

## InfoNet Update

InfoNet Update is produced by the Northumberland Information Network based in the Policy & Partnerships Service of Northumberland County Council in Morpeth.

The InfoNet provides a wide range of socio-economic statistics and research focusing on Northumberland.

This update aims to keep readers informed about the current work of the InfoNet team and updates to the website.

For more information on the Northumberland InfoNet see the contact details section at the end of this newsletter or go to our [website](#).

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Northumberland Information Network, [www.northumberlandinfonet.org.uk](http://www.northumberlandinfonet.org.uk)

## InfoNet Work Programme

The InfoNet team aim to service the research and intelligence needs of Northumberland County Council and its partners and also provide a one day enquiry service. Most data and reports produced by the InfoNet can be accessed on the website [www.northumberlandinfonet.org.uk](http://www.northumberlandinfonet.org.uk)

The InfoNet are currently seeking Service Level Agreements with departments throughout Northumberland County Council to help define future work programmes. Individual services who would like InfoNet to undertake a piece of work or require help or advice on carrying out a piece of research should contact Philip Hanmer, Corporate Research Manager on (01670) 533919 or e-mail [philip.hanmer@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:philip.hanmer@northumberland.gov.uk)

To find out more about the work we do, the members of our team or how to contact us please see the 'About us' section of the website.

## InfoNorthumberland Area Profiles

The InfoNet have recently published interactive area profiles on the website. The aim of the area profiles is to pull together a range of demographic, socio-economic and perceptions data into one place for the two new sets of geographical boundaries in Northumberland – 27 localities and 3 areas (North, South-East and West).

The area profiles have a number of benefits by helping to identify issues at a local level, target improvements in the right place and by providing a dataset that is not only available to colleagues internal to the County Council but also partners and members of the public.

There are ten profiles available on the website, containing a range of indicators, broken down by the following themes:

- Community Involvement & Cohesion
- Community Safety
- Culture & Leisure
- Economic Well-being
- Education & Lifelong Learning
- Environment
- Transport & Access
- People & Place
- Housing
- Health & Social Well-being

The profiles are interactive and users can choose which indicators to display on the map and spine chart as well as being able to compare data for different areas of the County. The website also contains a user guide to help people access the system.

The InfoNet team is also producing hard copy profiles for each of the 27 locality areas which highlight key data and issues drawn from the online profiles. These will appear on the website as they are produced. For more information contact: Iain Rowe, Research Officer, (01670) 534147, e-mail [iain.rowe@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:iain.rowe@northumberland.gov.uk)

## English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)

InfoNet are working with the Community Safety team to examine ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) provision and need in the County, and alternative approaches both locally and further a field.

For more information contact: Julie Dowson, Senior Research Officer, (01670) 534831, e-mail: [julie.dowson@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:julie.dowson@northumberland.gov.uk)

## Northumberland Population Projections

Northumberland InfoNet are in the process of producing population projections for the county and the former districts, as well as the three new Service Areas. These projections will be based on trends in past population data and local information, and will provide estimates of future population size and type.

Although projections are already produced to a local authority level by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), there is some concern that these do not take into consideration local variations. By producing our own figures it is felt that the assumptions on which our projections are based, can take account of local knowledge particularly where migration is concerned.

The first step in this task has been to understand how population has changed in the past, and what elements have contributed to this change. A report entitled **Population in Northumberland – Changes from 1981 to 2008** which investigates past trends, is now available on the InfoNet website. For further information on this project please contact:

Myra Jamieson, Senior Research Officer  
(01670) 534755 [myra.jamieson@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:myra.jamieson@northumberland.gov.uk)

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## Northumberland County Council People's Panel

InfoNet are currently setting up a People's Panel for Northumberland County Council which should be up and running soon.

If you would like more information about the people's panel please contact:

Gillian Lavery, Consultation Officer  
(01670) 533021  
[gillian.lavery@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:gillian.lavery@northumberland.gov.uk)

Alyson Forster, Research Officer  
(01670) 534755  
[alyson.forster@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:alyson.forster@northumberland.gov.uk)

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## Analysing Community-led Plans

InfoNorthumberland Locality and Service Area Profiles are available on the InfoNet website and should be helpful to anyone producing a local or parish plan.

As a complimentary piece of work the InfoNet are examining historical plans developed by the community about their area. This includes Village Appraisals, Parish Plans, Community Action Plans from Wansbeck, Market Town Health checks and Objective 2 Priority 4 Appraisals. So far 116 plans have been found, dating from 1978 to 2009.

On a locality by locality basis, the plans are being mapped to show the themes explored in the plan. This highlights which issues were important to the local community that produced the plan when it was created. Once the maps have been produced for each locality they are compared to identify key themes that might be pertinent to that locality.

The outcome of this piece of work will be a set of maps showing the concerns of communities in Northumberland. When put next to the Area Profiles, which give data to show statistically the problems that localities face, the two can be a useful tool to help groups with future community planning.

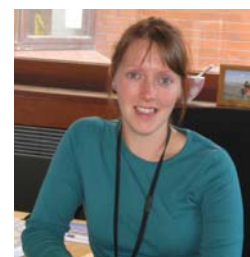
If you would like more information please contact:

Ian Humphreys, Policy Research Officer  
Tel: 01670 533063 [ian.humphreys@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:ian.humphreys@northumberland.gov.uk)

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## InfoNet Staffing Update

Shona Rowe the Principal Research Officer at InfoNet has recently finished work to start maternity leave. She will not be back in the office until October 2010. Any enquiries you would have contacted Shona for should be directed to [InfoNet@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:InfoNet@northumberland.gov.uk) or by contacting the relevant member of the team (contact details are listed at the end of the newsletter). InfoNet would like to wish Shona good luck and hope everything goes well for her over the next few months.



## The Childcare Sufficiency Assessment is on its Way!

Northumberland County Council is asking parents and childcare providers about the sufficiency of childcare throughout the County, through a childcare survey. The County Council has a statutory duty under the Childcare Act 2006 to manage the childcare market.

InfoNet will be helping to carry out this process as part of the service level agreement with the Early Years and Childcare Service in Northumberland County Council. This will be part of the process that will give the County Council the evidence and information they need, working in partnership with childcare providers and others, to facilitate and shape a childcare market that contains childcare which is sufficient, flexible, sustainable and responsive to parent's needs.

The survey will be distributed through schools, childcare providers and Children's Centres. Some parents will also give their views through focus groups. It will be rolled out in waves across the County between now and the summer, based upon the Children's Centre Locality areas. The survey will also be available online. Every parent who responds will be entered into a prize draw to win £100 of high street shopping vouchers.

The results of the survey will be published online and made available to the public early 2011 when the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment is complete. For further information on this project please contact:

Lauren Widdrington, Research Officer  
(01670) 534757 [lauren.widdrington@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:lauren.widdrington@northumberland.gov.uk)

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## Validating BRE Housing Data

Following on from a Audit Commission Housing inspection the Housing team at Northumberland County Council contracted with the InfoNet to develop a database to help them with strategic housing interventions.

Whilst most housing decisions up and down the country are based on expensive Stock Condition Surveys undertaken every 2 or 3 years, the alternative is to use modelled data based on a number of national surveys. InfoNet examined the accuracy of the leading modelling alternative, BRE's Housing Stock Modelling Service data.

Based on assumptions provided by the Housing team, Northumberland Warm Zone data was mapped over the BRE data. The results showed a strong correlation between areas defined as Non-Decent homes and older properties with more expensive fuel types, and it also showed areas with a higher percentage of Decent Homes have more modern housing and cheaper fuel types.

Following this assessment InfoNet were asked to take forward the design of a database to collect and map all the possible information on Northumberland's 151,000 properties and the relative vulnerability of those who live there. Data is currently being collected from colleagues at Northumberland County Council and external partners to develop a database for the Housing team and partner agencies to use whilst making strategic decisions about where to develop future initiatives. For further information on this project please contact:

Ian Humphreys, Policy Research Officer  
(01670) 533063 [ian.humphreys@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:ian.humphreys@northumberland.gov.uk)

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## Interim Poverty and Worklessness Assessment

This report sets out an interim poverty and worklessness assessment for Northumberland. The assessment has been jointly commissioned by the Place, People and Performance Groups of Northumberland County Council (NCC) on behalf of the Northumberland Strategic Partnership (NSP). Working as part of the NSP, The Families and Childrens Trust (FACT) and Economic Prosperity Thematic Partnership (EPTP) and their sub partnerships (including the Northumberland Employability and Work Strategic Partnership (NESSP) have a particular interest in this area of work and have championed the development of this interim report.

For further information on this project please contact:

Julie Dowson, Senior Research Officer  
(01670) 534831 [julie.dowson@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:julie.dowson@northumberland.gov.uk)

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## Northumberland InfoNet

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[www.northumberlandinfonet.org.uk](http://www.northumberlandinfonet.org.uk)

## Consultation

If you carry out any form of consultation the InfoNet would like to hear about it and may be able to provide advice and assistance in areas such as: questionnaire design, sampling and other related consultation or research techniques.

InfoNet map all consultation carried out by the County Council and its partners to build a corporate evidence base, avoid duplication, and to highlight consultation being carried out which others might find useful.

To inform InfoNet about any consultation you are carrying out or to seek advice contact:

Gillian Lavery, Consultation Officer  
(01670) 533021 [gillian.lavery@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:gillian.lavery@northumberland.gov.uk)

## Latest Reports

The InfoNet have recently published the following reports and they are all available via the InfoNet website:

### Changes to Population in Northumberland from 1981 to 2008

Prior to producing population projections, it is first important to understand how the population has changed in the past, and what elements have contributed to this change. This document details analysis that has been carried out on this subject.

### The Economic Deprivation Index (EDI)

The Economic Deprivation Index (EDI) was created in order to address the problems of comparing the Indices of Deprivation of 2004 to 2007 as different methodologies were used in creating both series. The EDI has been produced in a consistent manner over time and can be used to track the progress of deprived neighbourhoods.

### Town Centre Performance Monitoring System Reports

Northumberland's Town Centre Performance Monitoring System has been designed to assess the vitality and viability of rural market towns and larger town centres in Northumberland. The system assesses the economic prosperity, social and cultural functions and the conditions of the physical environment for each town centre. The reports for Belford, Blyth, Cramlington, Seaton Delaval, Seahouses & Wooler have now been added to the reports that were already available on the InfoNet website.

### Validating BRE Data

InfoNet were asked by the Housing team to examine the Building Research Establishment (BRE) Housing Stock Modelling Service (HSMS) data. The Housing team had considered using BRE data as a means of strategically planning housing interventions and initiatives, but wished to have the data validated to ensure that the dataset had the necessary rigour and could be used for their purposes.

## About the InfoNet

*Established in 2001 as a pilot project, the InfoNet is the sub-regional information partnership for Northumberland. From the 1st April 2009 the InfoNet became the Corporate Research and Intelligence unit for Northumberland based in the Policy and Partnerships Service of the new Northumberland County Council. The InfoNet aim to support the economic, social and environmental research and information needs and aspirations of Northumberland.*

*The InfoNet work to a work programme agreed in April each year which supports the research and intelligence needs of the County Council and its Partners. Please direct requests for InfoNet to carry out research work to Philip Hanmer (01670) 533919. For more information contact us at the e-mail below:*

E-mail: [infonet@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:infonet@northumberland.gov.uk) Website: [www.northumberlandinfonet.org.uk](http://www.northumberlandinfonet.org.uk)