

# Perth & Kinross Economic Journal

January - March 2015

The Journal is an electronic publication on the state of the local economy prepared and published by Planning & Development in Perth & Kinross Council.

**Release Schedule:** The Journal is a quarterly publication and is scheduled for release as follows:

- Q2 2015 - end of July/beginning of August 2015
- Q3 2015 - end of October/beginning of November 2015

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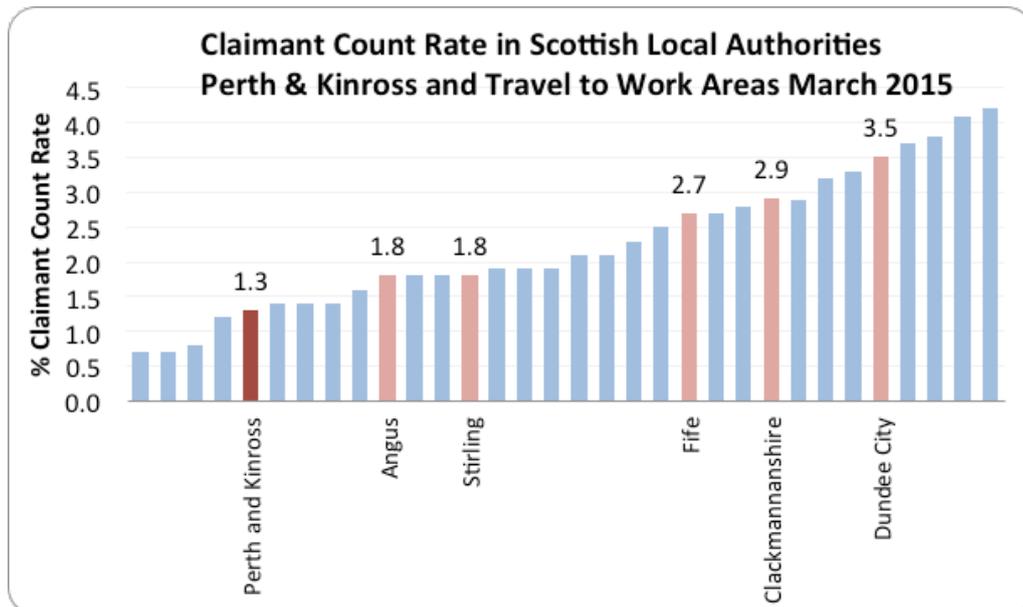


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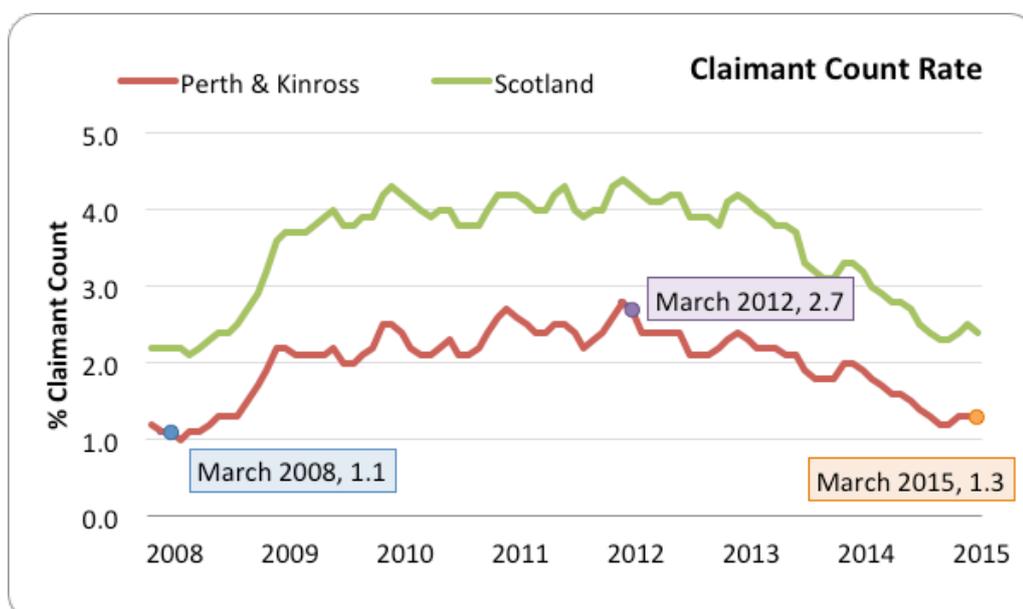
## Labour Market

### Unemployment

- Perth & Kinross area remains among top five local authority areas with the lowest Jobseeker's Allowance Claimant Count in Scotland.
- The rate rose marginally to 1.3% in January 2015 (from 1.2% the month before) and stayed at this level for February and March as well.
- Travel to Work areas fared less favourably, each with a higher rate ranging from 1.8% in Angus and Stirling to 3.5% in Dundee.

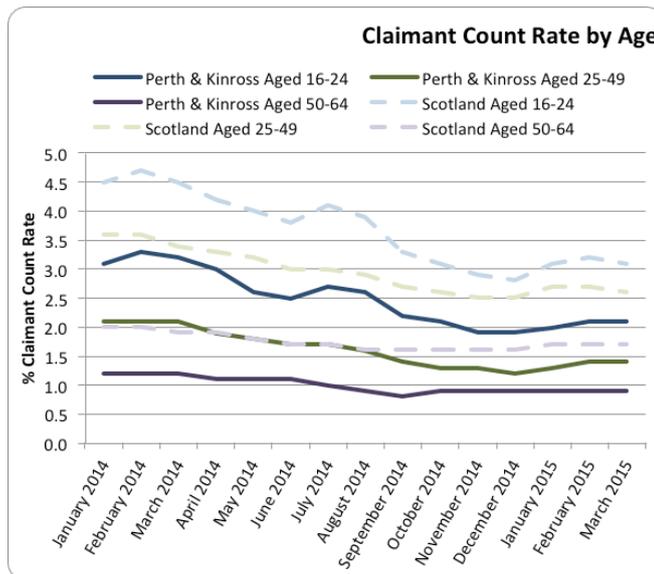


- In Perth & Kinross, the rate was the lowest March result since pre-recession levels. In 2008, this was 1.1%. This is in stark contrast to the highest March level of 2.7% in 2012.
- The rate in Perth & Kinross was 0.6 percentage points lower than a year before. There were 1,212 JSA Claimants in the area.
- Scottish Claimant count rate has been fluctuating between 2.3% and 2.5% since September 2014. In March 2015, the rate was 2.4%.
- Perth City Claimant Count rate remains below Scottish average at 2.0%.

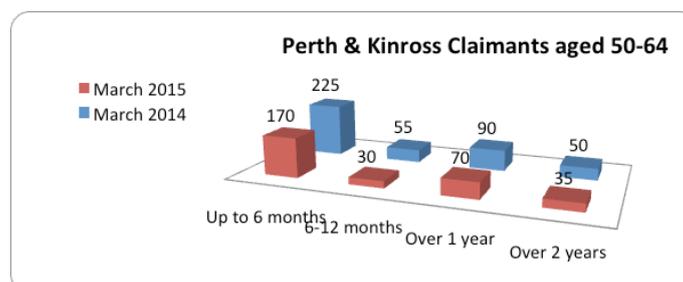
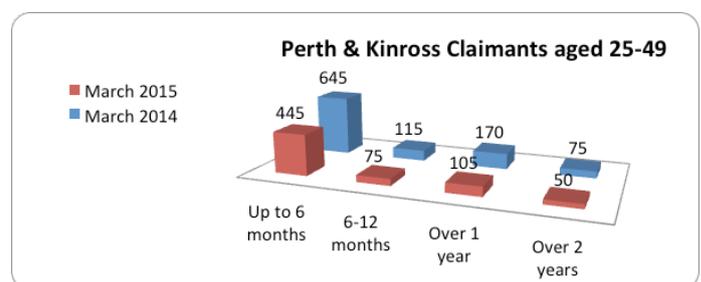
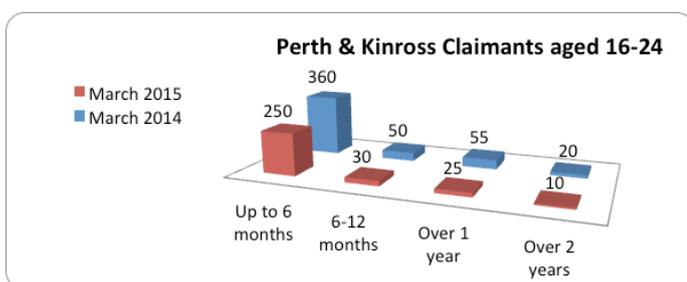


## Jobseekers's Allowance Claimants Age Groups

- The largest improvement in all age groups was among short-term unemployed (claiming less than 6 months).
- Between March 2014 and March 2015, it was the 16-24 age group who recorded the largest improvement in Claimant numbers. The figures fell by 35% for that age group. The fall in the number of Claimants for 25-49 year olds was only marginally lower at 33%, though.
- The smallest improvement over the same time period was among Claimants aged 50-64: the figures fell by 27%.



- 865 people were claiming Jobseeker's Allowance for less than 6 months in March 2015 in Perth & Kinross. 250 (28.9%) of these short-term Claimants were below 25 years of age and 445 (or 51.5%) were aged 25-49.
- 200 people were claiming Jobseeker's allowance for more than a year. Of these, only 12.5% were under 25 years of age. This illustrates just how more mobile young people are when job seeking in the labour market. They are also more likely to enter positive destinations other than work (i.e. education).



## Best and Worst Performing Wards

The table below illustrates how the wards in Perth & Kinross performed in terms of Jobseeker’s Allowance Claimant Count rate. The rates recorded across the area in March 2015 range from 0.6% to 2.7%, with the average being 1.2%. The Perth City divide is clearly evident with City Wards occupying the highest and lowest positions in this comparison exercise.

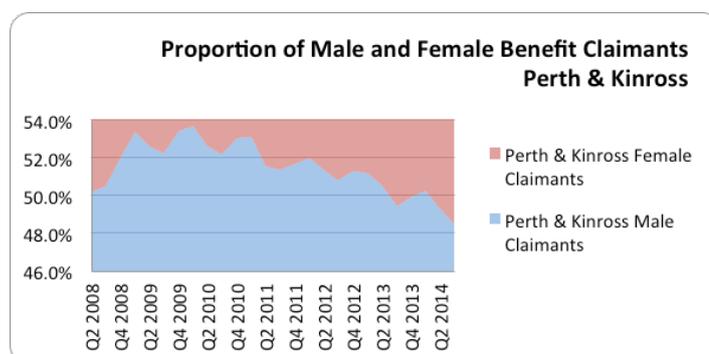
	Claimant Count	Claimant Rate		Claimant Count	Claimant Rate
Perth City South	48	0.6	Strathmore	85	1.0
Strathallan	47	0.7	Kinross-shire	87	1.1
Strathtay	49	0.8	Strathearn	68	1.1
Almond and Earn	58	0.9	Blairgowrie and Glens	81	1.3
Highland	52	0.9	Perth City North	281	2.4
Carse of Gowrie	65	1.0	Perth City Centre	291	2.7

## Benefit Claimants

- There were 9,510 benefit claimants in Perth & Kinross in the third Quarter of 2014 (latest data available at the date of publication), 530 less than a year before.
- The rate of Benefit Claimants was at 10.4%, down from 11.0% the previous year. It was also 0.1 percentage points lower than the previous quarter and well below the Scottish level of 14.6%.

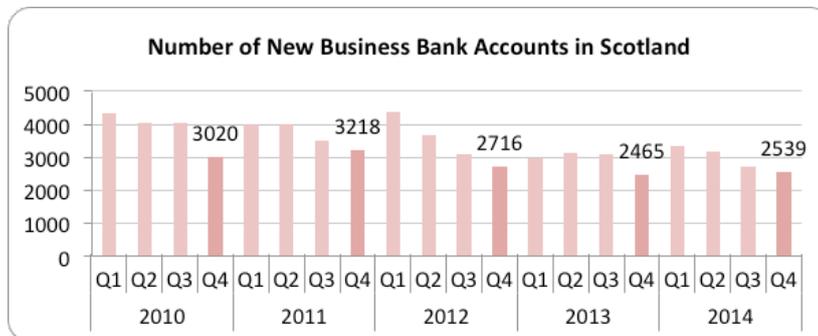
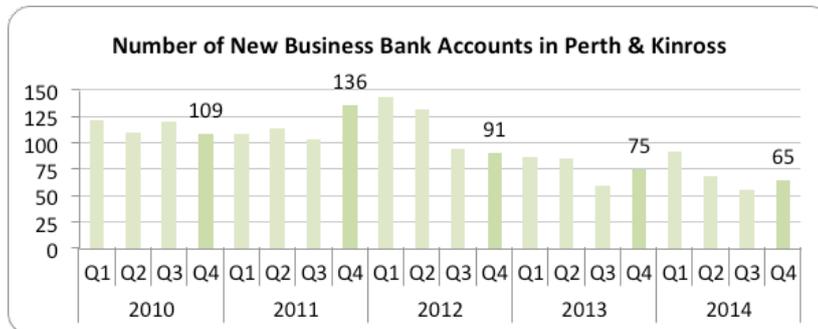
Statistical Group	Perth & Kinross		Scotland	
	Q3 2014	Q3 2013	Q3 2014	Q3 2013
job seeker	1.4	2.0	2.5	3.4
ESA and incapacity benefits	5.5	5.5	7.8	7.6
lone parent	0.7	0.7	1.1	1.1
carer	1.1	1.0	1.4	1.3
others on income related benefit	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4
disabled	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.3
bereaved	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2
<b>All Benefit Claimants</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>15.4</b>

- The gender split of benefit claimants was at 49.3% male and 50.7% female in Q2 2014. Following the relative imbalance between the numbers of male and female claimants that accompanied the economic downturn, over the last year this proportion seems to have come to a roughly equal split, as illustrated in the graph below. The underlying trend is of a gradual picking up of the traditionally male-dominated construction industry which was one of the worst affected during recession.



## Business Start-up

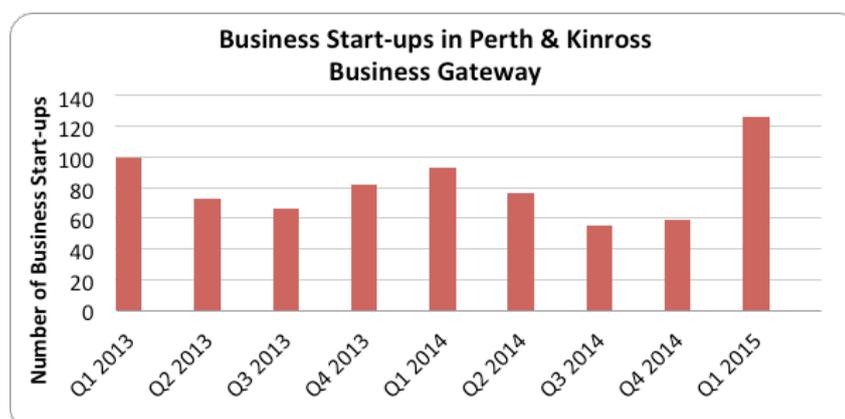
- There were 65 new business bank accounts in Scottish Banks in Quarter 4 of 2014 (latest data available at the time of publication), a recovery from the previous Quarter's figure of 56.
- Q4 2014 was down by 13.3% on the same quarter in 2013.



- For comparison, the number of new bank accounts in Scotland in Q4 2014 was 3.0% higher than the year before and 6.9% lower than the previous quarter.

Variance	Perth & Kinross	Scotland
Q4 2014 On Q4 2013	-13.3%	3.0%
Q4 2014 On Q3 2014	16.1%	-6.9%

- Business Gateway recorded 126 start-up businesses between January and March 2014, up from 93 the year before, and well higher than the 59 in the previous quarter.

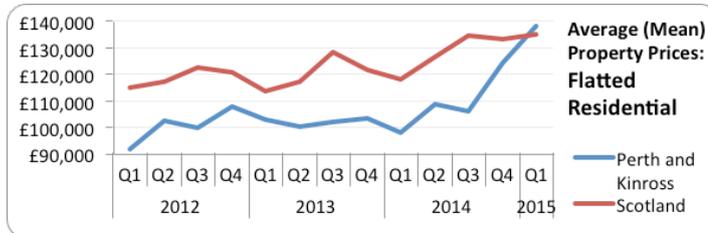


# Housing Market

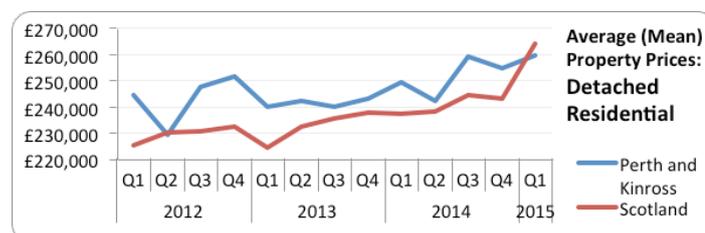
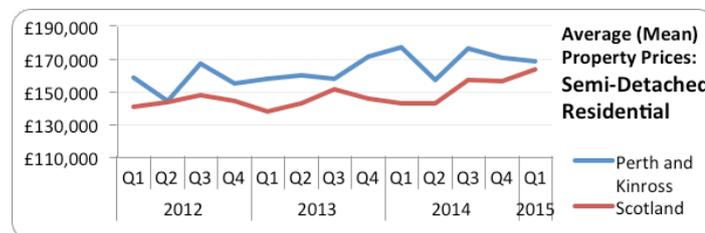
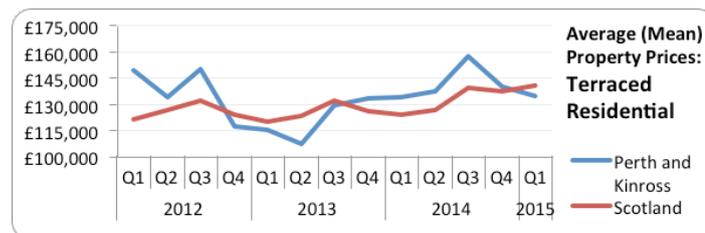
- The overall 3-year trend in the housing market in Perth & Kinross is showing further signs of recovery (see trendline in chart below).
- The average residential property price in Perth & Kinross in the first Quarter of 2015 was £191,160 which was over £17k above the Scottish average.



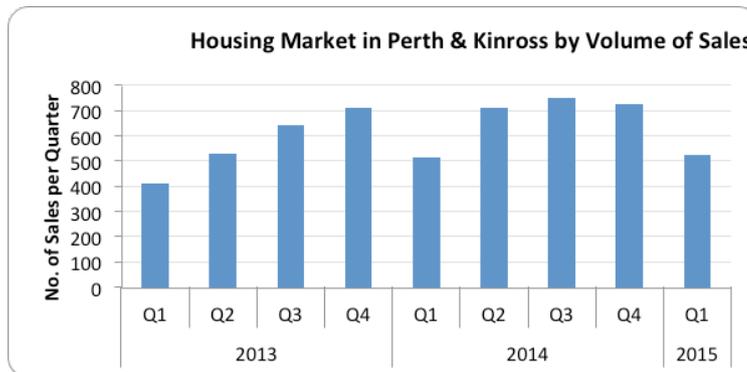
- An average flatted property price recorded a rather sharp increase of £13,618 to £138,223. Unusually for Perth & Kinross, this was higher than the Scottish average. The latter was at £135,337.



- The average Perth & Kinross price for a detached property rose by just over £4.5k to £259,880. The Scottish average reached £264,103 in the same quarter. Both Terraced and Semi-Detached properties in the area sold for less than the previous quarter: £134,936 and £168,713, respectively.

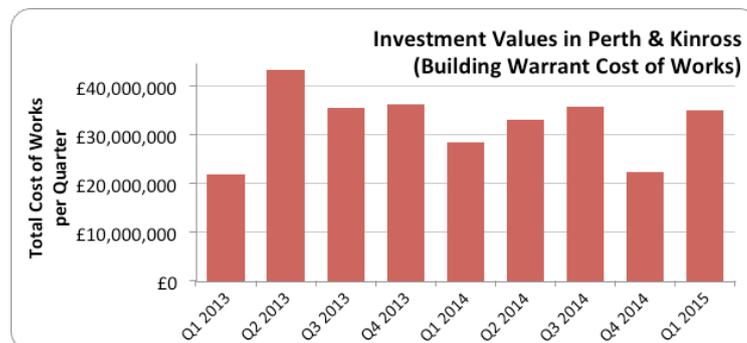


- It is common to see the volume of sales in the first Quarter to dip below the rest of the given year. Q1 2015 followed this pattern with 524 houses sold in Perth & Kinross, down by 201 on previous quarter. The volume was marginally higher than the figure of 515 recorded in the same Quarter of 2014.



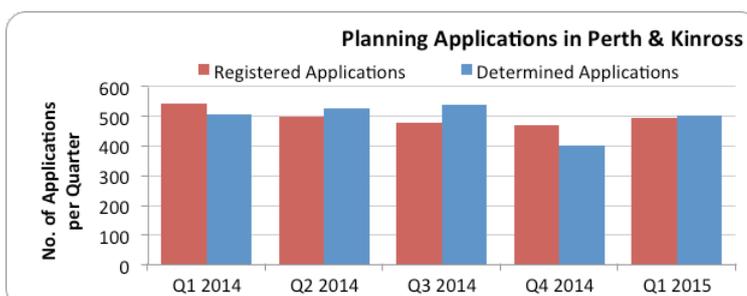
## Investment

- The value of building works requiring a Building Warrant in Quarter 1 of 2015 was £35,105,840 - over £6.5M above last year's figure of £28,573,116.
- Compared to the previous quarter, the value was also higher by £12.6M.



## Planning Applications

- The number of new Planning Applications submitted to Perth & Kinross Council at 494 was lower (by 8.9%) than a year before.
- The number of determined applications at 505 was at a very similar level to the previous year's figure of 508.



## Perth City Centre

- Perth City Centre business vacancy rate, although it was higher than the 2 previous quarters, remained at a low level of 8.18%, just barely up from 8.13% in Quarter 4 of 2014. This is in contrast to 8.39% in the same Quarter the year before, and 9.45% in 2012.
- March rate of 8.0% was 0.26 percentage points lower than the year before.
- Between January and March 2015, there were 2 new retail business openings against the backdrop of 10 retail closures.



## In the spotlight: The Hub

Based at 31-33 South Street, the Hub is becoming well established in its new location in Perth City centre as well as in the Perth & Kinross employability scene. This spacious 'all purpose' suite with 8 computer work stations and private training room is becoming, as the name suggests, a 'Hub' for business and employability activity.



Supporting an average of 35 clients a month into jobs, the Hub is always looking for opportunities to further engage with individuals and businesses throughout the local and rural community of Perth & Kinross. We are focusing increasingly on clients facing two or more barriers to employment and have ongoing rural projects in Aberfeldy, Blairgowrie and Crieff.

For more information, visit <http://www.pkc.gov.uk/thehub>