Sefton's Economic Strategy

First Performance Monitoring Report

March 2013

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1. Introduction

Sefton's Economic Strategy was approved by Sefton Council and Sefton Borough Partnership in November 2012.

It is the first economic strategy for Sefton in more than 10 years. It offers a response to the evidence base of the Sefton Local Economic Assessment which was completed in March 2011.

It is intended to join up and steer the work of all our partners as we strive to improve the long-term prospects of our economy, our businesses and our communities. But it is also a statement of Sefton's long-term assets and ambitions.

This strategy could not have been prepared at a more challenging time. The global financial crisis of 2008, the subsequent recession, and the halting recovery, has had a significant impact on the borough's prosperity and its communities.

The Performance Monitoring Framework established in this report is intended to show how partners have addressed these many challenges; and documents many successes and achievements.

The Report contains

- A headline summary of Sefton's overall performance
- A more detailed assessment of trends
- A statistical profile of Sefton using the latest indicators
- A narrative of performance against each of the five strategic objectives

A glossary of terms is included to guide new users through any unavoidable jargon.

As this is the first Performance Monitoring Report on Sefton's Economic Strategy we are still experimenting with content, format and tone. Please let us know if it can be approved in any way.

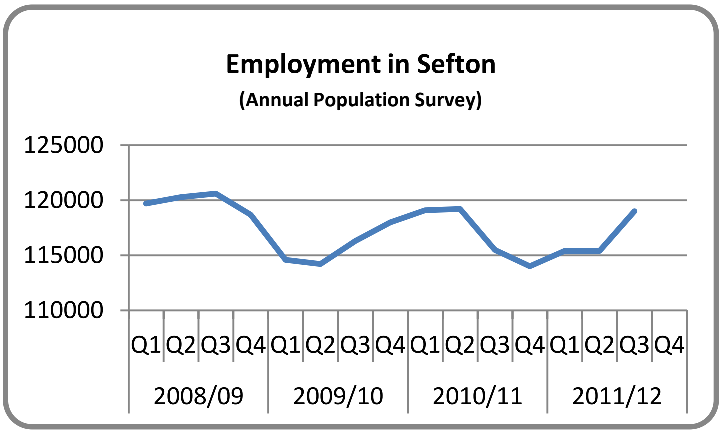
A second Report is due at the end of 2013, when we confidently expect to be able to report with greater coverage and achievement.

Alan Lunt
Director of Built Environment, Sefton MBC

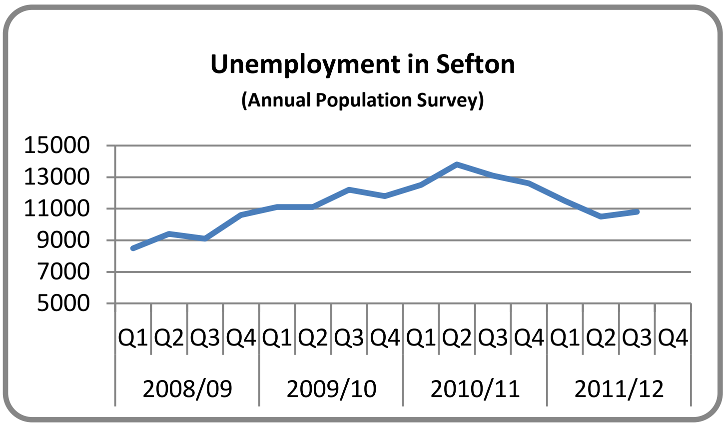
2. Headline Performance

Mitigating the local impact of the recession

- **Employment** has started to show signs of recovery over the last 2 quarters. After falling to a low of 114,200 at the end of 2010/11, it has recovered to 119,000.

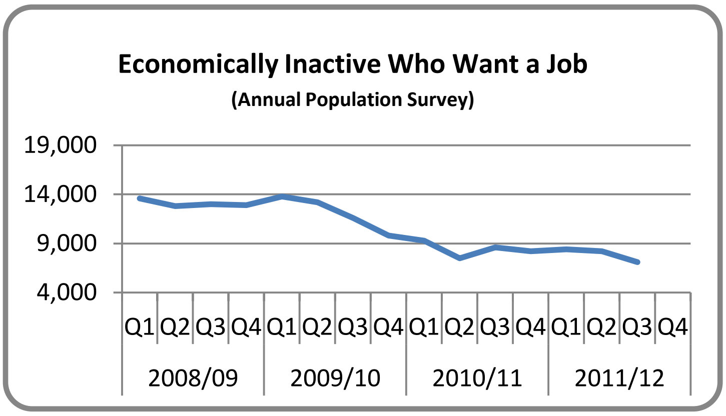


- **Unemployment** has fallen over the last two quarters. After reaching a peak of 13,800 in Q2 2010/11 it has now fallen to 10,800.

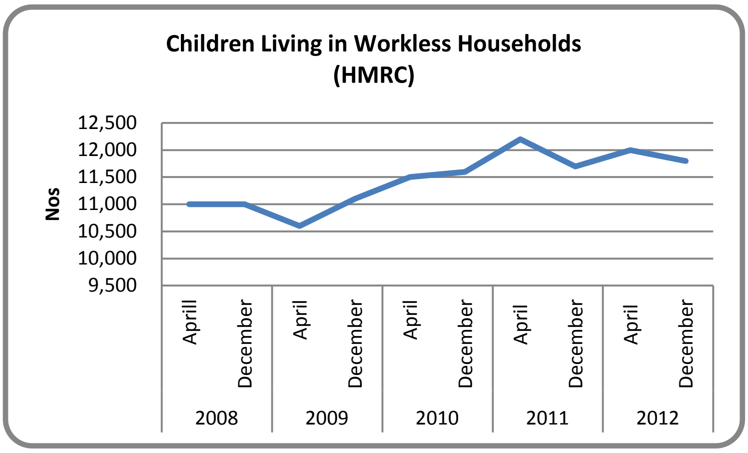


- The number of **economically inactive people who want a job** stabilised in the last year, following a significant decline in 2009/10.

  However, after reaching a peak of 13,800 in Q1/2009/10 it has fallen to 7,100 in the latest data.



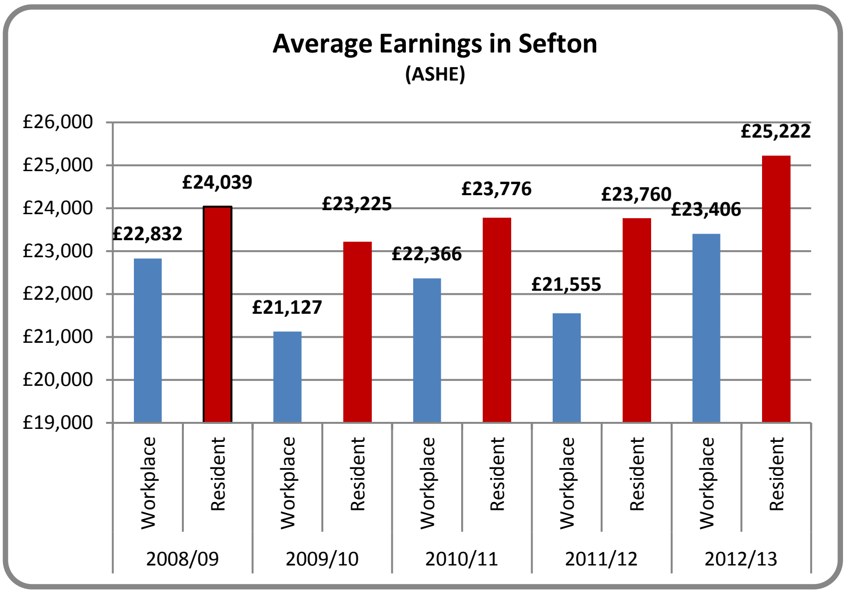
- The number of **children living in workless households** has decreased since December 2012. Figures have been relatively volatile over the last 24 months.



Narrowing the performance gap

- Although Sefton's GVA has grown over the past 10 years, there is still a gap between Sefton, the LCR and the UK. However, in the last two years the gap between Sefton and the LCR has narrowed further and Sefton now stands at 75% of the LCR total, an improvement of 5 percentage points.

- Gross Disposable Household Income in Sefton has continued to grow and is 7% higher than that for the LCR, but still 4% lower than the UK average.



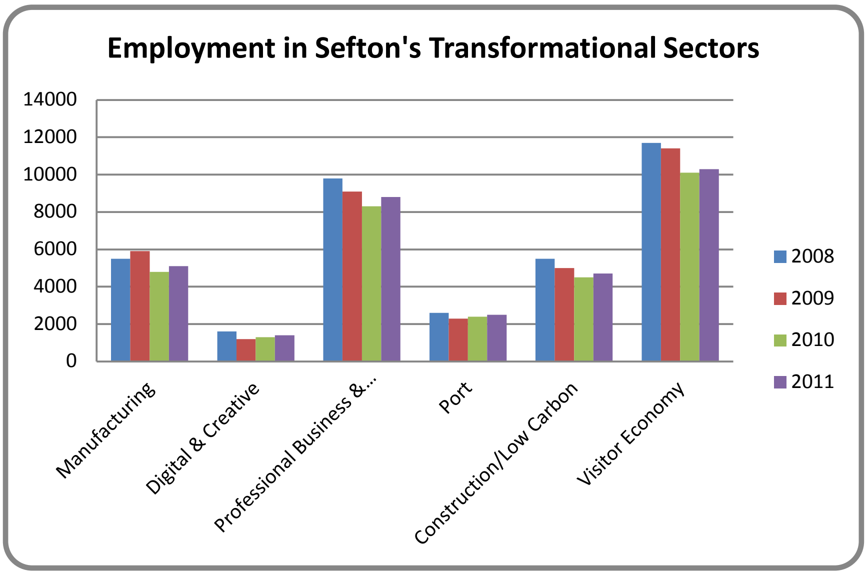
The **average wages** paid by Sefton businesses saw a significant rise in 2012. Average full time wages paid in Sefton are currently £23,406, however still 4.4% lower than for Merseyside and 11.5% lower than for the UK.

In comparison, the **wages of residents** are significantly higher, due to the fact that many Sefton residents travel outside of the borough for work. The average wage for Sefton residents is £25,222, 2% higher than that for Merseyside, but still 4.9% lower than for the UK

- Sefton's business stock has fallen by 4% since the beginning of the economic downturn. This fall is greater than that for both the City Region and the UK.

- The number of business births is down by 13.5% over the same period, with business deaths up by 5.4%. These figures are similar to those for the City Region, but higher than for the UK as a whole.

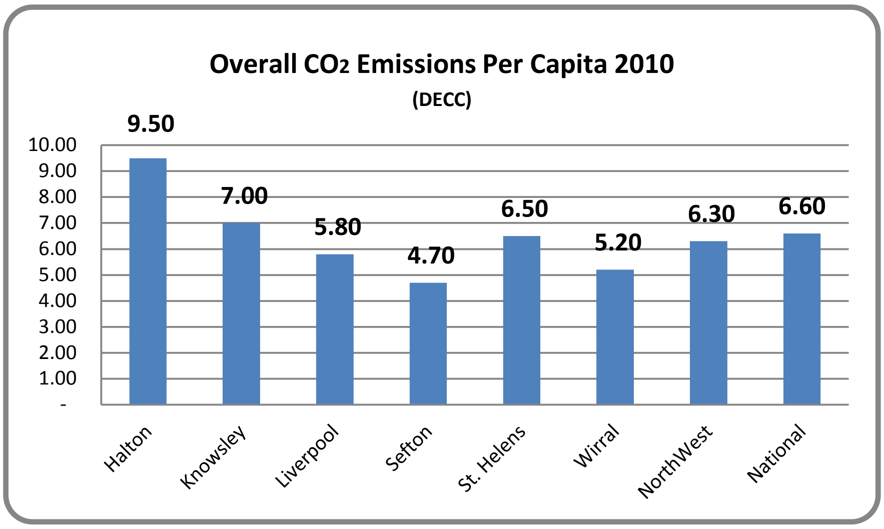
3) Capitalise on new growth sector opportunities



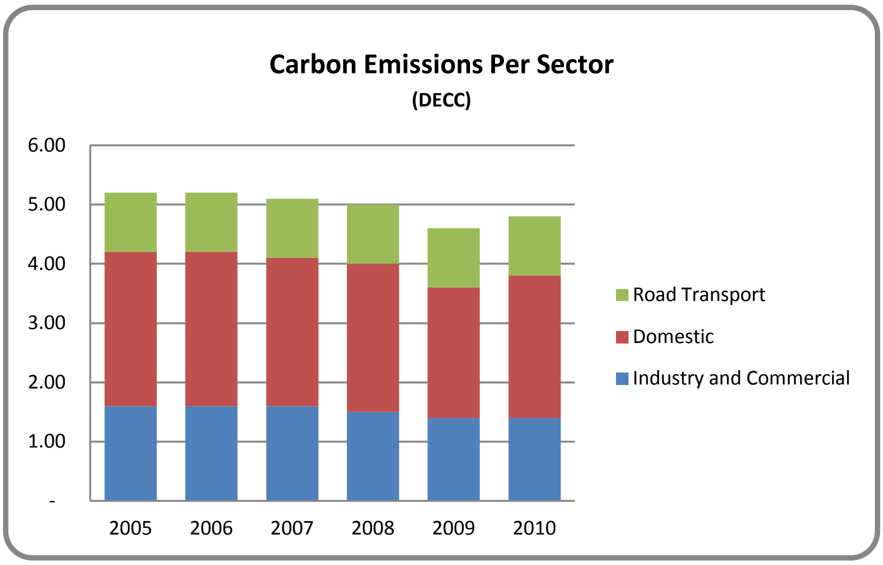
Sefton is working with the Liverpool City Region on its key Transformational Sectors. Due to Sefton's diversity we will have more involvement in some sectors than others. Sefton's Business Advisors are available to provide advice and guidance to all sectors but there will be special targeting of The Knowledge Economy, Super Port, Construction/Low Carbon and the Visitor Economy. The table shows Sefton's performance in key elements of these sectors over the past 4 years.

Green Growth

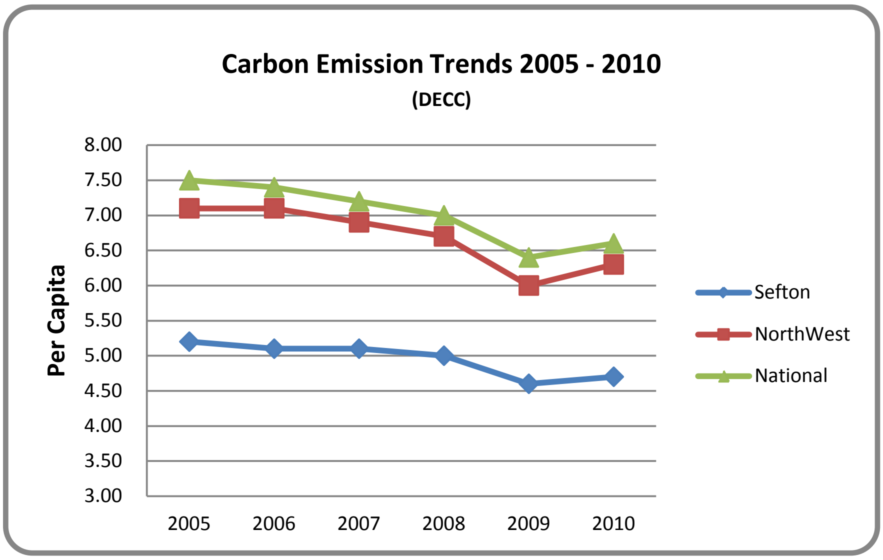
- Sefton continues to have the lowest CO2 emissions per capita in the Merseyside area.



- Following on from 5 years of continued reduction, there was a slight increase in 2010. This can be traced back to an increase in emissions from domestic sources.



- Sefton has performed strongly against both the North West and National achievements in carbon reduction.

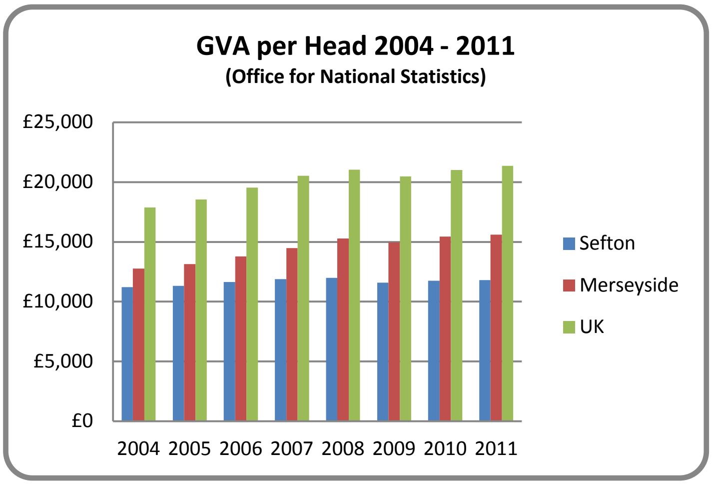


3. Trends in Sefton's Economy

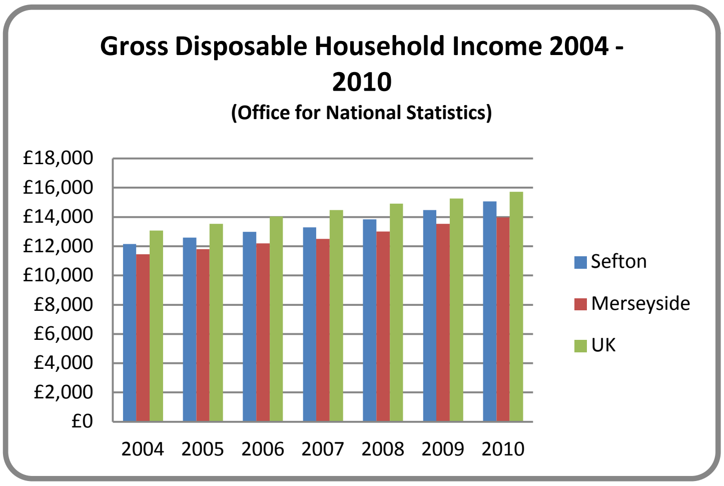
Sefton's **GVA** (the difference between the cost of producing goods and selling them) is currently £11,797, significantly lower than for Merseyside and the UK. Sefton's businesses are predominantly in the Service Sector, which means that we are not a high productivity area and therefore GVA remains lower.

However, the **Gross Disposable Household Income** (the amount of money left after payment of tax, NI, pension and mortgage costs) has risen again to £15,068. Rising living costs will, however, use up much of the GDHI in the area.

Graph 1



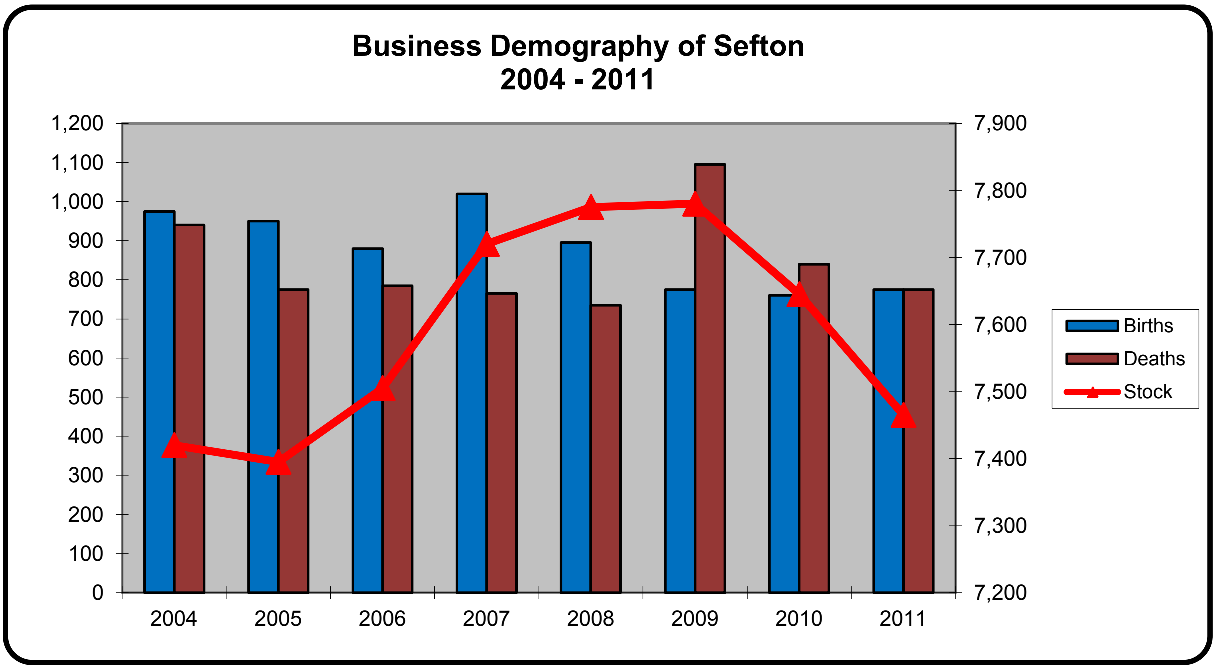
Graph 2



In 2011, Sefton's **business stock** was just over 7,400, a fall of on the previous year. Since 2008 Sefton has seen its business stock fall by 4%. This is higher than the fall for the LCR, ,which was down by 1.5%. The UK as a whole has seen an increase in its business stock for the first time since 2008, but only by less than 1%.

There were just under 800 **new businesses** created, with an identical number of **businesses failing** during the same period. There was a 7.8% fall in the number of businesses closing in Sefton in 2011, This compares with a 5.6% fall for the LCR and a 7.9% fall for the UK.

Graph 3



Employment in Sefton

In 2011 there were 90,900 people employed at a workplace in Sefton.

The health sector currently has the largest proportion of jobs in Sefton at 18.6% (17,000). Over 45% (7,700) of health sector employment is based in the north of the borough.

The retail sector accounts for 13.7% (12,500) of jobs in Sefton, again the largest proportion of jobs is in the north of the borough.

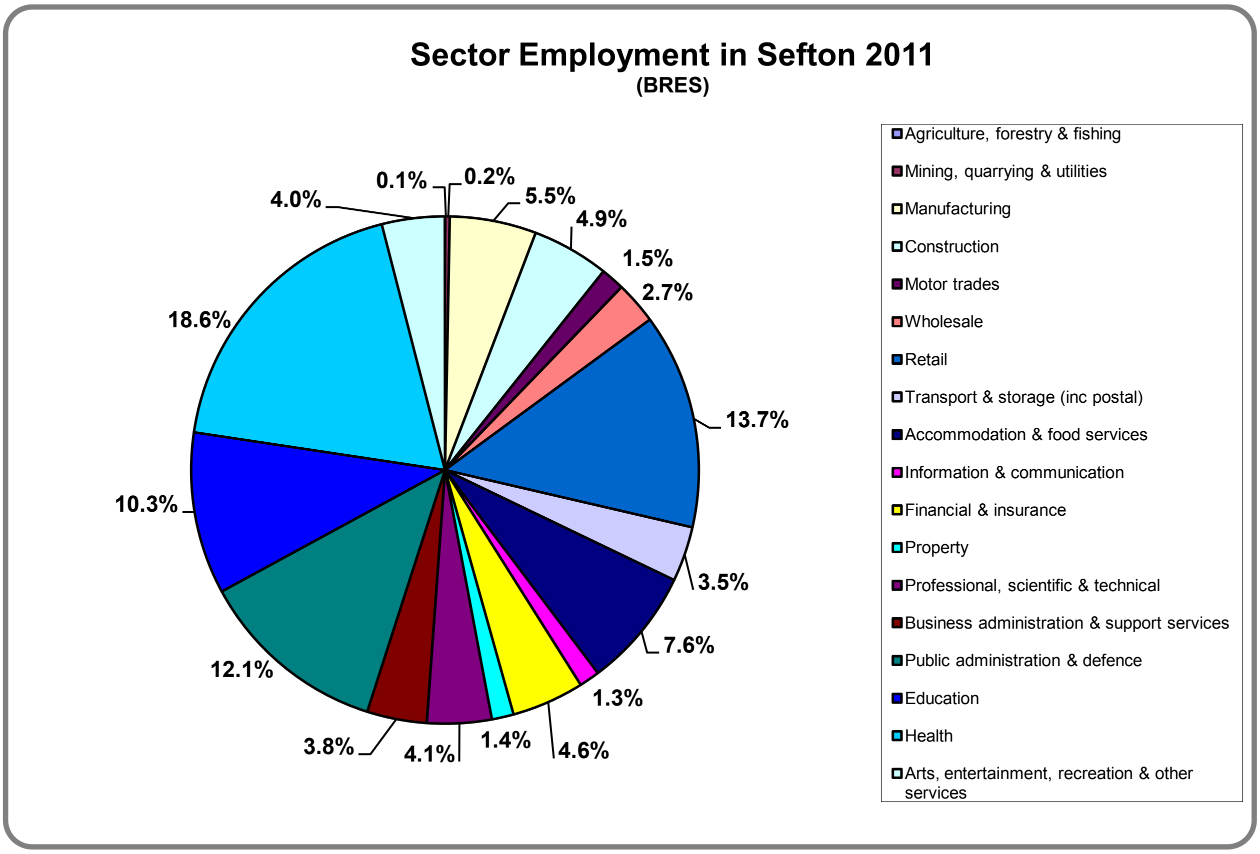
Employment in public administration accounts for 12.1% (11,000) of the employment in Sefton. 73% (8,000) of all public administration jobs in Sefton are in the south of the borough, where it accounts for 37.5% of the south Sefton total employment.

The largest number of job losses in 2011, was in Accommodation and Food Services, however, due to the temporary nature of many of the jobs in this sector, it is difficult to monitor changes across the industry.

The next highest number of job losses in Sefton in 2011 was in public administration & defence, with an overall loss of approximately 1,000 jobs.

The arts, entertainment and other services sector has also been hit hard, with a loss of approximately 900 jobs.

Graph 4

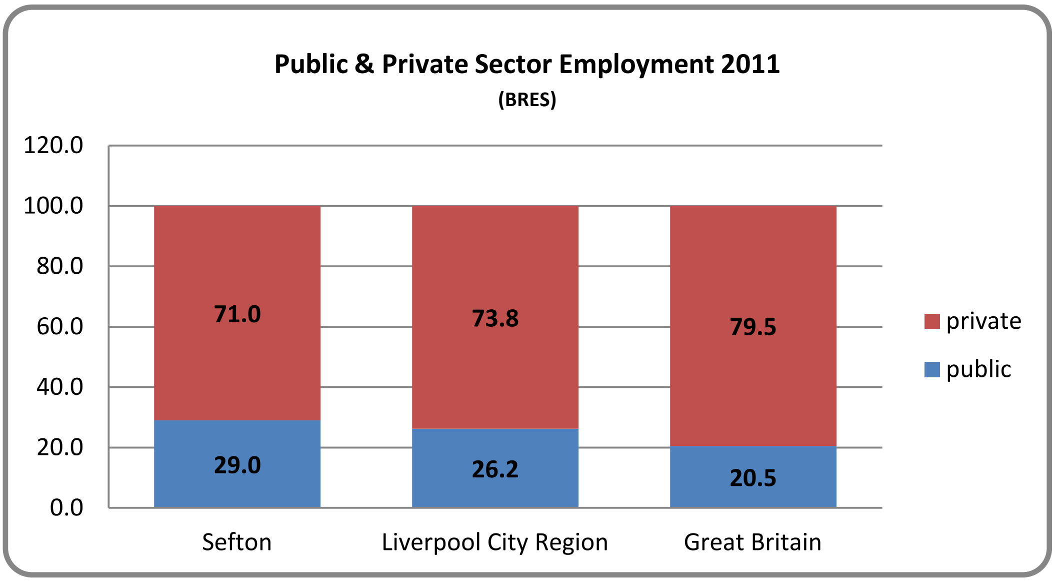


Public sector employment is continuing to fall, in the last year we have seen a 2% reduction in the number of public sector jobs (source: BRES) It is likely that the contraction of jobs is in public administration (rather than education and the NHS) as these have yet to feed through.

Despite the cut in jobs over the last two years, Sefton continues to have a much higher level of **public sector, health and education employment.** In 2011, Sefton 29% of jobs are in the public sector, compared with 26.2% in the LCR and 20.5% the UK. Between 2010 and 2011 the number of employment jobs in Sefton has fallen by almost 4%, from 94,600 to 90,900,

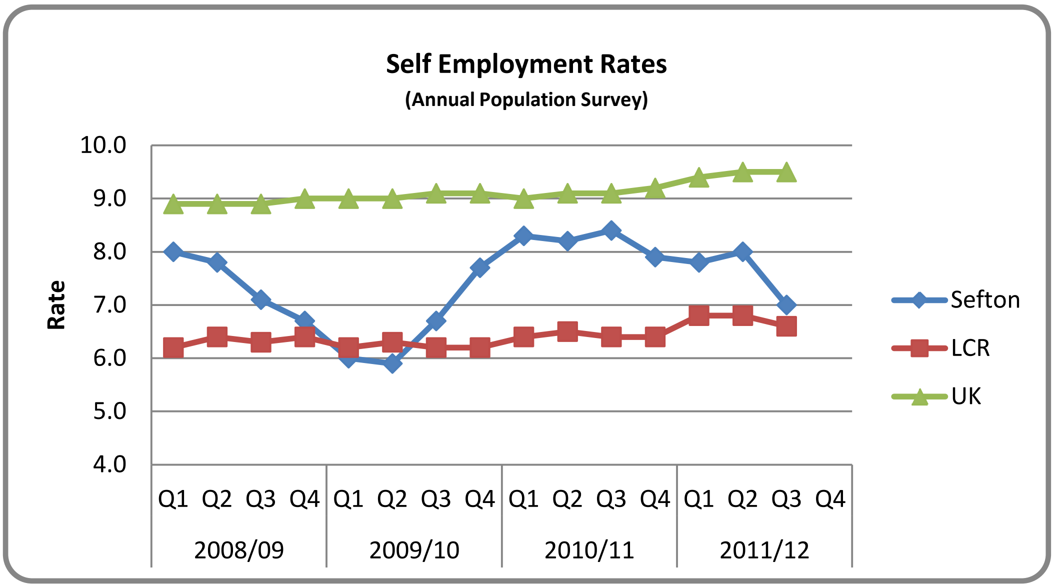
Central Government predicted that private sector job creation would off-set job losses in the public sector, however to date this has not occurred in Sefton. The current rationalisation of public sector accommodation by Government Departments has seen public sector staff being relocated to Bootle's Office Quarter which may explain why the number of public sector jobs in Sefton remains buoyant.

Graph 5



Self employment in Sefton has been strong in recent years, however since its peak at 8.4% in Oct-Dec 2010, it has fallen back to 7.0%. The fall is more rapid than the overall fall for the LCR, whilst the UK figure has continued to rise.

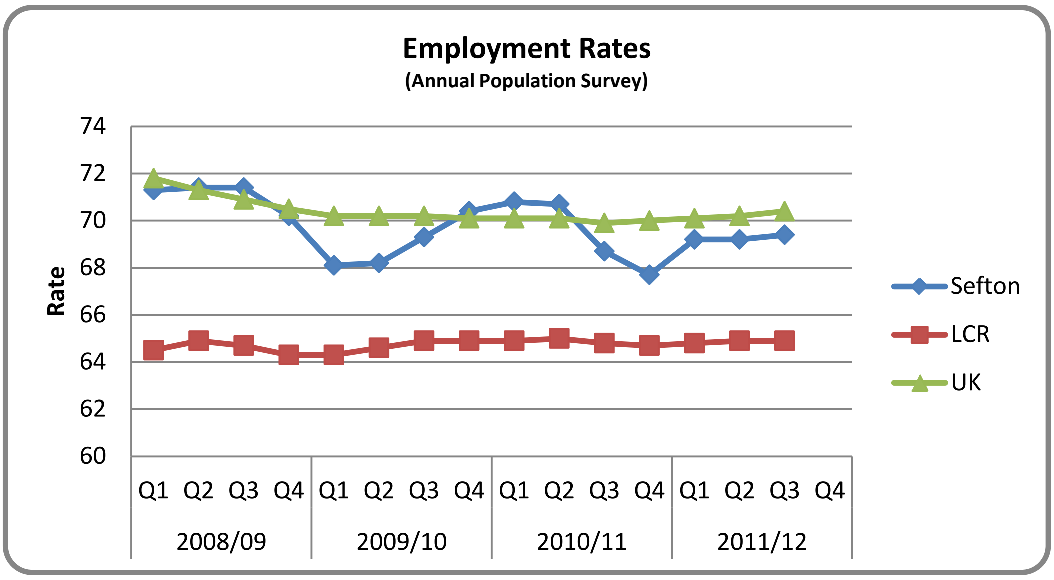
Graph 6



Confidence Levels :1.8%

Sefton's **employment rate**, at 69.4% is moving closer to that for the UK (70.4%), and is more than 4.5% higher than the rate for the LCR. Sefton's rate has been very changeable over the last 4 years.

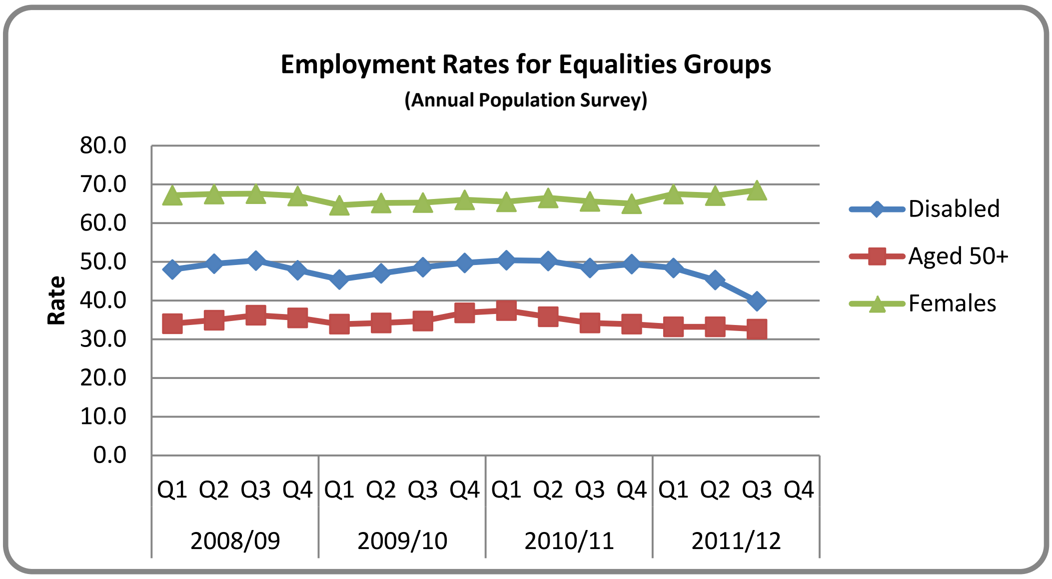
Graph 7



Confidence Levels : 2.8 - 3%

Employment rates for those who are at risk of being disadvantaged vary in the borough.

Graph 8



Female employment rates have risen steadily, currently standing at 68.5%.   3% higher than for the LCR and 6% higher than the UK. This is the highest recorded female employment rate for 8 years.

There has been a reduction in the employment rate of those residents who have a **disability**, falling approximately 9% since 2008, from 48.0% to 39.8%. Please note that confidence levels for these figures are plus or minus 6.7 percentage points (see Glossary for further explanation).

Employment rates for **older residents** (aged 50+) has also fallen over the last 12 months, from 34.2% to 32.6%.

This group should also include information on **ethnic minority groups**, however due to low numbers the estimate and confidence levels are unreliable.

The new Census of Population 2011, provides us with a more accurate picture of the ethnic population within Sefton. Sefton has a relatively low ethnic population and therefore, often statistical information is unreliable. According to the 2011 Census the **ethnic population** is now 2.5%, a 1 point rise on the Census 2001 figure.

Unemployment in Sefton

When looking at residents who are **not in employment**, it is necessary for us to use three different data sets:

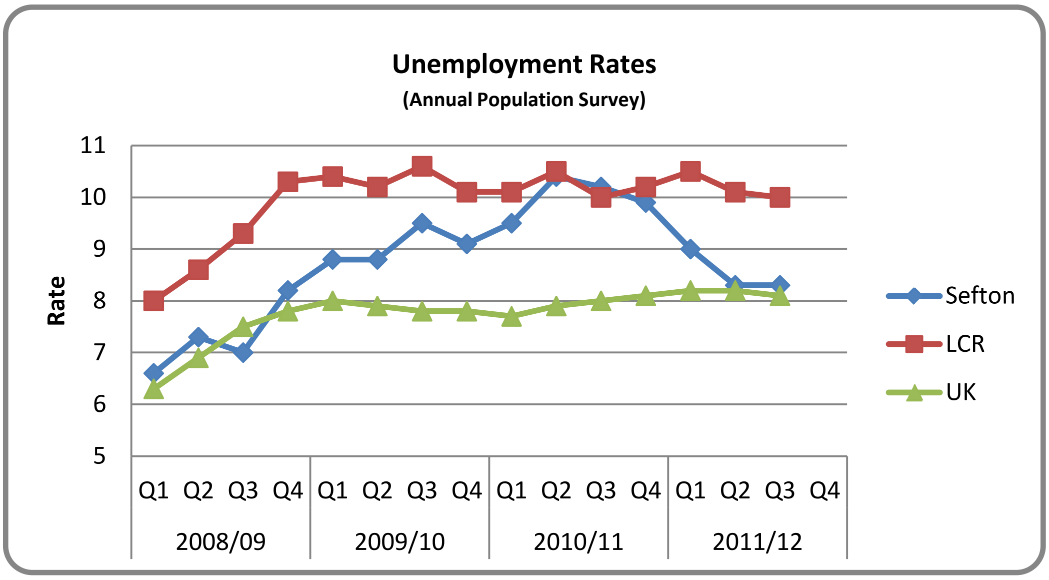
Unemployment is measured by a national sample survey – the Annual Population Survey – and is the most comprehensive dataset for understanding the number of residents who are without a job, regardless of whether they are receiving benefits. These residents must also be actively seeking work. Datasets are produced quarterly, with each dataset containing 12 months of data.

Worklessness is a term for residents who are not working and either seeking work or not in the labour market. They are measured by counting all out of work benefits: JSA, ESA/IB, Lone Parent and other income related benefits (Department of Work and Pensions). Data release was quarterly, however, future data will only be released 6 monthly.

Claimant Count provides information just on the number of residents who are seeking work i.e. in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance (Department of Work and Pensions). Data is released monthly, one month in arrears. This dataset allows us to see more immediate changes in unemployment.

Overall **unemployment** is currently 8.3%, and has fallen over the last two recorded quarters. It is now 1.7% lower than the rate for the LCR (10.0%), the rate is now just slightly higher than the rate for the UK (8.1%).

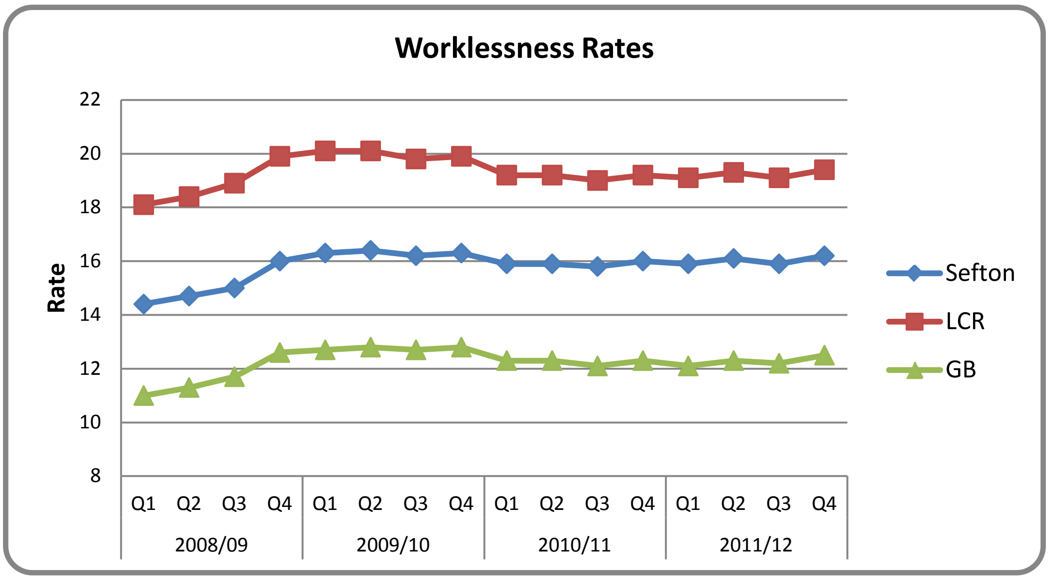
Graph 9



Confidence Levels : 2 – 2.3%

Worklessness rates in Sefton have risen by approximately 2% since the economic downturn began in 2008. Rates reached a peak of 16.4% in mid 2009/10 and currently stand at 16.2%. Sefton's rate is almost 3% below the rate for the LCR, but is more than 3% higher than the rate for Great Britain.

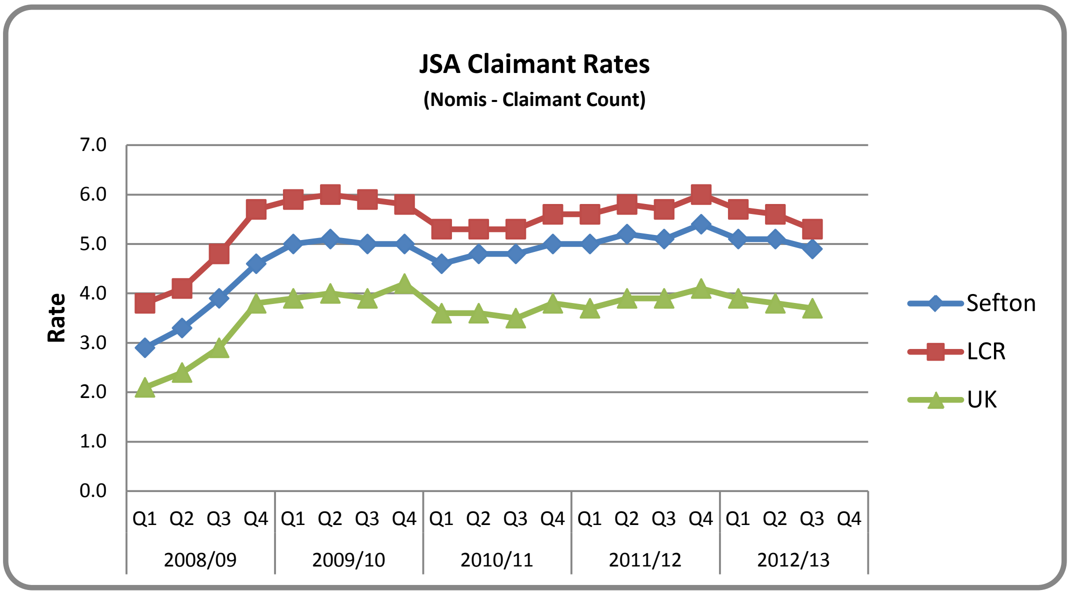
Graph 10



JSA claimant rates in Sefton have shown signs of recovery and are currently lower than the rate for the LCR, however they remain higher than the national figures. The rate in Sefton is currently 4.9%, almost half a percent lower than for the City Region, but still 1.2% higher than for the UK as a whole.

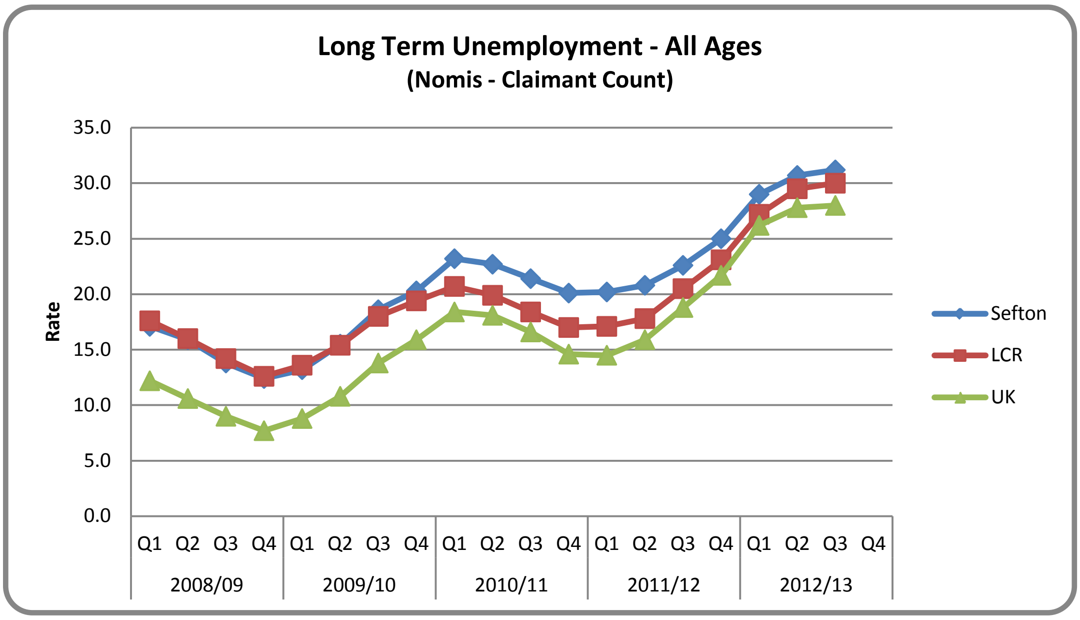
Sefton's **claimant count** has risen by 68% since the beginning of the economic downturn, much higher than the 42% rise across the LCR, but lower than the 82.0% rise for the UK.

Graph 11



New claimants tend to have more success accessing employment, rather than those employed for 12 months or more. **Long term unemployment** is a particular problem in Sefton and continues to rise, particularly amongst the younger cohort. Sefton's overall long term unemployment is currently 31.2%, 1.2 points higher than the City Region (30.0%) and over 3 points higher than the UK (28.0%).

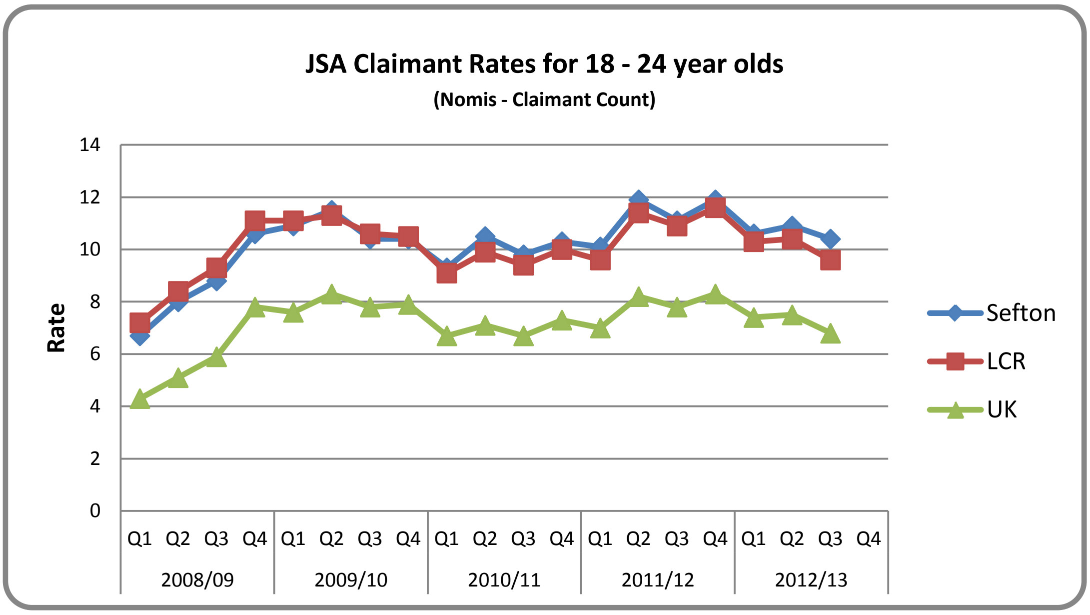
Graph 12



The **youth claimant rate**, at 10.4%, is now slightly higher than that for the LCR, and over 3% higher than the rate for the UK.

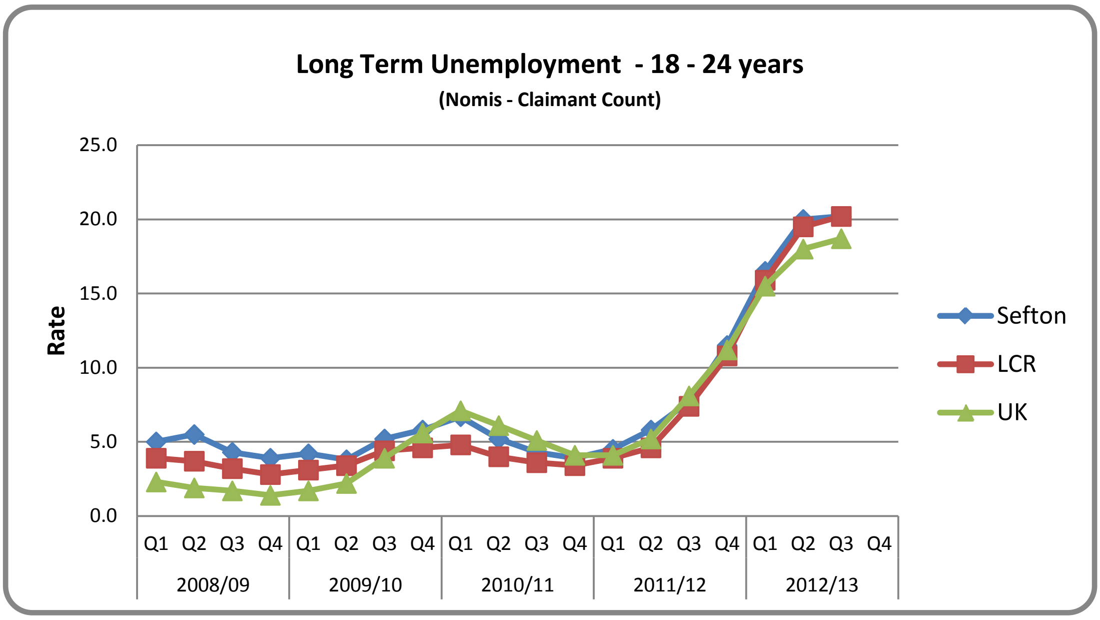
The number of **young claimants** has risen steadily since the economic downturn began. Latest figures indicate that 11% of all 18-24 year olds living in Sefton are claiming Job Seekers Allowance. The figure is slightly higher than for the LCR, but significantly higher than the UK.

Graph 13



Long term youth unemployment continues to grow across Sefton, where 20% of young claimants have been claiming JSA for more than 12 months. This is identical to the LCR and is 1.5 points higher than the rate for the country as a whole.

Graph 14

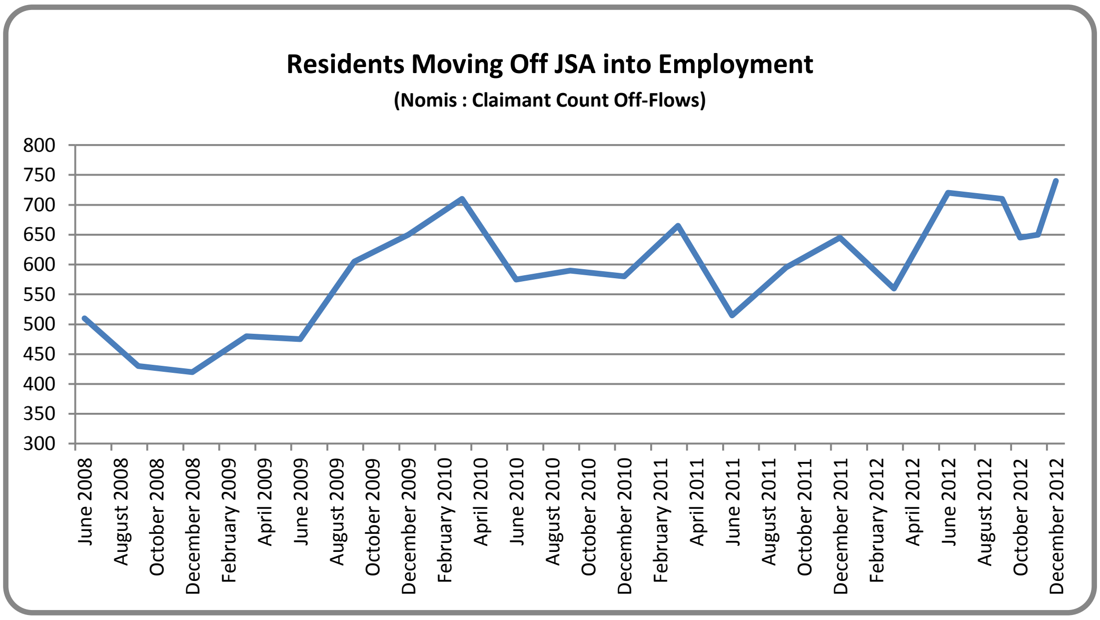


The DWP provides us with information on the number of former claimants who **move off benefits and into employment** each month.

The percentage of off-flows with a "not known" or "failed to sign" destination has increased since the start of the series (representing 44% of total UK off-flows in July 2009). This is because the completion levels of the forms filled in by JSA leavers have decreased. Many of these unknown leavers will have moved into employment. For the purposes of this exercise we are only using the number of “Known” destinations.

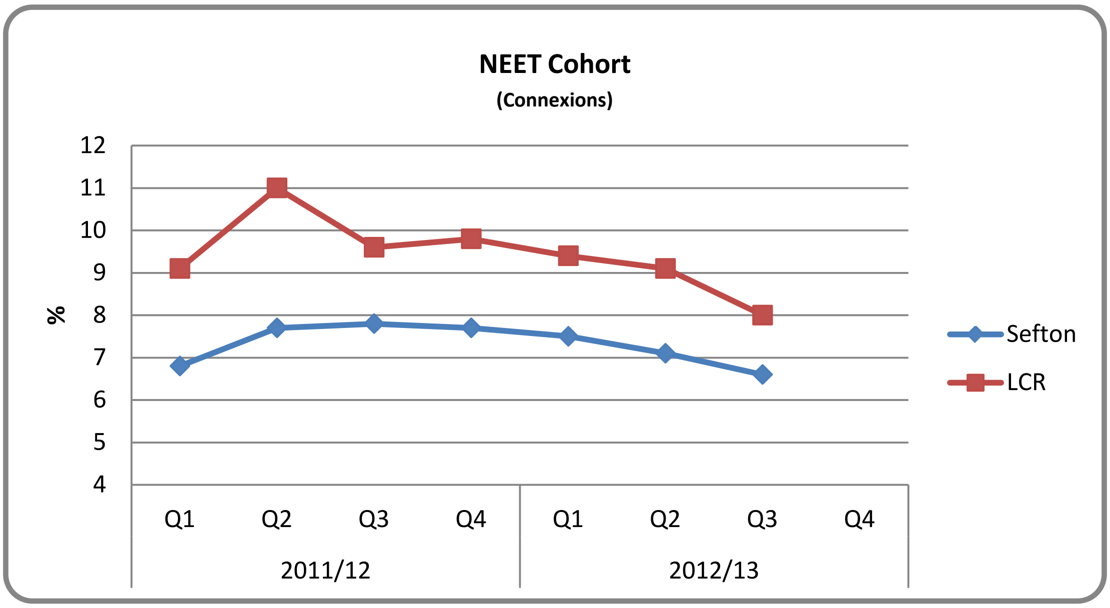
The number of residents, known to have moved into employment, reached its highest level in December 2012. Sefton is following a similar pattern to that for the UK and LCR.

Graph 15



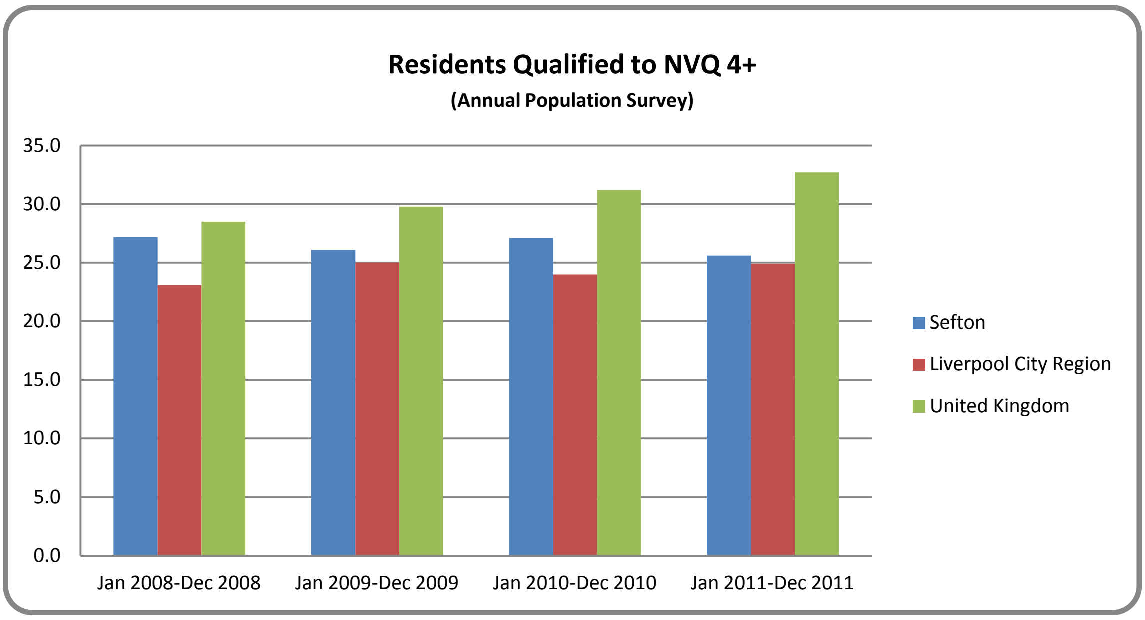
The **NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)** figure for Sefton has fallen in recent months and was 6.6% in December 2012, compared with 8.0% for the City Region. National data is not available.

Graph 16



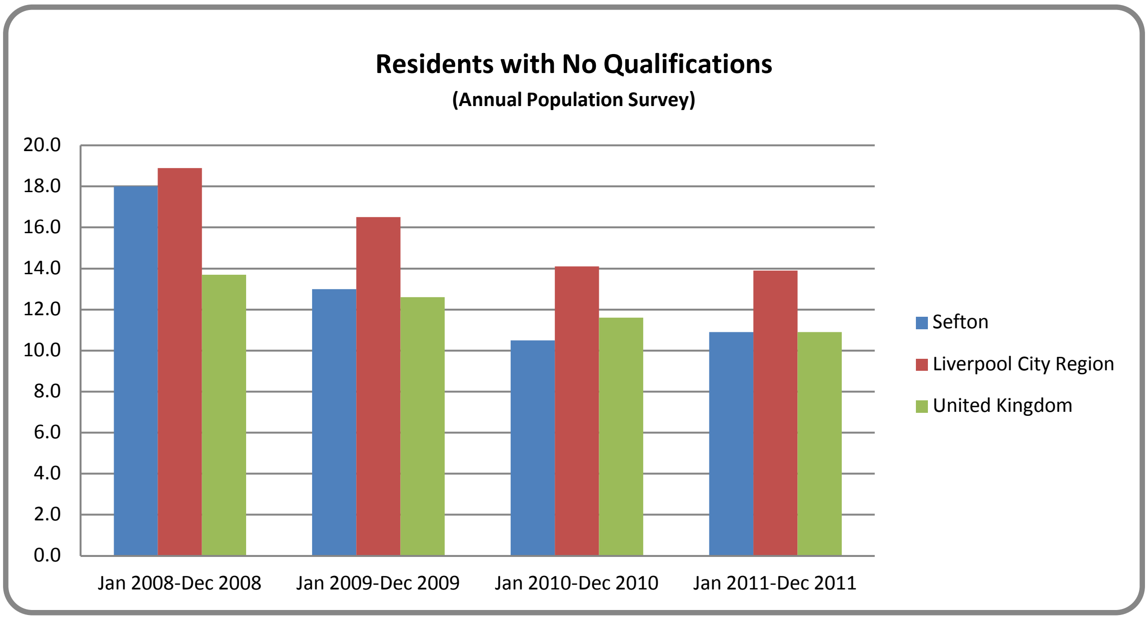
In 2011, 25.6% of Sefton's working age population were **qualified** to NVQ Level 4+. This is slightly higher than for the LCR, but 7 points lower than the UK figure. The percentage qualified to Level 4 has fallen slightly in the last year.

Graph 17



Since 2008 the % of Sefton's working age population with **no qualifications** has fallen significantly and now stands at 10.9%. This is identical to the figure for the UK and 3% lower than the LCR.

Graph 18



4. Statistical Profile – Latest Indicators

Key Indicators	Sefton's Position Rate/%	Sefton's Position Value	Date of latest data	Sefton's performance compared to LCR/Merseyside average		Is the gap with the national average narrowing or widening	
GVA per head	N/A	£11,797	2011	Weak : Sefton is 75% of the LCR average, due to there being some improvement over the last two years	⇩	The gap with the UK continues to show no improvement.	☹
Gross Disposable Household Income	N/A	£15,068	2010	Strong : Sefton is 108% of the LCR average	⇧	The gap has closed over the last two years. Sefton is now just £700 below the UK average	☺
Private Sector Emp	71.0	64,600	2011	Weak : Sefton has almost 3% more public sector employment than the LCR	⇩	The gap has closed slightly in the last year, but is still almost 9%	☹
Public Sector Emp	29.0	26400	2011				
Average Earnings (workplace)	N/A	£20,143	2012	Weak : Sefton's average workplace earnings are falling and are over £3,000 lower than for the LCR	⇩	The gap continues to widen.	☹
Average Earnings (residents)	N/A	£23,026	2012	Similar : Sefton's residents earnings are falling, but are still similar to those for the LCR	⇨	The gap continues to widen	☹
Business Stock/Density per 1,000 population	44	7,465	2011	Strong: Sefton has 44 businesses per 1,000 population compared with 39 for the LCR.	⇧	The gap with the UK remains unchanged	☹
Business Births	46	775	2011	Similar : Sefton had 46 business starts per 10,000 population, compared to 45 for the LCR	⇨	The gap with the UK continues to widen	☹
Business Deaths	N/A	775	2011	Similar: Sefton's saw a 7.8% improvement in the number of business failures in 2011, almost 2% higher than for the LCR	⇨	Sefton performed similarly to the UK in reducing the percentage of business failures	😐
Sefton Jobs	N/A	90,900	2011	Weak : Sefton experienced a 4% fall in employment compared with just 0.5% in the LCR.	⇩	Sefton performed poorly against UK % job losses	☹
Self Employment Rate	7.0	11,700	Jul 11 – Jun 12	Strong : Sefton continues to outperform the City Region.	⇧	The gap is showing no signs of improving	☹
JSA Claimant Rate	4.9	8,335	Dec 12	Strong: Sefton's claimant rate continues to be lower than the LCR (5.3%)	⇧	There has been no improvement in the gap between the UK and Sefton	☹
LTU Rate All Ages	31.2	2,600	Dec 12	Weak: Sefton continues to see its LTU rate rise and is now higher than for the LCR	⇩	The rate continues to be higher than the UK rate	☹
JSA Claimant Rate 18-24	10.4	2,325	Dec 12	Weak: Sefton's rate is now higher than the rate for the LCR	⇩	Sefton's rate is now 3.6% higher than the rate for the UK.	☹
LTU Rate 18-24	20.2	470	Dec 12	Similar : Sefton's rate is the same as the rate for the LCR	⇨	The rate remains higher than for the UK.	☹
NEET Population	6.6	607	Dec 12	Strong: Sefton's NEET population is 1.4% lower than for the LCR	⇧	N/A	N/A
Employment Rate	69.2	115,400	Jul 11 – Jun 12	Strong : Sefton continues to maintain a higher level of employment than the LCR	⇧	Sefton is closing the gap with the UK.	☺
Unemployment Rate	8.3	105,000	Jul 11 – Jun 12	Strong : Sefton's unemployment rate is close to 2% lower than that for the LCR	⇧	Sefton has closed the gap with the UK and is now just 0.1% higher.	☺
Worklessness Rate	16.2	27,440	Feb 12	Strong : Sefton's worklessness figure is over 3% lower than for the LCR	⇧	Sefton continues to perform poorly, with no sign of the gap closing	☹
Working age Population Educated to level 4+	25.6	43,000	2011	Similar : Sefton is 1% higher than the LCR, performance has slowed in last 12 months	⇨	Gap remains at 4% lower than UK	😐
Working Age Population with no qualifications	10.9	18,300	2011	Strong : Sefton is 3.0% lower than the LCR average of 13.9%	⇧	No gap, Sefton at the same level as UK	☺

5. Strategy Monitoring Report

Objective 1 More new starts to replenish the business population

Sefton has traditionally performed well at a LCR level in terms of creating new business start ups and this has been reflected in local business support programmes. Over the past five years Stepclever and the Working Neighbourhood's Fund generated over 670 new businesses.

The latest business births data shows Sefton and the LCR creating 46 and 45 new start ups per 10,000 of the population respectively. This is still significantly below the UK. The same applies to Sefton's self employment rate which at 8% continues to outperform the LCR but at national level the gap is showing no signs of improving. Therefore the creation and development of sustainable new businesses must remain a key priority in Sefton.

Business demography statistics are produced using data from all businesses that are PAYE registered. This provides a more comprehensive data set than VAT registrations alone, as it includes those businesses which have not yet reached the annual VAT threshold of £76k pa. In summary the data tells us that:

- Sefton's business stock continues to fall
- The number of new businesses being created is showing a small sign of improvements
- The number of business closures continues to fall
- Business survival rates remain relatively strong.

New Enterprise Allowance

The Government's New Enterprise Allowance programme has been a key driver to help stimulate the creation of new start ups. This includes the use of free mentoring from experienced business people, business coaching for SME owner managers and dedicated support to raise entrepreneurial activity in key communities and groups.

NEA is a Government programme aimed at helping unemployed people to start their own business. Until recently the criteria meant only those unemployed for at least 6 months could qualify but this has been relaxed to allow greater access to the scheme.

The scheme has been contracted out in the LCR to **St Helens Chamber of Commerce** and **Blue Orchid.** They both receive referrals from Jobcentre Plus and individuals are assigned to a dedicated mentor. In Sefton a local presence is ensured with St Helen's Chambers Business Advocate working one day per week in the Sefton@work office in Bootle to meet scheme participants.

Upon satisfactory progress participants are offered loans of up to £1,000 to help kick start their business. Scheme progress in Sefton up to 31 December 2012 is as follows:

No of referrals	304
No of clients engaged	237
No of approved business plans	120
No of business starts	94

Stepclever Legacy Fund

Invest Sefton has designed a new Stepclever grant programme to increase economic activity in North Liverpool and South Sefton by providing financial support to both new and expanding businesses. It is a capital only grant fund, which provides financial assistance to businesses who find it difficult to access other sources of mainstream funding. There are 3 levels of grant funding available:

- *Tier 1 Business Start Up Grant for amounts up to £750*
  Available to individuals starting their own business or businesses that have been trading for up to 18 months

- *Tier 2 Business Start Up Grant for amounts from £1,500 up to £7,500*
  Available to new businesses and businesses trading up to 18 months who are creating new jobs.

- *Tier 3 Business Expansion Grant for amounts from £100 up to £25,000 (maximum of 45% of project costs)*
  Available to existing businesses (continuously trading for 12 months) who are creating new jobs.

A key component of the new fund is a mandatory referral to Sefton@work or Liverpool in Work for Tier 2 & 3 applications. This will help both maximise local employment opportunities and assist with the monitoring of job outputs.

The scheme was launched in December 2012 and the team has already received 111 expressions of interest comprising potential 50 new start ups and 61 business expansion projects. A private sector led steering group will oversee grant awards and workshops will be available to help applicants through the process.

The project has a smaller team of four including two dedicated Business Support Specialists to help support business applicants through the process. The team has already built up a strong network of support through other stakeholders including Social Enterprise North West (SENW) who manage a consortia of providers offering 1:1 support for start ups including help with business planning, cash flow forecasts and accessing other finance.

Stepclever – Enterprise Gateway

This programme ran from June 2007 to 31 March 2012 yielding the following results in the south Sefton wards of **Derby and Linacre:**

Businesses assisted	465
Residents supported into start ups	444
New Businesses created	206
No of new VAT registered businesses	14
Residents entering self employment	112
Of which: Women	50
Jobs Created	537
Jobs safeguarded	116

A survey of Stepclever assisted businesses was undertaken in November/December 2012 to both help evaluate the former Enterprise Gateway project, delivered jointly between

Invest Sefton and Liverpool Vision (between 2007 and March 2012), and also to ascertain future support/growth needs and prospects.

The survey was carried out on 200 businesses and key findings can be summarised as follows:

- 78% of respondents found the overall level of service from Stepclever to be excellent
- 72% stated that their business manager had an excellent understanding of their business needs
- 98% found the grant application process to be clear or very clear
- 80% rated the level of communication from their business manager as excellent
- 83% expect their business to grow in the next 24 months
- 67% expect employment in their business to increase over the next 12 months with 2% expecting a decline
- Finance/grant/investment is the area in which most respondents require support, followed by sales and marketing. This mirrors previous Sefton Business Surveys carried out in 2010 and 2011.

Social Enterprise North West (SENW)

SENW leads a consortium of partners delivering start up advice support and guidance to individuals and social enterprises through a staged programme of delivery. It's supported through £3m of ERDF matched against a further £3m to deliver the Big Enterprise in Communities programme. The aim is to stimulate enterprise in disadvantaged communities and underrepresented groups in the Liverpool City Region.

Progress in Sefton up to 31 December 2012 is as follows:

Stage one	(Pre) Pre-start up awareness raising workshops (Community engagement)	289
Stage two	Pre-start up group based workshop support and action planning	212
Stage three	Business creation start up assistance, including business planning	168
Stage four	Social Enterprise Intermediate business development support	6
Stage five	Social Enterprise Intensive Support-Growth, Income & Diversification	9
Total		684

<u>Promoting an enterprise culture</u>

Promoting enterprise in Sefton is a key strand of the economic strategy. While there has been a contraction in the overall delivery of start up support across the LCR, Invest Sefton and its partners and stakeholders are working closely to help maximise funding and delivery in Sefton. At a grassroots level links between education and business have been vital in terms of assisting young people into work and self employment. A key partner in this work is **Sefton Education Business Partnership (SEBP**), a 'not for profit' company established in 1998. SEBP works closely with the council in terms of developing key links between schools, colleges and businesses. Sefton@work and Connexions also work in partnership with SEBP.

SEBP is currently working with Sefton secondary and special schools to help them deliver work related learning and enterprise education through a range of different programmes. Several secondary and special schools work more intensively with SEBP in developing student's enterprising skills and attitudes, financial literacy and links within curriculum areas. There are numerous examples of business and students working together to provide a business idea or social enterprise for the community.

This includes the 'Get Shirty' Enterprise Challenge Day which is sponsored and supported by a local printing company who work with the students during the day, print their designs and offer an industry visit to the winning team.

Coco Mango co-deliver a Soap Enterprise Challenge Day which results in the winning team having their soap manufactured and the school being able to sell it as a social enterprise. The 'Leading in Enterprise' programme that SEBP co-ordinates is delivered by volunteer industry experts who have their own businesses and want to impart their knowledge of the business world to young people; who have been identified as having enterprising skills and qualities.

SEBP is currently growing its Primary Education links and delivering Enterprise Challenges and projects in numerous schools. This will continue to grow over the coming months and remains a key priority for SEBP moving forward

Objective 2 Grow existing businesses and stimulate the economy

LEPs are seen as the main driver by Government for economic growth in the cities and regions they represent. The 2012 Autumn Statement contained some positive messages including:

- A scheme to provide up to £1.5 billion of loans for the purchase of UK exports focussing mainly on transactions below £50m
- 1% cut in the main rate of corporation tax from April 2014 to 21%
- The creation of a Business Bank to enable UK Export Finance to provide loans
- £120m for two additional rounds of the Advanced Manufacturing Supply Chain Initiative
- Exempt all newly built commercial property completed between 1 October 2013 and 30 September 2016 from empty property rates for the first 18 months
- £50m to support a second wave of cities in the Government's Urban Broadband Fund

The Government is tasking LEPs to lead the development of new strategic plans for local growth priorities and has committed to devolving a greater proportion of growth related public spending in local areas from April 2015 in response to Lord Heseltine's review of economic growth. The Liverpool City Region LEP is already well established and is leading on a number of sub-regional projects and initiatives.

The latest business stock/density data (per 1,000 of the population) shows Sefton as the highest LCR district with 44 businesses per 1,000 of the population compared with 39 across the city region. Similarly there has been an improvement in the number of business losses with Sefton recording 26% compared with 22% for the city region.

The gap with the UK remains unchanged and business retention is a key driver in the council's economic development strategy for supporting existing businesses including, where possible, through turnaround programmes for struggling businesses. This is carried out in conjunction with partners.

Mersey Business Support Project

InvestSefton remains at the heart of business growth support and together with Sefton@work has secured £1.2m ERDF as part of the Mersey Business Support Project. This will help deliver support to over 400 Sefton businesses up to the period ending 31 March 2014. Business will have up to 12 hours of free support covering a wide range issues.

A team of highly experienced business and employment support specialists will provide dedicated support to Sefton businesses. The support can take many forms, including:

- Free business events and workshops to meet business needs
- Financial support in the Stepclever Legacy project wards
- Providing business advice and guidance
- Helping businesses to access finance
- Dealing with Sefton Council more easily and effectively
- Quality signposting to partners
- Recruitment of new staff through Sefton@work
- Finding premises and helping businesses relocate in Sefton
- Supporting business to access new markets, including export

- Developing supply chain opportunities in public/private procurement.

The team works closely with a range of public and private sector partners to help bring more cohesive and joined up delivery to businesses including banks, Sefton Chamber of Commerce, MSIF, A2F, The Women's Organisation, Manufacturing Advisory Service and UKTI.

Access to Finance

The Coalition Government has introduced a raft of financial incentives through banks and private sector institutions following criticism of bank lending through Project Merlin in 2011/12. Evidence revealed a reluctance from banks to provide loans to businesses which still prevails and the Government has responded to this with £1bn funding towards a new business bank with a specific focus on manufacturers, export and growth businesses..

The Government will build a single institution that will address long-standing, structural gaps in the supply of finance. It will bring together in one place Government finance support for small and mid-sized businesses. It will also control the Government's interests in a new wholesale funding mechanism which will be developed to unlock institutional investment to benefit small businesses.

The Government has also introduced Regional Growth Funds (RGF) which aims to encourage private sector led growth in areas currently reliant on public sector employment.

Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership is already up and running and currently co-ordinating bids for the Government's Regional Growth Fund RGF. One proposal includes the development of an incentives programme aimed at supporting 'oven ready' business growth projects that fall below the minimum RGF grant threshold of £1m. Invest Sefton has helped develop some local business propositions.

In two successive Sefton business surveys involving 800 Sefton firms (2010 and 2011), Access to Finance was identified as the top business priority moving forward. Businesses (especially small ones) continue to access affordable through banks despite being subsidised by and set lending targets by the aforementioned Project Merlin

Invest Sefton has responded to this challenge by appointing a dedicated Access to Finance Specialist to support businesses across Sefton working with a range of financial support providers including Banks, Venture Capitalists and grant funding bodies. The Business Support Specialist provides 1:1 support and help find the most appropriate route to finance including debt, equity or other alternative loan solutions. This service will help ensure that businesses are 'finance ready' by:

- Assisting in the development of a credible, viable business plan
- Ensuring the financial Information is available to support a funding application
- Assessing the business to ensure the most appropriate form of finance is being requested
- Explaining the various financial products and options so that an 'informed' decision is reached

Support will then be provided through an established network of contacts and providers including:

- Identifying the most appropriate providers
- Know who has both appetite and available funds
- Understand the application process and assist with submission
- Meet potential funders with the client
- Support Client through process to approval and drawdown

The Business Support Specialist works closely with a network of providers and support has included a mix of specialist workshops and site visits to Sefton businesses seeking finance to grow. This has also extended to supporting businesses refused bank finance or have had credit facilities withdrawn.

This recently included a major bank withdrawing from the Hospitality/Hotel Sector requesting Commercial Mortgage borrowers move their loans or sell to repay indebtedness. Invest Sefton has been instrumental is assisting a client to re-mortgage, by consulting with its existing network of providers and securing a competitive loan to facilitate transfer away without having to resort to sale of property.

Merseyside Special Investment Fund (MSIF)

Since its inception in 1994 MSIF has provided funding to a variety of businesses employing less than 250 people. This has included sole traders, partnerships and limited companies. More recently it has used ERDF Objective one monies to support business and since 2002 MSIF has invested £2.8m in Sefton SME's and projects. This can be broken down by postcode:

Postcode/area	**£**
PR8/PR9 Southport/Birkdale/Ainsdale	1,215,000
L9 Aintree	250,000
L20 Bootle	448,800
L30 Netherton	422,000
L22 Waterloo	43,000
L23 Crosby	186,000
L31 Maghull	23,000
L21 Litherland	121,000
L37 Formby	162,500
Total	**2,871,300**

The figures are offset by the inevitable number of loans 'written-off' due to bad debt normally resulting in closures or business failure. Given that this is a fund of last resort, and businesses are expected to have already been refused bank funding, this comes as no great surprise, particularly under the prevailing economic climate. Sefton currently averages 15.8% of loans that have been 'written off' although this figure includes a more recent large debt incurred by a north Sefton business which has inflated the rate.

MSIF products are:

The Merseyside Loan and Equity Fund provides finance from £50k to £2m through loan, mezzanine and equity finance to established businesses with at least two years trading history.

The Merseyside Small Loans for Business Fund on behalf of the Department for Business Innovation & Skills (BIS). This fund provides loans from £3k to £50k and back earlier stage businesses including start ups.

Current performance up to 24 January 2013 shows 15 loan approvals to SMEs in Sefton which have all been drawn down. The total value is £643,000 with a further one (total value £50,000) under offer.

The MSIF Loan and Equity fund has recently supported three new propositions in Sefton:

- Acquisition of Printers £65,000
- Specialist Insurance Brokers £50,000
- Greetings Card design and supply £13,000

There have been 16 lapsed or declined applications in Sefton although the three recent deals have been under development for some time and combined loan/equity funding proposals are often complex. The deals tend to be larger and far longer in the gestation period than smaller applications.

Invest Sefton will continue to work closely with MSIF on referrals and seek ways of improving deal flow particularly over declined or lapsed applications.

Regional Growth Fund

The Government has launched three rounds of the Regional Growth Fund. The Regional Growth Fund (RGF) has two main objectives:

(a) To encourage private sector enterprise by providing support for projects with significant potential for economic growth and create additional sustainable private sector employment; and

(b) To support in particular those areas and communities that are currently dependent on the public sector make the transition to sustainable private sector led growth and prosperity.

Invest Sefton promoted these opportunities by email to 1,000 plus recipients and via www.investsefton.com . Although some businesses have been supported to firm up applications, interest in the fund across the city region has been limited as the minimum grant threshold is £1m. Invest Sefton has been working with the LCR Local Enterprise Partnership and other LA's to support those businesses with growth potential but which fall below the £1m grant threshold.

However the team was successful in supporting **Crown Speciality Packaging** with their Round two application which helped their recent business expansion in Aintree securing 115 jobs and creating an additional 20 employment opportunities.

Crown Speciality Packaging is a global leader in speciality metal packaging, with an international network of production facilities and as such is relatively flexible in terms of where it operates from. This investment in a new facility locally, along with significant investment in new plant and equipment will ensure the creation and safeguarding of new jobs both directly and indirectly.

Invest Sefton will continue to work with Sefton businesses seeking RGF grant opportunities including the pending £10m developed by the LEP in partnership with the other LA's. The scheme is currently the subject of due diligence and a likely start date will be summer 2013.

Invest Sefton also supported Sefton businesses seeking RGF via the Liverpool Echo Booster grant fund. This resulted in two successful awards to

Trident TAP Ltd (Bootle-£60k)

Trident TAP aims to reduce water wastage wherever possible through both a unique auditing programme aimed at the corporate sector and also via the unique Cool Water Diverter (CWD) Valve aimed primarily at the residential and hotel sectors.
The aim is to develop an assembly operation within the company's current facilities that will create a minimum of12 permanent jobs in the first year, with an additional 30 permanent jobs during years 2 and 3

Objective 3 Target Traditional and Emerging Growth Sectors: (i) Superport, (ii) Visitor Economy, (iii) Knowledge Economy, and (iv) Low Carbon Economy

(i) SuperPort

Port Expansion

A £1.6bn refinancing deal has been secured to fund Peel Ports' growth plans and the Marine Management Organisation licence necessary to proceed with the construction of The Ports of Liverpool's £300 million deep water container port 'Liverpool 2' has also been secured and construction is due to commence. New jobs will be created in the operation of the Liverpool 2 terminal and in the local supply chain.

Maritime Supply Chain Work

The Maritime and ports sector makes a significant contribution to the LCR business economy. Over 1,000 limited companies work in the maritime sector, responsible for an estimated 26,000 jobs. The SuperPort Action Plan sets out an operational programme for engaging and working with key stakeholders including importers, manufacturers and carriers, to maximise supply chain opportunities for local economies.

Work undertaken by InvestSefton to further these aims includes mapping the local business base, to develop an 'economic footprint' of maritime and ports-related businesses, and develop a database of Sefton companies offering ports-related services.

Discussions have also been held with Peel Ports, in relation to supply chain opportunities arising from works, goods and services, and opportunities with companies situated within the ports estate. A joint Peel/InvestSefton working group has recently been established comprising officers with a remit for supply chain development, construction opportunities, and employment and skills.

(ii) Visitor Economy

Great progress was made in the run up to the 2007 credit crunch and subsequent recession. This is evidenced by major capital investment in the Sefton element of the LCR 'offer' together with substantial public sector support for its promotion. There is a clear ongoing requirement to ensure this key component of the local economy and the jobs within it is sustained. The primary objective in this austere period is to ensure the best use of diminished public sector resources. Effective partnership between the public and private sectors is key to this.

A Business Improvement District (BID) is being developed for Southport Town Centre and Seafront. It is being led by the private sector through a town team consortium supported and guided by Sefton Council. A Business Plan proposal is currently being developed in preparation of a ballot to businesses.

A policy focus on the importance of Sefton's various town centres has been developed by the Council and this will assist local partner working between pro-active private sector partners to deliver the best of return on investment in those diverse assets

The growing importance of the Liverpool City Region LEP and the Sefton's role within it requires active development to ensure that the prime assets of Southport, Sefton's Natural

Coast and England's Golf Coast continue to be visible in the visitor market place. This will employ both a local and City Region approach to doing more with less.

(iii) Knowledge Economy

BDUK Superfast Broadband

A multi-million pound programme, consisting of roughly equal contributions from BDUK, ERDF and private investment, to connect 56,000 premises to superfast broadband across the Liverpool City Region is being developed. In Sefton as many as 28,000 residents have the potential to be reached. It is proposed that a telecommunications supplier will start work on laying fibre optic cables from late 2013, completing the task by the end of December 2015. The result will be a 90% overall broadband coverage of the LCR, with superfast speeds (26 Mbps and over) available for the latest business and social needs.

The shadow board of the project has recently agreed to place more emphasis on connecting businesses, ensuring that all the five local authorities identified strategic industrial sites will be prioritised. Sefton has responsibility for stimulating the demand for superfast connection, crucial for the private sector leverage, and has agreed to host and develop the website – www.merseysideconnected.org.uk

(iv) Low Carbon Economy

Liverpool City Region Sustainable Energy Action Plan (SEAP)

The LCR SEAP was launched in July 2012. It has been developed to "increase understanding of the issues associated between economic growth, energy consumption and CO_2 emissions.

The issues identified in the LCR SEAP should "be used to inform the development of individual projects, including those led by the private sector as well as any individual local SEAPs prepared by local authorities for their own purposes.

It is the intention of LCR leaders to invite major investment in energy infrastructure, bringing jobs, prosperity and environmental benefits. The LCRLEP is looking to support feasibility work on a number of individual projects.

The draft Sefton Sustainable Energy Action Plan

There are 3 key components to the draft Sefton SEAP:

1. The ability for Sefton to benefit from large scale infrastructure investment from the private sector, which can deliver renewable energy and carbon reduction.
2. The Home Energy Conservation Action (HECA) Plan
3. The Council's own Carbon Reduction Plan

Sefton Council's Cabinet have approved the Sefton HECA Plan to be published to the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change. Local authorities with a housing obligation, have a duty to prepare a new baseline HECA plan by 31 March 2013. Sefton Council are one of the earliest UK Local Authorities (LA) to publish its plan and thereby gain first mover early advantage in attracting external investment into Sefton The Plan is a prerequisite for accessing funding under the recently announced Green Deal and the Energy Company Obligation (ECO).

REECH

REECH (Renewables and Energy Efficiency in Community Housing) is a European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funded project aimed at improving energy efficiency in social rented housing.

Managed by Sefton Council. REECH is working with Registered Housing Providers to provide a range of energy saving measures in over 2,000 homes within the LCR at a cost of £15 million.

The project intends to increase demand for low carbon measures and has provided new business opportunities for local suppliers and contractors working in the low carbon sector. The project commenced in January 2011,and is scheduled for completion in June 2014.

Project outputs include:

- 12 different low-carbon energy efficiency measures.
- 12,000 tonnes reduction in CO2 emissions over the lifetime of the project
- £4m increase in Gross Value Added.
- £9,552,424 of private sector investment.
- 230 Jobs created

At February 2013, of the £7.1 ERDF funding allocated to REECH a total of £5.5 million (77%) has been now been committed. Schemes currently contracted account for 1,598 individual properties and much of this work will be complete by June 2013.

Funding agreements are currently being drawn up with housing providers that will take up the remaining £1.6 million and secure the remaining project outputs.

Objective 4 Create Conditions for Growth

Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership

For our conversation with the Local Enterprise Partnership, a prospectus approach is being developed for Sefton (north and south), to frame local investment priorities in need of support from future UK and EU regeneration funding, and to show where the private sector can invest with confidence.

The Council is working with the LCRLEP in promoting the emerging growth areas, the construction sector and in identifying ways to unlock development opportunities.

North Sefton

Southport has a strong core group of retailers, attraction operators and other town centre & seafront businesses, who have worked with each other and alongside the Council in Southport Partnership, Southport Tourism Business Network, and most recently in Southport Town Team. Cabinet have approved Southport as the first tourism/retail Business Improvement District (BID) in the borough and have invited a Southport BID Development Group to prepare a Business Plan and submit it to the Council in due course

Sefton's Cabinet are supporting the preparation of a wider vision and investment prospectus to guide the broader development of Southport and help underpin a future Business Improvement District.

Sefton Council are about to seek Expressions of Interest for a preferred developer on the extension to Southport Business Park.

Site investigations are proceeding on Town Lane prior to remediation works starting on site on behalf of the developer David Wilson Homes.

South Sefton

A 'Prospectus for Growth' (currently in development) for South Sefton, will set out the Council's response to Peel's major new investments in the Port of Liverpool at Seaforth. Port expansion is recognised as a key transformational project in Liverpool City Region (LCR) City Deal, by the Local Enterprise Partnership Business Plan, and in the Council's Strategic Regeneration Framework for South Sefton & North Liverpool, agreed with Liverpool City Council & Mayor.

We want to ensure that our communities secure maximum benefit from the Port's prosperity, and pursue solutions to help reduce pollution, congestion and ill-health. Looking 10 years ahead, our strategy is to magnify the investment by Peel and port users many times over to regenerate the wider area, stimulate jobs, attract investment, improve the environment and improve longstanding concerns. The Prospectus will outline our priorities for helping to make this happen and the next steps.

Bringing forward land for employment, new homes and access are key to this.

- Sefton Council are looking at ways to unlock employment land for development in the Dunnings Bridge Road Corridor and will work with developers and the LCRLEP to achieve this aim.

- Sefton Council are also looking to both improve the residential offer in the borough and to sustain the construction industry through house building. Sefton has already been successful in bidding for Regional Growth Funding for such a scheme which will be delivered in parallel with ongoing housing regeneration schemes in the south of the borough over the next 3 – 5 years.
- Port Access – In line with City Deal, a Steering Group met twice, in November 2012 and January 2013. The DfT and Highways Agency are active partners. Terms of Reference for the group, governance and a set of key messages have been agreed. Sefton Council continues to provide the supporting arrangements and resources. A work programme, building on the Port of Liverpool Access Study is being developed. City Region partners (led by Sefton Council and the LEP) have been preparing a Trans European Transport Network (TEN-T) Bid. The bid will consist of proposals for technical feasibility studies and options assessments for elements of the emerging port access work programme.

Local Plan

The Sefton Local Plan is facilitating the conditions for future investment by making sure adequate land is available to meet future employment and housing needs. It is anticipated that Preferred Options will be out to consultation in the summer 2013.

Objective 5 Increase Opportunity and Employment

Developing Partnership Arrangements for the Sefton Employment & Skills Offer

A Sefton Partners Group has recently been established in order to simplify and co-ordinate a comprehensive offer to investors and employers looking to recruit, develop and train their workforce. The initial members of this group are: JobCentrePlus, Hugh Baird College, Southport College, Sefton@work, Sefton Training Providers Network and Sefton Council's 14 – 19 team together with Sefton's Economic Development and Tourism officers.

The remit is to devise a clear and streamlined process for local employers to access the skills and recruitment support they need, while developing the employability of residents who have been out of the labour market, to access employment and improve their skills for the longer term. The Group intends to focus its work on the Transformational Sectors most likely to impact upon Sefton's economy, including the Visitor Economy, Low Carbon and Environmental technologies, Knowledge Economy, and SuperPort and Port-centric Logistics.

Mapped Out – Sefton Training Providers Network

Sefton's Training Providers Network have published a unique model of aligned training delivery which describes the co-ordinated skills offer for employers, schools, young people and adults to be able to more identify options available in the locality. The first Mapped Out promotional event was held in late 2012 and this is intended to be a regular occurrence in future years, particularly when young people are making their post-16 choices.

Merseyside Apprenticeship Programme

Sefton MBC, through its partnership with Greater Merseyside Connexions has been participating in a European Funded Programme in this city Region Apprenticeship Programme. The Funding has been targeted at providing opportunities with smaller local employers who may not previously employed Apprentices. The Map project has also hosted the Merseyside Apprentice Awards Programme with an Awards Ceremony will be held in March 2013.

Liverpool City Deal on Employment and Skills – Devolution of NAS AGE grants

As part of the LCR City Deal on Employment and Skills the National Apprenticeship Service has devolved funding to the Local Authorities and their partners to deliver a matched grant to employers, which will see the subsidy from NAS being matched with locally managed European monies to offer a flat rate incentive of £3,000 for smaller businesses to take on an apprentice. Sefton MBC and its partners, Sefton Education Business Partnership and the Sefton Training Providers Network have been promoting this grant which is available for employers who have had no apprentices in the previous year and who are prepared to pay the National Minimum Wage rate applicable to the young person's age, rather than the lower flat rate of Apprenticeship pay . This is the first such devolution of national funding to the City Region LAs and as such represents an important milestone in the development of new arrangements for sub regional governance related to employment & skills.

Hugh Baird College New site

Work has begun on the new site on Balliol Road for the College, which will open In January 2014. The brand new, state-of-the-art Higher Education development incorporates a high tech University Centre, which will be a dedicated place of study for students taking one of the College's degree programmes. The new development has been designed for use by the public and local businesses, as well as Hugh Baird College's apprentices and students. The College is working in partnership with Sefton Council to regenerate the local area as much as possible.

Wates Construction, who are building the development, are also committed to engaging with the local community to ensure they are fully informed of the progress on-site, as well as some wider community initiatives they intend to engage in.

Plans have been drawn up for the centre to feature a whole host of facilities for the wider community. These may include:

- A public library occupying a whole floor of the building, featuring everything from the latest information technology to classic literature
- A dedicated Jobcentre Plus base, offering jobseekers access to computers and expert advisors
- A public cafe with a 'Liverpool ONE look' and an outdoor eating area staffed by catering apprentices
- An employers' floor offering professional training courses for staff and a corporate hospitality base allowing local companies to host meetings and conferences for clients
- A flexible performance/exhibition space which could be booked out for public events ranging from school productions to conferences

The DWP Work Programme in Sefton

In June 2011 the government saw the introduction of the Work Programme, designed to simplify the system of support for people on benefits looking to get back into work, Procured by the DWP through the Employment Related Support Framework, the Work Programmes contracts covering Sefton were awarded to two private sector Prime Contractors, A4E ltd and Ingeus Deloitte Ltd. The premise of the Work Programme, different to any preceding programmes, is that it is based on shifting financial risk for under-performance away from the tax payer and to the provider as it is almost entirely a payment by results initiative. The components of clients' employment journey are to be determined locally through each Prime Contractor's business model.

In November 2012 the DWP published its first statistics on Work Programme Performance nationally. Analysis of this data provided by the Prime Contractors indicate that performance has fallen far short than the level expected. However, the performance rates for Sefton in comparison with other LA areas in the same Contract Package Area was much better than our neighbours.

Sefton MBC is keen to ensure that the correct level of support and challenge is available for the Work Programme contractors to make a positive difference for Sefton claimants and to add value to the local infrastructure. There is a general concern, articulated in the recently published House of Commons Committee of Public Accounts report about the inherent risk in the Work Programme of "creaming and parking" where the focus is placed on those most likely to progress into work with least intervention and the quality of support available for those who need more intensive assistance. As a result Sefton officers have been in dialogue with both Prime Contractors and there is an emerging protocol with both companies to engage in regular contact with regards to

- data sharing
- targeting of local services
- alignment of Work Programme support and local provision, including joint funding arrangement for individuals.

Sefton@work's Local Programme for the Unemployed

Sefton MBC's local Labour Market Intermediary service, Sefton@work has been delivering a programme of Local Interventions to support Residents who have been unemployed or economically inactive to re-connect with the labour market and make the transition from benefit dependency to sustainable employment. This has been a voluntary programme delivered across the borough through the main office locations in Stanley Road, Bootle, Netherton Feelgood Factory, the Southport Promenade office a together with a range of outreach locations across the Borough (often in partnership with One Vision Housing) running since January 2011, there has been consistent demand from local jobseekers and to date more than 3000 people have voluntarily sought some form of help ranging from self-managed job search through to intensive, person –centred assistance with a fully qualified and experienced local adviser.

- 1,030 People have been assisted with funding to help with the financial challenge of transitioning from benefits to work through the Employability Fund which provide funding for suitable work attire, public transport assistance, various licenses and accreditation etc
- 48% of people accessing this ESF project are female (against a target of 45%)
- 22% of people accessing this ESF project are lone parents (target of 20%)
- 30% of people accessing this ESF project have disabilities or limiting health conditions (target of 20%)
- 40% of people accessing this ESF project are aged 50 or over – (target of 20%)
- 8% of people accessing this ESF project are from BME groups (local population of 5.9%)
- 14% of people with disabilities or limiting health conditions are in work on leaving the Project
- 26% of people aged over 50 are in work on leaving the Project
- 15% of people form BME groups are in work on leaving the project

Within this Project, Sefton@work has operated a number of Pathways designed both to meet specific needs of disadvantaged groups and respond to opportunities. These Pathways have included:

Health Trainers Project for Clients with Long Term Health Challenges

A collaboration between Sefton@work , the May Logan Centre and NHS Sefton to provide accessible and friendly support for people with limiting health conditions to overcome social isolation, address practical ways to improve their wellbeing and begin consideration of learning and employability progression. This project successfully attracted people who had been economically inactive for a significant period of time after injury and trauma. First step learning opportunities were provided through Sefton's Adult Community Learning Service.

Pathway for Ex-Offenders

Identifying employers willing to recruit people with an offending background can be problematic and the risk of re-offending increases the longer an ex-offender remains inactive. To counteract this, Sefton@work has forged a partnership between Sefton MBC Security Service and Asset Training Ltd to deliver a course aimed specifically at this client group to develop the skills, attitude and industry accreditation to work in the security industry.

Pathway for Clients with Health Issues

The re-assessment of people on health-related benefits through the Work Capability testing regime, a central part of the Government's policies on welfare reform, have raised multiple challenges for Sefton@work clients. A significant percentage of people deemed to be" job ready" and therefore migrated from health-related benefits to Jobseekers Allowance have appealed these decisions. However, this benefit migration means loss of income for many and new conditionality connected with actively seeking employment for people to satisfy. As a result, a high proportion of clients seeking assistance from Sefton@work are presenting with greater levels of need, particularly in relation to mental health, addiction and dependency which affect their prospects of entering and sustaining employment. In response, Sefton@work has devised:

- a training programme for advisers led by NHS Sefton to help deal with people in distress. The aim of the training module titled" Managing difficult conversations" is to increase adviser confidence to discuss misuse of alcohol and drugs, weight, personal hygiene and mental health issues in a constructive and positive manner
- Referral route to NHS support on thinking Positively about Health conditions
- Links to Sefton CVS Volunteer Centre and the Green Gym

Pathway for Recovering Drug Users

In partnership with the Sefton Drug Action Team project Moving On, Sefton@work has developed a specific routeway for people who are engaged with Drug Treatment Providers, to assist their effective re-integration into employment or training. This pathway has delivered:

- 50 people accessing employment advice and support delivered through Sefton@work in close liaison with their Treatment Provider
- Innovative case conferencing techniques, bringing together treatment support and employability progression advice
- Funding was identified for 6 waged placements to be placed with the network of local Treatment Providers, who have recruited local people to act as supporters and advocates for other clients

Pathway for Self Employment

Sefton@work has provided support for benefit claimants seeking to enter self employment for some time under the Stepclever Initiative. As this is confined to residents of certain wards in Sefton, other providers of complementary services have been invited to provide services at the Bootle Sefton@work offices for clients interesting in pursuing this option. St. Helens Chamber, the Woman's Organisation, Social Enterprise North West consortium, Merseyside Investment Fund and JCP New Enterprise allowance can be accessed through these arrangements together with workshops on tax, NI, record keeping etc for the self employed delivered by HM Revenue and Customs Service.

Pathway for Young Care Leavers

Directed by Sefton's Corporate Parenting Board, Sefton@work made funding available for a cohort of young people to access waged employment placements for up to 26 weeks, as part of the Council's LAC Employability Programme. This consists of a pre-employment support phase, a transition phase and a supported employment phase where the young people were offered full time contracts across Sefton MBC departments, public sector partners and key local employers. Statistically, the outcomes for young people leaving care tend to be much less favourable than for other young people and this project attempted to counteract this. The Pathway supplied funding for 17 young people, none of whom would have been able to access traditional Apprenticeship routes for a variety of reasons. From the 17 placed, 6 found full time employment either with their host or with another employer as a result of the support they received.

Family Support and Employment

The recognition of the importance of skills, qualifications, and sustainable employment have been central to two new government initiatives introduced in 2012 by different Government Departments seeking to provide assistance to families facing challenges in our communities. The DWP ESF for Complex Families Programme, tendered through the ERSA framework and won by Reed in Partnership Ltd and the DCLG Troubled Families Initiative, require employment support providers to act differently, respond to new funding and contracting models and target groups who experience disadvantage in the labour market arising from poor skills, lack of work experience, offending behaviour and poor levels of motivation and aspiration. Sefton@work is fully engaged with both these programmes.

Establishment of a Substance Misuse Working Group

Sefton Economy & Tourism Service has joined up with Health Commissioning officers to establish a partnership with JobcentrePlus, drug treatment providers, Sefton MBC and the Work Programme Prime contractors, A4E Ltd and Ingeus Deloitte. The aim of the partnership is to ensure that positive activity designed as part of treatment plans for these clients can be identified and recognised as qualifying activity to support Benefit Conditionality for both Work Programme and Jobseekers Allowance. This is intended to counteract the risk of sanctions being applied in error to these clients and to aid understanding among the relevant agencies.

The Impact of Welfare Reform

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 will lead to the biggest changes to the welfare system for over 60 years. These national plans for Welfare Reform are likely to have cumulative effects on some households and it is accepted locally that many local families and communities, both those in receipt of welfare benefits and those working on low incomes are likely to be worse off.

Changes likely to impact in the first instance will be :

- Social Sector Size Criteria (known as the Bedroom Tax)
- Universal Credit
- Benefits Cap
- Council Tax Support scheme
- Personal Independence Payment
- Social Fund Replacement scheme

Sefton MBC is leading a local partnership focused on identifying the impacts these changes will have in our Borough and seeking to mitigate some of the worst effects through a range of actions including:

- Introducing Food Banks in Sefton
- A Big Lottery Fund bid for Supporting the Transformation of Advice Services
- A Welfare Reform Partnership, rolling out training to local agencies

6. GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Annual Population Survey - A national sample survey of households

Average Earnings - Annual full time workplace earnings

BRES - Business Register and Employment Survey

Business Demography Statistics - The Business Demography statistics will include all businesses which are PAYE registered

Business Births - Number of new businesses (Business Demography Statistics)

Business Deaths - Number of failed businesses (Business Demography Statistics)

Business Stock - The count of live businesses (Business Demography Statistics)

Claimants - The number of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance.

Confidence Levels - Extent to which an assumption or number is likely to be true when using a sample survey. For example: a confidence level of 1% means that the figure could be 1% higher or lower than that given.

Employment Jobs – Employees plus working proprietors (BRES)

Employment Rate - The number of people in employment expressed as a percentage of the working age population.

GDHI - Gross disposable household income (GDHI) is the amount of money that individuals (i.e. the household sector) have available for spending or saving. This is money left after expenditure associated with income, e.g. taxes and social contributions, property ownership and provision for future pension income.

GVA - Gross Value Added is the difference between the value of goods produced and the cost of actually producing them.

LCR - Liverpool City Region

LEP - Local Enterprise Partnership

Long Term Unemployed - The number of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance for 12 months or more.

NEET - Young people 16-18 years Not In Education, Employment or Training

Unemployment Rate - Unemployed people are those without a job, have actively sought work in the last four weeks and are available to start work in the next two weeks or; out of work, have found a job and are waiting to start it in the next two weeks. The rate is calculated as a percentage of the working age population.

Worklessness Rate - the proportion of working age residents claiming out of work benefits (JSA, ESA/Income Support, Lone Parent and other income related benefit)

Working Age Population - All residents aged 16 – 64