

Summary of Buckie ASG/LMG

The Buckie ASG includes the following towns/villages: Buckie, Cullen, Findochty, Portgordon and Portknockie. Population levels vary throughout the ASG, ranging from 844 in Portgordon to 8273 in Buckie.

Main issues

The Buckie ASG has a greater proportion of older people than both the Moray and national 'norm'. Although the area is currently home to a number of older people's services the evidence suggests that this need will increase over time in order to cater for increased demand. The evidence infers a correlation between older age and health and also illustrates that certain parts of the ASG have poorer health outcomes. Cullen has the highest percentage of people aged 60+ in the ASG. Both Cullen and Portgordon have relatively more residents with long term conditions as well as higher rates of unpaid care provision. Portgordon has the highest percentage in Moray of people reporting bad/very bad health and also has higher rates of emergency hospital admissions.

The second cross-cutting theme is educational attainment and subsequent post-school destinations. Attainment throughout S4 and S5 is generally below average although Portknockie performs above average in attaining higher level exams. Entry into Further Education is above average in all five of the ASG's areas but the evidence suggests that this is largely on a part-time basis. The percentage of young people entering employment from school is roughly on a par with the Moray average but Portgordon has the highest percentage of young people who are 'unemployed not seeking employment or training'.

Minor issues

Also of note for the Buckie area is the relatively high level of council housing: the town of Buckie has the highest percentage of council house tenants in Moray. The local economy is relatively low wage and there are lower than average percentages of full-time employment: Portgordon has the highest percentage of part-time employment in Moray. Access to services is an issue for the more rural parts of the ASG.

Population

The general age profile of the Buckie ASG follows the national trend towards an aging population: overall the Buckie area has proportionately more people aged 60+ than both the Moray and national averages.

Cullen has the oldest demographic in the Buckie area. It has relatively fewer working age residents and higher percentages of people in the 60-74 and 75+ age groups. As might be expected, this translates into a relatively higher proportion of older people households (age 65+). In fact, Cullen has the highest percentage in Moray of people aged 65 and above who live alone. An aging population, particularly where living alone, may have consequences for the availability of unpaid care and the need for paid care services, both of which would have an impact upon public expenditure.

The town of Buckie has a younger age profile with a slightly higher percentage of people of working age (based on ages 16-59). Although above the Moray and Scottish averages, the town also has relatively fewer people aged 45 and over than elsewhere in the ASG where this age group makes up over half of the population. A higher proportion of 'middle-aged' people at the present time will lead to a higher proportion of older people in the future.

The population of the ASG at the time of the last census was approximately 13,000. In comparison, Moray's main town of Elgin has a population of just over 23,000. Given this difference, the Buckie

area appears to be well provided for in relation to older people's services. The wider area is currently home to four registered care homes, four sheltered housing provisions, and one community hospital. Elgin has five registered care homes and five sheltered housing provisions. The projected change in population dynamics for the Buckie area suggests that further provision will be needed in the future. 'Human health and social work' is already the second main industry in the Buckie ASG and so in addition to implications for the long term planning of services and public expenditure there may also be an impact on the local job market.

Identity

In relation to ethnicity, the wider Buckie area can be seen as traditionally Scottish. In addition to higher percentages of people who identify themselves as 'White – Scottish' and people who were born in Scotland than the Moray average, there are also proportionately fewer mixed nationality households. The town of Buckie stands out as being the most Scottish part of the ASG in this respect. Due to the location of RAF Lossiemouth and Kinloss Barracks, Moray is significantly above the national average with regards to 'White – Other British' residents and people who were born in England. In contrast, the town of Buckie is below the national average and also has the lowest percentage in Moray in both respects.

There appears to be a correlation elsewhere in Moray between higher rates of English residents and people who identify their religion as 'Other Christian' which would suggest affiliation to the Anglican Church. However, despite having fewer English residents, the Buckie ASG also has proportionately more people who nominate 'Other Christian' as their religion: Findochty has almost twice the Moray average. A potential explanation for this is that there are churches/meeting halls for Methodists, Baptists, Episcopalians, Salvation Army and Brethren located throughout the Buckie area.

Despite the traditional identity of the wider Buckie area, there is evidence of some movement within the local population - although it is worth noting the small numbers of individuals involved which may affect the statistical percentages. Both Cullen and Findochty have significantly higher percentages of non-UK residents who have lived in the UK for 10 years or more. Further, in four of the ASG's five areas there are relatively more non-UK residents who have lived in the UK for between five and ten years than is average for either Moray or Scotland. Portknockie has the highest percentage in Moray, and Cullen and Portgordon are close behind.

Housing

Levels of home ownership are slightly above the Moray average in the majority of the Buckie ASG with the evidence showing that Portknockie has a significantly higher percentage than the Moray 'norm'. While social and private renting are not so common here as elsewhere in Moray there are proportionately more properties rented from the council and the town of Buckie has the highest percentage in the ASG. With a lower population density it is perhaps not surprising that the smaller settlements of this area are more likely to have semi-detached as opposed to terraced housing. However, the town of Buckie also has a higher percentage of this type of building than the Moray average in addition to a slightly elevated rate of terraced housing. Rankings in the latest SIMD data suggest that quality of housing is above average in three of the ASG's four areas.

Buckie is one of Moray's five main towns and as such it is a hub for local businesses and services as well as being home to three primary schools and the ASG's secondary school. This would imply that residents have access to services without the need to travel far. In fact, the town of Buckie has the highest percentage of households in Moray with no car or van and also the lowest percentage with two cars or vans. Vehicle ownership elsewhere in the area is roughly in line with the Moray average. Although Findochty and Portgordon have proportionately more car owning households they are only

slightly above the Moray 'norm' in this respect which is surprising given that these areas were ranked as deprived in relation to access to services in the most recent SIMD data.

Economy and labour

The evidence suggests that the Buckie ASG is a relatively low wage area which has lower rates of economically active adults than the Moray average and also less full-time employment. In fact, Portgordon has the highest percentage of part-time employment in Moray. Although Cullen and Portknockie have the lowest rates of full-time employment in the Buckie area this off-set by higher rates of self-employment in each of these towns. It is interesting to note that these towns have the highest percentages in Moray for employment in the 'accommodation and food services' and 'transport and storage' industries respectively. This may indicate the existence of 'niche' businesses in these areas.

The retired population reflects the age profile discussed earlier and this in part explains the level of economic inactivity in the area. Further explanation may be found in the slightly higher percentages of long-term sick or disabled people in the town of Buckie and Portgordon, and proportionately more households where adults are looking after home or family in four of the ASG's five areas. This may in turn further illustrate the area's older age profile and the impact that an aging population can have upon the wider population and economy.

The top employment industry is 'wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles'. As one of Moray's main towns, Buckie may provide employment opportunities in the local retail trade and the relatively short distance to Keith and Elgin may provide further opportunity for those able to commute. There appears to be a correlation elsewhere in Moray between higher rates of employment in the wholesale and retail trade and higher rates of part-time work. This might suggest less opportunity for full time work in the retail trade and may also help to explain the ratio of full-time/part-time in this ASG.

Second to the wholesale and retail trade is the human health and social work industry. As above, the Buckie ASG is home to a number of older people's services and the commutable distance to two of Moray's other main towns also provides access to Dr Gray's hospital in Elgin, the Turner Community Hospital in Keith and a number of registered old people's homes and sheltered housing provisions.

Interestingly, each of the ASG's five areas has a higher percentage of employment in the mining and quarrying industry than the Moray average. Both Portgordon and Buckie have three times this average, and Buckie has the highest percentage of persons employed in this sector in Moray. This particular sector includes the oil industry. Anecdotally, the decline of the fishing industry in Moray's coastal areas may have led to an increase in people seeking work 'off-shore'.

In line with the predominant industries, the top three occupations in the Buckie ASG are skilled trades; process, plant and machine operatives, and elementary occupations. In general there appear to be fewer opportunities for jobs at a professional/associate professional or managerial level. This would suggest relatively lower incomes. The comparatively higher rates of council rented accommodation in comparison to, for example mortgages or private renting, may go some way to reduce the impact of low income.

As with levels of car ownership, mode of transport to work is largely in line with the Moray average. There are a few exceptions: proportionately more people travel by car in Findochty, and bus is a more common method of travel in Portgordon. There are slightly elevated rates of travel by 'other' means, an option which includes travel by bike or motorbike.

Education

The overall adult population (16-64) of the Buckie area hold low levels of qualification. Each of the ASG's five areas has a higher percentage of adults with no qualifications and, with the exception of Cullen, there are proportionately fewer adults educated to degree level or above.

Recent levels of attainment performance are also below average across the board at S4 and in three of the ASG's five areas at S5 level. However, the evidence shows improved performance in Cullen and Portknockie at S5 where attainment of one and three higher level exams is above average in both areas. Attainment of five exams at this level is above average in Portknockie and also Findochty.

Choice of post-school destination seems to match levels attainment, for example, entry into Higher Education is roughly in line with the Moray average where students perform well at higher exam level. Further Education is a relatively common post-school destination across the ASG: it is above the Moray average in all five areas. It is encouraging that those whose levels of attainment might prohibit entry to Higher Education do continue their education. However, the percentage of 16-18 year olds in full time education is below the Moray average which suggests that a number of young people may be furthering their education on a part-time basis.

Rates of entry into the world of work straight from school are roughly the same as elsewhere in Moray. Findochty is the exception as it has the lowest percentage of school leavers in Moray who chose this option. Portgordon has proportionately more people entering negative destinations than the Moray 'norm' as well as the highest percentage of young people who are 'unemployed not seeking employment or training'.

The ASG has a relatively low level of educational attainment, of adult qualifications and also a low wage economy. This might suggest that the educational aspiration of and for young people may be influenced by the attainment of their parents and also by perceptions of the job market.

The Buckie ASG contains eight primary schools. As the town of Buckie has three primary schools in addition to the area's secondary school it is perhaps not surprising that over half of the students in the town walk to school. This option is less common in the four other areas: around quarter of pupils travel on foot, and a further third of pupils travel by bus. This illustrates a reliance on the availability of public transport to enable students to reach their place of study. The fact that walking and/or bus transport are feasible options might explain the significantly lower percentages of students from Cullen and Portknockie who travel by car. In addition, Portknockie has the highest percentage of students who study at home.

Health and social care

In general self-reported perceptions of health are in line with the Moray average. However Portgordon is a notable exception to this in that it has the highest percentages of people in Moray who say their health is bad/very bad. This town, along with Cullen, also has proportionately more people with one or more long term conditions. Further, Portgordon has the highest percentage in Moray of people who report being limited by a long term condition; Cullen is again a close second. Rather than any of the six specifically named long term conditions, 'other condition' was the category most commonly selected by Portgordon residents in the last Census – almost a quarter of the population.

Encouragingly, both Portgordon and Cullen have slightly higher percentages of people providing care in comparison with the Moray average. In fact, Portgordon has the highest percentage of individuals

in Moray providing 20-34 and 35-49 hours of care per week. As before, the ASG appears to be well provided for in relation to the provision of older people's services. Given the relatively poorer health of residents in Portgordon it is perhaps not surprising that this area has a higher rate of emergency admissions for 'all ages', and particularly for the 65+ age group, than the Moray average. The town of Buckie also has a higher rate of emergency admissions for each of these categories.

The top three conditions in the Buckie ASG are smoking, hypertension and obesity. While there is a slightly higher prevalence rate of smoking-related conditions here in comparison to the Moray 'norm', overall rates are roughly in line with the rest of Moray

Anti-social behaviour / crime

While levels of anti-social behaviour are generally low in comparison with Moray, Portgordon has the highest rate of neighbour disputes in Moray and the town of Buckie has a higher rate of vandalism than the Moray 'norm'. Complaints about dog fouling are also more common across the ASG area in comparison with the Moray average. Crime rates are below the Moray average in four of the ASG's five areas, the town of Buckie being the exception.

Access to services

The latest SIMD data ranks two of the ASG's five areas as deprived in relation to access to services. However, while drive time is above average in four of the six categories used by SIMD the maximum time is just over 10 minutes. Drive time to primary school is below average and the impact of the slightly longer journey on families to secondary school is reduced by the provision of bus transport.

As above, Cullen has the oldest demographic in the Buckie area which may result in increased need for GP services. The time taken by both public transport and car are below average for Cullen residents accessing their local GP. Both Cullen and Portgordon have relatively poorer health which again has implications for access to health services. Although drive time from Portgordon to the nearest GP is above average it is less than 10 minutes.