

UNDERSTANDING THE COASTAL COMMUNITIES OF THE NORTH WEST

**LOCAL AUTHORITY
DISTRICT SUMMARY:**

LANCASTER

JUNE 2009



Lancaster contains six of the 47 communities considered within the regional study of coastal communities across the North West¹. This summary offers a high level extract of analysis into those communities.

- **Bolton-le-Sands** is a local centre situated on the southern shore of Morecambe Bay between Carnforth (to the north) and Morecambe (to the south). It has a relatively aged and affluent population; it is a relatively weak employment centre but performs an important role as a supplier of labour to these two centres².
- **Carnforth** is a small working town situated at the north eastern corner of Morecambe Bay. It operates as a local service centre and supplies labour to Lancaster, Morecambe and South Lakeland³. Carnforth's connection with the sea is limited; it has no port or harbour. Its development was influenced by first the canal and then the railway. It is connected to the remainder of the settlements around Morecambe Bay by the coastal railway line.
- **Glasson** is a very small settlement which has developed around port infrastructure which connects the canal system to the sea. Glasson Dock is still operated commercially and supports a grain and agri-products and general cargo wharf and handling area. The canal basin is used as a marina for leisure craft.
- **Heysham** forms part of the urban area of Morecambe. It has a working port which operates as a base for passenger and freight services on Irish Sea routes. The port also hosts a Nuclear Power Station. Despite its port infrastructure Heysham is a relatively weak employment centre and operates in a network with Morecambe. The data suggests that it does not suffer the same social problems as Morecambe, despite its proximity⁴.
- **Morecambe** is a large urban centre with a population of nearly 40,000. Its population has grown in the period 2002 - 2007, much of which is due to a significant increase in the 16-29 age group⁵. Morecambe is a coastal resort, recording 2.5 million visits in 2007 and is equipped with much of the related seaside infrastructure. Morecambe is an employment centre but also supplies labour to other centres; this is not surprising given the proximity of Lancaster and Heysham. Local employment is dominated by the distribution, hotels and restaurants industrial group. There is extensive deprivation in Morecambe and a relatively high incidence of houses in multiple occupation⁶.

¹ Understanding the Coastal Communities of the North West; Rural Innovation; June 2009

² See Understanding the Coastal Communities of the North West . Data Workbook; 2001 Travel to Work Out

³ See Understanding the Coastal Communities of the North West . Data Workbook; 2001 Travel to Work Out

⁴ See Understanding the Coastal Communities of the North West . Data Workbook; IMD Deprivation

⁵ See Understanding the Coastal Communities of the North West . Data Workbook; 2001 Population and 2001 - 2007 Population Change

⁶ See Understanding the Coastal Communities of the North West . Data Workbook; IMD Deprivation

- **Silverdale** is a small settlement situated right on the shore of Morecambe Bay. It is set in an attractive and high quality environment and attracts visitors and inward migrants. Despite its small size it is relatively well served with shops, pubs and restaurants and is a thriving community.

Data relating to the socio-economic and environmental characteristics of each settlement can be found in the %Understanding the Coastal Communities of the North West . Data Workbook+. This data can be brought together to provide a detailed picture for the coastal communities within Lancaster. The table below records the relative performance of each settlement against a set of summary indicators. It defines the performance of each community with reference to the sub-regional average for each indicator⁷.

Community	Population	Aged Pop.	Pop Growth	Low Income	Car Ownership	Deprivation	Unemployment	Retail & Hospitality	Access to Services	Employment Centre	House Ownership	Private Rented Housing
Bolton-le-Sands	7,040	+	=	-	+	-	-	=	=	-	+	-
Carnforth	5,312	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Glasson	332	+		-	+						-	+
Heysham	9,662	+	+	-	=	-	-	=	-	-	-	
Morecambe	39,851	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	+	+
Silverdale	1,316	+		-	+						-	-

= about average, + more than average, - less than average

gaps indicate where Lower Super Output Area analysis was not possible for some settlements

⁷ A sub-regional rather than regional average has been used because of the significant impact of communities within Merseyside on the overall regional data. See main report, Geographic Analysis (page 6)

Typology

Within the main report four typologies of coastal communities have been identified; large urban areas, working towns by the sea, maritime towns and settlements of choice⁸.

Morecambe has been categorised as a Maritime Town. These are the places where the coastal influence is most powerful. This descriptor covers a much broader range of places than the national focus on 'Seaside Towns' has so far allowed. Maritime Towns have at some point been defined by a functional / economic relationship with the sea. Their future will be heavily influenced by the coastal features which have and continue to attract people and businesses to them. They can be resorts or ports, and are frequently both. Policy relating to Maritime Towns should regard their coastal location as a core issue, and understand the challenges and opportunities that it provides.

Bolton-le-Sands, Heysham, Glasson and Silverdale are categorised as Settlements of Choice. These are popular communities made even more attractive by the high quality environment of their coastal location. They have a strong link to the sea and have often developed around their role as a harbour or haven. The coastal location of these settlements is a very real asset yet it risks prejudicing their future as sustainable communities . both in terms of low carbon living and the balance and vibrancy of their population and business stock. These communities tend not to have structural social economic problems requiring bold intervention. Instead they need gentle but positive management to ensure they remain relatively balanced communities able to meet the obligations of sustainable living.

Carnforth is categorised as a Working Town by the Sea. These are places which cannot be described as seaside resorts or retirement communities. They no longer have a dominant economic link with the coast and lack the type of infrastructure which typifies coastal settlements - harbours, promenades and beaches. These communities share socio-economic characteristics with inland settlements, yet proximity to the sea still makes up an important element of their character. Future policy affecting Working Towns by the Sea should seek to ensure that the benefits offered by their particular types of coastal location are not overlooked, but will not place their coastal location centrally in their futures.

⁸ See main report, Functional Typology of Coastal Settlements (page 82)

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