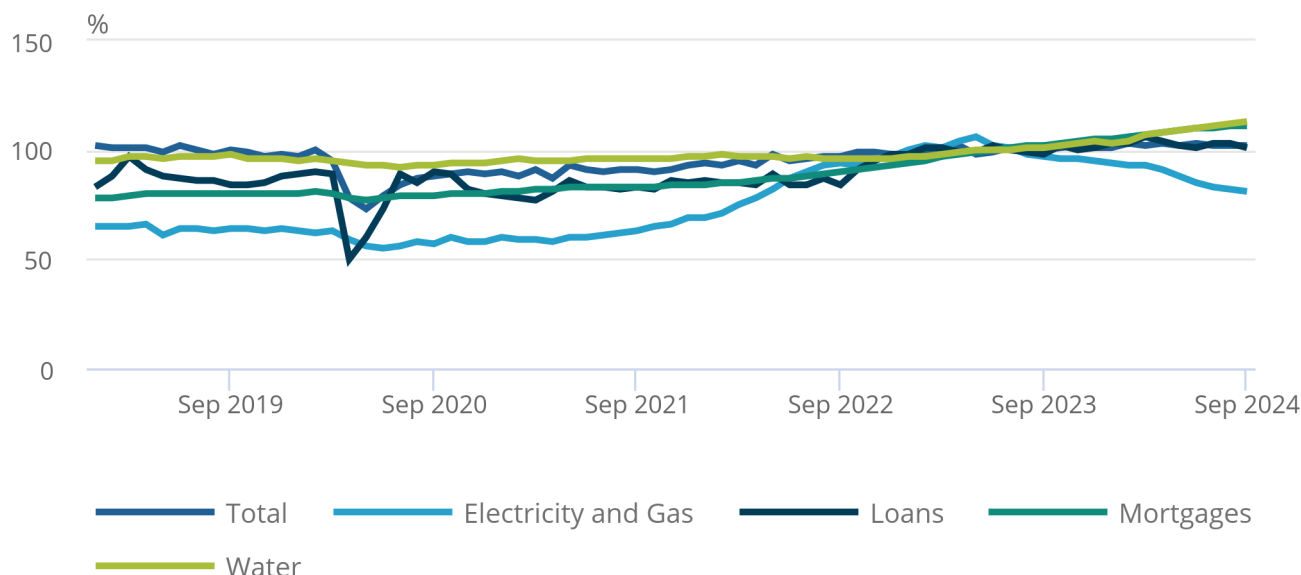
When compared with September 2023, the seasonally adjusted “Total” Direct Debit failure rate rose by 4%. Year-on-year, the failure rate for “Electricity and Gas” increased by 25%, while “Loans” and “Water” increased by 1% and 10%, respectively, with “Mortgages” decreasing by 6%.

Figure 2: The total monthly Direct Debit average transaction amount increased by 2% in September 2024 when compared with September 2023

Average Transaction Amount, UK, January 2019 to September 2024, seasonally adjusted

Figure 2: The total monthly Direct Debit average transaction amount increased by 2% in September 2024 when compared with September 2023

Average Transaction Amount, UK, January 2019 to September 2024, seasonally adjusted



Source: Pay.UK and Vocalink

Notes:

1. Data include both individual and business Direct Debit transactions.
2. The total series covers all Direct Debit transactions and is comprised of data beyond the five categories published alongside.
3. Data are not adjusted for inflation.

The total average Direct Debit transaction amount decreased by 1% in September 2024, after seasonal adjustment, when compared with August 2024. However, this average was 2% higher than in September 2023.

By category and after seasonal adjustment, the average transaction amount for "Loans" decreased by 2% in September 2024, when compared with the previous month, while "Electricity and Gas" decreased by 1%. Over the same period, the average transaction amount for "Mortgages" remained broadly unchanged, while "Water" increased by 1%.

When compared with September 2023, the average transaction amount across all categories increased, with the exception of "Electricity and Gas", which decreased by 17% year-on-year. The largest year-on-year increase was for "Water", which was 12% higher, while "Mortgages" and "Loans" were 9% and 2% higher, respectively.

Our accompanying [Monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount dataset](#) is available.

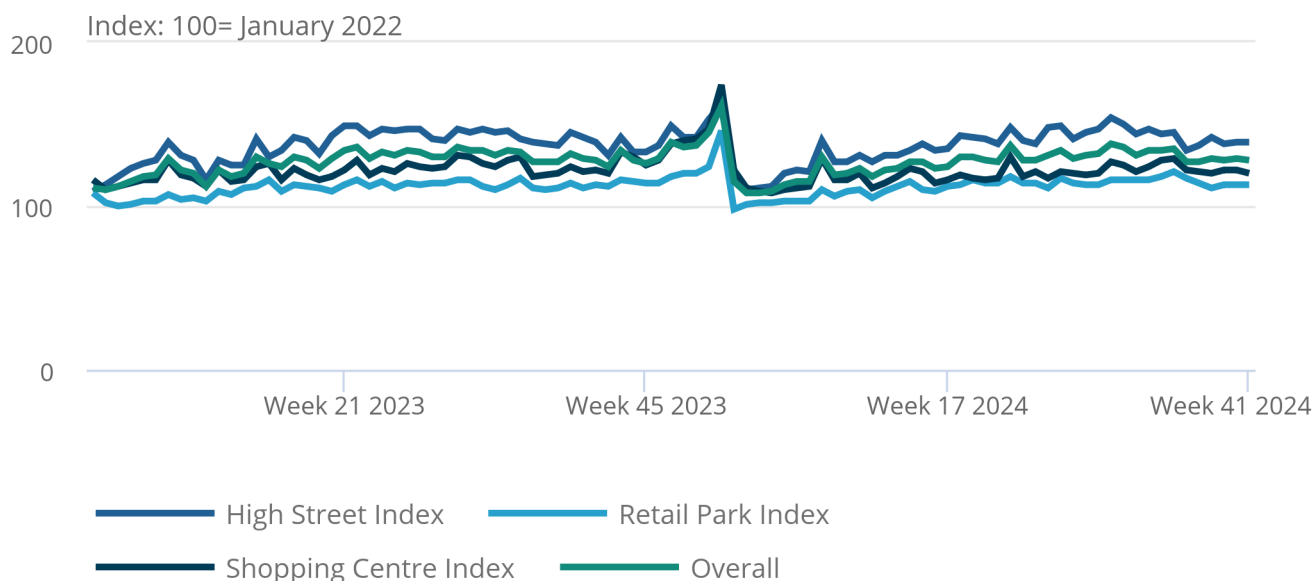
National retail footfall

Figure 3: Overall retail footfall decreased by 1% in the week to 13 October 2024, when compared with both the previous week and the equivalent week of 2023

Index of daily retail footfall volumes, UK, 1 January 2023 to 13 October 2024, non-seasonally adjusted

Figure 3: Overall retail footfall decreased by 1% in the week to 13 October 2024, when compared with both the previous week and the equivalent week of 2023

Index of daily retail footfall volumes, UK, 1 January 2023 to 13 October 2024, non-seasonally adjusted



Source: MRI OnLocation

Notes:

1. Peaks in footfall correspond to bank holidays and school holidays and for the previous 12 months are as follows: Week 51, 2023 Christmas bank holidays and school holidays; Week 7, 2024 February school half term; Week 15, 2024 Easter bank holidays and school holidays; Week 21, 2024 late May bank holiday and school half term.

High street footfall remained broadly unchanged in the week to 13 October 2024 when compared with the previous week, while retail park and shopping centre footfall decreased by 1% and 2%, respectively. When compared with the equivalent week of 2023, retail park footfall rose by 1%, while high street and shopping centre footfall both fell by 1%.

Across the 12 UK countries and English regions, overall retail footfall increased in 2 regions but decreased in 10, when compared with the previous week. The largest increase was in London and the North West of England, where retail footfall increased by 1%. The largest decreases were in the North East of England, and Yorkshire and The Humber, both falling by 5%.

When compared with the equivalent week of 2023, overall retail footfall increased in 3, decreased in 7 and remained broadly unchanged in 2 of the 12 UK countries and English regions. The largest year-on-year increases in overall retail footfall were in Northern Ireland and the East Midlands, which rose by 3% and 2%, respectively, while the largest year-on-year decreases were in the North East and South East of England, which fell by 4% and 3%, respectively.

Automotive fuel spending

The annual growth rate in average fuel price decreased by 1 percentage point in the week to 6 October 2024, compared with the previous week, and was 8 percentage points lower than the equivalent week of 2023.

The annual growth rate in the estimated fuel demand per transaction increased by 1 percentage point in the week to 6 October 2024, compared with the previous week, and was 9 percentage points higher than the equivalent week of 2023.

Our accompanying [Automotive fuel spending dataset](#) is available.

4 . Business and workforce

Online job adverts

Figure 4: The total number of online job adverts on 11 October 2024 was 2% lower when compared with the previous week, and 14% lower than the equivalent period of 2023

Volume of online job adverts, UK, 7 February 2018 to 11 October 2024, non-seasonally adjusted

Notes:

1. These estimates of online job adverts are provided by Adzuna, an online job search engine, and are an indicator for the demand of labour.
2. Week-on-week changes in online job advert volumes are outlined as percentages, rather than as percentage-point changes. Percentage-change figures quoted in the commentary will therefore not necessarily match the percentage-point changes observed in the chart and in our [Online job advert estimates dataset](#).
3. Further category breakdowns are available in our Online job advert estimates dataset, and more details on the methodology are available in our [Using Adzuna data to derive an indicator of weekly vacancies: Experimental Statistics methodology](#).

Download the data

The total number of job adverts on 11 October 2024 decreased by 2% when compared with the previous week. Job adverts fell in 9 of the 12 UK countries and regions, with the largest falls being 2% in Scotland, London, the North East, the North West and the South East. For the remaining 3 regions, adverts remained broadly stable week-on-week.

The total number of job adverts fell by 14% when compared with the equivalent period of 2023. Adverts in all UK countries and English regions were lower than the equivalent period of 2023, except in Northern Ireland, which saw a year-on-year increase. Because of additional sources of job vacancy data added by Adzuna, there is a step-change increase in the number of Northern Ireland adverts. This is reflected in the 30 August 2024 snapshot, onwards.

The largest year-on-year decrease was in Scotland, at 30%, with Wales seeing the second largest decrease at 26%.

When compared with the equivalent period of 2023, the total number of online job adverts fell in 21 of the 28 job categories. The categories with the largest year-on-year decreases were "Admin, clerical and secretarial", "Wholesale and retail" and "Marketing, advertising and PR", decreasing by 42%, 41% and 40%, respectively.

Our accompanying [Online job advert estimates dataset](#) is available.

Value Added Tax flash estimates

Turnover diffusion indices are an aggregate measure used to track whether most firms are reporting an increase or decrease in turnover in their Value Added Tax (VAT) returns. They are calculated as the percentage of firms with increasing turnover, minus the percentage of firms with decreasing turnover.

These estimates have been weighted according to each industry's contribution to the economy. As services have the greatest contribution, they have a greater contribution to the total index.

The indices are constructed to lie between 1 and negative 1. An index of 0.05 means that 5% more firms reported an increase in turnover compared with the previous month than those reporting a decrease in turnover. Conversely, an index of negative 0.05 means that 5% more firms reported a decrease in turnover compared with the previous month.

Figure 5: The number of firms reporting an increase in turnover in September 2024, when compared with the previous month, was broadly equal to the number of firms reporting a decrease in turnover

Weighted Value Added Tax turnover diffusion indices, seasonally adjusted, UK, January 2020 to September 2024

Notes:

1. These data are current price so may reflect elements of inflation.
2. The shaded areas represent the 95% confidence limits.
3. The confidence limits are 1.96 standard deviations of the seasonally adjusted series, centred around zero. If a data point is outside of these limits, it is a statistically significant difference.

After seasonal adjustment, the number of firms reporting an increase in turnover in September 2024, when compared with the previous month, was broadly equal to the number of firms reporting a decrease. This is unchanged from August 2024.

The services sector, the largest contributing sector to total gross domestic product (GDP), also reported a broadly equal number of firms with increased turnover and decreased turnover in September 2024, when compared with the previous month. This is broadly unchanged from August 2024.

The production sector saw the largest month-on-month increase of 6 percentage points, with a net 4% of firms reporting increased turnover in September 2024, compared with the previous month. This latest figure is within normal month-on-month variation.

A net negative 2% of firms in the construction sector reported increased turnover on the previous month, decreasing 5 percentage points from August 2024. This latest figure is within normal month-on-month variation. Meanwhile, a net 1% of firms in the agriculture sector reported increased turnover compared with the previous month, a decrease of 1 percentage point from the previous month.

The data are seasonally adjusted. More information on the compilation and methodology of these estimates can be found in our [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology](#).

5 . Energy

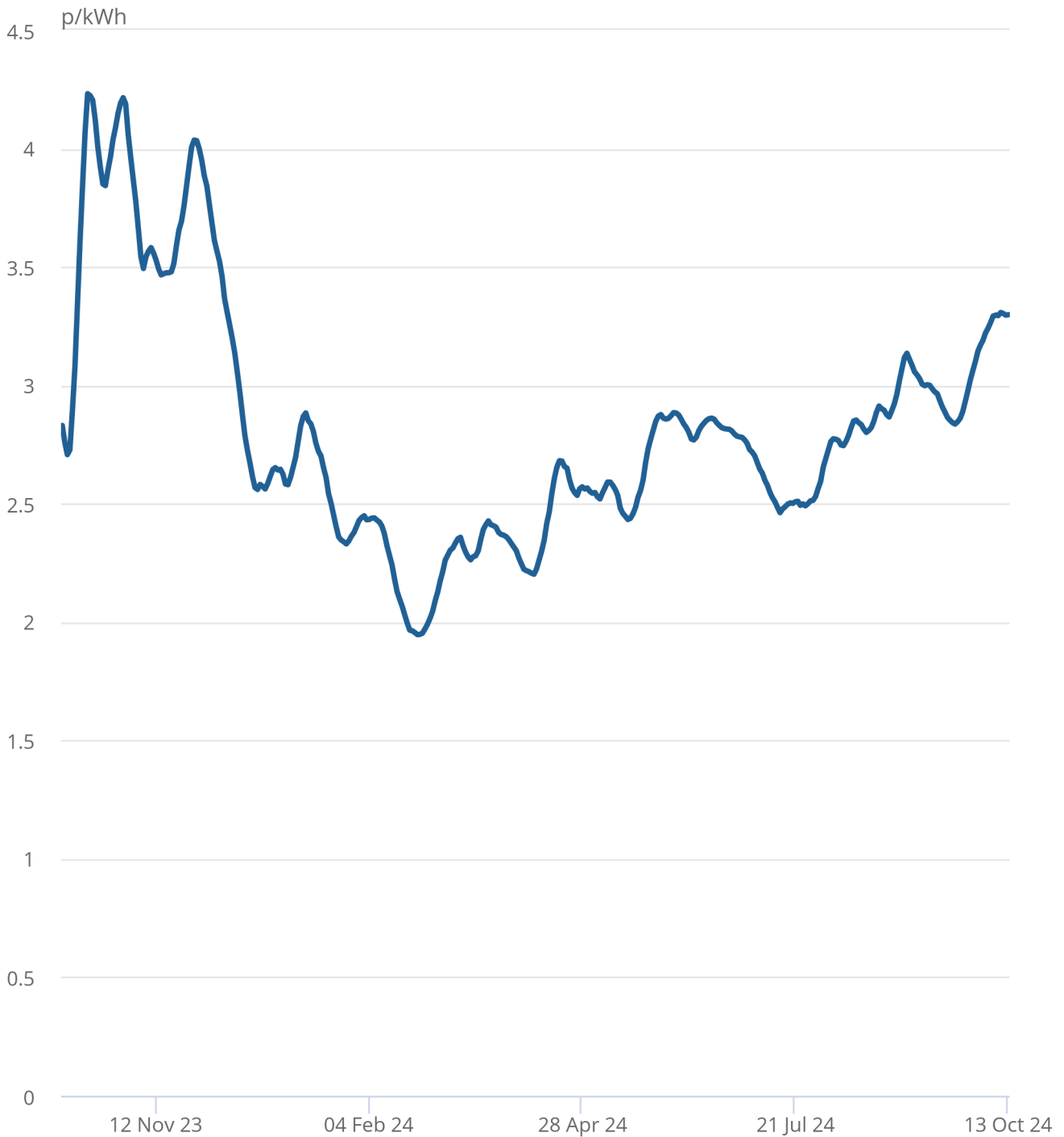
System Average Price of gas

Figure 6: the System Average Price (SAP) of gas increased by 1% compared with the previous week, and was down 19% compared with the equivalent week of 2023

System average price, pence per kilowatt hour, 1 January 2024 to 13 October 2024, GB, non-seasonally adjusted

Figure 6: the System Average Price (SAP) of gas increased by 1% compared with the previous week, and was down 19% compared with the equivalent week of 2023

System average price, pence per kilowatt hour, 1 January 2024 to 13 October 2024, GB, non-seasonally adjusted



Source: National Gas Transmission

Notes:

1. The prices are in pence per kilowatt hour (p/kwh).

The System Average Price (SAP) of gas increased by 1% in the week to 13 October 2024, compared with the previous week, from a seven-day average price of 3.265 pence per kilowatt hour to 3.298 pence per kilowatt hour. This was still 19% lower than the equivalent week of 2023, which had a seven-day average price of 4.069 pence per kilowatt hour.

Our accompanying [System Average Price of gas dataset](#) is available.

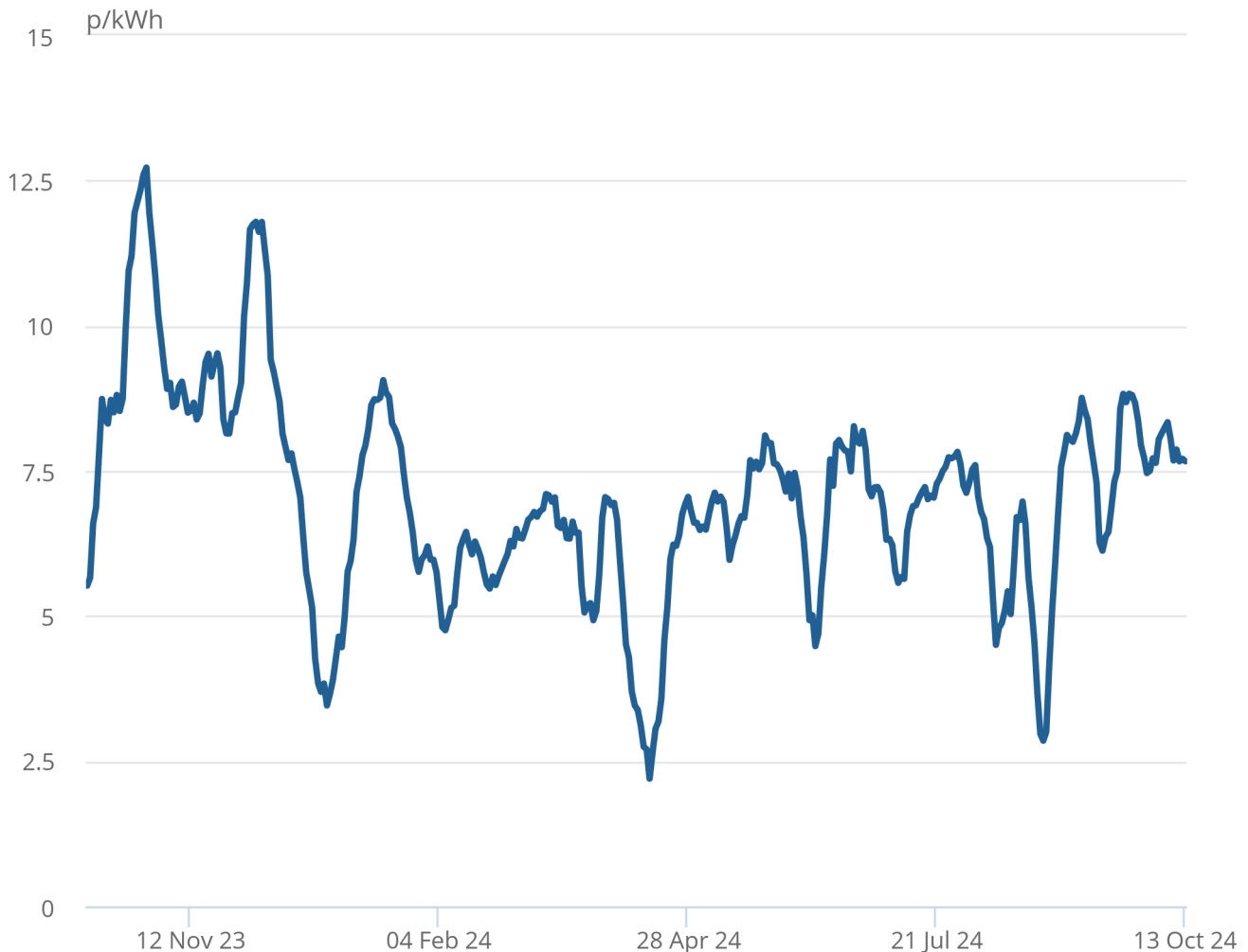
System Price of electricity

Figure 7: The System Price of electricity decreased by 7%, when compared with the previous week, and was 8% lower than the equivalent price of 2023

System Price of electricity, pence per kilowatt hour, 15 October 2023 to 13 October 2024, GB, non-seasonally adjusted

Figure 7: The System Price of electricity decreased by 7%, when compared with the previous week, and was 8% lower than the equivalent price of 2023

System Price of electricity, pence per kilowatt hour, 15 October 2023 to 13 October 2024, GB, non-seasonally adjusted



Source: Elexon

The System Price of electricity decreased by 7% in the week to 13 October 2024 compared with the previous week, from a seven-day average price of 8.243 pence per kilowatt hour to 7.664 pence per kilowatt hour. This was 8% lower than the equivalent week of 2023, which had a seven-day average price of 8.313 pence per kilowatt hour.

Our accompanying [System Price of electricity dataset](#) is available.

6 . Transport

Daily UK flights

The daily average number of UK flights decreased by 2% in the week to 13 October 2024 when compared with the previous week, but was 3% higher than the equivalent week of 2023.

Our accompanying [Daily UK flights dataset](#) is available.

7 . Housing

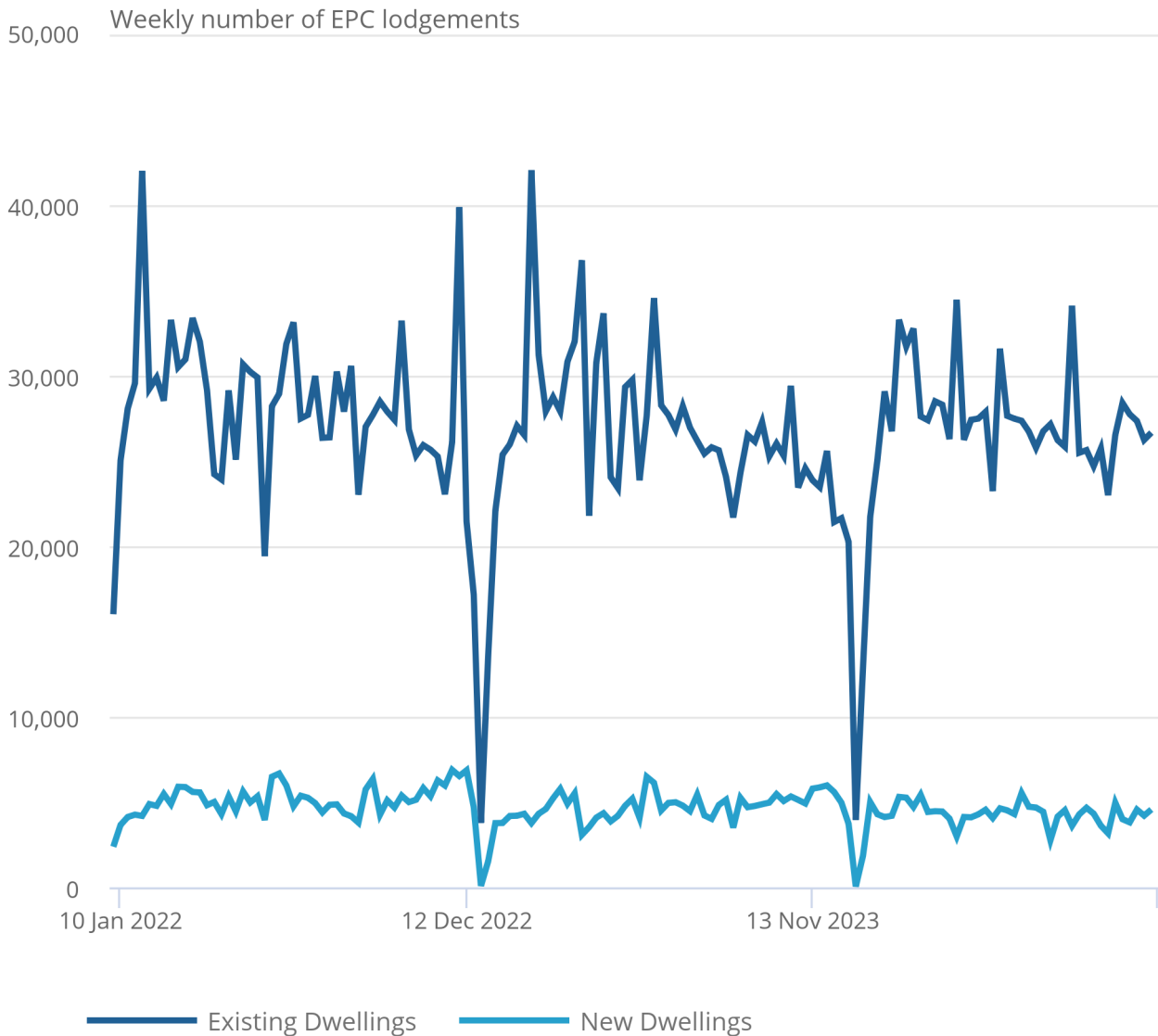
Energy Performance Building Certificates

Figure 8: The number of Energy Performance Building Certificates for new dwellings was 16% lower than the equivalent period of 2023, but was 2% higher for existing dwellings

Number of Energy Performance Building Certificates (EPC) lodgements, 3 January 2022 to 13 October 2024, England and Wales, non-seasonally adjusted

Figure 8: The number of Energy Performance Building Certificates for new dwellings was 16% lower than the equivalent period of 2023, but was 2% higher for existing dwellings

Number of Energy Performance Building Certificates (EPC) lodgements, 3 January 2022 to 13 October 2024, England and Wales, non-seasonally adjusted



Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

The total number of Energy Performance Building Certificates (EPCs) in the week to 13 October 2024 was 9% higher than the previous week for new dwellings across England and Wales, and was 2% higher for existing dwellings. For new dwellings EPCs, the largest week-on-week increases were in the East of England and East Midlands, which rose by 54% and 32%, respectively. The largest decreases were in the North West and South East, which fell by 20% and 18%, respectively.

For existing dwellings EPCs, the largest week-on-week increases were in the North West and the West Midlands, which rose by 13% and 9%, respectively. The largest decrease was in the East Midlands, which fell by 12%. When compared with the equivalent period of 2023, the number of EPCs for new dwellings was 16% lower, while the number of EPCs for existing dwellings was 2% higher.

8 . Data

[Online job advert estimates](#)

Dataset | Released 17 October 2024

Weekly snapshot of online job advert indices covering the UK job market. These are official statistics in development. Source: Adzuna

[System Average Price \(SAP\) of gas](#)

Dataset | Released 17 October 2024

Daily data showing System Average Price (SAP) of gas, and rolling seven-day average, traded in Great Britain over the On-the-Day Commodity Market (OCM). These are official statistics in development. Source: National Gas Transmission.

[System Price of electricity](#)

Dataset | Released 17 October 2024

Daily data showing the System Price of electricity, and rolling seven-day average, in Great Britain. These are official statistics in development. Source: Elexon

This section lists a selection of the data available in this publication. For the full list of available datasets, please see our [accompanying dataset page](#).

9 . Glossary

Real-time indicator

A real-time indicator provides insights into economic activity using close-to-real-time big data, administrative data sources, rapid response surveys or experimental estimates, which represent useful economic and social concepts.

Seasonal adjustment

Seasonal adjustment is the identification and removal of consistent and systematic variation in time series associated with the time of year. For more information on seasonal variation, and how we implement seasonal adjustment, see Section 2 of our [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology article](#).

10 . Data sources and quality

Official statistics in development

These statistics are labelled as [official statistics in development](#). Until September 2023, these were called "experimental statistics". Read more about the change in our [Guide to official statistics in development](#).

We are developing how we collect and produce the data to improve the quality of these statistics. Find out more in our [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators methodology article](#).

Once the developments are complete, we will review the statistics with the Statistics Head of Profession. We will decide if the statistics are of sufficient quality and value to be published as official statistics, or if further development is needed. Production may be stopped if they are not of sufficient quality or value. Users will be informed of the outcome and any changes.

We value your feedback on these statistics. If you would like to get in touch, please email realtime.indicators@ons.gov.uk.

Dataset release dates and intended release frequency

Latest release dates and intended release frequency of our associated datasets are available in this section. Please note that there may be some change to the intended release frequency for a variety of reasons, such as data availability. If you would like further information about any of these datasets, or previous release dates, please email realtime.indicators@ons.gov.uk.

Weekly data release

- The [UK spending on credit and debit cards dataset](#) was last updated on 16 May 2024.
- The [Revolut spending on debit cards dataset](#) was last updated on 1 February 2024.
- The [Automotive fuel spending dataset](#) was last updated on 17 October 2024.
- The [Online job advert estimates dataset](#) was last updated on 17 October 2024.
- The [Company incorporations, voluntary dissolutions and compulsory dissolutions dataset](#) was last updated on 17 October 2024.
- The [Advanced notification of potential redundancies dataset](#) was last updated on 10 October 2024.
- The [System Average price of gas dataset](#) was last updated on 17 October 2024.
- The [System Price of electricity dataset](#) was last updated on 17 October 2024.
- The [Weekly shipping indicators dataset](#) was last updated on 5 April 2024.
- The [Daily UK flights dataset](#) was last updated on 17 October 2024.

Fortnightly data release

- The [Transactions at Pret A Manger dataset](#) was last updated on 10 October 2024.

Monthly data release

- The [Monthly Direct Debit failure rate and average transaction amount dataset](#) was last updated on 17 October 2024.
- The [Value Added Tax \(VAT\) flash estimates dataset](#) was last updated on 17 October 2024.
- The [Renter affordability for new tenancies dataset](#) was last updated on 10 October 2024.

Quarterly data release

- The [Sales and jobs in small businesses dataset](#) was last updated on 1 August 2024.

Strengths and limitations

These statistics have been produced to provide timely indicators of the effect of developing world events on the UK economy and society, using close-to-real-time big data, administrative data sources, rapid response surveys, or official statistics in development.

The data presented in this bulletin are reviewed and refreshed on a regular basis. Indicators are swapped in and out of the publication based on their suitability and availability.

Seasonality

Seasonal fluctuations are likely to be present in many of these indicators, so caution must be applied when interpreting changes in series that are not seasonally adjusted.

11 . Related links

[GDP monthly estimate, UK](#)

Bulletin | Released monthly

Gross domestic product (GDP) measures the value of goods and services produced in the UK. It estimates the size of and growth in the economy.

[Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain](#)

Bulletin | Released fortnightly

Social insights on daily life and events, including important issues, cost of living, and artificial intelligence from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

[Business insights and impact on the UK economy](#)

Bulletin | Released fortnightly

The impact of challenges facing the economy and other events on UK businesses. Based on responses from the voluntary fortnightly business survey (BICS) to deliver real-time information to help assess issues affecting UK businesses and economy, including financial performance, workforce, trade, and business resilience. These are official statistics in development.

12 . Cite this statistical bulletin

Office for National Statistics (ONS), published 17 October 2024, ONS website, statistical bulletin, [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators: 17 October 2024](#)