



Lanarkshire LEADER Socio Economic Analysis

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Lanarkshire LEADER Programme

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The socio-economic character of the LAG can be profiled from the analysis of data-zone-level data. A data-zone represents between 500 and 1000 people and represents the lowest level for which data are published by the Scottish Government. For ease of interpretation, the data-zones for the towns are enlarged in boxes at the edge of the maps. The dates on the maps represent the latest available data in that category. Apart from the maps of SIMD ranks (which are based on the Scottish quartiles), the quartiles are based on the quartiles for the Lanarkshire LAG. They thus describe the internal variation within Lanarkshire. Additionally, maps showing change in variables over time show positive and negative changes grouped into categories. Where appropriate, the comparison with Scotland can be made by reference to the LAG average and the Scottish average.

Demography

Overall there is a distinct pattern of population change with a gain of over 11% between 2003-2013 compared to a gain of just over 5.3% in Scotland over the same time period. All other demographic ratios (% young people; % old people; dependency ratios) were very close to the Scottish average. With respect to the change in population level, there were gains in most of the peri-urban rural areas, and losses in the southern part of South Lanarkshire. There is also evidence of a degree of thinning out of population in towns and some of the former mining villages with Carluke, in particular, showing a number of datazones with significant losses. In the Strathaven area, there is a surprisingly large number of datazones with losses, which rather bucks the trend of growth for the central-northern part of the LAG area. Apart from Shotts-Harthill, the North Lanarkshire component of the LAG has been gaining in population.

Proportion of people aged 65 or more

In Scotland as a whole 17.77% of the population was over 65 whereas the figure for the Lanarkshire LAG was 17.43%. Generally, the population of the more rural parts of the Lanarkshire LAG in 2013 has rather less people over 65 than the Scottish average. There are pockets of a high proportion of older people in the population in central South Lanarkshire including Carluke, Lanark, Lesmahagow and Douglas, another cluster around Biggar and its hinterland and two smaller clusters around Strathaven and Shotts.

There are quite marked differences in the change in the proportion of older people between 2003 and 2013, with a number of data zones in more peri-urban areas showing a decrease in the proportion of more elderly people (possibly associated with increases in commuting) but with some areas where there has been a significant increase, especially the area south of Lesmahagow, parts of the Strathaven hinterland and parts of the north east corner of South Lanarkshire.

Proportion of population that are 16-64

For Scotland as a whole 65.12% of the population was between 16-65 years old in 2013; for the Lanarkshire LAG the figure was 64.33%. Across a large swath of central South Lanarkshire the proportion of the population of working age is significantly below the LAG average with many datazones in the bottom quartile for the LAG area. These data-zones

include towns and more rural areas. The far west of Strathaven, the north east of South Lanarkshire and most of North Lanarkshire outwith Shotts-Harthill have a more positive demographic structure.

In terms of change, the overall picture from 2003-2013 is one of a declining proportion of the population of working age, with areas of modest growth in the far west of Strathaven, in much of North Lanarkshire and in some data-zones east of Lanark.

Proportion of the population aged below 16

The proportion of children varies significantly over the LAG area in 2013, with high proportions (compared to the Scottish average of just over 17%) recorded in the central area of North Lanarkshire adjacent to the larger urban settlements and in a number of more rural data-zones in the centre of the LAG area. The lowest proportions are in the south of the LAG area, the M74 corridor south of Lesmahagow, the north east corner of South Lanarkshire and parts of North Lanarkshire around Shotts.

The change in the proportion of children is most marked by decline over much of the LAG area, though this is smaller on average than the decline over Scotland between 2003-2013. Only in the central peri-urban area in South Lanarkshire adjacent to the major urban settlements, one data-zone to the west of Biggar and parts of North Lanarkshire is there an increase in the proportion of children. Generally those areas with a high proportion of children in 2013 have also seen growth in the previous decade.

Incomes and employment

On average, household incomes in Lanarkshire are marginally above the Scottish average (£415 per week instead of £389 for Scotland as a whole). The lowest quartile median household incomes tend to be in the market towns and mining communities with an island of poorly performing data-zones to the south of Lesmahagow and another poor performing area in the remote southern part of South Lanarkshire. Compared to some of the other socio-economic variables, North Lanarkshire performs relatively well, with a significant number of data-zones in the top 50% in the LAG area, although the Shotts-Harthill area performs badly.

Proportion in high-level occupations

The general pattern within the LAG is for there to be an over-representation of high-level occupations across the central part of the LAG area with below average levels in the North Lanarkshire part of the LAG and the south west part of South Lanarkshire. Lanark and Carluke also have a number of data-zones with a low proportion in high-level occupations, but Strathaven has only one low-scoring data-zone. This suggests a concentration of high level occupations in the more rural data-zones close to urban centres and a degree of social spatial stratification.

Unemployment

Persons 16-64 claiming job seekers allowance

The percentage of the population 16-65 on job seekers allowance is marginally higher for the Lanarkshire LAG than for Scotland as a whole (4.47% compared to 4.21% in 4th quartile of 2012). There is a clear spatial pattern within the centre of the LAG area, outwith the market towns performing rather well by overall Lanarkshire LAG standards with almost all the area

in the lowest quartile of those claiming job-seekers allowance, but with pockets of high numbers of claimants in the towns. The poor performing areas are concentrated in North Lanarkshire and in the far south west of South Lanarkshire.

Persons 16-24 claiming job-seekers' allowance, (2012 4th quarter)

The proportion of 16-24 year olds on job seekers' allowance is slightly higher in the LAG area than for Scotland as a whole. The proportion of the population claiming job seekers' allowance ranges from 2.5% to over 22 %. Generally the worst performing areas are the market towns, with Lanark having a large concentration of poorly performing data-zones. Peri-urban data-zones in northern parts of South Lanarkshire perform relatively well with a significant proportion of data-zones in the best quartile, and these high-performing data-zones extend into the southern parts of North Lanarkshire.

Employment Deprivation

In terms of employment deprivation (defined as the percentage of the working age population (men aged 16-64 and women aged 16-60) who are on the claimant count, receive Incapacity Benefit, Employment and Support Allowance, or Severe Disablement Allowance, the scores show a marked concentration in the towns, North Lanarkshire generally and in the far south west of South Lanarkshire. Across a large swath of rural central South Lanarkshire the rural data-zones perform rather well.

Education Training and Skills Deprivation

Lanarkshire LAG's average rank for this variable is 2969, significantly lower than the Scottish average of 3253. With regard to Education Training and Skills Deprivation, North Lanarkshire performs badly with the whole of the North Lanarkshire LAG area below the Lanarkshire LAG mid-point and many data-zones in the bottom quartile. The whole of South Lanarkshire south of Lesmahagow also performs badly apart from a data-zone south of Biggar which is in the least deprived quartile. There is also an island of poorly performing data-zones around Stonehouse.

Health

The median health deprivation rank for the LAG area is better than the Scottish average. In terms of health deprivation rank in 2012. The North Lanarkshire part of the LAG performs very poorly indeed with almost all data-zones in the lower two Scottish quartiles. South Lanarkshire has below average health deprivation data-zones in the towns and in the rural area to the west of Lesmahagow and with only one lowest quartile data-zone in Rigside.

The proportion of the LAG area with higher than average long term health and disability is quite low with two distinct rural concentrations in the M74 corridor immediately south of Lesmahagow and in the Shotts area of North Lanarkshire and a number of datazones in Lanark, Carluke and adjacent areas and an outlier in Biggar when all the rest of north east Lanarkshire performs well on this variable.

Access to services

Access to services can be considered with respect to drive times or public transport times. For those who do not have regular access to a car, it is public transport accessibility that should be considered; and in general, more disadvantaged people are more dependent on public transport. In all cases (6/6) access to services was associated with a longer drive or

public transport time in the Lanarkshire LAG compared to the Scottish average and in 5/6 cases this worsened between 2006 and 2012.

Drive times

Using the overall drive time deprivation indicator, the majority of the LAG area is in the worst Scottish quartile. This is not entirely surprising because there are many data-zones of 50 square km or more where the density of population is very low, and the housing very scattered. Predictably, the situation in the small towns is reversed with most urban data-zones in the highest performing Scottish quartile.

Public services times

On the average public transport drive time deprivation rank, almost the whole of the LAG area excluding only five rural data-zones is in the most deprived quartile by Scottish standards. Bearing in mind that these areas do include smaller settlements and former mining communities the performance is very poor. In terms of average public transport times to get to a GP the worst performing data-zone has a travel time of nearly 90 minutes. The character of the rural areas with highly scattered pattern of farmsteads and isolated dwellings inevitably makes the delivery of effective public transport very challenging, although the situation is better where there are distinct villages. On a range of access to particular services large areas of rural Lanarkshire perform very poorly with high average public transport drive times.

Housing

In a 2007 survey for the Scottish Government, house price affordability was assessed. Across three categories of dwellings North Lanarkshire had the most affordable homes of any local authority in two out of three classes in Scotland and South Lanarkshire ranked between 6th and 15th¹.

The lower quartile house prices 2012 show a pattern of broadly low prices in the North Lanarkshire part of the LAG and in the south west part of South Lanarkshire and two areas in the mid part of the LAG area: around Stonehouse and to the north of Biggar. There is an unexpected cluster of higher house prices in the northern part of North Lanarkshire to the south of Cumbernauld. The towns predictably have some areas with house prices in the lowest quartile, which will most likely comprise the poorer housing estates.

Aggregate deprivation

The average figure for the data-zones comprising the Lanarkshire LAG is marginally above the Scottish average. However, SIMD is known to under-record rural deprivation because it tends to pick up blocks of deprivation in data-zones whereas rural deprivation tends to be more dispersed. Nonetheless, rural Lanarkshire shows quite large areas in the deep rural south west and the scattered settlements around Dunsyre in the east of South Lanarkshire with high SIMD levels and with the largest concentrated area of high SIMD (most deprived communities) in the post-industrial, former mining areas of rural North Lanarkshire. Over and above the predictable concentrations in certain parts of market towns (excepting

¹Paper presented to the Barker Commission <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/180088/0051205.pdf>

Strathaven and Biggar), the most noticeable feature of the poorest performing communities is that they are typically villages, many of which are associated with active or former mining/opencast activity. They include three settlements to the south of Lesmahagow including Coalburn and Douglas, Carstairs and Forth in the north-east of South Lanarkshire and a significant number of communities in North Lanarkshire, including Harthill, Blackridge and Caldercruix. These are the focal points of concentrated disadvantage as assessed by SIMD. Generally, the north west of South Lanarkshire and the east are above the Scottish average with the worst performing parts of the LAG area, the more rural south (albeit with former mining communities) and the North Lanarkshire area.

Overall conclusions

On many socio-economic variables the Lanarkshire LAG is in the middle range for Scotland. Its population has increased faster, its SIMD average is close to the Scottish average, as is its health deprivation score and its education and skills score. It is rather worse on employment deprivation, with a score significantly below the average for Scotland. It scores 2484 whereas the Scottish average is 3253, well below the Scottish average on Geographical Access to Services, Drive Times Deprivation Rank (median rank). The LAG's mean annual lower quartile house prices are about 20% below the Scottish average. The proportion of the population on job seekers' allowance is marginally higher than the Scottish average. However, there is very considerable variation within the LAG area.

The general spatial pattern is one of two major pockets of disadvantage: one on North Lanarkshire and one along a corridor either side of the M74 to the south of Lesmahagow. These areas contain some deeply disadvantaged areas, which include many of the mining dependent communities in central South Lanarkshire and in almost the whole of North Lanarkshire within the LAG. Some of the smaller former mining areas lack vibrancy. There are also concentrations of disadvantage in most of the towns, although Strathaven and the surrounding data-zones generally show higher socioeconomic performance on many variables. Biggar is also something of an outlier in the central part of the LAG which on many variables outperforms the other towns. The lightly populated hill areas of rural south west Lanarkshire are also characterised by weak socio-economic performance.

With respect to housing, house prices are very low in North Lanarkshire and house price earnings ratios are relatively favourable whereas rural South Lanarkshire has house price earnings ratios closer to the middle of the range for Scotland. The availability of housing is probably not a major issue. Quality might well be.

Access to services is constrained for many rural residents with large areas of the LAG area experiencing long and worsening travel times, especially by public transport. Travel times in and around the market towns are not a concern, but those of poorer remote residents ought to be, especially where private car ownership is lacking.

The variation within the LAG area suggests that support for service provision, enhanced mobility skills training and enterprise support might be focussed on the areas of greater disadvantage which are clearly displayed on the data-zone-level maps.