

Developing Appropriate Strategies for Reducing Inequality in Brighton and Hove

Phase I Identifying the challenge: Inequality in Brighton and Hove

**Phase I Final Report
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Section I Executive summary

I.1 Introduction and context to the Reducing Inequality Review

Project aims

I.1.1 The aim of the Review has been to inform the Public Service Board and Local Strategic Partnership about

- the effectiveness of the city’s Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy
- policy options for the future to reduce inequality
- measures of success that could be used as targets in future

I.1.2 It has involved an exhaustive analysis of the evidence base, with a scope incorporating not just neighbourhoods but also disadvantage amongst client groups and communities of interest across the city, relating to factors such as race, disability, gender and sexual orientation.

The Review has been carried out in two phases: this report presents the results from Phase 1

I.1.3 The Review has two distinct phases:

- Phase 1: to assess current data and information to see where inequality is most acute, both in terms of areas of the city but also for particular groups such as people with disabilities and people from a Black or minority ethnic background. This report presents the results from the research carried out in Phase 1, highlighting inequality issues that need addressing
- Phase 2: to review the way partners across Brighton and Hove have been working to reduce inequality through strategies such as Neighbourhood Renewal and New Deal for Communities, and to suggest the changes needed in our approach. The results from Phase 2 are presented in a separate report.

Reducing inequality can meet both social and economic outcomes

I.1.4 Tackling inequality is about both social justice and economic development.

I.1.5 The social justice rationale for tackling inequality is based on developing a fairer society. Programmes here might aim to develop equality of *process* (treating people the same way), equality of *outcome* (ensuring that people have equal shares of “the cake”) or equality of *opportunity* (ensuring that people have the “substantive freedom” to do something).¹

I.1.6 There is also a clear economic rationale to tackling inequality. Treasury work, for example, has identified that the key factor explaining the UK’s low productivity compared to countries such as the US and France is the lower level of skills². Programmes here would aim to reduce economic inefficiency by making better use of Brighton and Hove’s assets: for example through tackling low skills and other barriers to employment, along with action involving employers to improve the match between job requirements and what jobseekers have to offer.

¹ For a fuller discussion of these questions see Burchardt, T (2006) *The Foundations for Measuring Inequality* www.theequalitiesreview.org.uk/documents/pdf/foundations4measuring.pdf

² Treasury, DTI (2001) *Productivity in the UK 3 – The Regional Dimension*

A note on terminology - what we mean by inequality

- 1.1.7 In this report, we are using “inequality” as a label for deprivation and disadvantage, for example identifying those groups or areas that are doing significantly worse than the city as a whole.

1.2 Key information coming out of our analysis in Phase I

Brighton and Hove in context

- Latest estimates suggest relatively slow population growth, with only a 0.6% increase in the population between 2001 and 2006. However, growth is faster for working age groups.
- The population profile of the city is shifting. The city ranks among the 10% of LAs across England with the highest numbers of recently registered migrant workers, with nearly 10,000 registered for National Insurance numbers between 2005/06 and 2006/07. In 2001, 15% of the city’s residents were born outside England, and 20% of all new births in 2005 were to mothers born outside the UK.
- The city has a fast-growing and relatively strong economy. The stock of VAT registered businesses grew by nearly one-third between 1995 and 2005, significantly faster than across other small cities, with roughly 30,000 jobs created over the same period.
- Brighton and Hove has a highly educated workforce. According to the most recent estimates, nearly two in five residents have degree-level qualifications, well above other small cities, and national and regional averages.

Inequality in Brighton is about both deprived places and deprived people

- The city contains some of the most significantly deprived areas in England, particularly in East Brighton, Queens Park and Moulsecoomb & Bevendean wards. 8% of the city’s neighbourhoods are amongst the most deprived 10% in England, and 21% amongst the most deprived 20% (based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004)
- Some 14 out of the city’s 21 wards contain at least one ‘Super Output Area’ (SOAs) – smaller areas defined for the Census with around 1,500 people – in the worst 20% nationally
- Concentrations are more pronounced when analysed at the more detailed Output Area level
- Trend data appears to show that the most deprived areas across the city are not “closing the gap” on important indicators of equality
- Some groups are particularly concentrated in the most deprived areas, eg, the Bangladeshi and Black African populations (though *not* minority ethnic groups overall)
- The city is home to large numbers of people experiencing inequality, however the most deprived areas in the city are significantly more deprived than the city as a whole – with levels on many indicators two or three times the city average in these neighbourhoods
- However, the majority of people facing inequality do not live in the most deprived 20% of areas across the city

There is a significant group across the city with multiple needs –concentrated in the most deprived areas

- Census data identifies a significant group of 1,500 households where people are experiencing multiple disadvantage across the city, with more than 25% in the most deprived 10% neighbourhoods
- Children in low income families and with special educational needs are even more concentrated in the most deprived areas
- There is a significant number of people with multiple needs living in social housing (with over two-thirds of households experiencing at least two out of the following dimensions of inequality: income, benefits dependency, health, crime and environment)

Worklessness across Brighton and Hove

- While unemployment levels are falling across the city, wider worklessness remains a challenge
- Nearly three times as many people (just under 13,000 people) are on Incapacity Benefit (IB) as on Jobseekers Allowance (JSA – 4,500 people)
- Many more people experience unemployment than shown by the figures at the monthly count of unemployment. Flows on and off benefit identify that up to 17,000 people have been on JSA over the course of the last year – nearly four times the JSA count.
- Long-term unemployment is more marked amongst older people on JSA
- Black Caribbean, Black African and Pakistani ethnic groups are more likely to be unemployed than white ethnic groups across Brighton and Hove
- Women are less likely to be unemployed, also significantly less likely to be economically active
- Other groups with higher levels of worklessness include those with low skills, the homeless, ex-offenders and drug users.

Those with low skills are being squeezed out in the labour market

- Those with low skills in Brighton are facing increasing pressure in competing for work across the city through (1) scarcity of appropriate jobs; (2) competition from those with higher qualifications; and (3) competition from other groups including students and migrant workers
- As a result, the employment rate is poor for those with low or no skills (at 53%, a third lower than the Brighton average). Economic activity rates for this group are also low.

Significant barriers are faced by disabled groups

- Disability and incapacity benefit levels are high across the city. More than 50% of all working age people on benefit claim as a result of incapacity.
- Nearly 20% of all people over 60 receive disability-related benefits
- Disabled people are likely to be claiming benefit long-term – over five years for around half of IB claimants
- Disabled children are at greater risk of living in poverty
- Brighton pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are less than one-quarter as likely to attain good GCSEs compared with those pupils without SEN

- Disabled people have a higher risk of experiencing hate crime

Those with mental health issues face additional barriers

- The city shows very high levels of mental health issues, and there are relative concentrations of people with mental health conditions in the most deprived SOAs
- Over half of those out-of-work due to long-term sickness have mental health problems
- Brighton and Hove has one of the highest suicide rates in the country

Groups struggling to access affordable housing

- Lack of affordable accommodation can compound a range of inequalities. Limited access to affordable housing is a significant problem across Brighton and Hove.
- The city saw the second highest average house price increases of any city in the country over the decade between 1996 and 2006, with house prices increasing by 260%
- Homeless levels have fallen (573 households in priority need in 2005/06) but remain amongst the highest in the country

Children and young adults are at risk

- Nearly one-quarter of the city's children (11,000) live in 'out of work' households. Lone parent households account for nearly 70% of all out of work households in the city, mainly headed by women
- Child poverty is heavily concentrated in the eastern areas of Brighton and Hove
- GCSE attainment levels are increasing but still below national and regional levels; children from low income households do significantly worse than the average across the city
- Attainment levels at Key Stage 3 across the city remain well below national and regional levels
- Young adults are most likely to commit crime, and most likely to be victims of crime
- 650 young people are 'Not in Employment, Education or Training' (NEET). This group are likely to face health and housing problems
- Teenage conception levels are declining across Brighton and Hove, and are well below NRF averages (although higher than regional and national averages)

Community strength and participation

- Research identifies that community strength can contribute to economic and social outcomes, but is difficult to reliably define or measure. The Community Level Infrastructure Audit carried out by the The Trust for Developing Communities identified six key indicators of community capacity, though these were only examined for the Neighbourhood Renewal Areas across the city.
- Locally, surveys of local partner managers highlight that the community engagement work funded through NRF over the last few years has improved the delivery of services at a neighbourhood level. We have picked-up issues around service delivery in Phase 2 of the project.

Health inequalities

- Life expectancy across the city is rising, however male life expectancy is well below the regional average. The gap in life expectancy between the Neighbourhood Renewal Areas and the rest of the city identifies that there remain wide variations within the city.
- Analysis of healthy life expectancy data also identifies a high variation in healthy life expectancy, with the most deprived areas across the city having significantly lower levels of healthy life expectancy.

Substance misuse

- Brighton and Hove has high levels of substance misuse. The Director of Public Health annual report identifies that the city has the highest rate of problem drug users (opiates and/or crack cocaine) in the South East, with the second highest rate of drug-related deaths in the country
- An estimated 45,000 adults are hazardous drinkers, and the city is ranked the 2nd highest local authority in England and Wales for alcohol-related deaths in men

Communities at increased risk of inequality

- As well as spatial analysis of inequality, we have also explored whether groups and communities are experiencing high levels of inequality. Some groups and communities are clearly affected by the effects of discrimination and other social barriers which impact on their life chances and opportunities. The impacts of discrimination in affecting inequalities should not be underestimated.