

## Lancaster and Fleetwood Parliamentary Constituency

This is the second bulletin of 2013 produced by Northern Housing Consortium (NHC) providing analysis of housing-related data for the Parliamentary Constituencies in the North of England. The report provides analysis of the impacts of welfare reform and the housing market in the constituency.

We have used the following symbols to indicate your performance against the relevant regional or national statistics.



Above average



Reference point



Below average

### Welfare Reform



[Real Life Reform](#) report is the result of a partnership between Northern Housing Consortium, seven registered providers and York University. Some findings emerging from the first report are that 65% of households have less than £10 per week to live on following rent and essentials such as food and bills. 83% of households are in debt (average £2,418). Households are reporting increased levels of stress and depression.



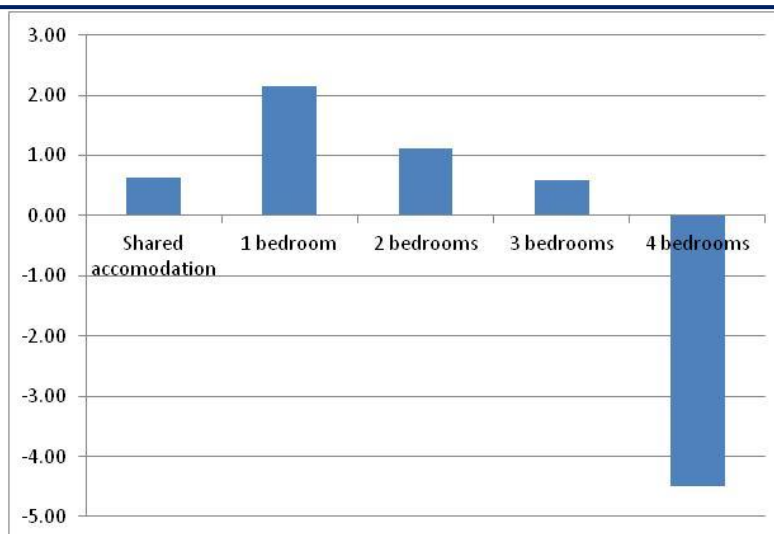
The Trussell Trust's latest figures show that more people are being referred to foodbanks with Benefit related problems since April's welfare reforms. Between April and June, over 150,000 people received three days' emergency food from a Trussell Trust foodbank - 200% more than the same period in 2012. The nearest foodbank to the constituency is in Morecambe.



The number of Housing Benefit claimants in the social sector has grown in the constituency since the implementation of the under-occupation penalty. Such claims grew by 0.06% between March and May this year. Meanwhile, claims of Local Housing Allowance in the private sector grew by 0.9% in the same period compared with a Lancashire average increase of 1.2%.



While the average Housing Benefit award grew by 0.4%, the average weekly LHA award grew by 0.07% and by multiplying the number of claimants by average weekly award an overall weekly LHA cost increase of 0.96% can be estimated (£1,784). Figure 1 shows how average costs have changed over this period by dwelling size.



**Figure 1: Change in weekly LHA costs**

## Housing Market



Ministry of Justice data shows that in the City of Lancaster LA area, social landlord possession claims in the first two quarters of 2013 stood at 63. This compares to 51 claims in the corresponding timeframe in 2012 – a 23.5% increase. Landlord possessions grew from 18 to 12. In the private sector (rented and mortgage), while claims fell by 24.3%, possessions fell by 2.6%.



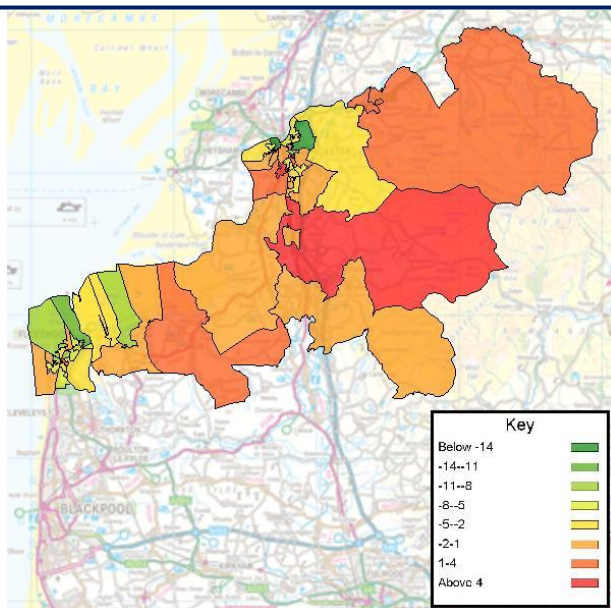
According to ONS figures, the population in the constituency fell by 2.3% from 88,892 in 2010 to 86,860 in 2011. The map below shows the population change by lower super output area and that greatest population increases and that have taken place in an LSOA covered by the Scotforth West ward (15.8%) and that the greatest decrease was seen in part of Castle ward (-18.9%) (note: data is not available for some LSOAs in 2011).



Notwithstanding this overall population decrease, CORE data shows that social housing lettings have grown in City of Lancaster from 597 in 2011/12 to 800 in 2012/13 – a growth of 34%. Lettings in Wyre have fallen by 8.4%. This compares to an overall increase of 10% in Lancashire.



In the year ending in March 2013, there were 888 decisions made by the planning authority in City of Lancaster. Some 59 of these (6.6%) were regarding developments for housing. This represents 5.8% of all housing-related decisions in Lancashire.



**Map 1: Percentage change in population**

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