THE MONEY CHARITY

The Money Statistics

September 2026

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THE
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CHARITY

Welcome to the September 2026 edition of The Money Statistics, The Money Charity's complete monthly round-up of statistics about how we use money in the UK, kindly funded by Vanquis.

"At Vanquis, we're excited to support The Money Charity and help their important work. Our shared passion for Financial Inclusion and social mobility makes this partnership a natural fit. By funding this initiative, we're proud to play a small part in helping The Money Charity support people across the UK build the skills and confidence they need to manage their money and improve Financial Wellbeing." **Ian McLaughlin, Vanquis CEO**

If you have any questions, comments, or want any information about the source of these statistics, please email us at **hello@themoneycharity.org.uk**. Throughout this report, statistics that are written in **colour** have been calculated by The Money Charity. All the other statistics come from external sources such as Bank of England, the ONS and UK Finance and are written in **black**. All statistics are taken from the latest available at the time of writing.

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We update these statistics every month with the latest data.
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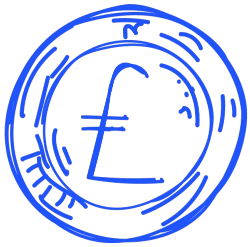


1. Striking Numbers

This Month's Highlights

£68,318

Average total debt per UK household in July 2026

£2,832

Average credit card debt per household in July 2026

£4,560

Total unsecured debt per UK adult in July 2026

+8.9%

Change in outstanding credit card balances in year to July 2026, unchanged from the year to June 2026

1.69 pence per litre

Increase in the price of unleaded petrol in the month of August 2026

3.1%

Inflation rate in the year to August 2026, up from **2.9%** in the year to July 2026

1.2%

Increase in average first-time buyer house price in the year to July 2026

12 years

Time to save for a first-time buyer house deposit, saving at the average rate out of average UK income (at Q1 2026 saving rate)

1. Striking Numbers

Every Day in the UK

- The population of the UK grew by an estimated **563** people a day between mid-2024 and mid-2025.
- On average, a UK household spends **£5.66** a day on water, electricity and gas.
- **385** people a day were declared insolvent or bankrupt in England and Wales in the three months to August 2026. This was equivalent to one person **every 3 minutes 44 seconds.**
- In Northern Ireland in the three months to August 2026, there were **5.4** insolvencies per day. In Scotland in the three months to June 2026 there were **24.0** insolvencies per day.
- Citizens Advice Bureaux in England and Wales dealt with **1,264** debt issues every day in the year to August 2026.
- **12.6** properties were taken into possession every day in April to June 2026 in the UK, or one **every 1 hour and 54 minutes**.
- The number of UK mortgages with arrears of over 2.5% of the remaining balance fell by **25.9** a day in the year to June 2026.
- The number of people unemployed in the UK increased by **227** per day in the twelve months to July 2026.
- **1,242** people a day reported they had become redundant in May to July 2026.
- Net lending to individuals and housing associations in the UK increased by **£178.8 million** a day in July 2026.
- Government debt increased by **£395.6 million** a day in the year to August 2026.
- Borrowers paid **£249 million** a day in interest in July 2026.
- In 2025, it cost an average of **£38.02** per day for a couple to raise a child from birth to age 18.
- For a lone parent family, the cost of raising a child came to **£44.11** per day.
- **57** mortgage possession claims and **40** mortgage possession orders were made every day in England and Wales in April to June 2026.
- **260** landlord possession claims and **192** landlord possession orders were made every day.

1. Striking Numbers

Arising From the Current Climate

The UK has experienced significant turmoil over the past five years. The pandemic, cost of living and energy crises, high interest rates and the economic policies of the new US administration have affected the lives and finances of many people in the UK. UK inflation rose to **3.1%** in the year to August, as gasoline and diesel prices surged. However, the latest figures also offer some encouraging signs. Following are some striking money statistics:

Positives

- UK GDP grew **0.4%** in July 2026, following a growth of **0.3%** in June 2026. Compared to the same month last year, GDP was **1.6%** higher in July 2026, the fastest annual growth since February 2025. Services output was the main driver, with the ONS highlighting strong activity among AI and cloud computing businesses.

- In August 2026, retail sales volumes rebounded from July and were **2.4% higher** than in August 2025. They also increased by **0.9%** in the three months to August.

- Food and non-alcoholic drink prices rose **1.3%** annually in August 2026, unchanged from July. The rate was last lower in September 2021, when it was **0.8%**.

- Annual growth in employees' average regular earnings (excluding bonuses) was **3.5%** in May to July 2026. It has been relatively stable over the past five consecutive three-month periods, after a year of slowing growth, according to the ONS.

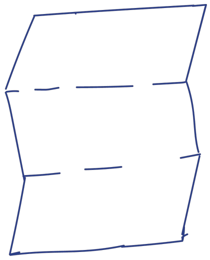
Challenges

- Average UK private rent reached **£1,400** per month in the 12 months to August 2026, **£52** (**3.8%**) more than a year earlier. The annual growth rate was up from **3.7%** in the 12 months to July, and the highest since last December.

- England and Wales individual insolvencies were **3% higher** than a year earlier in August 2026. In the 12 months to August, **137,263** individuals, **1 in 366** (**0.27%**) of the adult population of England and Wales became insolvent.

- Overall, motor fuel prices rose by **23.0%** in the 12 months to August 2026, compared with a rise of **15.5%** in the previous month.

(Sources: ONS, Bank of England, The Insolvency Service, BBC News, Reuters, The Guardian, CNBC)



2. Personal Debt in the UK

Total UK Personal Debt

People in the UK owed **£1,984.3 billion** at the end of July 2026. This is up by **£70.5 billion** from £1,913.8 billion at the end of July 2025, an extra **£1249** per UK adult over the year.

Type of Personal Debt	Total Personal Debt £ billion	Per Household £	Per Adult £
Secured (Mortgages)	**£1,726.8**	**£59,452**	**£30,573**
Unsecured Consumer Debt	**£257.5**	**£8,867**	**£4,560**
Of which, Credit Card Debt	**£82.3**	**£2,832**	**£1,456.3**
Grand Total (July 2026)	**£1,984.3**	**£68,318**	**£35,133**

The average total debt per household, including mortgages, was **£68,318** and per adult was **£35,133**, around **89.1%** of average earnings. This is up from the revised **£35,035** a month earlier.

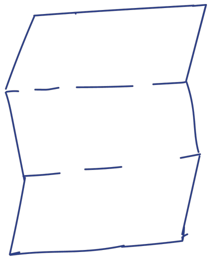
Based on July 2026 numbers, the UK's total interest payments on personal debt over a 12-month period would have been **£91.0 billion**, an average of **£249 million** per day. The average annual interest per household would have been **£3,133** and per person **£1,611**, **4.09%** of average earnings.

According to the Office for Budget Responsibility's March 2026 forecast, household debt of all types will rise from **£2,377 billion** in Q1 2026 to **£2,792 billion** in Q1 2031. This would raise average total household debt to **£93,537** (assuming household numbers track ONS population projections).

Consumer Credit Debt

At the end of July 2026, outstanding consumer credit lending was **£257.5 billion**, **an increase of £1.12 billion** on the previous month and **£16.8 billion more** than in July 2025. Within the total, outstanding credit card debt came to **£82.3 billion**, an increase of **8.90%** (**£6.7 billion**) in the year to July 2026. Credit card debt averaged **£2,832** per household and **£1,456** per adult.

A credit card on the average interest rate would take **28 years and 1 month** to repay, making only the legal minimum repayments (interest plus 1% of the outstanding balance) each month. The minimum repayment in the first month would be **£81** but would reduce each month. If £81 were paid *every* month, the debt would be cleared in **4 years and 11 months**.

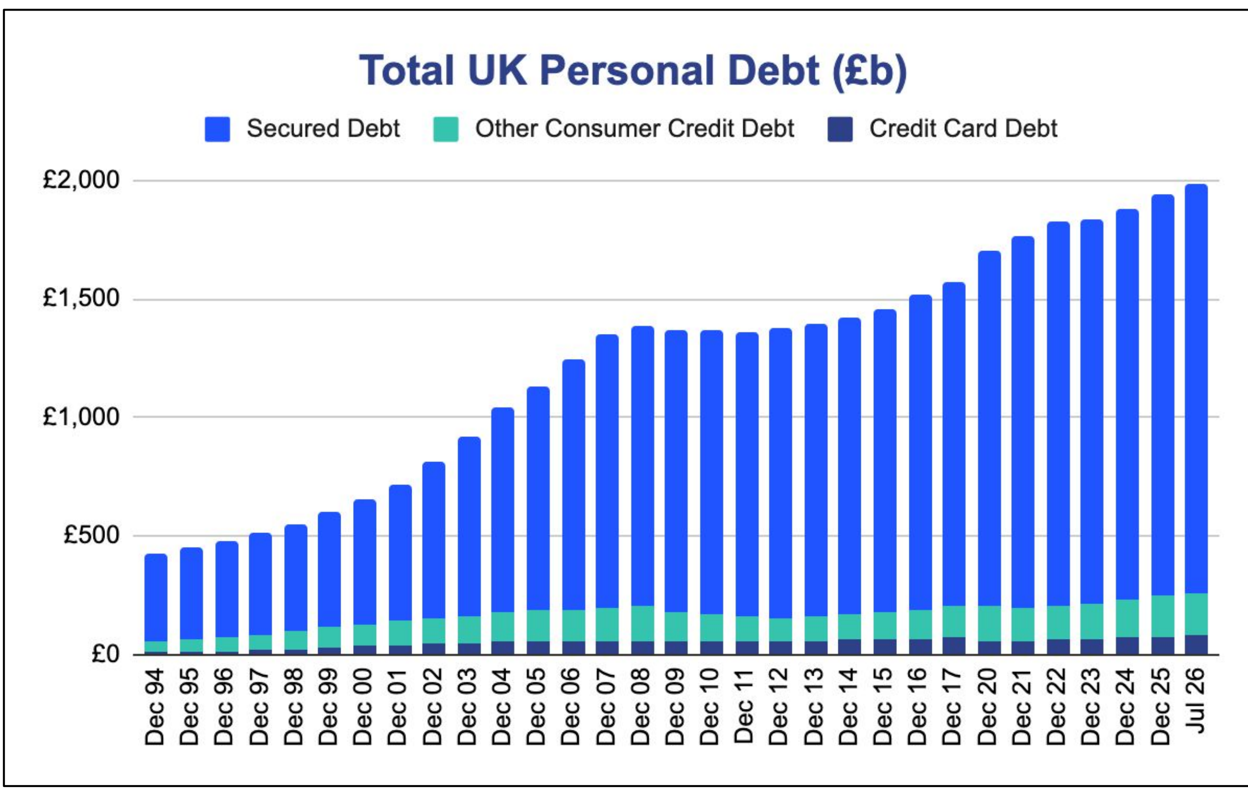


2. Personal Debt in the UK

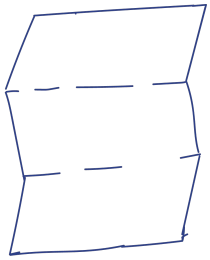
Net Lending and Write-Offs

Total net lending to individuals and housing associations by UK banks and building societies **increased by £5.5 billion** in July 2026 or **£178.8 million a day** over revised figures for June 2026.

- Net mortgage lending **increased by £4.4 billion** in the month, while net consumer credit lending **increased by £1.1 billion**.
- In Q2 2026 lenders wrote off **£913 million** (of which **£376 million** was credit card debt, amounting to a daily write-off of **£4.1 million**.)



Bank of England Data to July 2026



2. Personal Debt in the UK

Advice on Problem Debts

Citizens Advice Bureaux across England and Wales answered **189,935** enquiries in August 2026, **14.78% less** than in August 2025.

Debt was the second largest advice category in August 2026 with **42,952** issues, behind Benefits and Tax Credits (**63,414**). Debt calls were **4.7% higher** compared with August 2025, while calls about Benefits and Tax credits were **down by 3.4%**. Calls about Fuel (gas, electricity etc) were **down by 8.2%** on August 2025. Debt represented **21.6%** of all issues dealt with in the year to August 2026. The top three debt categories in August 2026 were fuel debt, debt assessments and council tax arrears. In the year to August 2026, Citizens Advice Bureaux in England and Wales dealt with **1,264** debt issues every *day*.

In a report on its clients in 2025, published in March 2026, Citizens Advice reports a surge in household bill debts, with these rising from a per-client average of **£2,194** in 2022, to **£3,112** in 2025, with increases for energy, water and Council Tax debts, as well as private rent arrears. The number and levels of debts people have increased, as did the complexity of debts. **50%** of the debt clients are in a negative budget, up from **41%** in 2021.

Citizens Advice Scotland report that they supported **22,523** clients in April to June 2026, of whom the majority were clients with health conditions and/or caring responsibilities. Among priority family groups, the majority were families with a member with a health condition or disability and single parent families. The most common debt issues addressed were council tax arrears, credit/store card debts and energy debts. Debt issues were the second largest category overall, after benefits.

StepChange Debt Charity reports that **14,576** clients received debt advice in August 2026. This is **7%** lower than July 2026, and **14%** higher than August 2025. The most common reasons for seeking debt advice continued to be “lack of control over finances”, “cost of living increase” and “unemployment or redundancy”. **75%** of clients had credit card debt, **56%** had personal loan debt, **33%** had an overdraft and **25%** had catalogue debt. The majority of StepChange clients were female (**59%** in August 2026) and young (**58%** under the age of 40). **60%** were renting and **17%** living with family. Only **15%** were house owners.

2. Personal Debt in the UK

Individual Insolvencies

There were **35,379** individual insolvencies in England and Wales in June to August 2026, an **increase of 10.3%** from **32,081** for the same period in 2025. This was equivalent to **385** people a day or one person **every 3 minutes 44 seconds**.

Every day on average in England and Wales, **23** people were made bankrupt, **126** Debt Relief Orders were granted and **236** Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVAs) were entered into.

In the 12 months to August 2026, **137,263** individuals, **1 in 366** (**0.27%**) of the adult population of England and Wales became insolvent.

In Northern Ireland there were **498** individual insolvencies in the three months to August 2026, a rate of **5.4** per day. This comprised **390** Individual Voluntary Arrangements, **66** Debt Relief Orders and **42** bankruptcies. Total individual insolvencies in the three months to August 2026 were **9.7% higher** than in the three months to August 2025.

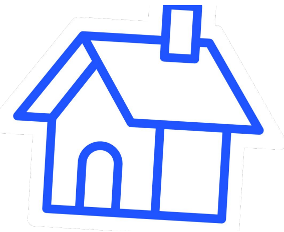
In Scotland there were **2,181** personal insolvencies in April to June 2026, a rate of **24.0** per day, comprising **849** bankruptcies and **1,332** protected trust deeds. Personal insolvencies for the three months to June 2026 saw a **12.8% increase** on the same period in the previous year.

County Court Judgements for Debt

3,539 Consumer County Court Judgements (CCJs) were issued every day in England and Wales in April to June 2026, an **increase of 34.5%** on the same period in the previous year. The median value was **£602** according to Registry Trust Ltd.

In Northern Ireland, there were **10.7** consumer debt judgements every day in April to June 2026. **26%** of the consumer judgments have amounts greater than **£3,000**.

In Scotland, **52.8** consumer debt judgements were registered every day in April to June 2026, with a median value of **£1,999**.



3. Mortgages, Rent and Housing

Mortgage Debt

According to the Bank of England, outstanding mortgage lending stood at **£1,726.78 billion** at the end of July 2026. This is up from **£1,673.05 billion** a year earlier, an increase of about **£53.73 billion**.

That means that the estimated average outstanding mortgage for the **10.62 million** households with mortgage debt was **£162,597** in July 2026.

The average mortgage interest rate was **3.97%** at the end of July 2026. Based on this, households with mortgages would pay an average of **£6,455** in mortgage interest over the year.

For new loans, the average mortgage interest rate was **4.46%**. Based on this, First-Time Buyers with mortgages would pay an average of **£8,222** in mortgage interest over the year.

According to the FCA and Bank of England, gross mortgage lending in April to June 2026 was **£77.38 billion**, **31.7% higher** than the same quarter the previous year.

The Financial Conduct Authority reports that **52.5%** of mortgage lending in Q2 2026 was for 75% or less of a property's value. **8.38%** of lending was for mortgages for over 90% of a property's value.

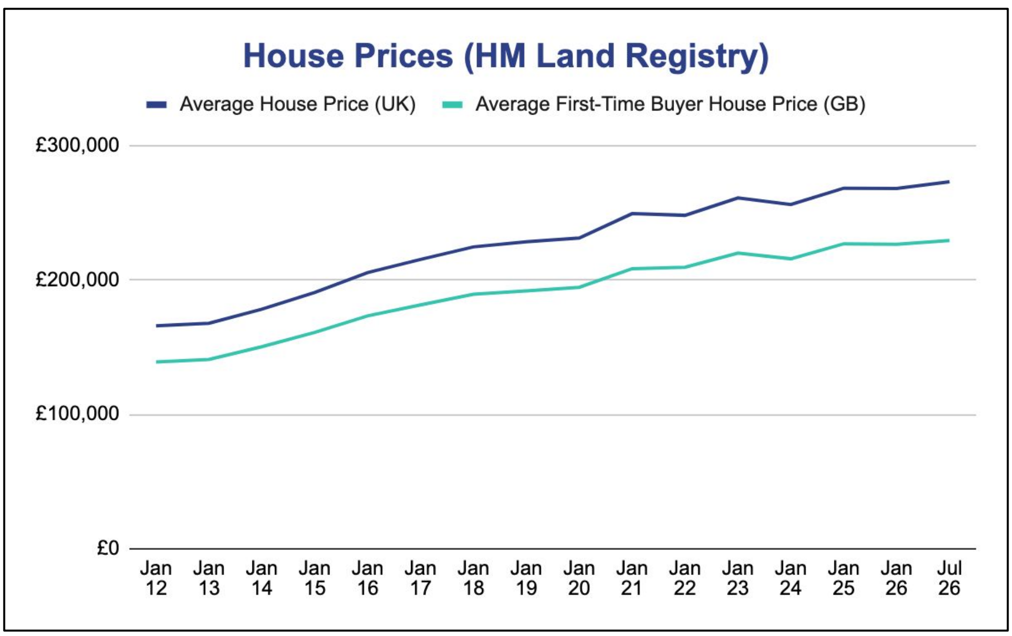
55.17% of mortgage lending was for three or more times the borrowers' incomes.

3. Mortgages, Rent and Housing

House Prices

Nationwide estimates that house prices **increased by 0.2%** in August 2026 and were **1.6% higher** than 12 months before. Lloyds reports that the average UK house price in August 2026 was **£298,468**, **a decrease of 0.2%** from the previous month and **0.4% lower** than the year before.

Nationwide, Lloyds (formerly Halifax) and HM Land Registry all show an upward trend in prices over the last few years, particularly in 2020, 2022 and 2024. HM Land Registry has the largest dataset and includes cash sales, but records transactions later, after registration of the sale, not at the mortgage approval stage.



First-Time Buyers

HM Land Registry reports that the average house price for first-time buyers in Great Britain in July 2026 was **£229,302**, an annual increase of **1.2%** and monthly increase of **0.6%**.

According to Lloyds (formerly Halifax), the typical first-time buyer deposit in 2024 was **19.6%** of the purchase cost, which would average **£44,943** in July 2026 based on the above Land Registry first-time buyer price. This is **114%** of the average UK salary.

3. Mortgages, Rent and Housing

House Prices in Government Office Regions, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales

According to HM Land Registry, average house prices in the UK increased by **1.4%** in the year to July 2026 to **£273,000**. The highest rates of increase were in Northern Ireland (**9.2%**) and North East (**4.9%**). The lowest price increases were in London (-**3.3%**) and South West (**-0.2%**). The average house price was highest in London (**£550,037**) and lowest in the North East (**£166,943**).

Average House Prices: Nations and Regions – July 2026
Source: ONS. Ranked by Annual Change

Country and government office region	Price	Monthly change	Annual change
Northern Ireland (Quarter 2 - 2026)	£202,487	2.1%	9.2%
North East	£166,943	1.1%	4.9%
North West	£221,445	1.0%	4.4%
Yorkshire and The Humber	£209,116	1.3%	3.0%
Wales	£215,037	1.0%	2.6%
Scotland	£196,349	1.2%	2.3%
East Midlands	£242,274	1.7%	1.9%
West Midlands Region	£250,880	0.5%	1.5%
England	£293,479	0.7%	1.1%
East of England	£337,518	0.5%	0.5%
South East	£380,878	0.5%	0.2%
South West	£302,298	-0.2%	-0.2%
London	£550,037	-0.1%	-3.3%

3. Mortgages, Rent and Housing

Renting

According to the Office for National Statistics, private rental prices in the UK rose by **3.8%** in the 12 months to August 2026.

Over the year to August 2026, private rental prices increased in Wales, Scotland and all the English regions. North East (**5.8%**), North West (**5.8%**), West Midlands (**4.9%**) and Yorkshire and the Humber (**4.9%**) saw the highest increases while South East (**3.0%**) and Scotland (**1.1%**) saw the lowest increase. Private rents in Northern Ireland increased by **1.6%** in the year to June 2026.

The average monthly rent in the UK across all private rental property types in August 2026 was **£1,400** according to the Valuation Office Agency and ONS. In London it was **£2,332**.

For a one-bed flat in the UK in August 2026, the average monthly private rent was **£1,136**. In London it was **£1,760** (**54.9% higher**).

For two bedrooms, the average monthly private rent in the UK in August 2026 was **£1,281**. In London it was **£2,232** (**74.2% higher**).

Figures from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government show that in 2024-25, private renter households in England spent an average of **£250** per week on rental payments. Private renters spent, on average, **39%** of their income on rent when income from housing support was excluded. When housing support was included in income, private renters spent, on average, **34%** of their income on rental payments.

Average weekly rents in the social housing sector in England in 2024-25 were **£120** for local authority renters and **£134** for housing association renters.

In 2024-2025, **64.8%** of households were owner occupiers, while **18.9%** rented privately and **16.3%** paid a social rent.

3. Mortgages, Rent and Housing

Arrears and Repossessions

According to the Financial Conduct Authority, at the end of Q2 2026 there were **160,962** mortgage loan accounts with arrears of more than 1.5% of the current loan balance. This is **2.4% fewer** than revised numbers for the previous quarter and **9.5% down** on Q2 2025.

48.0% of payments due for loans in arrears were received in Q2 2026.

UK Finance reports that **77,940** (**0.89%**) of homeowner mortgages had arrears equivalent to at least 2.5% of the outstanding mortgage balance in Q2 2026, **down 1.5%** on the previous quarter. Over the last year, mortgages in arrears have **fallen by 25.9** a day.

UK Finance estimates that there were **1,150** homeowner properties taken into possession in the UK in April to June 2026, down from **1,340** in Q2 2025.

This equates to **12.6** properties being possessed every day, or one property being possessed **every 1 hour and 54 minutes**. This number was lower during the pandemic-related moratorium on forced possessions but is now back to pre-pandemic levels.

In England and Wales, in April to June 2026, according to the Ministry of Justice, every day **57** mortgage possession claims were issued and **40** mortgage possession orders were made.

260 landlord possession claims were issued and **192** landlord possession orders were made every day.

Compared to Q2 2025, mortgage possession claims fell by **20%** and orders fell by **17%**. Landlord possession claims increased by **6%** while landlord possession orders increased by **0.2%**.

4. Spending and Loans

How We Spend

In the year to July 2026, outstanding consumer credit increased by **7.0%** according to the Bank of England, while outstanding levels of credit card borrowing increased by **8.9%**. Since mid-2021, outstanding consumer credit has been rising, with some variation month on month.

On average, **37.3** cash machine transactions (including balance enquiries and rejected transactions) were made **every second** in August 2026, a decrease of **9.1%** on August 2025. The total value of transactions decreased by **6.3%** over the same period.

- In total, cash machine transactions were worth an average of **£62.0** per transaction.
- These LINK transaction figures do not include transactions or withdrawals made by customers at their own banks or building societies.
- The number of ATMs (in-branch and remote) fell from **44,569** at the end of 2024 to **42,403** at the end of 2025 (a fall of **4.9%**). Free-to-use ATMs fell from **35,468** to **33,710** while pay-to-use ATMs fell from **9,101** to **8,693**.

What We Buy

In Q1 2026, households in the UK spent a revised **£164.52 million** a day on water, sewerage, electricity and gas, or **£5.66** per household per day. On a seasonally adjusted basis, this was **6.28% higher** than the figure for Q1 2025.

In August 2026, according to the RAC, the average price of unleaded petrol **increased by 1.69 ppl to 161.66 ppl**.

- This meant it cost **£80.83** to fill a 50 litre unleaded tank, **£0.84 more** than last month.

The average price of diesel **increased by 4.55 ppl** to **183.52 ppl**.

- This meant it cost **£91.76** to fill a 50 litre diesel tank, **£2.28 more** than last month.
- The price difference between the two was **21.86 ppl**, a difference of **£10.93** per 50 litre tank.

According to Which? the cost of home-charging an electric car was **2p** per mile (off-peak) and **8p** per mile (normal rate), compared with **19p** per mile for a typical large diesel or petrol SUV. Public charging was significantly more expensive, as much as **27p** per mile for ultra-rapid charging.

Child Poverty Action Group's "The Cost of a Child in 2025" report estimates that couple families spend **£250,000** on raising a child to their 18th birthday, **£38.02 a day**. This was a decrease of **3.85%** over the previous year and **75.2%** more since the study began in 2012.

- The cost for a lone parent was **£290,000**, an increase of **87.1%** since 2012.
- This came to **£44.11 a day**.

4. Spending and Loans

The Cost of Credit

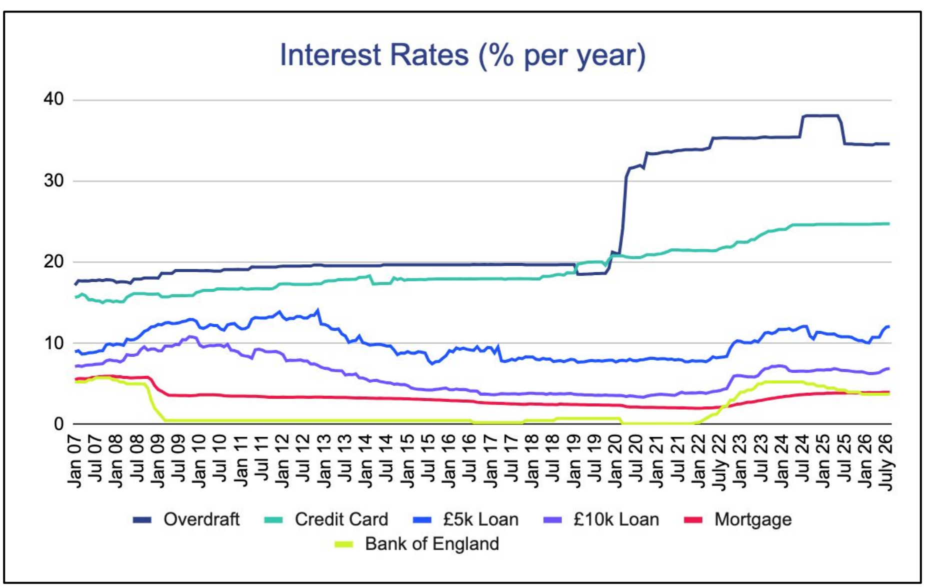
The average interest rate on credit card lending bearing interest was **24.71%** in August 2026. This was **20.96%** above the Bank of England Base Rate, which in August 2026 was **3.75%**. (The Base Rate was reduced to **3.75%** on 18 December 2025)

Latest UK Finance figures show that **47.6%** of credit card balances were bearing interest in June 2026.

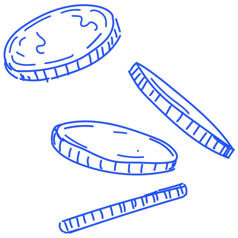
In August 2026, the average APR for a £5,000 personal loan was **12.08%**, according to the Bank of England. For a £10,000 loan it was **6.90%**, while the average rate for an overdraft was **34.53%**.

The gap between credit card, overdraft and other interest rates has widened substantially since the 2008 crash. The dramatic increase in overdraft rates in 2020 was due to new FCA overdraft rules, which banned high fixed charges penalising accidental and short-duration overdrafts, but at the cost of a rise in the average overdraft rate.

Why overdraft and credit card rates are so high when the bank base rate is much lower remains an open question.



Souce: Bank of England. Last data point is August 2026.



5. Savings and Pensions

Savings

The average interest rate for an instant access savings account was **1.90%** in August 2026, down from 2.19% in August 2025. For a variable rate cash ISA, the rate was **2.00%**, up from 1.86% a year ago.

In Q1 2026, households saved an average of **8.9%** of their post-tax income, including benefits, up from **9.6%** (revised) in Q4 2025, and down from **10.5%** in Q1 2025. During the pandemic, savings rates peaked at **27.4%**, but have since reduced to more normal levels. From 2000 to 2015, the savings rate fluctuated mostly within the 7-10% range, with the most recent pre-Covid peak being **13.5%** in Q1 2010. If someone on the average salary saved 8.9% of their income in an average instant access savings account for a year, they would receive **£53.33** in interest after tax. If they saved it in an average variable rate cash ISA, they would receive **£70.17**.

It would take **12 years** for someone on the average salary, saving the average amount per household every year in an average instant access savings account, to afford the average first-time buyer deposit. If they saved the same amount into an average variable rate cash ISA, it would also take **12 years**.

In 2024-2025, according to the Family Resources Survey, **46%** of UK households had either no savings or less than £1,500 in savings. **28%** of single parent households had no savings, and **79%** had less than £1,500.

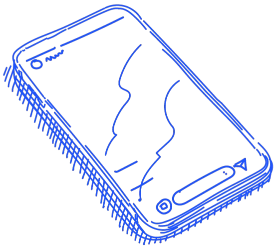
Pensions

According to The Pensions Regulator's Compliance Report, at least **11.45 million** workers had joined a pension scheme under auto-enrolment by the end of May 2026, making a total of **24.32 million** members of pensions schemes, but leaving over **12 million** workers unenrolled, out of the total declared workforce of **36.4 million**.

According to the Family Resources Survey, **55%** of working age adults actively participated in a pension in 2024-2025, unchanged from the previous year. Participation was **80%** for employees and **21%** for the self-employed.

According to ONS, in 2024, **34%** of employees in a workplace pension scheme were members of Defined Benefit schemes, **40%** were members of Defined Contribution schemes and **25%** were were in a group scheme.

In March 2026, there were **13.3** million recipients of the State Pension, an increase of **2.0%** compared with February 2025. Of these, **5.4 million** were on the new State Pension (nSP) introduced in 2016, an increase of **780,000** compared with February 2025.



6. Financial Inclusion

According to the FCA, in the UK in 2024 there were **900,000** UK adults who did not have a bank account (either a current account or an alternative e-money account.) This was **1.6%** of the UK adult population. Among the highest unbanked rates were for the digitally excluded, unemployed and those who were long-term sick, or care providers.

There were **7.04 million** basic bank accounts (BBAs) on 30 June 2024, according to HM Treasury. BBAs are the no-frills bank accounts that the nine largest personal current account providers are required to offer under the Payment Accounts Regulations 2015.

According to ONS, in 2022 there were **8,060** bank and building society branches in the UK. This was a reduction of **750** branches (**-8.5%**) from the year before. According to Which? banks and building societies have closed **6,795** branches since January 2015, at a rate of around **53** each month.

According to Financial Conduct Authority, in 2024, **4.8%** of UK adults (**2.6 million people**) used cash for most or all of their purchases.

According to the Bank of England, **2.17 million** adults were members of credit unions in January to March 2026, increased by **0.60%** compared with the reported last quarter. There were **339** credit unions in the UK, with loans to members to a value of **£2.61 billion**. **38%** (£999.57 million) of UK credit union loans to members were made in England, with Scotland accounting for **29%** and Northern Ireland for **31%**.

Fair By Design has estimated that the cost of the poverty premium to a typical parliamentary constituency is **£4.5 million a year**. This equates to **£444 per year** for a low-income household. The poverty premium is the extra costs people on low incomes pay for essential products and services.

According to the FCA, in 2024, **6.5 million** UK adults (**12%**) had low financial capability, down from 7.4 million in 2022. Around **one-fifth** of UK adults had poor financial numeracy or lacked confidence working with numbers.

According to UK Finance, in June 2026 there were **2.1 billion** debit and credit card transactions in the UK, **3.2%** fewer than in June 2025. Contactless payments accounted for **67%** of all credit card payments and **76%** of all debit card payments.

7. Young People

Young People in Education and Employment

According to ONS, in May to July 2026 there were **5.91 million** people aged 18 to 24. Of these, **2.0 million** were in full-time education while **3.51 million** were in employment (including those in full-time education who were also in employment). Compared to the same period in the previous year, the number of 18-24 year-olds in employment decreased by **14,700**.

Unemployment

589,000 18-24 year-olds (**14.4%**) were unemployed in May to July 2026. This was **112,700 more** than the same period the previous year and **2,300 more** more in February to April 2026.

- **252,000** had been unemployed for over 6 months.
- **133,000** (**22.5%**) had been unemployed for over 12 months, **22,000 more** than the same period the previous year and **900 more** than in February to April 2026.

981,000 (**13.0%**) of 16 to 24-year-olds in the UK were estimated by ONS to be not in education, employment or training (NEET) in April to June 2026, an increase of **30,000** over the last year.

Minimum Wage

Minimum wage rates increased on 1 April 2026. For under 18s the new rate is **£8.00**. The apprentice rate (for those under 19 or in the first year of their apprenticeship) is **£8.00**. For those aged 18-20, the minimum wage went up by £0.85 to **£10.85**. The National Living Wage (age 21 and above) increased by £0.50 to **£12.71**. The next increase in the minimum wage will be on 1 April 2027.

Wages Paid by Age and Gender

According to ONS, in 2025 the median weekly gross pay for all full-time employees was **£766.6**. For employees aged 16-17 it was **£373.2**. For those aged 18-21 it was **£498.5** and for those aged 22-29 it was **£648.2**. For those aged 16-17, female FT pay as a percentage of male FT pay was **105%**. It was also **95%** for those aged 22-29 but then continued reducing by age to reach **82.1%** for the 50-59 age group.

Student Loans

In 2024-25, the average maintenance loan awarded to full-time students in England was **£7,410** (**down 3.6%** on the previous year.) In Wales it was **£8,150** (**up 11.8%**), in Northern Ireland **£4,490** (**down 0.9%**) and in Scotland **£8,330** (**up 34.1%**). The provisional average tuition fee loan in England was **£8,210** (**down 5.3%**). In Wales it was **£8,560** (**up 0.6%**) and in Northern Ireland **£5,510** (**up 0.2%**).

Student Debt

In England, the provisional average debt for the latest (2025-26) cohort to enter repayment was **£47,730**, up from £10,050 in 2006-07. In Wales it was **£44,830** (**+13.9%** on the previous year), in Northern Ireland **£29,180** (**+4.7%**) and in Scotland **£21,000** (**+16.3%**).

8. The Bigger Picture

Economy and Inflation

The UK economy, or real gross domestic product (GDP), **is estimated to have grown by 0.4%** in the three months to July 2026, compared with the three months to April 2026. The largest contribution to this came from a growth of **0.6%** in services output. GDP grew by **0.4%** in July 2026, after showing a growth of **0.3%** in June 2026.

The CPI (Consumer Prices Index) increased by **3.1%** in the 12 months to August 2026, up from **2.9%** in the 12 months to July 2026. According to the ONS, the highest rates of inflation over the 12 months to August 2026 were for communication (**5.3%**), education (**5.1%**), housing, water and energy (**4.9%**) and transport (**4.6%**). The lowest rate was for clothing and footwear (**0.2%**). Among the sub-groups measured by ONS, exceptionally large price increases were recorded for liquid fuels (**64.6%**), fuels and lubricants (**23.0%**), recording media (**9.0%**) and water supply (**9.0%**).

Pay Rates

In the three months to July 2026, regular pay increased by **3.5%** on the year before. Pay including bonuses increased by **3.9%**. Average weekly pay was **£705**, or **£756** including bonuses; an annual salary of **£36,761**, or **£39,420** with bonuses. In real terms, for the year to July 2026, regular pay increased by **0.6%**, while total pay increased by **0.9%**. Compared to the pre-financial crash peak of February 2008, total real pay in July 2026 was **3.3%** higher, with total regular pay increasing by **4.7%** in the same period.

Public Sector Borrowing

Public Sector Net Borrowing (excluding public sector banks and Bank of England) in the three months to August 2026 was **£34.0 billion**, an average borrowing of **£369.9 million** per day. Spending included **£14.0 billion** net investment, meaning there was a current budget deficit of **£20.0 billion** over the same three months. Total net borrowing for the year to August 2026 was **£132.1 billion**, compared with **£159.0 billion** for the year to August 2025.

Public sector net debt in August 2026 (excluding public sector banks and Bank of England) was **£2,870.1 billion** (**90.2% of GDP**). This was **£144.4 billion** more than in August 2025, an increase over the year of **£395.6 million** per day.

According to the March 2026 Forecast from the Office for Budget Responsibility, after the spending and revenue decisions of the UK Government up to that time, public sector net debt will rise from **96.9%** of GDP in 2025-26 and to **97.1%** of GDP in 2029-30.

8. The Bigger Picture

Population, Taxpayers and Benefit Recipients

According to the latest ONS estimate, the population of the UK was **69.5** million in mid-2025, growing at the rate of **563 per day** from mid-2024 to mid-2025.

According to ONS, there are projected to be **40.8 million** individual income taxpayers in 2026-27. Of these, **31.4 million** will be basic rate taxpayers, **7.7 million** people will fall into the 40% income tax band and **1.29 million** will pay the 45% rate, which replaced the 50% rate in 2013-14. **415,000** are expected to pay the savers rate of tax. People who do not pay income tax still pay indirect taxes such as VAT, import duties, insurance premium tax and excise duties on tobacco, alcohol and fuel, which together raised **£255.6 billion** in 2023-24, according to the Institute of Fiscal Studies, nearly as much as income tax (£268 billion).

There were **10 million working age people** claiming some combination of DWP benefits in March 2026, according to DWP. In March 2026, **3.98 million** received Personal Independence Payment (PIP), **1.45 million** people were in receipt of housing benefit and **8.29 million** of Universal Credit.

Unemployment

The number of people classed as unemployed in May to July 2026 was **1.778 million** (**4.9%** of the workforce), **10,700 more** than in February to April 2026, around **116 more** per day, and up **82,700** from the previous year, around **227 more a day**. The unemployment rate in the UK was highest in London (**6.8%**) and lowest in Northern Ireland (**2.4%**). **463,000** people had been unemployed for over 12 months in May to July 2026, rising by **71,700** (**197 a day**) from a year earlier.

Employment and Unemployment – Older Workers

317,000 people aged 50 and over were unemployed in May to July 2026, a decrease of **26,300** on the three months to April 2026 and **50,800 less** for the same period the previous year. **32.0%** of unemployed workers aged 50 and over, a total of **101,000** people, had been out of work for over a year. **62,000** had been unemployed for more than two years. **1,765,000** (**13.3%**) people aged 65 and over were *in work* in May to July 2026, **2,600 more** than in February to April 2026, and an increase of **71,900** from the previous year.

Redundancies

114,300 people (**1,242 per day**) reported they had become redundant in May to July 2026, an increase of **1,500** compared with February to April 2026 and **10,000 more than** the year before.

The Money Charity is the UK's Financial Capability charity.

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