

UNDERSTANDING THE COASTAL COMMUNITIES OF THE NORTH WEST

**LOCAL AUTHORITY
DISTRICT SUMMARY:**

BARROW-IN-FURNESS

JUNE 2009



Barrow-in-Furness contains three 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.

- **Askam-in-Furness** is a mid sized settlement (in Cumbrian terms) that operates as part of a functional network with Barrow-in-Furness (subsequently described as Barrow) and Ulverston. Askam-in-Furness is a relatively weak employment centre, providing labour to the maritime and manufacturing sectors in the town of Barrow. The socio-economic characteristics of its residents show that Askam-in-Furness is a relatively successful place; people tend to fare better than their neighbours in Barrow and the population has grown².
- **Barrow-in-Furness** and **Walney Island** can be considered as a single functional urban area. Barrow is an important sub-regional centre. Its relatively isolated position (from inland) contributes to the self containment of its labour market. Barrow is an important maritime centre; it is the construction base for military submarines and is a growing centre of excellence and centre for the offshore gas and renewable energy sectors. The economic future of Barrow is linked to the sea, with proposals for a new cruise terminal, marina and gas storage facility.

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 Barrow-in-Furness. 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 indicator³.

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 Population and 2001 . 2007 Population Change

³ 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)

Community	Population	Aged Pop.	Pop Growth	Low Income	Car Ownership	Deprivation	Unemployment	Retail & Hospitality	Access to Services	Employment Centre	House Ownership	Private Rented Housing
Askam-in-Furness	3,423	-	+	-	-	-	-	=	-	-	+	-
Barrow-in-Furness	47,300	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	-	+	+
Walney Island	10,123	=	-	+	-	+	-	+	+	-	+	-

= about average, + more than average, - less than average
gaps indicate where Lower Super Output Area analysis was not possible for some settlements

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 choice⁴.

Barrow-in-Furness and Walney Island are 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.

Askam-in-Furness is categorised as a Settlement 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.

⁴ See main report, Functional Typology of Coastal Settlements (page 82)

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