

CHANGING GEOGRAPHY OF DEPRIVATION: DISCUSSION PAPER

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This paper provides background information to one of a set of three seminars to be held in November and December 2006. The seminars are based around three themes originally identified in my analysis of "Socio-Economic Change in the Glasgow Conurbation", and provide an opportunity for further discussion of the main findings. This seminar looks at the changing geography of deprivation and makes particular use of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD).

1.2. The initial approach separated-out processes affecting the city and looked at them individually and in depth. Accordingly, demographic processes were separated from economic ones, and so on. But it soon became clear that there were similarities in the way each of these processes developed, that could have been missed if seen in isolation. These similarities have formed the focus of this and further work.

2. CROSS-CUTTING PROCESSES

2.1. Three broad processes have affected Glasgow in the last 25-30 years. Two relate to geographical differences: the first to changes in the geographical distribution of poverty and deprivation; the second to different trends taking place between Glasgow and both the surrounding area and reference cities. The third process relates to the particular way change in Glasgow has taken place, and the wider implications of the pace and rate of change on the city. These three processes form the focus of the seminars.

2.2. This approach sets out a view that different aspects of Glasgow should be seen not as individual or unrelated, but as a set of general features that together define the city. In the context of deprivation, this means a turn away from accepting that it is a feature of all large urban settlements in the UK, and towards an understanding that it is a consequence of the way urban, industrial and economic restructuring took place in Glasgow. This in turn led to self-reinforcing attitudes and lifestyles that until recently have been accommodated by public policy, rather than challenged.

2.3. Part of Glasgow's story is how cycles of deindustrialisation and deurbanisation occurred simultaneously rather than sequentially to doubly-disadvantage the city. How can the opportunities around employment growth and urban development be used to reinforce positive change for the future? That will be the task of public policy in the next 10 to 15 years.

3. DEPRIVATION: WHAT'S NEW

3.1. On a number of measures of deprivation there has been a reduction in levels in Glasgow, which runs counter to the general experience of the city over the last thirty years. Moreover, areas in Scotland that used not to feature in descriptions of deprivation now make an appearance. There are signs of a shift in the geographical location of deprivation that needs to be identified and understood.

3.2. These changes are consistent with the state of the local economy, but there is a subtle relationship between the economy and all aspects of deprivation. At the same time, and in spite of many years of continued investment, there are areas in Glasgow where a strong focus on the housing and wider infrastructure appears not to have had the desired effect. This suggests that the principles underlying area-based strategies need to be reexamined and brought into line with the opportunities that now exist to work with deprived communities.

4. DEPRIVATION IN GLASGOW: BENEFIT LEVELS

4.1. This section focuses on two ways of measuring deprivation: benefit levels and the Index of Multiple Deprivation. Both tell a similar story: rates in Glasgow are high, but are in decline compared to other areas in Scotland. Even so, the dynamics are complicated and the balance between changes in overall levels of deprivation, and changes in the individual components which make up the overall deprivation score, can be difficult to understand.

4.2. The number of people in receipt of benefits is a useful indicator but makes several assumptions: that deprivation affects working-age persons, there are few if any problems relating to entitlement and that people who need support get support. However this approach does describe the growth in the number of persons receiving support. At 1979 there were 36,400 people receiving support in Glasgow, equivalent to 8.2% of the working-age population. This total was made up of 3,100 persons receiving disability support, 8,800 people receiving lone parent support, and 24,500 who were unemployed.

4.3. Twenty years later the position had changed dramatically. By 1999 there were 70,800 receiving a health-related benefit, 25,700 receiving Income Support (which includes lone parent support) and 22,600 who were registered unemployed; equal to 30.9% of the working-age population. The proportion of the working-age population on benefits therefore increased by nearly four times, consistent with the change in the structure of employment in the city and in particular the reduction in the number of jobs in manufacturing. The consequences of this change were and continue to be traumatic and should not be underestimated.

4.4. Since 1999 the number of people on benefits in Glasgow has fallen faster than in Scotland, linked to a strong labour market. By 2006 61,300 were on health-related benefits (down by 13.4%), 19,800 on Income Support (-23.0%) and 15,000 registered unemployed (-33.6%). Overall 23.9% on the working-age population now receive benefits: still far higher than the 1979 rate, but a reduction of 22.7% on the 1999 rate. Benefit levels are a useful proxy for deprivation, describing an aspect of a persons' economic situation. However, while these changes are the start of a general improvement, they do not cover all aspects of deprivation such as health and lifestyle behaviour.

5. DEPRIVATION IN GLASGOW: INDEX OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION

5.1. On this measure, Glasgow still has the largest level of deprivation in Scotland, and the greatest proportion of an area's population living in deprived circumstances. 46.7% of the city's population live in Scotland's 15% most deprived areas, three times as high as if deprivation was distributed equally throughout Scotland. When deprivation is more tightly defined, Glasgow's share of Scotland's most deprived areas increases. Glasgow has 37.5% of its population resident in the 10% most deprived (3.75 times as high); 23.0% living in the 5% most deprived (4.6 times as high), and 5.7% in the 1% most deprived (5.7 times as high).

5.2. Compared to 2004, however, there have been reductions in the proportion of Glasgow's population living in deprived areas. During 2004-06 the population in deprived areas in Glasgow has fallen: for the 5% most deprived by -28.6% (affecting 53,400 persons); for the 10% most deprived by -19.3% (affecting 51,900 persons); for the 15% most deprived by -12.5% (38,500 persons); and for the 20% most deprived by -8.8% (29,500 persons). These are cumulative figures and show, for example, that 53,400 people who were in the 5% most deprived in 2004 had moved out of that category by 2006. Many of them will have moved to the next category (6%-10% most deprived) but the useful point is that the largest number of moves is from the most deprived categories.

5.3. These changes are at an overall SIMD level. Benefit levels feature prominently in the SIMD and the movement reflects the general reduction in benefit levels already described. However, it is not the case that where an area moves out of the 15% most deprived as defined by the overall SIMD score, then all the components comprising the overall score move in the same way. For example, between 2004 and 2006 38,500 people moved out of the 15% category on the overall SIMD score; but when the health domain is isolated, the number of people moving was higher, at 45,600. This suggests that the link between moves out of deprivation according to the overall SIMD score (weighted in favour of benefit changes) and moves out under the health score is not at all straightforward and requires further analysis.

5.4. Other aspects of this are of further interest. There are signs that areas moving under the health domain moved further than under the overall score: the majority of moves under the health domain were to the 20% most deprived level, while under the overall score most moves were to the 16%-20% most deprived group. Also, while 66 areas moved out of the 15% most deprived under health, only 23 of them also moved out of the 15% most deprived under the overall score, comprising areas in Knightswood, North Maryhill, Springburn and Greater Pollok.

6. DEPRIVATION ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND

6.1. These changes in Glasgow have their counterpart in changes in the rest of Scotland. For overall benefit levels, the large rate of reduction in Glasgow has not been seen in other areas in Scotland. While the rate in Glasgow fell by 19.2% between 1999 and 2006, the overall rate in Scotland was -13.0%, but -10.5% in Aberdeen, -6.9% in Fife, -6.1% in Aberdeenshire and unchanging in either Perth & Kinross or Midlothian. At the same time, the number of jobs rose by 11.1% in Glasgow, by 7.7% in Scotland, but by 2.3% in Aberdeen; and declined in Scottish Borders (-2.9%), Dumfries & Galloway (-4.0%), and Angus (-8.4%). Moreover, while in Glasgow the number of persons in work increased by 48,000, equal to an increase of 24.5% (1998/99 to 2004/05 with a Scottish average of 5.2%) there were decreases in areas like Aberdeen (-12.7%), Inverclyde (-17.5%) and Moray (-8.6%).

6.2. Other signs show that benefit rates in other parts of Scotland have increased. The areas that have increased working-age benefit claimant numbers by over 10%, starting from a base higher than 12.5%, tend to be semi-urban areas often based around traditional or a few large employers, such as nuclear energy (Thurso), fishing (Frazerburgh and Peterhead) or manufacturing (Dunfermline, Glenrothes).

6.3. These trends are reflected in the Index of Multiple Deprivation. While the number of datazones in the worst 5% fell from 226 to 169 in Glasgow, they increased from 1 to 5 in Fife, from 2 to 9 in Aberdeen, from 9 to 13 in Dundee, and from 9 to 17 in North Lanarkshire. Even Edinburgh saw an increase, from 25 to 27.

7. GLASGOW: PERSISTENT AREAS OF DISADVANTAGE

7.1. While the trends suggest that the general improvement in Glasgow's labour market is having its effect on deprivation scores, it still remains true that multiple deprivation is predominantly a Glasgow phenomenon. When areas simultaneously in the bottom 5% in any four or more deprivation themes are looked at, Glasgow has 89,510 persons in them, more than the rest of Scotland put together (51,730).

7.2. This illustrates a wider problem: in spite of the improvement in Glasgow's relative position, progress in the traditional areas of deprivation in Glasgow has been disappointing.

Proportion of Population in 10% Most Deprived

	IMD 1991	SIMD04	SIMD06	1991-06	2004-06
Castlemilk	75.3%	100.0%	85.9%	+14.1%	-14.1%
Drumchapel	71.6%	93.2%	77.6%	+8.4%	-16.7%
Greater Easterhouse	76.5%	86.9%	77.4%	+1.2%	-10.9%
Greater Pollok	58.0%	62.0%	44.4%	-23.4%	-28.4%
East End	71.4%	83.9%	78.2%	+9.5%	-6.8%
Gorbals	79.1%	100.0%	87.0%	+10.0%	-13.0%
Govan	50.7%	77.9%	63.6%	+25.4%	-18.4%
North Glasgow	69.3%	91.6%	74.4%	+7.4%	-18.8%

All of these areas have been priorities for the last fifteen years and, in the case of the East End, the last thirty.

7.3. Castlemilk in particular has shown little change. There has been virtually no change in the number of people receiving Incapacity Benefit, in stark contrast with Glasgow and other areas of deprivation in the city. Between 1999 and 2005 the number of Incapacity Benefit claims in Castlemilk fell by 0.2% compared to a city-wide fall of 9.6%. The number in Drumchapel fell by 7.7%, in Greater Easterhouse by 8.6%, and in Govan by 14.2%.

8. CASTLEMILK

8.1. The issue with Castlemilk is that since 1988 the area has received significant levels of investment. For example, by 1999/2000 housing expenditure to the value of £203.5 million had been either made or agreed, £22.0 million on social and community issues, and £13.4 million to fund the Castlemilk Economic Development Agency and other training and employment activities. By 2000/2001 a minimum of £244.5 million had been spent in Castlemilk, and by 2003 over £300 million had been invested and 5,000 new or improved homes had been completed.

8.2. This expenditure has not filtered through to employment levels. The 2001 employment rate in the socially-rented sector in Castlemilk was 28%, compared to a 1991 rate of 33% (although this is for the area as a whole, at that time owner-occupation had not yet been developed, and so the figure can be taken as a proxy for the socially rented sector). This suggests that the employment rate for the socially-rented sector in Castlemilk fell by 15.2% between 1991 and 2001, at a time when the rate in Glasgow increased by 11.9%. An increase in employment rates was also seen in Drumchapel, Greater Easterhouse and Greater Pollok.

8.3. Castlemilk stands as an example of housing-led regeneration, and the lack of significant progress in reducing deprivation in Castlemilk raises questions as to the link between housing-led regeneration and social outcomes. When the Partnership was being set up, the prevailing view was that a lack of housing investment was at the root of many social problems, and also there was a lack of information on the underlying levels of benefit uptake. The Glasgow economy was not creating employment so increased housing investment through the Partnership's favoured route of tenure diversification became a major part of policy.

8.4. In addition, Castlemilk has strong physical boundaries and this could have led to a view that local developments were more important than improving connections with other areas. Solutions would come from within a strong boundary-based identity, but this could have led to a sense of insularity and a difficulty in adapting to new circumstances.

8.5. The convention now in Glasgow is that labour market and welfare benefit reform are being used to assist people to move into employment. Programmes such as the Full Employment Initiative tend to be person-centred, appreciative of individual circumstances and aware of opportunities across the city. It is interesting to speculate that, had the emphasis in Castlemilk been towards this approach, levels of deprivation might have been lower than they are now.

9. CONCLUDING REMARKS

9.1. Given Glasgow's previous record on deprivation, it is difficult to adapt our understanding of the issue and relate it to a set of changing circumstances that appear to indicate a reduced impact from deprivation on the city. Much still needs to be done, and there are large areas that have not moved their relative position since the early 1990s. But the positive message is that the strength of the labour market is starting to have an effect on the level of deprivation in the city, and that other sets of indicators are moving in the same direction, even if the reasons for this are not clearly understood.

9.2. Across Scotland, deprivation is now beginning to be a feature of areas that hitherto were not seen as being as vulnerable. That said, the genuine problems that these areas face should not be used to draw attention away from the areas of greatest multiple deprivation that are still located in Glasgow.

9.3. The intention is not to deny that housing and infrastructural improvements are of use, but that by themselves they are not sufficient to deal with deprivation, and may lead to unforeseen consequences. With a more favourable local economy, and more person-centred approaches to dealing with deprived communities, the opportunities to deal decisively with the social problems of deprivation are present.

James Arnott
November 2006