HARROGATE DISTRICT: LOCAL ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

November 2004

1. Introduction

This profile of the local economy has been prepared by Harrogate Borough Council's Economic Development Unit. It is intended to provide an overview about what is happening in the local economy in terms of key economic issues such as population changes, economic activity rates, unemployment levels, education & skills, business performance and earnings. The document should be viewed as a 'snapshot' of the local economy, as at November 2004.

In preparing this document we have drawn upon numerous sources of information and, where possible, have included the most relevant and up-to-date statistics. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information provided is accurate, but Harrogate Borough Council accepts no legal responsibility for any errors or omissions in the information.

The local economy inevitably plays a key role within the work of the Council, most prominently in relation to the work of the Economic Development Unit and Harrogate International Centre. However it is fully acknowledged that the local economy must be viewed as a cross cutting issue for the Council because it is affected by, and can impact upon, numerous other areas of service delivery including planning, housing and leisure & tourism.

This economic overview will be used to inform the business planning process for the Economic Development Unit in 2005/06. It is intended that this document will then be updated in October 2005, as part of our business planning process for 2006/07.

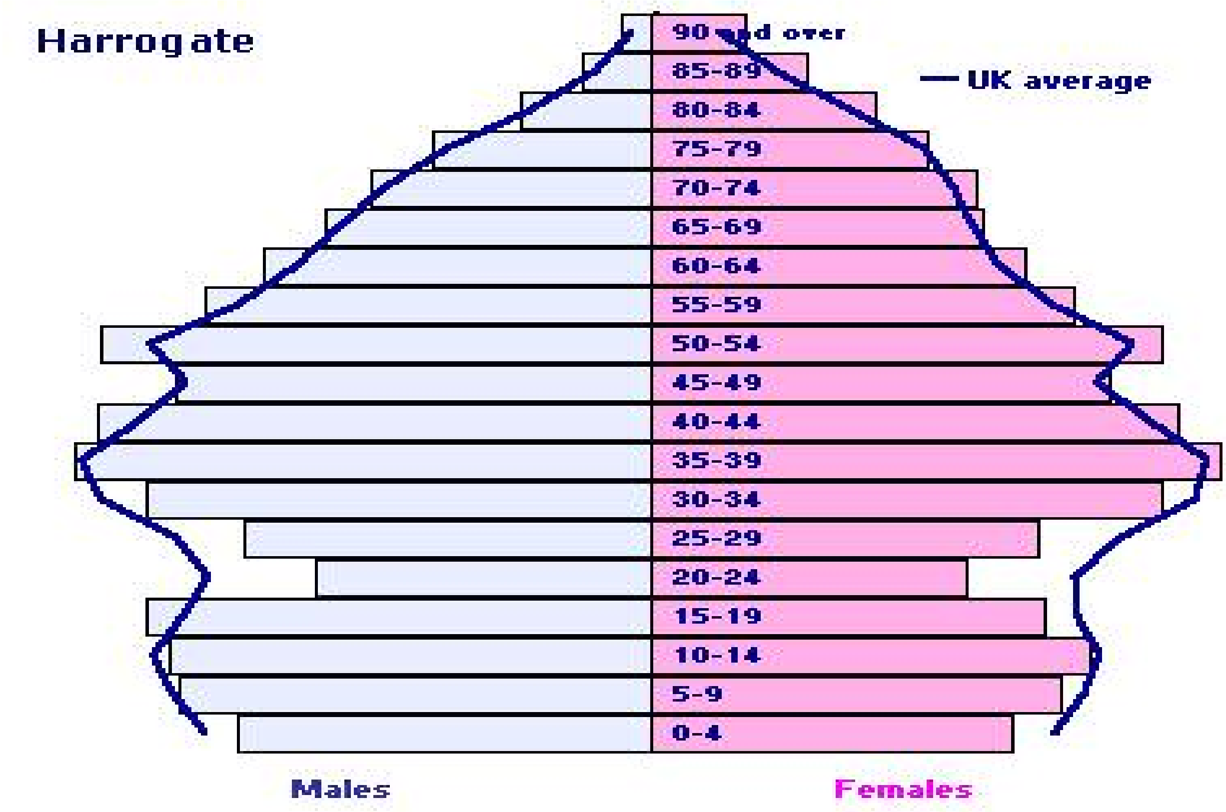
2. Population

The 2001 Census count calculated the population of the Harrogate district as 151,339. This represented approximately 27% of the total York and North Yorkshire population, with females accounting for 51.6% and males the remaining 48.4%. The latest population estimates (mid 2003) indicate that the population of the district now stands at 152,832.

According to Population Projections for the Yorkshire & Humber Region (ONS 2001), the Harrogate District is expected to experience a 13% increase in population over a 25-year period culminating in a total population of 166,000 in 2021. This is the highest projected increase in the region. Much of this increase is expected to result from inward migration, a high proportion of which are expected to be high-income earners.

A closer look at the age group split for the Harrogate District (according to the 2001 Census results) illustrates that the District is below the national population averages in age groups between 20 and 35 but higher than the national average in all 50+ age groups. This trend (illustrated in Figure 1 below) is reflective of an ageing population, which inevitably impacts upon the local economy both now and in the future, particularly in terms of workforce availability. A key factor thought to be contributing to this trend is the loss of young people from the District to attend University, who then are unable to return due to the upward pressure on house prices within the District (see Section 8 – Housing) together with a perceived shortage of graduate jobs in the area.

Figure 1: Harrogate District Population by Age Group (compared to National Average)



Source: Census 2001, ONS

More detailed information about the findings of the 2001 Census is available on the National Statistics Website at www.statistics.gov.uk/census

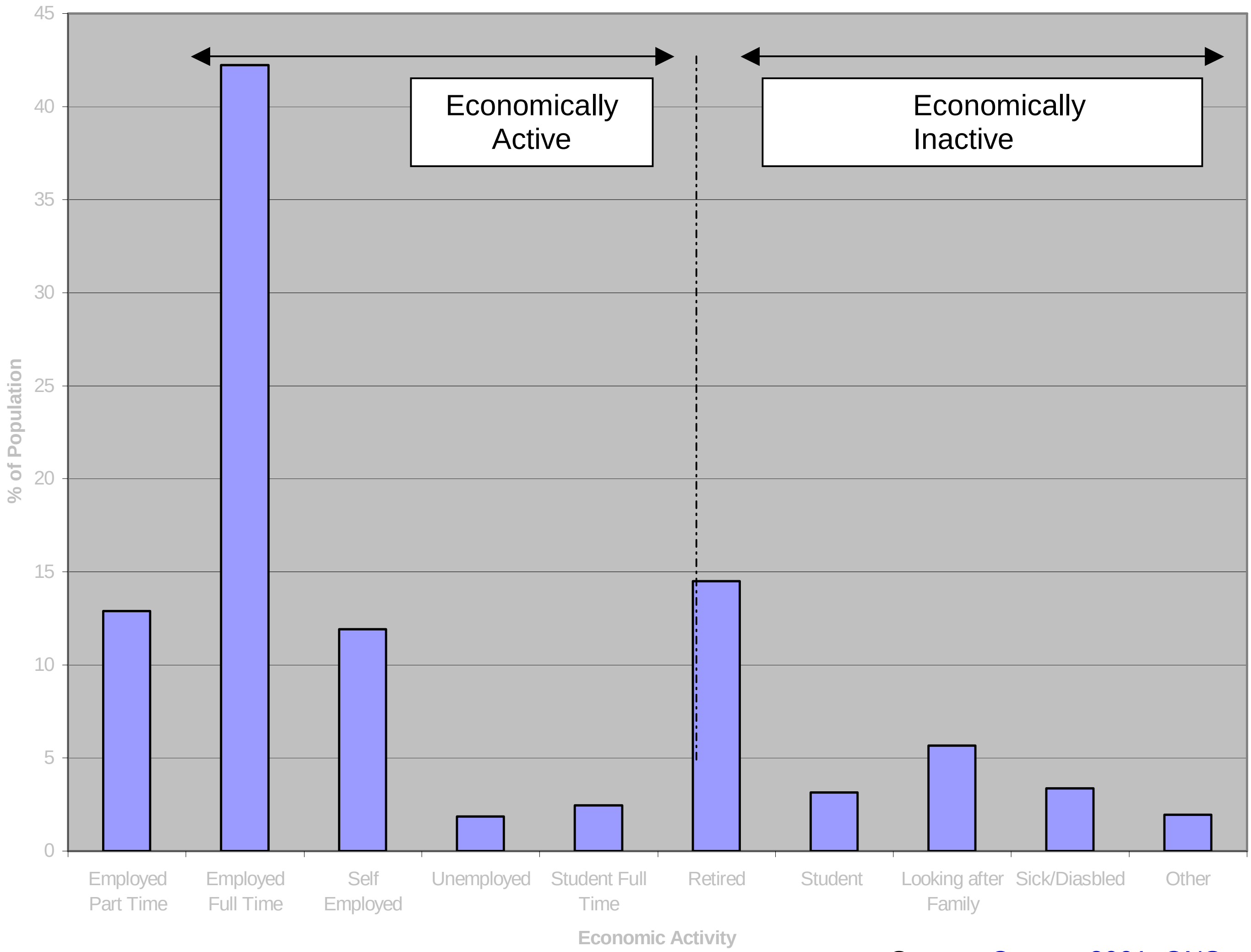
3. Economic Activity

The 2001 Census reported 77,943 economically active individuals of working age (in employment or seeking employment) in the District, representing an economic activity rate of 71.4%. This is significantly higher than the national rate of 66.5%.

Of these economically active individuals, 42.2% were in full time employment in the District compared to 40.5% nationally. The percentage of self-employed people in the District was also above the national average, accounting for 11.9% of people in Harrogate District, compared to 8.3% in England & Wales.

The breakdown of economic activity by type for the Harrogate District is illustrated in Figure 2 below:

Figure 2: Economic Activity of Harrogate District Population



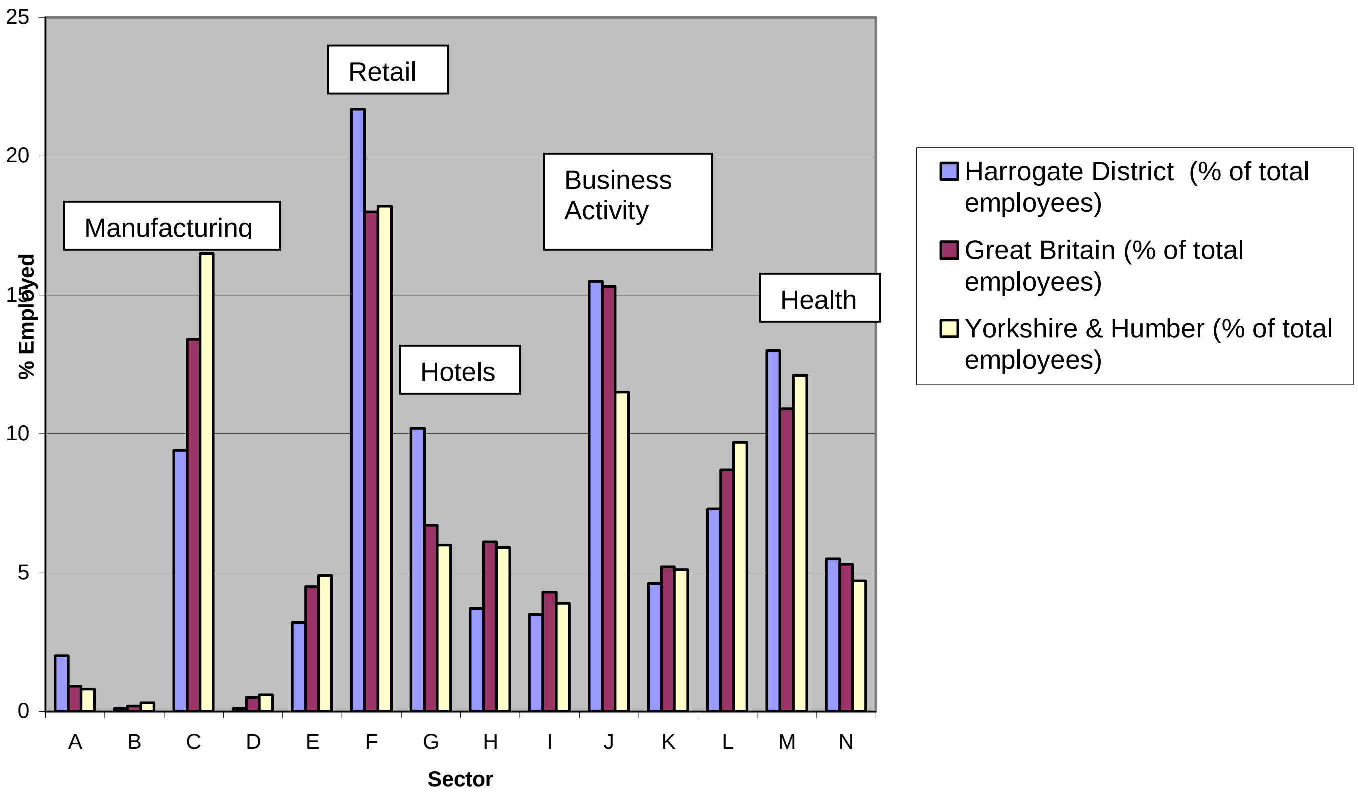
Source: [Census 2001, ONS]

More detailed information about the findings of the 2001 Census is available on the National Statistics Website at www.statistics.gov.uk/census.

4. Employment

Employment figures are derived from the Annual Business Inquiry (formerly known as the Annual Employment Survey), which records the number of employees in employment. The figures exclude the self-employed, forces personnel and government supported trainees. Figure 3 shows the latest Annual Business Inquiry data (2002), to provide estimates for the number of people employed in different sectors. Results from the 2003 ABI will be published at the end of December 2004.

Figure 3: Employment by sector at local, regional and national level

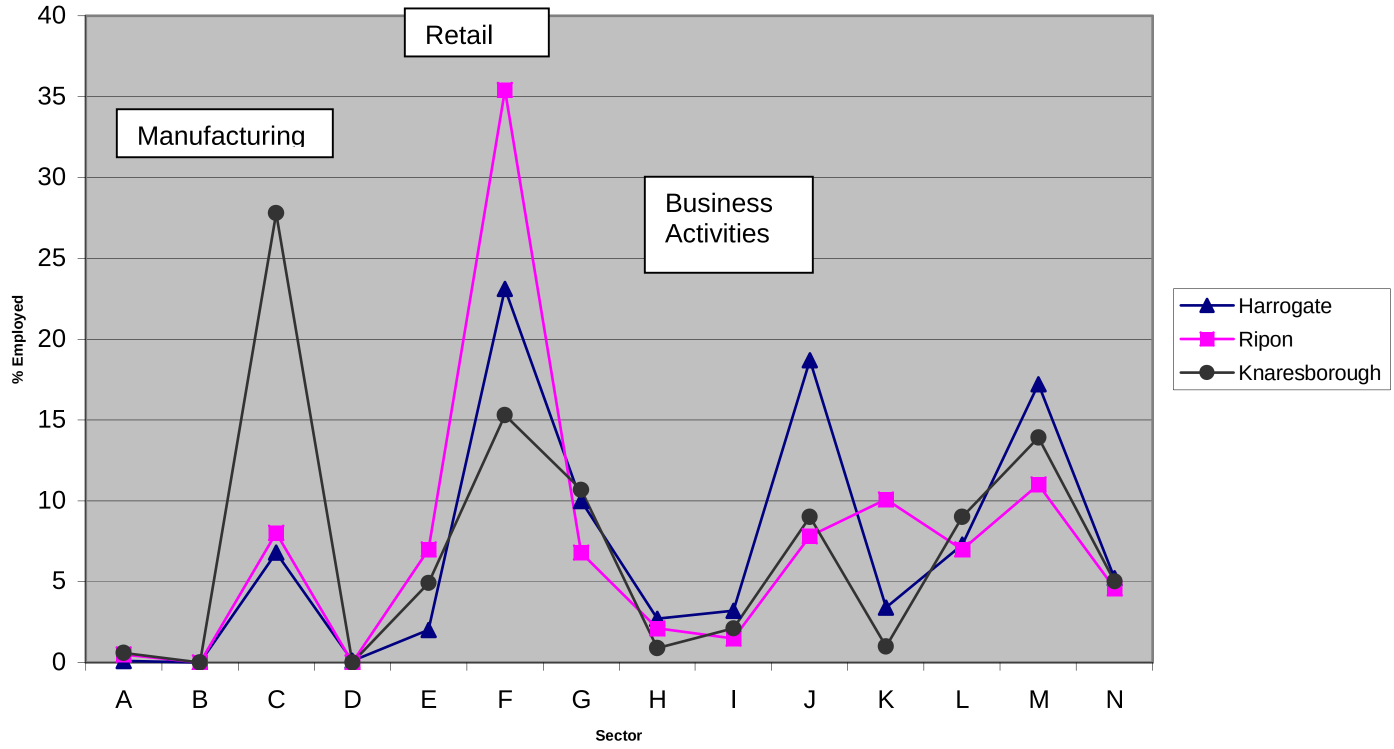


Sector Key (for Fig's 3,4&5) Source: Annual Business Inquiry 2002 , NOMIS

A	Agriculture, hunting & forestry	I	Financial Intermediation
B	Mining and quarrying	J	Real Estate, renting, business activities
C	Manufacturing		
D	Electricity, gas and water supply	K	Public administration/defence; social security
E	Construction		
F	Wholesale, retail trade etc.	L	Education
G	Hotels and Restaurants	M	Health and social work
H	Transport, storage and communication	N	Other community, social/personal service

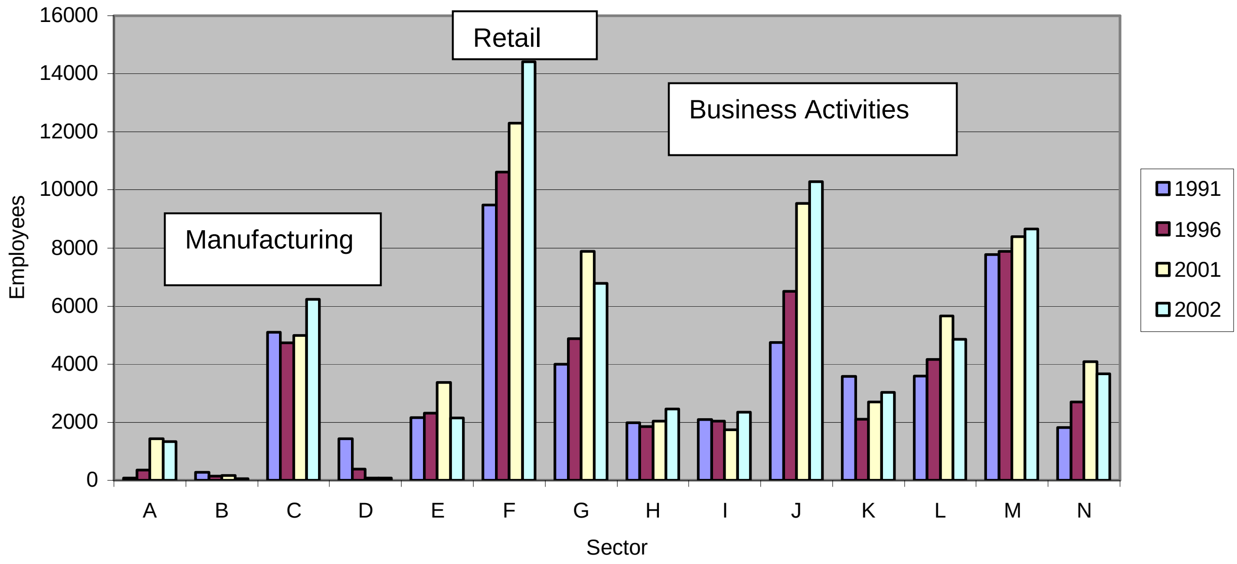
The data in figure 3 above indicates that, whilst the Harrogate District picture largely mirrors that for the region and the country as a whole, there are notable exceptions in manufacturing (which is significantly lower in the District), as well as retail, hotels and agriculture (which are all higher in the District). Figure 4 below, illustrates the split of employment sectors throughout the District's three main settlements. It is particularly interesting to note the differing importance of the manufacturing sector (C) which accounts for 27.8% of employment in Knaresborough but just 6.8% and 8.0% in Harrogate and Ripon respectively and the retail sector (F) which is significantly higher in Ripon (35.4%) than in Harrogate (23.1%) and Knaresborough (15.3%).

Figure 4: Employment by Sector in Harrogate, Ripon & Knaresborough



In terms of how the employment structure is changing in the District, Figure 5 below compares the latest survey results to those of previous years.

Figure 5: Employees by Sector 1991 - 2002 (Harrogate District)



The above data indicates the continuing growth of sectors F (Retail) and J (Business Activities), with the retail sector remaining by far the biggest employment sector in the District. In 2002, employment in the Manufacturing sector (C) increased by 25% whilst the previously buoyant Hotel & Restaurants sector (G) decreased its employment by 14%. Decreases in employment were also notable in the Construction sector (E), Education sector (L) and Community/Social sector (N), all of which had seen steady growth in the previous years.

More detailed information about the Annual Business Inquiry is available on the NOMIS Labour Market Statistics Website at www.nomisweb.co.uk.

5. Unemployment

Unemployment in the district is low and relatively stable, with levels fluctuating between 0.9 and 1.1% over the past 12 months. Government unemployment figures for September 2004 show the total number out of work in Harrogate district as 917, a rate of 1.0%. This represents a slight decrease (48) compared to the previous year, detailed below.

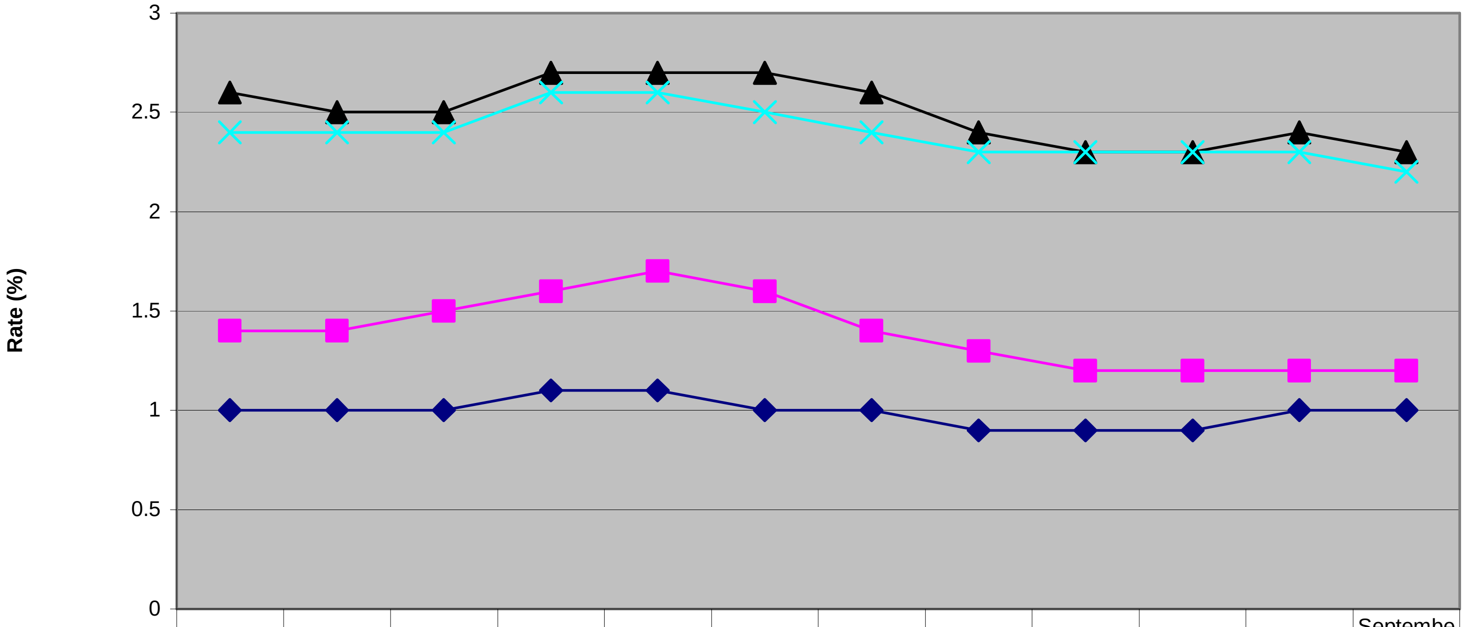
Figure 6: Unemployment September 2004

Unemployment	September 2004		September 2003	
	Number	Rate (%)	Number	Rate (%)
Harrogate (district)	917	1.0	965	1.2
North Yorkshire	4229	1.2	4774	1.4
Yorkshire & Humber	70657	2.3*	82011	2.7*
Great Britain	796921	2.2*	886144	2.5*

Source NOMIS October 2004 * = ONS Residence-based figure

Figure 7 below illustrates the low rate of unemployment that has been seen in the Harrogate district between October 2003 and September 2004, compared to the higher rates seen during the same period at county, regional and national levels.

Figure 7: Comparison of Unemployment Rates (October 2003-September 2004)



	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September
District	1	1	1	1.1	1.1	1	1	0.9	0.9	0.9	1	1
County	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.6	1.4	1.3	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
Region	2.6	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.3
GB	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.2

Month (2003/04)

District County Region GB

In the latest figures, women make up 30% of the jobless. 175 males (27.2% of total male unemployed) and 50 females (18.8% of total females unemployed) have been out of work for more than 6 months. This represents a District Long Term Unemployment (LTU) rate of 24.2%, which compares to a county LTU of 28.5% and a national LTU of 33.2%

6. Business Performance

VAT registrations and de-registrations provide an overview of business start up's and closures and can therefore be used as an indicator of the health of the local economy and levels of entrepreneurship. The most recent figures (2002) show a net increase of 70 in VAT registrations in the Harrogate District between 2001 and 2002, as illustrated in Figure 8 below. This represents a slight increase compared to the net change in registrations in the previous year.

Figure 8: VAT Registrations and De-registrations in Harrogate District (1995-2002)

	Year								
	1995	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**	**1999**	**2000**	**2001**	**2002**	**2003**
Registrations	495	549	575	559	575	590	540	610	*
De-registrations	605	560	540	435	490	510	475	540	*
Stocks (start of year)	5985	5875	5855	5890	6005	6090	6155	6235	6485
Net change	-110	-20	35	115	85	80	65	70	*

* Breakdown for 2003 not yet available

The fact that de-registration rates are only slightly lower than registration rates can suggest high levels of competition in the District. In addition this trend can point to an economy characterised by seasonality as well as a high proportion of small sized firms who are more 'at risk' of closure. This high 'turnover' of enterprises is characteristic of many rural areas throughout the UK.

The net change in VAT registrations by sector is illustrated in figure 9 below.

Figure 9: Net change in stocks by Sector

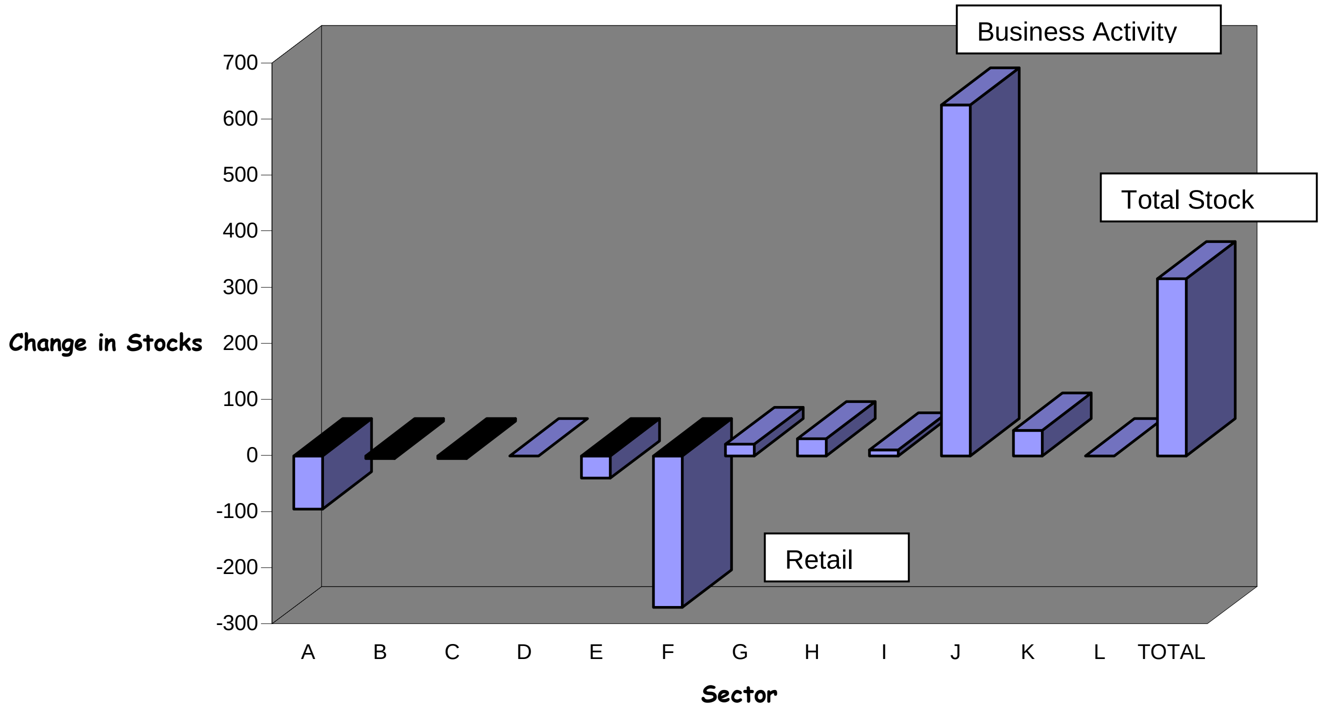
Industrial Sector	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	**Overall Net change 1994-2002**
Agriculture; fishing	-5	-20	-10	-5	0	-20	-15	-20	-95
Mining; energy	0	-5	0	0	0	0	0	0	-5
Manufacturing	0	5	0	0	0	-10	-5	5	-5
Construction	-20	5	-15	-10	-20	10	0	10	-40
Wholesale & retail	-95	-80	-40	-20	-25	-10	0	0	-270
Hotels/restaurants	-5	-15	5	15	10	-10	10	10	20
Transport	-15	15	-5	5	5	5	10	10	30
Finance	0	5	5	5	0	0	0	-5	10
Business Activity	35	75	75	105	110	75	85	65	625
Public admin;other	-5	-5	40	15	0	20	-15	-5	45
Education; health	0	0	-20	5	10	5	0	0	0
Total	-110	-20	35	115	90	65	70	70	315

Source: NOMIS

Looking first at net change in the latest annual figures (2002), business stocks have increased in the Manufacturing, Construction, Hotel & Restaurants, Transport and, most significantly, in the Business Activity sector. The increase in stocks in the Manufacturing sector in 2002 follows a decrease in this sector in the previous two years. Decreases in business stocks 2002 were seen in Agriculture, Finance and Public Administration.

It is also interesting to look at the overall net change for the 7 year period (1995-2002) in terms of the most significant sectors of growth and decline in stocks over time. This is illustrated below in Figure 10:

Figure 10: Net change in Business Stocks (1995-2002)



Sector Key Source: Annual Business Inquiry (2002), NOMIS

A	Agriculture, hunting & forestry	H	Transport, storage and communication
B	Mining and quarrying	I	Financial Intermediation
C	Manufacturing	J	Real Estate, renting, business activities
D	Electricity, gas and water supply	K	Public administration/defence; social security
E	Construction		
F	Wholesale, retail trade etc.	L	Education / Health and social work
G	Hotels and Restaurants		

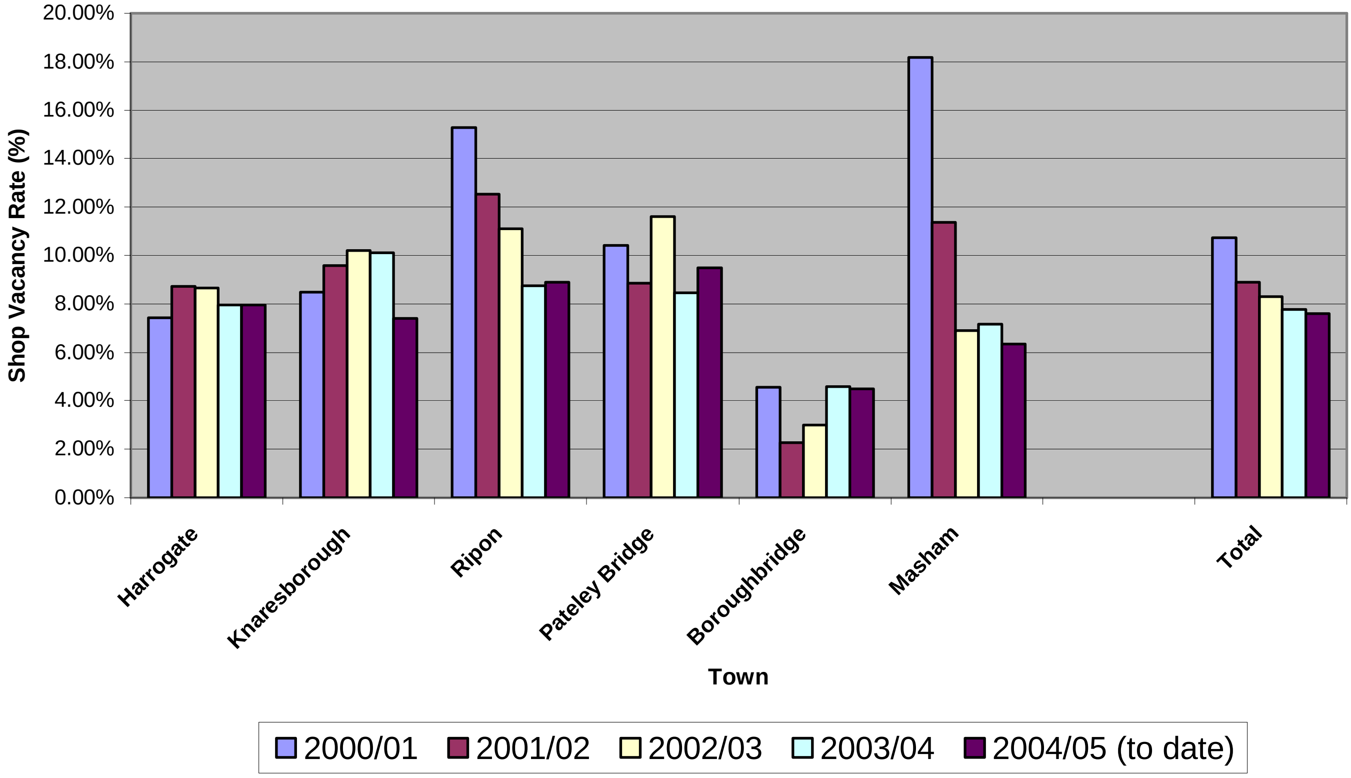
As figure 10 illustrates above, the most significant growth over the last 7 years in Harrogate district business stocks has been evident in the Business Activity (Sector J) sector, and the total Business Stock. Slight growth has also been seen in the Hotel and Restaurant (Sector G), Transport (Sector H), Finance (Sector I) and Public administration (Sector K) sectors. Over the same 7-year period, the most significant overall decline in business stocks is evident in the Retail sector (Sector F) and, to a lesser extent, in the Agricultural (Sector A) , Mining (Sector B) and Construction (Sector E) sectors.

More detailed information about the Annual Business Inquiry is available on the NOMIS Labour Market Statistics Website at www.nomisweb.co.uk.

7. Shop Vacancy Rates

Shop vacancy rates are monitored on a quarterly basis for each of the District's main settlements, by way of assessing the relative health and vitality of the individual town centres across the Harrogate District. The rates are calculated by dividing the number of vacant shops in an area by the total number of shops available, using statistics from the Council's business rates system. Figure 11 below illustrates vacancy rates for the key settlements over the past 5 years.

Figure 11: % Shop Vacancy Rates in Main Settlements



Source: Harrogate Borough Council EDU October 2004

As figure 11 illustrates above, the average shop vacancy rate for the District has fallen gradually since 2000/01, and continues to do so in the current financial year (2004/05). Vacancy rates are currently lowest in Boroughbridge (4.5%), and have been over the past 5 years. Vacancy rates have fallen this year in Knaresborough and Masham, following minor increases in previous years. Ripon and Pateley Bridge have seen a slight increase in vacancy rates in the past 6 months, although both have enjoyed overall decreases in vacancy rates over the 5-year period. Vacancies in Harrogate Town remain stable at 8%, and have shown the least fluctuation over the period.

More detailed information about Shop Vacancy Rates can be obtained from the Economic Development Unit. Contact us via email at ed02@harrogate.gov.uk or telephone 01423 556077.

8. Earnings

The New Earnings Survey is based on a 1 per cent sample of employees in employment, information on whose earnings and hours is obtained in confidence from employers. It does not cover the self-employed. The earnings information collected relates to gross pay before tax, national insurance or other deductions, and excludes payments in kind. It is restricted to earnings relating to the survey pay period and so excludes payments of arrears from another period made during the survey period; any payments due as a result of a pay settlement but not yet paid at the time of the survey will also be excluded. The main purpose of the survey is to obtain information about the levels, distribution and make-up of earnings.

Figure 12 below illustrates that, according to the NES (Workplace) figures, Harrogate District average earnings are higher than the average earnings for the County and the Region, but lower than the national figures. It is interesting to note that the gap between earnings in Harrogate and York has significantly altered over the past 7 years, with average Harrogate earnings rising above those of York for the first time in 2003.

Figure 12: Comparisons of Average Weekly Earnings (1997-2003)

	Average gross weekly earnings (£)						
	1997	**1998**	**1999**	**2000**	**2001**	**2002**	**2003**
Harrogate District	324.60	349.60	363.30	369.70	397.90	423.60	440.49
York	351.10	368.10	382.00	406.60	405.30	432.20	439.20
North Yorkshire	315.90	330.30	347.20	356.10	381.30	381.30	422.29
Yorkshire Region	323.20	344.90	361.00	373.70	392.10	392.10	425.51
GB	367.60	384.50	400.1	410.60	444.30	444.30	475.78

Source: NES 1997-2003, NOMIS

It should be noted that the NES does not take account of different price levels between areas and therefore is not an indication of standard of living. Neither do the figures take account of the different mix of occupations in different areas and therefore can not be used to claim that pay for 'like work' is different e.g. an area could have a lower level of average earnings than another if it has a higher proportion of employees in low paid sectors. In relation to this point it can be noted that the five lowest paid industry groups in the UK, according to the NES 2003, are Restaurants, Retail Sales of Food, Bars, Hotels and Agriculture – all of which are key employment sectors within the Harrogate District.

It is also important to remember that the above figures are based upon the NES workplace statistics and therefore will illustrate the average earnings of people working in the Harrogate District. What it does not capture is the earnings of people who live in the Harrogate District but travel outside of the District to work.

A residence based breakdown was recently released for the 2003 earnings data (NES) but unfortunately the detail of the Harrogate district data can not be released in this report due to sample size confidentiality regulations. However the figures do suggest that residence based earnings in the district are significantly higher than the national average as well as being the highest for any district/unitary authority area in the Yorkshire & Humber Region.

These statistics can be interpreted as people choosing to enjoy the high quality of life offered by living in the Harrogate District but travelling outside of the District to access higher paid jobs in nearby cities. Commuting statistics from the 2001 Census support this interpretation, illustrating that just over 19000 residents of the district travel elsewhere for work. Meanwhile around 12500 residents of other districts travel into Harrogate for work purposes, creating a new commuting flow of -6526 for the district.

A recent survey by Barclays Bank highlighted Harrogate & Knaresborough as the 82nd wealthiest constituency out of 550 in the country, and is one of just 24 in the top 100 on the list that are outside London. The same survey indicated that 7.2% of Harrogate's population earn more than £60,000 per annum, a percentage that has increased by 42% in the last 12 months (Source, Barclays Bank 2004).

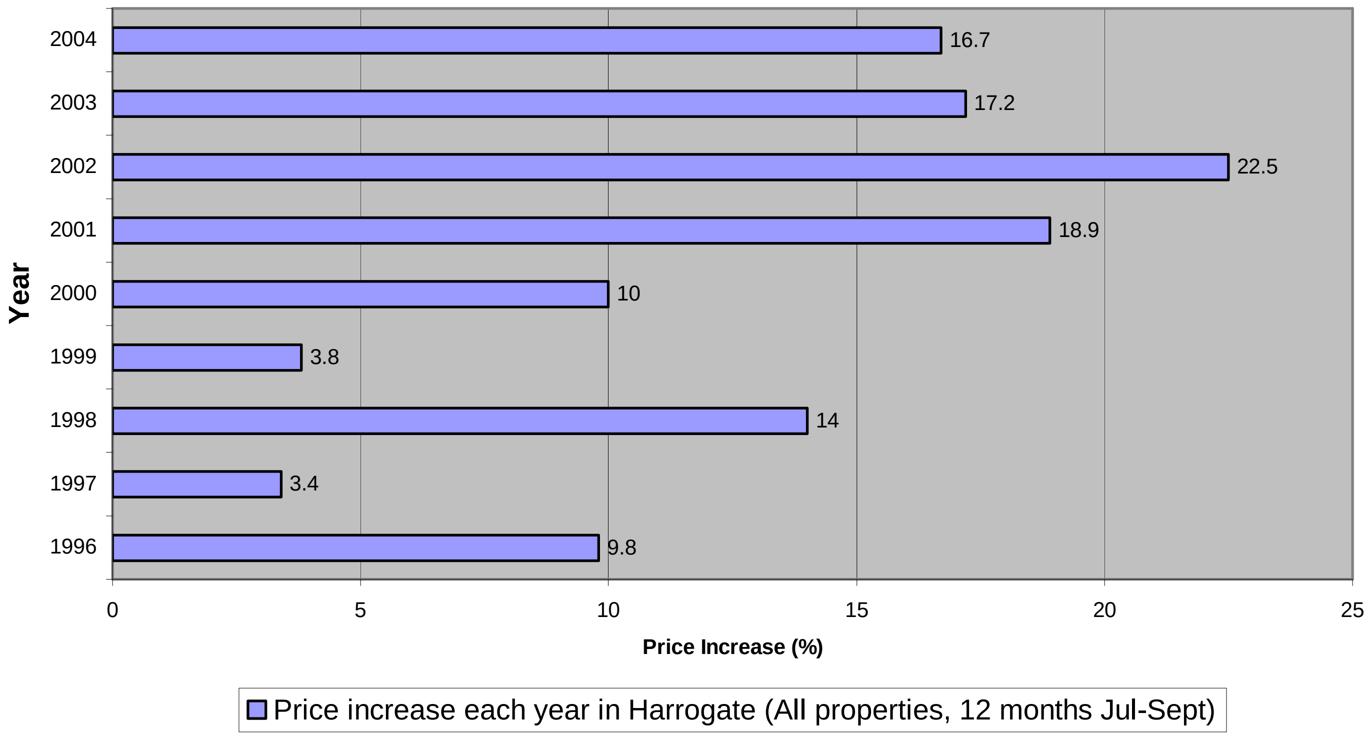
More detailed information about the New Earnings Survey is available on the NOMIS Labour Market Statistics Website at www.nomisweb.co.uk. Information on the 2001 Census is available on the National Statistics website at www.statistics.gov.uk/census.

9. Housing

The Harrogate District falls within the so-called 'Golden Triangle' (Leeds-Harrogate-York), which undoubtedly has an effect on the local housing market due to the perceived high quality of life in the area. Indeed, demand for certain properties often outstrip supply, which consequently pushes high house prices up even further. The underlying concern is that the high house prices and a limited supply of low cost housing is leading to shortages in the workforce i.e. through young people not being able to afford to buy property in the District, therefore being forced to move away.

Significant increases in house prices and a general buoyancy in the local housing market have been experienced in Harrogate during the last 8 years, as shown in Fig. 14 below. NB All statistics in this section are sourced from the Land Registry.

Figure 14: % Annual Increase in Average House Prices in Harrogate District



The average house price in the District is currently £233,461 (Jul-Sept 2004). This breakdown by property type is shown below in figure 15. The graph also shows how prices have increased in each property type compared to the 2003 prices, with the greatest increase evident in detached houses.

Figure 15: Average Price by House Type (September 2004)

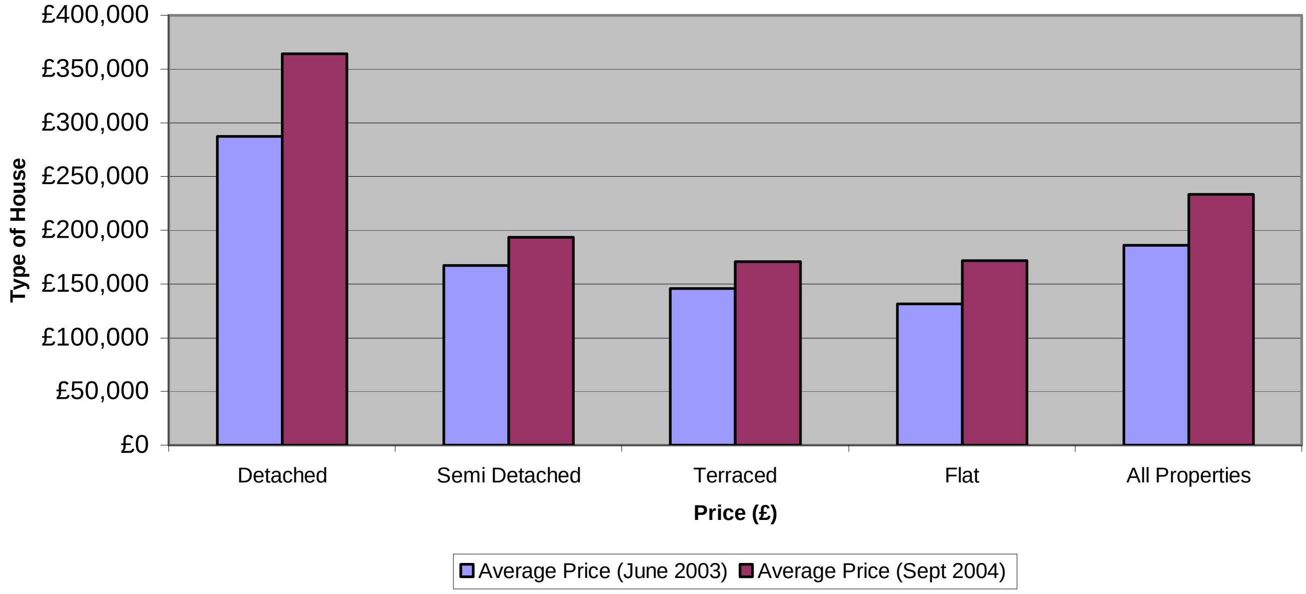
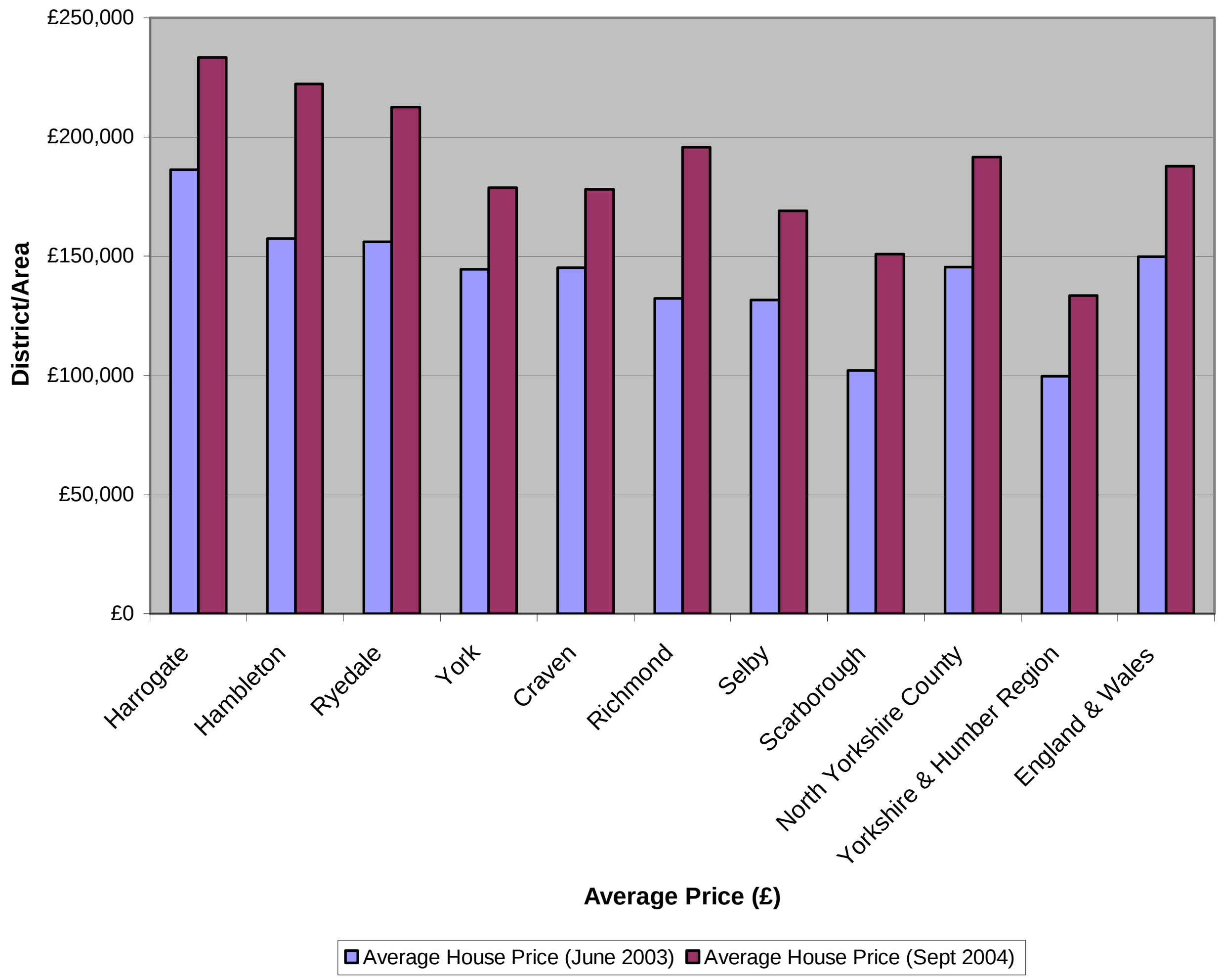


Figure 16: Average House Price by District/Area (September 2004)

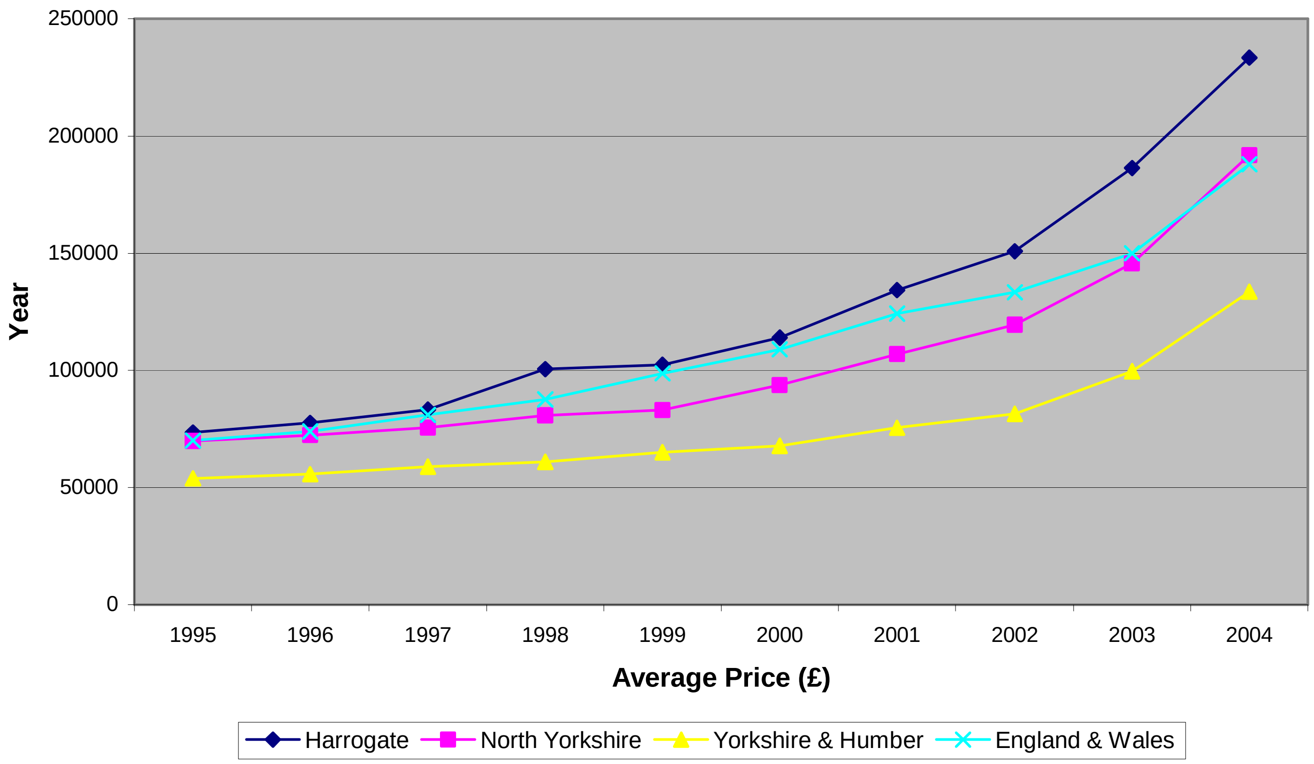


Fi

Figure 16 above illustrate that average house prices in the District are 24% higher than the national average, which is equivalent to the position in June 2003. Prices in the district are 21% higher than the North Yorkshire average (compared to 28% in 2003) and 74% higher than the regional average (compared to 87% in 2003). These figures illustrate that, whilst the property market is still booming in Harrogate, prices in other parts of the region are beginning to catch up.

The graph below (Figure 17) illustrates how house prices have increased over the past 9 years at district, county, regional and national levels.

Figure 17: Increase in Average House Prices over last 9 years by District/Area



Looking within the District, average house prices in September 2004 were higher in Harrogate Town (£227,596) than in Knaresborough (£221,751) and Ripon (£209,807).Over the past 12 months Knaresborough house prices have seen an increase of just 6.4% compared to 16.9% in Harrogate Town and 18.9% in Ripon.

More detailed information about house prices is available on the Land Registry Website at www.landregistry.co.uk. Alternatively, graphs and tables of local property price trends are available at www.proviser.co.uk.

10. Skills, Education & Training

Qualifications achieved by young people in Harrogate are above the already high York and North Yorkshire average and well above the national average. Figure 18 below illustrates school exam results in the District at GCSE level.

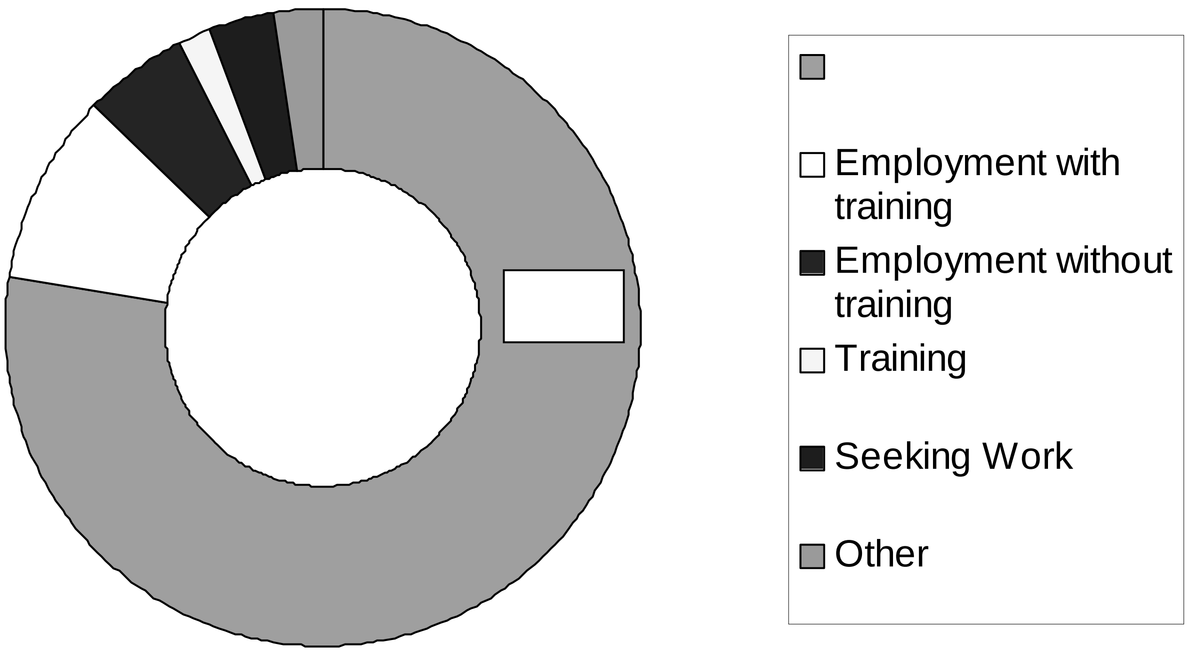
Figure 18: School Exam Results (not including private schools or colleges)

School	% aged 15/16 with 5 or more GCSE's grade C and above			
	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
Boroughbridge High	54	60	57	53
Harrogate Grammar	71	78	83	77
Harrogate Granby High	48	42	45	46
King James	73	69	71	72
Nidderdale High School	66	65	55	59
Ripon Grammar	96	97	95	97
Rossett	56	49	52	46
St Aidans CofE High	82	84	84	87
St John Fisher RC High	71	81	80	78
Harrogate Average (mean %)	**68.5**	**69.4**	**69.1**	**68.3**
National Average	**-**	**47.1**	**51.5**	**52.9**

Source: DfES 2004

The vast majority of school leavers (77%) in the District choose to stay in education beyond the age of 16, as illustrated in Figure 19 below. This represents a 4% increase compared to 2002.

Figure 19: School Leavers Destinations 2003 – Year 11



Source: Connexions 2004

In terms of gender, a higher proportion of females (84%) choose to stay on after Year 11 than males (72%). In contrast 22% of male Year 11 leavers in 2003 are now in work or seeking work, compared to just 14% of female leavers.

The vast majority of pupils (81%) leaving school after Year 13 (age 17/18) also choose to continue their studies in further education rather than enter the job market. Once again the proportion of females (81%) choosing to stay on in education after Year 13 is higher than males (80%), although the gap has narrowed in recent years.

In relation to educational attainment, the District has a high proportion (35%) of the working age population with qualifications at NVQ Level 4 (Degree level or higher). This is higher than the county (26%), regional (21%) and national (24%) averages (Source: Labour Force Survey 2002)

In terms of basic skills the Harrogate District has a lower than average proportion of the population with poor literacy and numeracy skills (Source: Basic Skills Agency).

The national average for people with poor literacy skills is 24%, compared to a Harrogate average of 20.6%. Five wards in the District have levels above the 24% national average, namely Granby (25.6%), Kirkby Malzeard (35%), Mashamshire (28.3%), Ripon East (26.9%) and Wharfedale Moors (27.7%)

The national average for people with poor numeracy skills is 24%, compared to a Harrogate average of 19.2%. Two wards in the District have above the 24% national average, namely Kirkby Malzeard (25.1%) and Ripon East (27.2%).

You can find a range of education and skills statistics for the Harrogate district (including ward level data) on the Dep't for Education & Skills Website at http://www.dfes.gov.uk/inyourarea.

11. Employment Land & Property

The availability of employment land and property is an important issue for the local economy, to ensure that sufficient space is available for existing businesses to expand within the District, and for new businesses to start up.

Employment Land in the Local Plan
Allocations for new employment land are identified in the District Local Plan, which was adopted by the Council in 2001 and runs until 2006.

The current employment land position (July 2004) in relation to the Local Plan is:

- 74.86 hectares of employment land allocated or committed within the District
- 42.38 hectares of employment land developed on these sites between April 1991 and April 2004
- This represents an annual development rate of 3.30 hectares. If this development rate continues at the same pace for the next 2 years, a further 6.52 hectares could be developed by April 2006.
- This would equate to a total of 48.90 hectares being developed by the end of the Local Plan period (2006)

It is important to note that the above figures only relate to larger employment sites within the District, and it is recognised that there is additional employment development occurring across the District on smaller sites.

Vacant Commercial Sites & Premises
It is also useful to look at the availability of vacant sites and premises currently being marketed for business use in the Harrogate District. With the help of local property agents, the Council's Economic Development Unit maintain an up-to-date database of vacant commercial premises, and can monitor the total amount of floorspace on the database at any given time, as illustrated by the statistics below from October 2004:

Sq M (Sq Ft)	OFFICE	INDUSTRIAL	HECTARE (ACRES)	LAND
0 - 93 (0 - 999)	906.22 (9,755)	596.52 (6,421)	0-1.1 (0 - 2.9)	2.16 (5.36)
94 - 464 (1,000 - 4,999)	6,054.77 (65,175)	6,956.46 (74,881)	1.2 - 2.3 (3 - 5.9)	0
465 - 929 (5000 - 9,999)	3,430.15 (36,923)	3,419.01 (36,803)	2.4 - 4.4 (6 - 10.9)	2.83 (7)
930 - 1,858 (10,000 - 19,999)	7,074.71 (76,154)	6,364.39 (68,508)	4.5 - 8.4 (11 - 20.9)	0
1,859 - 4,645 (20,000 - 49,999)	4,837.95 (52,077)	5,854.74 (63,022)	8.5 - 12.5 (21 - 30.9)	19.21 (47.45)
4,646 and over (50,000 and over)	5,647.76 (60,794)	6,549.45 (6,549.45)	12.6 and over (31 and over)	0
TOTAL	27,951.56 (300,878)	27,369.85 (294,616)	**TOTAL**	24.20 (59.81)
Source EDU October 2004				

Employment Land & Property Values

The following information on employment land and property values is taken from the Valuation Office Property Market Report for July 2004. Statistics from the report are based upon recent transaction data for property/land sales throughout the country. The report is produced every 6 months.

Employment related statistics for Harrogate within the July 2004 report were as follows:

Industrial Land Values

The range of industrial land values reported at 1st July 2004 varied between £400,000 per hectare and £650,000 per hectare, creating a 'typical' land value of £600,000 per hectare. This compares to a typical land value of £400,000 in 2003.

Retail Units – Rental Values

The average retail rental value reported at 1st July 2004 (£1/per m2/ per annum) were as follows:

Primary Position	£1300
Secondary Position	£ 750
Out of Town	£ 200

These values are very similar to those reported 12 months ago.

Office Units – Rental Values

The average office rental value reported at 1st July 2004 (£1/per m2/per annum) were as follows:

Town Centre >300 sq m	£140
Town Centre 150 – 300 sq m	£140
Secondary Position 50-150 sq m	£130

These values are very similar to those reported 12 months ago, although there has been a slight increase in secondary position values.

Industrial Units – Rental Values

The average industrial rental value reported at 1st July 2004 (£1/per m2/per annum) were as follows:

Starter Units (c 25-75 sq m)	£ 70
Nursery Units (c 150–200 sq m)	£ 55
Industrial Units (c 500 sq m)	£ 50
Industrial Units (c 1000 sq m)	£ 50

These values are the same as those reported 12 months ago.

You can view or download the full Property Market Report on the Valuation Office Agency website at www.voa.gov.uk/publications/property_market_report/index.htm

13. Tourism

Large parts of the Harrogate District owe their very existence to tourism. The development of Harrogate town as a Spa during the Victorian and Edwardian periods, and its dependence on visitor expenditure, is well documented. Knaresborough and Ripon also have a significant tourism heritage, whilst Nidderdale has seen more recent development as a touring base for the Dales.

A significant part of the tourist industry in the Harrogate District and particularly in Harrogate Town relies on the conference and exhibition business (business tourism), the majority of which is operated by Harrogate International Centre. The Centre boasts a 2000 seat main auditorium and 16,500 sq metres of exhibition space in 8 halls. The conference/exhibition business is year round and Harrogate International Centre enjoys higher occupancy levels than many of its national competitors.

Business and Holiday Tourism visitor days to the Harrogate District totalled 6.2 million days in 2003/04, with over 300,000 enquiries handled by the 4 Tourist Information Centres in the district during the same period. This compares to 5.5 million visitor days in the previous year (2002/03).

The town attracts around 347,000 business visitors per year on convention business comprising some 190,000 to conferences and 157,000 to trade fairs. Nearly all conference delegates and about 30% of exhibition visitors stay overnight for an average of 2 - 3 nights.

Total direct visitor spend (business and holiday) tourism in the District in 2003/04 was £234.1 million, compared £199.7 million of spend in the previous year (2002/03). The contribution of business tourism to this overall spend is estimated at around £160 million. Harrogate is ranked 3rd in the national league of conference towns, based on direct spend by business visitors.

For further information about the Harrogate International Centre, visit their website at www.harrogateinternationalcentre.co.uk. Alternatively holiday tourism statistics are available on the Harrogate Borough Council Tourism website at http://www.harrogate.gov.uk/tourism

14. Additional Sources of Information

This document provides specific information about the local economy of the Harrogate district. If you are looking for more detailed information or intelligence about the district, county or region you may find the following websites of interest:

Census Statistics
The 2001 Census was the most comprehensive survey of the UK population. Use this site to access more detailed information on the findings of the Census.

For further information visit: www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001

Commercial Property Statistics (Valuation Office)
Use this site to view or download statistics and reports on the commercial property market

For further information visit: http://www.voa.gov.uk/publications/property_market_report/index.htm

Education & Skills Statistics (DfES)
Use this site to access a range of education and skills statistics for the Harrogate district (including ward level data)

For further information visit: www.dfes.gov.uk/inyourarea

House Price Statistics (Land Registry)
Use this site to access property price data and reports at local and national levels.

For further information visit: www.landregistry.gov.uk
Alternatively, graphs and tables of local property price trends are also available at www.proviser.co.uk.

Labour Market Statistics (NOMIS)
Use this site to access official labour market statistics for local and national areas, including the Labour Force Survey, Annual Business Inquiry and New Earnings Survey. Includes pre-prepared Labour Market Profiles for all wards within the Harrogate district.

For further information visit: www.nomisweb.co.uk

Neighbourhood Statistics
Use this site to view, compare or download statistics for local areas on a wide range of subjects including population, crime, health and housing. Includes pre-prepared Local Area Profiles for all wards within the Harrogate district.

For further information visit: www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk

Yorkshire Futures
Use this site to access information and intelligence about the Yorkshire and Humber Region. Includes a 'Monthly Economic Monitor' report which summarises current economic trends at regional, national and global levels.

For further information visit: www.yorkshirefutures.com