

Summary of Milne's ASG/LMG

The Milne's ASG includes the following towns/villages: Fochabers, Garmouth, Lhanbryde and Mosstodloch. Population levels vary throughout the ASG, ranging from 589 in Garmouth to 1728 in Fochabers.

Main issues

The main issues for this area include themes which cut across the ASG and also issues which are relevant to smaller localities within the ASG. Overall, health is significantly below the Moray average and it has a prevalence rate that is higher than the national average in 17 of 24 conditions. Mosstodloch in particular has poorer health and a high rate of unpaid carers. Fochabers has the highest rate of emergency hospital admissions, for all ages, in Moray. Three of the ASG's four areas have a higher than average rate of people aged 60 and above which may, in part, explain the relatively poor health in the wider area.

With the exception of Garmouth, the ASG has higher rates of negative destinations than the Moray 'norm'. As above, there are differences within the ASG and education provides an excellent demonstration of this. While Garmouth has the lowest percentage of young people entering negative destinations in Moray, Mosstodloch has the highest percentage. Levels of attainment influence post-school destination: over half of pupils from Garmouth go on to Higher Education, and Lhanbryde has the highest percentage in Moray entering Further Education.

Further evidence suggests potentially different outcomes for the residents of smaller localities within the ASG. Of the four settlement areas, Garmouth appears to have the most positive outcomes: employment in professional occupations is common here; it has higher levels of home ownership than the Moray average, and levels of educational attainment are above average across S4 and S5. In contrast, Lhanbryde has the highest percentage of people employed in the retail trade in Moray, and there is a greater incidence of part time work and unemployment. Educational attainment in Lhanbryde is below average across the board. The latest SIMD data ranks Lhanbryde as the most deprived area in Moray.

Minor issues

Also of note for the Milne's area is the level of social renting: Fochabers and Lhanbryde have the highest percentages of non-council and council rented accommodation in Moray respectively. The evidence also suggests a heavy reliance on public transport for both work and school by the residents of Lhanbryde.

Population

The demographic of the Milne's area follows the national trend towards an aging population. Three of the ASG's four areas have proportionately more people aged 60 and over. Garmouth has a significantly higher percentage in this age group and both Fochabers and Mosstodloch have slightly elevated rates of people aged 75 and above. This may lead to a short term demand for both unpaid and paid care services which will have an impact upon public expenditure. The evidence suggests that this demand may increase over time: over half of the population in these same three areas is aged 45 and over.

Lhanbryde is more in line with the Moray average although it does have a slightly higher percentage of people of working age (16-59) than elsewhere in Moray. There is also a slightly elevated incidence of divorce/separation in the town.

Garmouth has a significantly higher percentage of married/same-sex civil partnerships in comparison with Moray as whole. Linking this with the town's older population, it might be inferred that unpaid

care would be available if needed. However, it would also suggest that the carers themselves would be older and this has implications for respite and/or carer support. Fochabers has proportionately more people who are widowed, perhaps a reflection of its particular age profile. Older people living alone can create additional demand for care and Fochabers has a proportionately higher percentage of people aged 65 and over living alone.

Identity

There is a noticeable variation in the ASG in relation to ethnicity. Fochabers, Lhanbryde and Mosstodloch are more 'traditional' towns with higher percentages of people who describe themselves as 'White – Scottish' and who were born in Scotland. Mosstodloch is the most 'traditional' town in the ASG in relation to ethnicity, country of birth, and single nationality households. Mosstodloch also has a higher than average proportion of individuals who follow the Church of Scotland which may be a further indication of its traditional identity. In contrast there is a significantly higher proportion of 'White – Other British' residents and also mixed nationality households in Garmouth.

In comparison with Moray, each of the ASG's four areas has a significantly higher percentage of non-UK born people who have lived in the UK for ten years or more. While this might suggest a settled community the evidence also indicates that there is an element of movement within the local population with slightly higher rates of non-UK born people who have lived in the UK for shorter periods of time.

Housing

Variation within the ASG is also apparent in relation to housing. Home ownership in both Garmouth and Mosstodloch is significantly above the Moray average and there is also a greater prevalence of houses/bungalows, as opposed to flats, in these two areas. Being a more rural area it is perhaps not surprising that Garmouth has more detached buildings than any other type of home.

In respect of home ownership Fochabers is on a par with the rest of Moray. However, the town also has highest percentage of social rented accommodation in Moray. Renting is also common in Lhanbryde: it has almost double the Moray average of council housing - the highest percentage in Moray. Lhanbryde is a more built up area than some of its ASG neighbours and as a result there are more terraced housing and flats here than elsewhere in the Milne's area.

Levels of car ownership further illustrate the varied levels of rurality across the Milne's ASG. Garmouth stands out in this respect with significantly higher percentages of multiple car ownership, particularly three or more cars/vans. Car ownership elsewhere in this ASG is roughly in line with the Moray 'norm': just under half of households have one car, and a quarter has two or more vehicles. Those living rurally who cannot afford private transport will rely heavily on public transport to access services. This has implications for the location of public services and also for the availability of public transport to those services.

Economy and labour

In general, there are proportionately fewer economically active residents in this ASG in comparison with the Moray average and, as might be expected, more retired people. This is with the exception of Lhanbryde which has a younger age profile and is more in line with the Moray 'norm'.

The three main industries in the ASG are wholesale and retail trade: repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, manufacturing, and human health and social work. The wholesale and retail trade employs almost two thirds of the ASG's workforce and Lhanbryde has the highest percentage of workers in Moray employed in this industry. It might be inferred that residents commute the

relatively short distance to work in Elgin which, being Moray's main town, is the economic hub of the area.

As is the case elsewhere in Moray where employment in the retail trade is relatively more common, Lhanbryde also has a slightly higher rate of part time employment which may suggest less opportunity for full time work in this industry. While the main occupations in Lhanbryde are skilled trade and elementary occupations there is also has a slightly elevated rate of unemployment and of full time students who are unemployed. Together, these factors would suggest a relatively low level of income. As above, council accommodation is a common housing tenure in Lhanbryde. The comparatively lower cost of council rents in comparison to, for example mortgages or private renting, may go some way to reduce the impact of low income.

Being home to a major food manufacturing company it is not surprising that the manufacturing industry appears in the top two employment sectors for the majority of this ASG. Mosstodloch has a significantly higher percentage of people who work in this industry than the Moray average and the evidence would suggest that this local firm also provides employment opportunities for the wider Milne's area.

The main occupations in Fochabers and Garmouth are at a professional level and both of these towns have proportionately higher percentages of employment in education, and human health and social work. This ASG has three primary schools and one secondary school. It is also within commutable distance to each of Moray's five main towns which provides further opportunity for employment in education. The central location of Milne's also means that work in, for example, Dr Gray's hospital and council headquarters/access points is also feasible.

Travel to work by car is above the Moray average in all four of Milne's areas, particularly in Garmouth which ties in with the higher rate of multiple car ownership in that area. The financial impact of multiple vehicle ownership in this town may be offset to some extent by the higher incomes suggested by the predominant occupations. Lhanbryde has the highest percentage of people who commute to work by bus and this may provide further evidence of employment in Elgin.

Education

Levels of educational attainment vary across the ASG. Where Garmouth performs consistently above average throughout S4 and S5, Lhanbryde fares less well across the board. Fochabers and Mosstodloch show improvement at the level of higher exams, particularly in attaining one and three higher level exams. Further variation is evidenced in relation to attainment of five higher level exams: Mosstodloch has the lowest percentage in Moray but Fochabers and Garmouth perform significantly better than average in this respect.

This variation in performance translates into an equally varied set of post-school destinations. As might be anticipated, Garmouth has the highest percentage of school leavers entering a positive destination in Moray and over half its school leavers go on to Higher Education. However, the evidence suggests that the improved performance at S5 level does not translate directly into positive destinations: three of the ASG's four areas have proportionately higher rates of negative destinations than the Moray average, and Mosstodloch has the highest percentage of unemployed school leavers.

Although levels of attainment in Lhanbryde might prohibit entry to Higher Education it is encouraging that almost two fifths of its school leavers do continue their education through the Further Education route. This is also a popular destination for pupils from Fochabers which is surprising given improved performance here at S5. One possible explanation is that school pupils

who perform less well at S4 leave school at that point to enter Further Education and those that remain at school go on to achieve higher level qualifications.

The levels of recent educational attainment across the ASG show a similar pattern to the qualification levels of the adult population, and this in turn reflects the predominant occupations for each of the settlement areas. Both Garmouth and Fochabers have a significantly higher percentage of adults educated to degree level, or above, and Lhanbryde and Mosstodloch are generally more in line with the Moray average. This might suggest that the educational aspiration of young people is influenced by the attainment of their parents. It may also suggest that perceptions of the job market play a role in the expectations of and for young people.

With the exception of Mosstodloch which is on a par with Moray, travel to school by car is significantly below the Moray average. As above, single car ownership is more common than multiple car ownership in this ASG and travel to work by car is higher than the Moray average. This may suggest that the availability of other modes of transport for young people helps to reduce the need for multiple car ownership.

Fochabers is home to one primary school and the area's secondary school and so it is unsurprising that over half of the student population walk to their place of study. Mosstodloch has the highest percentage of students who travel by 'other' means. Given the short distance to Fochabers and the relatively safe route between the two, it might be inferred that cycling is the chosen method of travel.

Being a more rural area, students from Garmouth are more likely to travel by bus. This town has the highest percentage of students in Moray using this mode of transport, over three times the Moray average. Rates of travel by bus are also significantly higher in Lhanbryde. This illustrates a heavy reliance on the availability of public transport to enable students to reach their place of study.

Health and social care

The evidence suggests that the overall level of health in the Milne's area is significantly below average: it has the highest prevalence in Moray for both smoking and hypertension, and the rate of obesity is also significantly higher. Further, figures from the Fochabers Medical Centre show a prevalence rate that is higher than the national average for 17 of 24 conditions.

Mosstodloch stands out in relation to the relatively poor levels of health in the town. It has the highest percentages in Moray of people with one or more long term conditions and also of people who are long term sick and disabled. There is a higher rate of people who report being limited by their long term condition and, unsurprisingly, self-reported perceptions of health are less positive here than elsewhere.

What is surprising, however, is that Mosstodloch has below average rates of emergency hospital admissions; significantly below the national average. In contrast, emergency admissions elsewhere in the ASG are higher than average and in fact Fochabers has the highest rate in Moray (all ages). Over 10% of Mosstodloch's population provides some level of unpaid care. This is proportionately higher than the Moray and Scottish averages and this area has the highest percentage of people providing 50+ hours of care per week. This may go some way to explaining this discrepancy and further research may provide a fuller explanation which would in turn help to inform long term planning for the aging population.

Anti-social behaviour / crime

While levels of anti-social behaviour are generally low in comparison with Moray, Fochabers and Lhanbryde are roughly in line with Moray for noise complaints, and Lhanbryde has a slightly higher rate of vandalism. Crime rates are below the Moray average.

Access to services

The latest SIMD data ranks three of the ASG's four areas as being deprived in relation to accessing services. Fochabers is the exception to this although it does have longer drive time and public transport times to the nearest shopping facilities. The impact of longer drive times to schools is reduced through the provision of bus transport, and the location of primary schools in Fochabers, Lhanbryde and Mosstodloch has a positive impact for younger pupils.

As above, the Milne's ASG has an aging population. There is also evidence to show relatively poor health across the area, particularly in Mosstodloch. Garmouth is the most rural part of this ASG and also has the most notably older age profile. Together these factors make accessing local GP services a priority for this area. While it is encouraging that drive time to GP surgeries is less than ten minutes in each of the three of the ASG's four areas, the Moray average is five minutes, and the journey time is over 10 minutes for residents in Garmouth. This increases to almost 40 minutes when travelling by public transport. It can therefore be seen that the location of GP and other health-related services, in addition to public transport provision, are important long term planning considerations.