

Blyth Valley Parliamentary Constituency

This is the second bulletin of 2015 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

Financial Distress



ONS figures show that in the year ending in June 2015, there were 39,000 people aged over 16 years old in employment (71.3%) in Blyth Valley. There are 30,000 jobs in the constituency which equates to 0.58 jobs per 16-64 year old compared to 0.68 across the North East.



Experimental Jobseekers Allowance and out of work Universal Credit statistics produced by Jobcentre Plus shows that there were 1,535 such claimants in November 2015 (3.0% of 16-64 year olds), which is a 0.3% fall on the previous year. This compares to 2.8% of people in the region (a 0.4% decrease).



The latest Government data shows that there were 17,360 children in low income families in the constituency in August 2013 (20.4% of all children). Almost four-fifths were in families in receipt of Income Support or Jobseekers Allowance while 10.9%, in families in receipt of Council Tax Credit and with less than 60% of median income.



Croft ward (39%) had the greatest concentration of such children followed by Newsham (34%). Croft also has a higher than average proportion of children living in a family in receipt of Income Support or JSA (89.6%).

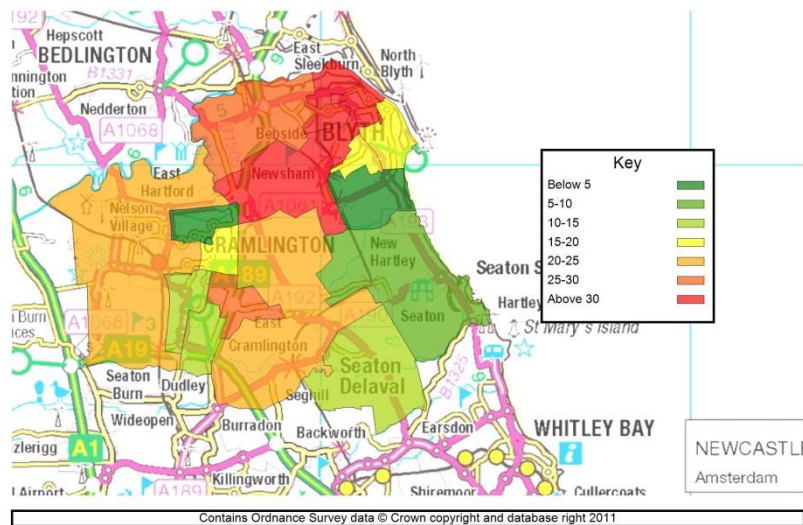


Figure 1: Percentage of children in low income families

Housing Market



In 2014/15, there were 194 homeless acceptances by Northumberland Council. This is a 57.7% increase on the 123 acceptances in 2009/10. Of these, 8 households were found temporary accommodation and there were no cases of a duty being owed but no accommodation found.



In October 2014, the total number of vacant homes was 5,074. This is an 11.4% decrease from 5,726 in 2009 compared with the 13.8% decrease in the North East. Long-term vacants fell by 18.7% over the same period. There was a total of 296 social housing vacants and 69 were classed as long-term vacant (23.3%) which is an increase from 46 in the previous year.



As at April 2014, there were 7,744 households on the housing waiting list in Northumberland. This is a 19.4% decrease on the previous year of 10,912. Furthermore, this figure represented a fall on previous years and the long-term trend is a 24.3% decrease on 2009 figures.



There are clear signs of a recovery in the housing market in the constituency with an overall increase in sales between 2009 and 2014 (89.2%) with greatest increase in sales of detached properties and a fall in flat and maisonette sales (ONS). The data also shows median house prices being at their highest level in 2014 (£124,950).



As figure 2 shows, median house prices and pay have not grown at the same rate. Median gross house prices growth outstripped that of median pay. As a result, the affordability ratio grew to 6.4 from 6.3 between 2013 and 2014.

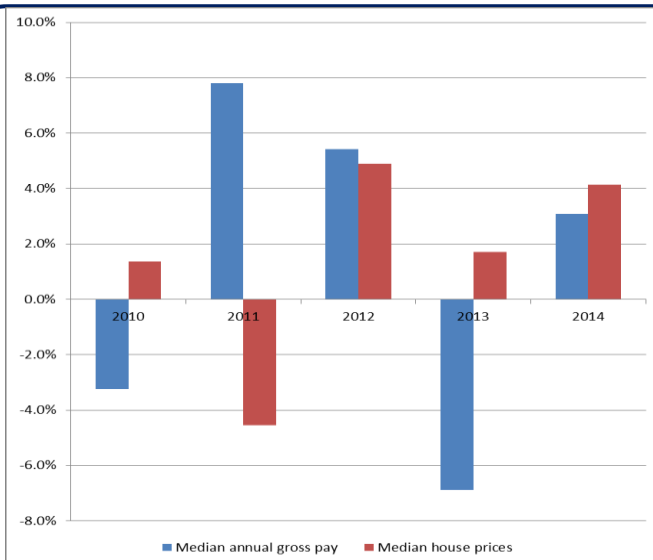


Figure 2: Annual % change in house prices and pay

If you have any queries regarding the content of the APPG briefings, please contact:
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