

GUERNSEY RETAIL PRICES INDEX

4.2% annual change as at 31 March 2004

At the end of March, Guernsey's annual rate of inflation, as measured by changes in the Index of Retail Prices, was 4.2% compared with 3.9% at the end of the previous quarter.

RPI X, the rate of inflation that excludes mortgage interest payments stands at 3.2%

Table 1

The Index Figures at the end of March 2004 were:

117.4 (Dec 99=100)
139.3 (Mar 1994 =100)
188.2 (Dec 1988 =100)
251.6 (Dec 1983 =100)
399.5 (Dec 1978 =100)

Period	%	Period	%
3 Months	2.2	2 Years	9.2
6 Months	3.2	3 Years	12.3
9 Months	3.6	4 Years	16.0
12 Months	4.2	5 Years	20.3

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Matters affecting the R.P.I during the last year

The major contributors to the March 2004 figure were Housing (1.9% out of 4.2%), Food (0.9%), Fares/Other Travel (0.4%), Alcohol (0.3%) and Leisure Goods (0.2%) Motoring, Household Goods, Clothing, Personal Goods, Household Services and Tobacco each had an increase of 0.1% giving a total contribution of 0.7%. Fuel, Light and Power decreased by 0.1%. Leisure Services and Food Away from Home did not change.

The Housing Group has again had the greatest effect on inflation at 1.9%. This was mainly due to an increase in interest rates and consequent rise in the average mortgage debt. The cost of building work and major house improvements has also continued to rise.

The Food Group has also had an upward effect on the index. The price of bread has increased twice in the last twelve months. Fresh fruit, potatoes and fish have also increased during the last year.

Increases in the Fares/Other Travel group was mainly due to travel out of the Island. Alcohol has also increased, mainly beers and spirits.

Matters affecting the R.P.I during the last three months

The main contributors to inflation over the last **three months** were the cost of accommodation in the UK, some air fares, women's clothes and beer consumed at home. Downward effects on the quarterly change included cell phones and home computers.

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Annual % Changes for each quarter

Table 2

	March	June	September	December
1991	8.6	8.7	6.1	5.5
1992	4.6	4.1	3.6	3.2
1993	2.3	1.5	1.8	1.4
1994	2.9	2.3	2.0	2.4
1995	3.0	3.5	4.0	3.6
1996	2.5	2.1	2.0	2.8
1997	3.1	4.0	4.4	4.7
1998	4.1	4.0	4.0	3.2
1999	2.1	2.2	1.8	2.4
2000	3.8	4.4	4.5	3.9
2001	3.3	2.3	2.6	1.9
2002	2.9	3.3	3.9	4.4
2003	4.7	4.3	3.3	3.9
2004	4.2			

Next publication date:
15 July 2004

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PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN GROUP INFLATION AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO OVERALL INFLATION

Table 3 GUERNSEY INFLATION RATE (+4.2%)

	Weight	Quarterly %Change	Annual %Change	% Contribution
Food	127	1.0	6.8	0.9
Alcoholic Drink	52	4.2	6.2	0.3
Tobacco	19	3.7	3.7	0.1
Housing	216	2.7	8.5	1.9
Fuel, Light and Power	41	-0.3	-2.9	-0.1
Household Goods	79	0.8	1.1	0.1
Household Services	33	3.2	3.6	0.1
Clothing & Footwear	56	1.2	2.6	0.1
Personal Goods	49	0.8	2.9	0.1
Motoring Expenditure	85	1.4	1.2	0.1
Fares/Other Travel	33	7.3	10.8	0.4
Leisure Goods	63	1.2	2.7	0.2
Leisure Services	92	0.8	-0.3	0.0
Food Away from Home	55	0.1	0.5	0.0
Overall	1000			
All Items				4.2

Weight is the proportion of the total index represented by each group. **Contribution** shows the effect of price changes in relation to the relative weight of the groups.

Retail Prices Index (RPI)

The RPI is a measure of inflation in Guernsey. It can be defined as "an average measure of change in the prices of goods and services bought for the purpose of consumption by the vast majority of households" (RPI Technical Manual, Office for National Statistics, 1998).

Goods and services that consumers purchase have a price, and these will vary over time. The RPI is designed to measure such changes. Imagine a very large shopping basket (over 2100 items) comprising all the different kinds of goods and services bought by a typical household. As the prices of individual items in this basket vary, the total cost of the basket will vary - the RPI is a measure of the change from quarter to quarter in this total cost.

No two households spend their money in exactly the same way and this basket of goods is compiled using spending pattern data from the Household Expenditure Survey. This is carried out every five years, hence the RPI index base is reset to 100 e.g. Dec 1999 = 100, Mar 1994 = 100 etc. The RPI while not applying precisely to any one household or person, will be close to the experience of inflation for the great majority of households.

GUERNSEY RETAIL PRICES INDEX - MARCH 2004

Figure 1

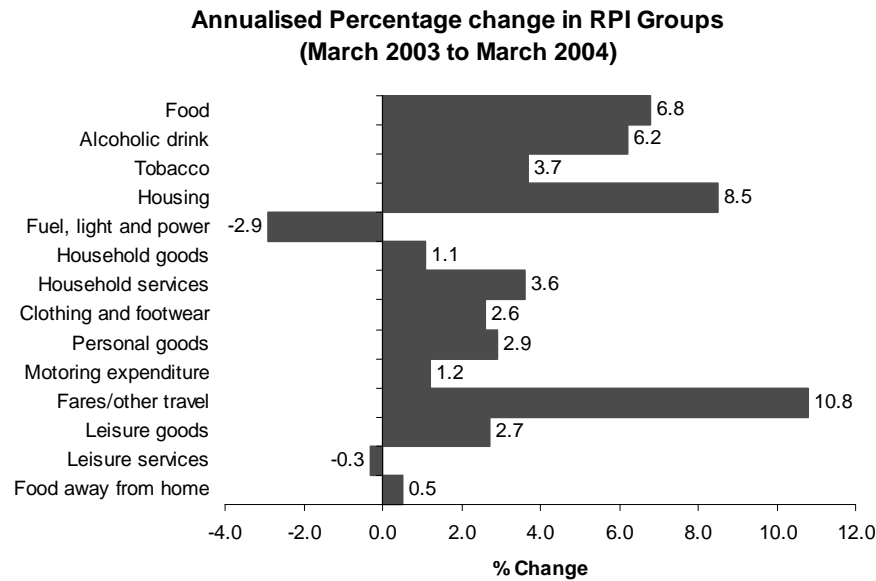


Figure 2

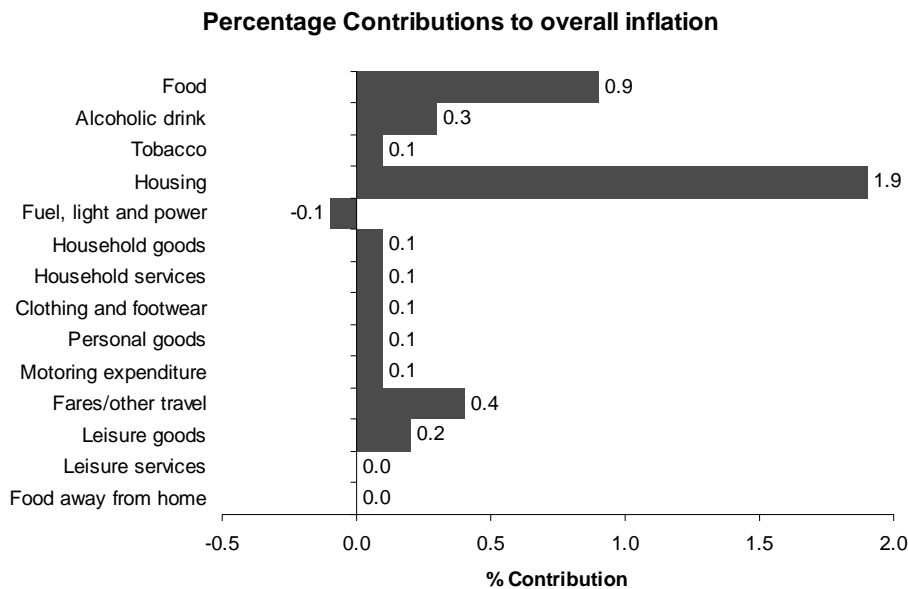
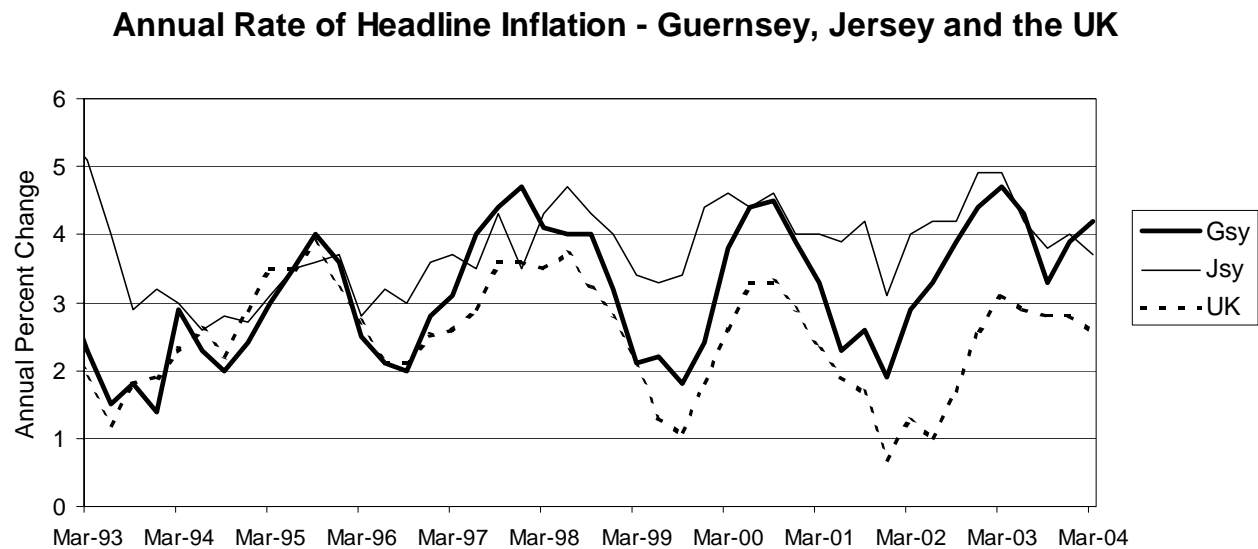


Figure 3



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RPI comparison with Jersey and the UK

Guernsey and Jersey tend to run at a higher rate than the UK. The chart on page 3 (figure 3) shows that inflation in Guernsey followed the general trends of the UK inflation rate, albeit at a higher level until 2003 when the trend changed. Since then the UK has declined and Guernsey has risen.

Table 4

		Annual Movements						Quarterly Movements		
		Guernsey		UK		Jersey		Guernsey	UK	Jersey
		Headline	RPI X	Headline	RPI X	Headline	RPI X	Headline	RPI	
1998	Mar	4.1	2.3	3.5	2.6	4.3	3.8	0.9	0.5	1.7
	June	4.0	2.3	3.7	2.8	4.7	4.1	0.9	1.6	1.2
	Sept	4.0	2.6	3.2	2.5	4.3	3.9	1.0	1.0	0.9
	Dec	3.2	2.2	2.8	2.6	4.0	3.9	0.4	0.0	0.2
1999	Mar	2.1	2.6	2.1	2.7	3.4	3.6	-0.2	-0.2	1.1
	June	2.2	3.1	1.3	2.2	3.3	3.6	1.0	0.9	1.1
	Sept	1.8	3.0	1.1	2.1	3.4	3.6	0.4	0.5	0.9
	Dec	2.4	2.8	1.8	2.2	4.4	4.3	1.1	0.7	1.1
2000	Mar	3.8	3.1	2.6	2.0	4.6	4.3	1.2	0.3	1.3
	June	4.4	3.6	3.3	2.2	4.4	4.0	1.6	1.6	1.0
	Sept	4.5	3.5	3.3	2.2	4.6	4.2	0.7	0.4	1.1
	Dec	3.9	3.8	2.9	2.0	4.0	3.4	0.5	0.3	0.5
2001	Mar	3.3	2.9	2.3	1.9	4.0	3.6	0.6	0.0	1.4
	June	2.3	2.7	1.9	2.4	3.9	3.8	0.8	1.3	0.9
	Sept	2.6	3.1	1.7	2.3	4.2	4.2	0.8	0.1	1.3
	Dec	1.9	2.9	0.7	1.9	3.1	3.6	-0.1	-0.7	-0.6
2002	Mar	2.9	3.8	1.3	2.3	4.0	4.4	1.6	0.6	2.3
	June	3.3	3.6	1.0	1.5	4.2	4.4	1.0	1.0	1.1
	Sept	3.9	3.8	1.7	2.1	4.2	4.2	1.4	0.8	1.3
	Dec	4.4	3.8	2.9	2.7	4.9	4.5	0.4	0.5	0.1
2003	Mar	4.7	4.3	3.1	3.0	4.9	4.8	1.9	0.8	2.4
	June	4.3	3.8	2.9	2.8	4.2	4.6	0.6	0.8	0.4
	Sept	3.3	3.1	2.8	2.8	3.8	4.4	0.4	0.7	0.9
	Dec	3.9	3.4	2.8	2.6	4.0	4.0	1.0	0.5	0.3
2004	Mar	4.2	3.2	2.6	2.1	3.7	3.5	2.2	0.6	2.1

RPI X

A single measure of inflation may not meet all user's needs. Following the Office for National Statistics' Review of the Island's RPI, one recommendation was for the Policy and Research Unit to publish the RPIX. RPI X literally means RPI **eXcluding mortgage interest payments**; the RPI is calculated again after this item has been removed.

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