

West of England: Economic News Bulletin

This Bulletin provides a quarterly summary of events and announcements of relevance to the local economy. For further statistical information: www.intelligencewest.org.uk. Email: hollie.bryant@westofengland.org

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The West of England Partnership consists of four unitary authorities - [Bath & North East Somerset \(B&NES\)](#), [Bristol](#), [North Somerset](#) and [South Gloucestershire](#) - and a range of social, economic and environmental partners.

This Bulletin is produced quarterly by the [West of England Partnership Office](#) and distributed through the West of England Local Intelligence Network Website: [Intelligence West](#) supported by the South West Regional Development Agency.

West of England: Economic News, August 2009 – November 2009

1) Jobs

1.1) Job Gains

16/08/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

A recruitment drive to find the first 250 people to work in the new Weston-super-Mare pavilion is underway. One year on since the fire and co-owners Kerry and Michelle Michael are ploughing ahead with the rebuild. They anticipate the landmark will open to visitors in summer 2010.

21/08/09 [This is Weston](#)

A new waitrose store in Weston-super-Mare opened its doors on Thursday 20th August. The opening of the store has created 160 new jobs.

25/08/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Focus DIY has struck a rescue deal with landlords to stave off administration which will save about 200 jobs across the Bristol area.

26/08/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Retail giant, JW Carpenter Ltd, which owns Cargo, has opened a Homestyle store in the former Rosebury's unit at Somerset Square, Nailsea; the store employs 8 people.

26/08/09 [Bath Chronicle](#)

High street clothing shop Republic is the latest retailer to sign up for a unit at Bath's SouthGate centre. The store will create 35 new jobs in its new store.

16/08/09 [Bath Chronicle](#)

Sainsbury's has opened its third shop in Bath. The chain has created 16 new jobs at its Sainsbury's Local store at Moorland Road. Another Sainsbury's Local store will open at the SouthGate centre in November.

21/10/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

In an attempt to deal with the backlog of letters from the postal strike, Royal Mail is doubling the number of temporary workers it would normally recruit in Bristol over the Christmas period from 500 to 1000.

23/10/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Bristol's new £4 million aquarium, due to open in November has created 40 new jobs in the city.

1.2) Job Losses

15/08/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

The Hartcliffe branch of Allied Carpets has shut with the loss of eight jobs.

04/09/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

About 10 Easyjet cabin staff and pilots based at Bristol International Airport will lose their jobs as part of a cost cutting measure by the budget airline.

08/09/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Baggage handling firm Servisair is to axe 25 jobs at Bristol International Airport. The company, which has 350 staff at Lulsgate, blames the decision on the economic downturn.

11/09/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Flatpack furniture shop Ikea is making 23 of its Bristol home delivery staff redundant.

15/09/09 [Bath Chronicle](#)

Replacement vehicle supplier Helphire, one of Bath's largest private employers, confirmed yesterday it had lost a contract with the AA. As a result the company will shed 55 jobs.

24/09/09 [Bath Chronicle](#)

Temple Street Solicitors in Bath is set to close with the loss of all its 150 staff, it follows the loss of its contract with Helphire.

01/10/09 [Western Daily Press](#)

John Lewis is cutting about 25 customer service jobs at its Bristol department store as part of a shakeup of its national call centre network.

02/10/09 [Bath Chronicle](#)

Job losses are expected at Bath-based mortgage broker London and Country. Staff at the firm, which employs 300 people across two offices in the city, were told the cuts will affect non-sales staff who account for 124 of the firm's workforce.

22/10/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Bristol's Jongleurs club and Quincey's restaurant in Filton have closed down as part of a rescue deal for troubled pubs and clubs chain Regent Inns. Around 45 jobs has been lost as a result of the combined closures.

29/10/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

London and Country is to shed an unspecified number of the 300 jobs at its two mortgage broking offices in Bath.

05/11/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Six off-licences are to close in the Bristol area with the loss of about 50 jobs after the owner of some of the best-known names in the industry, Threshers, Wine Rack, Victoria Wines, Bottoms Up, Haddows and The Local, went into administration.

11/11/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Lloyds Banking group has announced plans to axe another 5,000 jobs across the UK with Bristol workers expected to be amongst those hit.

2) Property & Development

2.1) Housing

04/09/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Eleven new homes could be built on the site of former garages. Somer Community Housing has submitted plans for the homes in Coleshill Drive, Hartcliffe.

10/09/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Council houses are to be built in Bristol for the first time in 30 years. The Government is giving more than £3m to build 46 homes on 11 brownfield sites in Lawrence Weston, Sea Mills and Brentry.

21/09/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Plans are set to be approved to build 13 homes on a patch of inner-city scrubland and create a nature reserve at Stibbs Hill in St George. Residents have objected to the scheme.

10/09/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Developer Themejob Ltd has unveiled plans to build 13 three-storey town houses on the site of the former Speedwell Swimming Baths in Bristol.

2.2) Commercial Development

16/09/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

The former Woolworths in Clifton will become an indoor market. Property firm Endless Property Company has bought the empty shop in Blackboy Hill and hopes to attract stall holders to create Clifton's answer to the popular St Nicholas Market in Corn Street.

17/09/09 [Western Daily Press](#)

Parts of the crumbling Tropicana on Weston-super-Mare's Victorian seafront will finally be demolished in May next year. North Somerset Council will flatten the structure's interior buildings to use as an open air concert venue for the 2010 summer season.

25/09/09 [DTZ News & Views](#)

Multi Development and Aviva Investors are selling a 35,000 sq ft hotel development opportunity within their £360m Southgate retail quarter in Bath.

29/09/09 [Bath Chronicle](#)

Bosses at Bath's SouthGate shopping centre have seen a surge in retailers signing up for units in the last fortnight. Designer shoe shops Kurt Geiger and tReds, clothes shops Cult, All Saints and Animal and speaker specialist Bose will all open stores in the first phase of the £360 million scheme in November

02/10/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Bristol's £20 million Radisson Blu Hotel has finally opened its doors. The 18-storey hotel provides 176 bedrooms, five suites, conference facilities and a large spa.

08/10/09 [DTZ UK Activity Report](#)

Pedersen Hotels is to submit plans to build a £20m 25-room hotel at Bristol International Airport by 2012.

14/10/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Capital Shopping Centres and PRUPIM have signed more retailers for The Mall Cribbs Causeway near Bristol – Quiksilver, Jigsaw, GIVe, Pilgrim, Crabtree & Evelyn and New Look's first standalone shoes and accessories shop.

15/10/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

The University of the West of England is planning to close the historic St Matthias campus in Fishponds within two years. It wants to sell the site and its Victorian Gothic-revival buildings to help finance the redevelopment of its main Frenchay campus.

29/10/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Bristol City FC has signed a deal to sell off its ground at Ashton Gate to supermarket chain Sainsbury's. Sainsbury's already has a store off Winterstoke Road that is popular but cramped and cannot cope with demand. Any development isn't likely to happen until 2013. The club will still have to win planning permission for the ground to be used as a site for a new store but the deal, worth more than £20m, paves the way for a new £65m football stadium at nearby Ashton Vale.

30/10/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Sainsbury's is set to open a new 'Local' convenience store in Bristol City Centre. Work on 1-3 Broadmead, a former clothes shop, will be complete early in the new year.

04/11/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Bristol City FC has won backing to build a new 30,000-seat stadium at Ashton Vale. Councillors would not back the building of 116 homes on a green belt site called Southlands near the proposed stadium. Bristol City's new stadium could bring £260m to the city's economy.

04/11/09 [BBC](#)

The first phase of the new SouthGate shopping centre in Bath is has opened. Phase 1 is now 80% let by floor area and the majority of tenants are new to Bath. Phase 2 is due for completion by next May.

04/11/09 [DTZ Activity Report](#)

Asda is thought to have appointed Bericote Properties to develop a new 500,000 sq ft distribution centre at St Andrews Road in Avonmouth.

2.3) Office/Industrial market

26/08/09 [South West Business](#)

The construction of Phase One of Harlequin Office Park at Emersons Green in North Bristol has been completed. The three, two and three-storey office buildings comprising 54,177 sq ft are part of eight-acre Harlequin Office Park which will ultimately comprise an office park of approximately 136,000 sq ft.

01/09/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Three major private sector firms - College of Law, Vestas Wind Systems, and Australia's Macquarie Bank - have sought office space within Bristol during July and August. All three of these organisations are new to Bristol, demonstrating that despite the marked slowdown in-line with national trends, the city still has a strong appeal to private-sector inward investors.

01/09/09 [Western Daily Press](#)

Smaller industrial units in Avonmouth are still proving popular despite the current economic climate.

03/09/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

A new Bristol office block has been named Britain's greenest building, before it has even been finished. The Environment Agency's £10-million headquarters in Deanery Road, behind the Council House, has achieved the highest score ever awarded by the Building Research Establishment (BRE) for its environmental credentials.

25/09/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

The concept of low-budget office space launched by the easyJet founder is coming to Bristol. His firm, easyOffice, which offers serviced office space, has bought premises at Stonebridge House on Colston Avenue.

3) Business news

12/08/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Bristol Port has secured £103m of funding through the Royal Bank of Scotland to support its future business operations.

13/08/09 [Bath Chronicle](#)

Bristol student accommodation firm Unite has struck a £200 million deal to develop three central London halls of residence, with an estimated completion value of £194m.

14/08/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

The second largest Primark in Britain finally opened its doors in Bristol's Broadmead yesterday.

17/08/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Bristol surveying firm Rider Levett Bucknall has struck a £350,000 deal to maintain homes for Jephson Housing Association, one of the UK's largest social landlords.

22/08/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

The Bristol branch of John Lewis was the group's worst performing store in the whole of the UK last week, according to new figures. Sales fell 16.2 per cent in the week to August 15, compared with the same week last year. The branch also saw the biggest fall in sales of all 27 UK branches for the first half of this financial year, down 11.6 per cent.

02/09/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Howards, one of Bristol's longest-established restaurants has closed after 33 years. The building it occupied in Hotwells is now up for lease.

03/09/09 [South West Business](#)

Hargreaves Lansdown defied the recession to post a 20 per cent rise in profits to £73.1 million. Turnover at the Bristol stockbroker also rose, up 10 per cent to £132.8m in the year to June 30.

10/09/09 [DTZ UK Activity Report](#)

Best Cover UV has closed its print coatings plant in London and the machinery will transfer to its site in Bristol.

11/09/09 [Property Week](#)

Australian and UK property company Stockland is beginning its exit from the UK with the sale of its Crown Glass Shopping Centre in Nailsea, North Somerset, to Development Securities and Ellandi

24/09/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Willmott Dixon Construction is expanding its South West HQ in Bristol by taking extra space and staff at its Queen Square offices.

01/10/09 [Bath Chronicle](#)

Bath's economy has received a £7.4 million boost thanks to the city's Thermae Bath Spa in the last year. Around 200,000 people have passed through the doors of the attraction over the last 12 months. The latest visitor survey has revealed more than half of those said the spa was their main reason for visiting Bath.

02/10/09 [Bath Chronicle](#)

Accident assistance firm Helphire, one of Bath's biggest employers, has unveiled a £149 million pre-tax loss - and revealed it had shed 700 staff in the last year

14/10/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Designer Matthew Fairweather is to open a new head office at the Paintworks, Bath Road in Bristol.

24/10/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Karamel Events based at the Easton Business Centre in Bristol has ceased trading.

26/10/09 [South West Business](#)

North Somerset ICT company Chorus has moved to a new base in Portis Fields, Portishead, after rapid growth in the last two years.

12/11/09 [Western Daily Press](#)

Bristol IT Company, a new IT support division of Teknecraft, has been launched in Bristol.

3.1) Mergers & acquisitions

04/09/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Bristol-based Bart Spices is planning to expand even further after the company was taken over in a management buyout.

08/09/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Mobile phone giants Orange and T-Mobile are to merge in a move which will make them the largest operator in the UK. The deal is expected to lead to job losses among the combined workforce of 19,000, which includes 2,200 staff in Aztec West, as the companies rationalise their networks.

22/09/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Mangotsfield window firm Panoramic Windows has taken over a struggling rival, Fishponds firm City Glass.

01/10/09 [DTZ UK Activity Report](#)

Bristol-based Acraman has bought Haines Clark, the Redditch-based printing firm with nine staff, out of administration.

08/10/09 [DTZ UK Activity Report](#)

IQE has acquired NanoGan the Bath-based supplier of semiconductor wafers for up to £3.6m.

12/11/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Clifton-based health insurer National Friendly has taken over a financial advice firm in a deal which has saved 25 jobs. The firm has bought Filton-based 425 Direct Limited, the new name for AWD Direct.

4) Tourism & Leisure

18/08/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Hoteliers in the city are struggling to fill their rooms according to new figures which revealed the number of guests had fallen from last year. The figures from PKF Hotel Consultancy Services showed that occupancy was down from 75.2 per cent in 2008 to 71.5 per cent in 2009 with rooms yield – money made per room – decreasing 9.2 per cent from £55.67 in 2008 to £50.55 in 2009.

19/08/09 [Bath Chronicle](#)

Bath has been placed second on a list of Britain's must-see cities. Hotel chain Travelodge commissioned a survey which asked 5,500 people which UK cities they would most like to visit before they die.

28/10/09 [Bath Chronicle](#)

A trio of Bath hotels and bed and breakfasts have been honoured with prestigious industry awards. Three city venues have been revealed as winners and finalists in the South West Tourism Excellence Awards 2009/2010 which recognise the best performers in the region's tourism industry.

04/11/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Bristol's Hippodrome theatre has been sold as part of a £90m deal. The historic 2,000-seat venue is one of 16 UK theatres sold by Live Nation to the Ambassador Theatre Group (ATG).

5) Aerospace

15/08/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Business Secretary Lord Mandelson yesterday gave Airbus a £340 million loan to develop its A350 plane – just over half £600m cash requested by the planemaker.

03/09/09 [South West Business](#)

China is looking to poach lucrative Airbus contracts away from Bristol but does not have the engineering ability to do it yet, Alistair Darling has warned. The Chancellor met senior members of the Chinese government last week who pointed out they need the UK to fill the gaps in their manufacturing capability.

29/10/09 [South West Business](#)

Defence giant Rolls-Royce has been awarded a \$90 million contract by the US Department of Defense to provide support for the engines that power the US Navy's T-45 training aircraft. This contract exercises the first of four option years to the base contract which was signed last year. The F405-RR-401 (Adour) engines for the T-45 fleet have all been assembled and tested at Rolls in Patchway and the fleet is supported from the site's operations centre.

6) Airport

25/08/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Bristol City Council has formally objected to the £150 million expansion plans drawn up for Bristol International Airport. The authority, which used to own the Lulsgate site, claims the expansion will mean more night noise, traffic pollution and climate change.

17/09/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

Canadian pension fund, The Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, is to become the co-owner of Bristol International Airport. They already owned 14.5% of the airport but yesterday agreed to buy 35.5% from Australian giant Macquarie Airports for £128m.

21/10/09 [South West Business](#)

The decline in people using Bristol International Airport slowed in September, according to new figures. More than 590,000 passengers flew to and from the airport last month, just two per cent below last year's total for September.

30/10/09 [Bristol Evening Post](#)

A new duty-free shop at Bristol International Airport has opened. World Duty Free (WDF) has been chosen to run the outlet.