

The Blackpool **Fairness Commission** Annual Report 2013/14



Is Blackpool a **fair** place
to live, work and learn?



SUPPORTED BY
Blackpool Council



Contents

Chairman's remarks	1
What is the Blackpool Fairness Commission?	2
Blackpool on a page.....	3
Vision and values	4
Blackpool – key statistics	5
Meet the panel.....	8
Talking and listening in 2013.....	9
Acting and doing in 2013.....	10
Looking forward to 2014.....	12
Getting involved.....	13
Our fairness charter	14



Chairman's remarks

I was delighted to be asked to chair the Blackpool Fairness Commission in August last year. I passionately believe in striving to make Blackpool a fairer place. I also understand that nobody knows better how to tackle the issues our communities face than those living in them.

I take my responsibilities to Blackpool Fairness Commission and the people it serves very seriously. During the last six months or so, I have - along with the other Steering Group Members - worked hard to increase the amount of meaningful activity undertaken. As a result I am very proud of all we have achieved - projects which have made a real difference to those living in our communities. Steering Group Members have also made real efforts to listen to those the Fairness Commission is here to support and we have done this by:

- Attending all of the Area Forums to hear the views of our communities;
- Issuing a quarterly newsletter to update people on our activities;
- Holding open events which have encouraged a sharing of views and celebrations of achievements;
- Reaching a whole new audience who had previously not been involved – mobilising a social army who want to roll up their sleeves and make a difference.

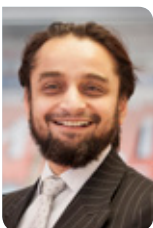
I firmly believe Blackpool Fairness Commission can make the greatest impact by:

- Undertaking a range of activities, some large and some small;
- Being a credible partnership body which can influence strategic decisions both locally, regionally and nationally;
- Being creative about the way we work – complex problems require creative solutions.

I am very proud of our efforts to host the first North of England Fairness Conference, taking place on 25th February 2014 in the beautiful Blackpool Tower Ballroom. I am both grateful and flattered that Public Health England has agreed to jointly host and fund this conference. A clearly visible commitment by Public Health England to fairness and equality, and their faith in Blackpool to deliver a fabulous event, are heart-warming. It therefore felt like a fitting and appropriate time to launch this Blackpool Fairness Commission Annual Report for 2013/14.

I very much look forward to working with all of the Fairness Commissioners and partners from the statutory, private, voluntary, community and faith sector during the coming year to continue on our journey towards a Fairer Blackpool.

Best Wishes



Dr Arif Rajpura
Chair of Blackpool Fairness Commission
and Director of Public Health, Blackpool

What is the Blackpool Fairness Commission?

Blackpool Fairness Commission is an independent body of people who are committed to making Blackpool a fairer place for everyone. Established by Blackpool Council in 2012 it is currently made up of 100 Fairness Commissioners led by a Steering Group of nine. It continues to be supported by Blackpool Council who undertakes the day-to-day co-ordination and management, allowing members to focus on delivering activities on the ground.

Fairness Commissions exist in pockets across the country and are becoming more popular as the early ones start to report results. Whilst they are all different and there is no prescription for what a Fairness Commission should look like, they do all trace their origins back to work done by Professor Richard Wilkinson who co-authored a book called "The Spirit Level" which examines the social effects of inequality.

There is no right or wrong model - each area is unique and will have a range of needs to meet and skills and experience available which will shape the type of Fairness Commission they choose to create.

In Blackpool, we have committed to a community engagement-led approach, this best meets our needs and gives us access to a wide range of skills, experience and enthusiasm to help us deliver real and meaningful activities. As a result our priorities are set by listening to our communities, and activities are community led. Later in the report you will learn about how we have put this into practice.



Blackpool on a page



In some wards 50% of children currently live in poverty



UK's leading seaside destination 12 million visits per year



Blackpool has the highest number of HMO's in the Country



A third of our jobs are tourism related



The worst male life expectancy in the Country



Biggest concentration of entertainment venues outside London

Vision and values

Blackpool Fairness Commission exists to make Blackpool a fairer and happier place to live, work and learn. We pride ourselves on the unique and creative approach we have developed and place the views of the people of Blackpool at the heart of our work.

Our work falls naturally into three strands:

- Listening and consulting;
- Influencing and guiding;
- Acting and doing.

Listening and consulting

We place value and importance on the views of the people of Blackpool. As a result, we take all opportunities to hear those views, we:

- Attend area forums;
- Issue newsletters;
- Use social media and our website;
- Hold public events.

Influencing and guiding

We have the commitment of all the Public Sector Stakeholders in the town. The Steering Group is attended by the Leader of the Council and senior officers from across the local authority, health and police together with private, voluntary, community and faith sector colleagues and there is an on-going conversation with colleagues in Lancashire Fire and Rescue and North West Ambulance Service. The Steering Group is therefore a place where strategic decisions and future policies can be influenced and negotiated.

Acting and doing

We firmly believe that actions speak louder than words. Therefore we undertake a number of campaigns and activities during the year to make a real and meaningful difference.

For us, the most effective Fairness Commission is a mix of all these activities. It is somewhere we can let our creativity and passion for Blackpool and its people shine through.



Blackpool – key statistics

Location

Blackpool is a large seaside town located in Lancashire in North West England. Blackpool is a Unitary Authority and covers an area of 13.46 square miles within the urban area stretching along the Fylde Coast, and is one of the most densely populated authorities in the UK.

Demographics

The population of Blackpool is estimated at 141,976, with a larger proportion of residents aged 60+ compared to national age structure. Residents are mostly of White, with Black and Minority Ethnic groups estimated to make up just 3% of the population (approximately 4000 people), compared with the estimated proportion for England of 15%.

Table 1: Population Demographics

Age	Blackpool	England
Aged 0–17 years	20%	21%
Aged 18–24 years	8%	9%
Aged 25–59 years	45%	47%
Aged 60+	26%	23%
Ethnicity		
White	97%	85%
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	1%	2%
Asian/Asian British	2%	8%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	0.2%	4%
Other ethnic group	0.2%	1%
Tenure		
Owned or Shared Ownership	62%	64%
Social Rented	11%	18%
Private Rented	26%	17%

Sources: See endnotes

Housing

Blackpool has a similar proportion of Owner-Occupiers compared to national (England) levels, but almost double the proportion of Private Rented accommodation (26.1% vs 16.8%). This is driven largely by changes in the seaside economy with many former guest houses converting to flats, and fluctuations in seasonal work creating demand for temporary accommodation in resort areas. Blackpool has a significant proportion of Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) in central wards close to the promenade. A monitoring project by Blackpool Council identified up to 37% of private sector rented properties in resort areas could be classified as an HMO.

Poverty and Deprivation

Blackpool has a large proportion of residents living in deprived areas and is currently ranked the 6th most deprived authority in England under the Indices of Deprivation 2010 – a higher rank than in 2007 (12th) and 2004 (24th). Additionally, in the 2010 Indices, Blackpool ranked 1st for the concentration of deprivation.

Around half of Blackpool's 94 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA's) are in the most deprived 20% of all LSOAs in England. Specific areas in the central wards of Talbot, Bloomfield, Brunswick, Claremont and the outer wards of Clifton and Park have the highest ranked levels of deprivation in Blackpool.

Poverty is also a significant factor in Blackpool. In 2010, 30.2% of children in Blackpool were estimated to be in poverty, compared to 20.1% of all children in England. Further analysis highlighted that the majority of children in poverty live in lone parent families.

There are strong relationships between deprivation and a range of social issues, and as a continued effort to address inequalities, Blackpool has launched a Fairness Commission. 2012 also saw the introduction of a Child Poverty Framework aimed at reducing the levels of poverty in low income families and providing support for families currently in financial difficulty.

Employment and Benefits

In terms of workforce, Blackpool has a low employment rate at 67.0% compared to a national (GB) rate of 71.2%. There are a high proportion of benefit claimants with out-of-work benefits, including Employment Support Allowance (ESA) and Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) at almost twice the national (GB) level - currently 20.6%, compared to 11.2% (GB). This approximates to about 18,000 individuals claiming an out-of-work benefit, the majority (10,670) of which claim ESA.

Education and Children's Outcomes

For young people in Blackpool, there are a range of challenges across both educational attainment and life chance indicators. The range of issues is partly driven by the existing high levels of poverty and social disadvantage in Blackpool, both of which have generational impacts whereby parents' difficulties create problems in the family and influence children's outcomes. The rate of Looked after Children in Blackpool is the highest in England at a rate of 166 per 10,000 children; this is over twice the rate for England as a whole at 60 per 10,000.

In terms of academic achievement, the proportion of children attaining the expected level at Key Stage 2 is similar to national levels at 80-85% attainment dependent on subject. There are strong differences between the highest and lowest performing areas however, with evidence for the North West region suggesting the proportion attaining level 4 in the 10% most deprived areas is 18 percentage points lower than those in the least deprived 10%.

Blackpool pupils perform similarly to national levels at GCSE level with a slightly lower proportion achieving 5 or more A* to C grade GCSEs (79.2%). When Maths and English are included however a significant gap appears – 45.9% of Blackpool pupils achieve 5+ A*-C (incl. Maths & English) compared to 58.6% nationally.

In addition, approximately 10% of Blackpool's young people are not in education, employment or training compared to 8% for the sub-region.

Health and Lifestyles

Blackpool has poor life expectancy, with life expectancy for males the poorest in England at 74.0 years compared to 79.2 years. Life expectancy for females is similarly poor, at 80 years, compared to 83 years for England - the 3rd poorest after Manchester and Liverpool. The biggest contributors for both men and women are circulatory diseases, digestive disease including cirrhosis, and respiratory disease. These three areas contribute over half of the overall life expectancy gap in Blackpool. Lung Cancer is also a significant contributor to Female Life Expectancy.

Substance and Alcohol misuse is considered high, with alcohol-related death the highest in England (cirrhosis being one of the major drivers of the life expectancy gap). Further estimates suggest that the prevalence of problematic heroin and/or crack cocaine use in Blackpool was 27.49 per 1,000 populations. Blackpool has the highest drug prevalence rate across the region, and is within the top ten nationally.

While not directly a health damaging issue, teenage pregnancy rates in under-18s are the 6th highest in England & Wales. In addition, Blackpool has a very low proportion of teenage pregnancies leading to abortion (36%) compared to England & Wales (49%). This implies a greater relative proportion of teenagers go on to become parents and may require further (local authority) support. Teenage conceptions have associated risks for both parent and child's health and social wellbeing.

¹ ONS Mid Year Population estimates 2012

² ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates 2012

³ ONS Census 2011 Ethnicity, 2011

⁴ ONS Census 2011 Tenure, 2011

⁵ Blackpool Council - MIPS Summary Report - 2011

⁶ HMRC Child Poverty Statistics, 2011

⁷ DWP WPLS, May 2013

⁸ ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2013.

⁹ ONS Labour Force Survey, 2011 – Estimates for Jan-Dec 2012.

¹⁰ DfE: Children Looked After by Local Authorities in England, 2013

¹¹ DfE: Local Area Data Tables, 2013

¹² CCIS Database, September 2011, (12 month averages of 2010 data)

¹³ ONS Life Expectancy, 2010-12

¹⁴ London Health Observatory - Spearhead Life Expectancy Tools - 2009

¹⁵ NWPFO Local Alcohol Profiles 2011

¹⁶ Glasgow University 2006/07

¹⁷ DfE: Teenage Pregnancy Statistics, 2008- 2010



Meet the panel



Dr Arif Rajpura
Chairman & Director of Public Health



Cllr Simon Blackburn
Leader of Blackpool Council



Jane Hugo
Streetlife Trust



Neil Jack
Chief Executive Blackpool Council



Chief Superintendent Richard Bayly
Lancashire Police



Angela Winter
Clinical Commissioning Group



Wendy Swift
Blackpool Teaching Hospitals



Alan Reid
Disability First



Ashok Khandelwal
Faith Sector

Talking and listening in 2013

Talking and Listening in 2013

During 2013 Blackpool Fairness Commission has paid close attention to the views and opinions of a wide range of stakeholders and members of the community.

We have talked at events such as:

- Area Forums;
- Public Events;
- Steering Group Meetings;
- Budget Consultation Events;
- Attendance at Residents Groups;
- Presentations at Conferences locally, regionally and nationally.

And through print and social media including:

- Facebook, Twitter and our Blackpool Fairness Commission Website;
- Articles in Your Blackpool - a quarterly publication distributed to every home in the town;
- Fairness News - a quarterly Blackpool Fairness Commission Newsletter available online, or in print from a range of venues or by post;
- Articles in the local, regional and national press.

In addition to these formal pathways of communication, Fairness Commissioners are in regular informal contact with their communities.



Acting and doing in 2013

During 2013 Blackpool Fairness Commission has undertaken a number of large scale events and campaigns to reach our communities and influence the behaviour of people towards the town and each other.

100 Acts of Kindness

Throughout November we encouraged our communities to get involved in a campaign which made Blackpool a happier place. They achieved this by encouraging everyone to undertake a small act of kindness for another person, community group or voluntary organisation. By the end of the month the target of 100 acts of kindness was a distant memory with the final total reaching over 300 individual acts of kindness.

Examples:

- Dr Arif Rajpura, Chairman of Blackpool Fairness Commission spent an afternoon digging on the allotment with volunteers at Grow Blackpool, a community mental health project;
- School Children at Unity Academy made Christmas Cards for everyone over 70 in Blackpool who has no family. Sending over 600 individual cards;
- Tony Doyle, Head of ICT at Blackpool Council gave a morning of his time to help a voluntary sector organisation understand their ICT needs and prevent them from making costly mistakes in the purchasing of new equipment;
- Richard Emmess, Chief Executive of Council for Voluntary Service gave up three afternoons of his time to be Father Christmas at the Age UK Christmas Parties, celebrating Christmas with over 100 older people;
- A group of eight cyclists rode over 800 miles from Blackpool Tower to Munich Tower to raise money for Brian House Children's Hospice, raising in excess of £15000.



Enjoy & Respect Campaign

Throughout December we ran a high-profile campaign to encourage local users of the night-time economy to behave responsibly, and treat Blackpool and each other with respect. The campaign was supported by:

- Local Pubs and Clubs;
- Lancashire Police;
- Taxi Association;
- Blackpool Transport;
- Stay Blackpool;
- North West Ambulance Service;
- Blackpool Council.

The campaign saw a significant improvement in the behaviour of party-goers in the night-time economy. Revellers received a wristband which entitled them to free water in any of the participating venues. Over 2000 people were reached and influenced through this campaign.



The Big Knit

We brought together an army of knitters from across the Community to create a mountain of little hats for the Innocent Big Knit Campaign - an annual campaign (which sees 25p from every innocent smoothie sold in the month of November, donated to Age UK to address fuel poverty). Our army of knitters produced in excess of 350 little hats - a fantastic effort by our volunteers.



Dementia Friends

In February 2014, we hosted the Dementia Alliance who delivered Dementia Friends Training for Fairness Commissioners. This was an excellent course which equipped Fairness Commissioners with additional skills and insights which will help to improve their interactions with sufferers of dementia. This will mean that people with Dementia who live in or visit Blackpool will be treated with more understanding and therefore have a better experience in their dealings with public, private and voluntary sector organisations in Blackpool.

North of England Fairness Conference

In collaboration with Public Health England we hosted the first North of England Fairness Conference in the beautiful Blackpool Tower Ballroom.

Delegates had the opportunity to listen to some unique insights from a range of leading keynote speakers who have national, regional or local significance, all have a passion and commitment to creating a fairer and more equal society.

This provided an opportunity to share good practice and experiences to date. We hope it also inspired and encouraged further opportunities for us all to work more closely both locally and regionally to address issues that affect our local communities.

Looking forward to 2014

Looking back we are very proud of the achievements of Blackpool Fairness Commission in 2013. This is not, however, a time to be complacent. Blackpool continues to be a place where many of our citizens are living difficult lives, with areas of poor housing, absentee landlords, lack of aspiration and limited job opportunities. There is still much to do to tackle these issues which have a big impact on the quality of life, health and well-being of our citizens. We recognise that the high levels of transience and aging population in parts of the town result in higher than normal levels of social isolation and loneliness and we acknowledge that loneliness has a detrimental affect on the physical and mental health and well-being of our population.

In 2014 we will:

- Build on our early work on social isolation and loneliness and launch a campaign to address this – **The Easter Buddies Campaign** will be the start of this journey;
- Following on from the success of the 100 Acts of Kindness we will continue on our journey to achieve **10000 Acts of Kindness** during 2014/15;
- We will re-launch the **Enjoy & Respect Blackpool Campaign** in time for the summer season to encourage all visitors and residents to treat the resort and each other with respect;
- We will continue on our journey towards developing a Community Shop;
- We will achieve Fairtrade status for Blackpool;
- We will continue on our journey towards making Blackpool Dementia Friendly.

Most of all, we will continue to provide an environment and partnership structure which is fit and ready to respond to the needs of our partners and communities in order to narrow the gap between those who have and those who have not.



Getting involved

There are lots of ways to get involved. The value of the Fairness Commission is the range of people who are able to contribute to its work utilising a wide range of skills and enthusiasm to make Blackpool a happier and fairer place where we treat everyone with dignity and care.



Our fairness charter

- We will work together to promote positive attitudes and perceptions of Blackpool and the people who live here;
- We will take decisive action to create more opportunities for people to achieve their potential;
- We will raise people's aspirations and inspire them to achieve their dreams;
- We will actively promote diversity and equality – we will encourage people to accept each other no matter who they are or where they are from;
- We will value people and the contributions they bring to the fairness debate;
- We will listen not only to the needs of our communities but also to their hopes and dreams;
- We will challenge perceptions of material gain as the only mark of success;
- We aspire towards a community where all our citizens feel valued and cared for by their families and their neighbours.





How to contact us...

T: 07788 353506

E: fairness@blackpool.gov.uk

W: blackpoolfairness.wordpress.com

 [bpool_fairness](#)  [blackpoolfairness](#)