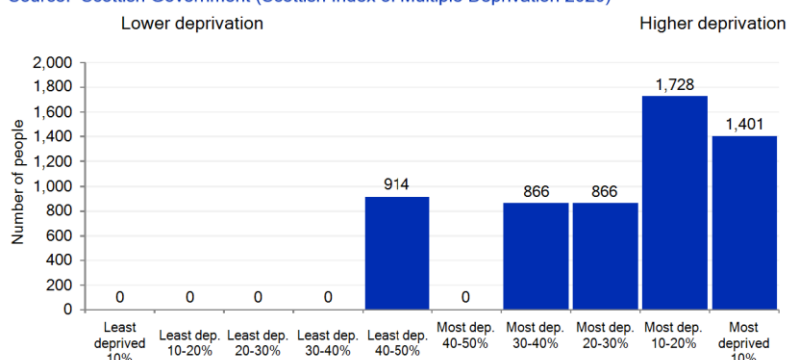


Blackburn in Numbers

There are 5,876 people living in the area and we are experiencing higher population growth than the rest of West Lothian and Scotland generally. Proportionally, we have a higher number of children and young people and a lower number of older people aged 65+. There are a significantly high number of lone parent households (37.4% of families compared to the national average of 27.6%).

Blackburn is a priority area for the Council. Over half of all residents live in the 20% most deprived SIMD areas (5 of the 8 SIMD areas (Data Zones) in Blackburn are within 20% of the most deprived areas in Scotland. 1 is within the top 10% of most deprived areas and 1 is within the top 5% of most deprived areas.

Figure: Number of people in each deprivation decile, Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020
Source: Scottish Government (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2020)

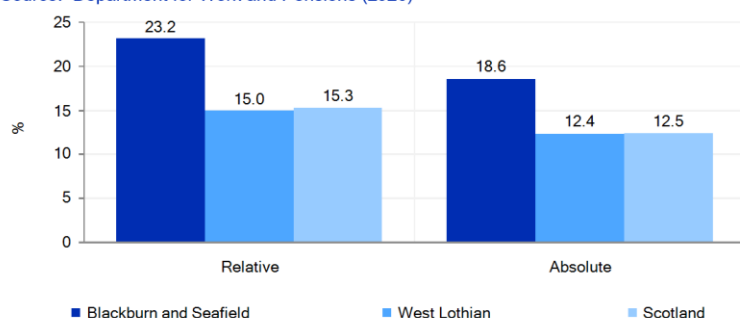


There are significantly higher numbers of benefit claimants in Blackburn including Universal Credit (all categories), disability living allowance and pension credits. Numbers of incapacity claimants is almost double the national average.

Unemployment rates across all groups is higher than the national average: youth unemployment claimants (18-24yrs) for example is 6.6% compared to the Scotland average of 4.4%. Male unemployment claimants (all age groups) is 5.6% v 3.9% nationally.

There are significantly higher numbers of children living in poverty.

Figure: Children living in low-income families
Source: Department for Work and Pensions (2020)

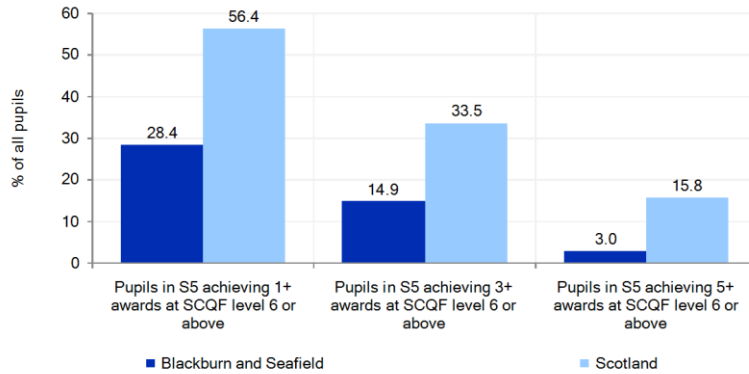


Data shows that there are higher rates of people living with long term, life limiting health conditions (24.5% v 19.6% nationally) and there are much higher rates of benefit claimants for mental health conditions. There are also much higher levels of unpaid care (especially in the 50+ hours pw bracket) being provided within family and friend groups.

Statistically, people in Blackburn (and Seafield) have far fewer qualifications compared to the national average: 37.5% of the working age population have no qualifications compared to 26.8% across Scotland. Only 11% have a qualification to degree level, compared to 26.1% nationally.

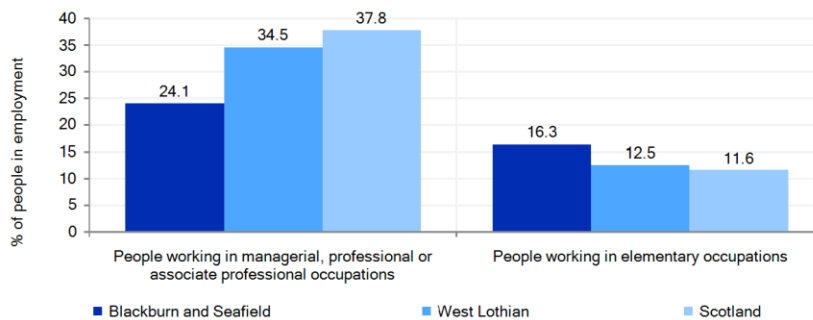
At S4 levels, pupils have comparable educational attainment but this drops off for S5 and S6. Only 11.1% achieve SCQF Level 6+ compared to 43.6% in Scotland. ASN pupils fair particularly poorly.

Figure: Attainment of pupils in S5 by level
Source: Scottish Government, Analytical Services Unit – Schools, 2012/13



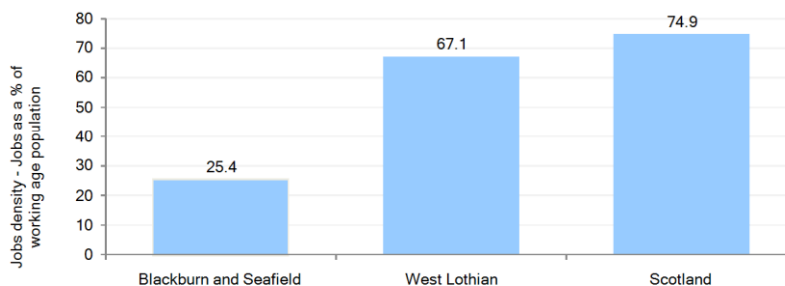
Employment data from the Census shows that there are fewer people proportionally in managerial type roles and more in elementary occupations.

Figure: People in professional and elementary occupations
Source: Census 2011



Local job density is significantly lower than the regional and national average.

Figure: Jobs Density (jobs as a % of working age population)
Source: Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES)



33.8% of households in Blackburn have no car (West Lothian 24.4%) meaning people need to rely on public transport / active travel to get around.

Stakeholders

A stakeholder summit meeting was held in Summer 2022 at Blackburn's Partnership Centre, bringing together key players including Blackburn Family Centre, the Nursery, Council Regeneration Officers, The Larder, CAB and Youth Action.

The needs in Blackburn identified by the group were:

- Family and nursery services reported that there was a marked decline in skills and confidence within families: there was a need to re-empower parents to be able to raise children
- People need to feel better about themselves generally- lost hope
- Not enough for young people to do in the area – diversionary but also active skills and training
- Closure of BLES (an employability scheme for young people) a few years ago has left a major gap for accessible skills training. People have to travel much further afield which is not always possible.
- Need organisations to do things *with* the people of Blackburn not for them and not just for a set period of time then stop – cannot be a tick box exercise
- Needs to be long term and sustainable
- Need to see inequalities in Blackburn reduced
- Greater need since COVID - Speech and language skills have declined. ‘Covid babies’ – young children have not been socialised well and will impact on future generations

Priorities for stakeholders since Covid:

- Holistic approach working with whole families / addressing multiple issues and developing more partnerships to ensure wrap around provision
- Better communication across the community- better planning to keep people informed and connected and better collaboration between groups to add value
- Securing premises: lack of suitable space is a significant barrier for The Larder and Youth Action who are having to turn people away and limit services. Face to face contact important following isolation of lockdowns. Partnership Centre is a big plus locally but not suitable for all activity- inaccessible for some
- Food insecurity and cost of living crisis- people need affordable options and help to work within a budget.