Wakefield Council, UK
Policy Alert: Corona – update 31st March

  
  **Benefits**
  - Thirteen per cent of gross household income came from state support (benefits), including the State Pension and tax credits. This is the lowest of any year since 2010. Eight per cent came from non-state pensions, including workplace and private pensions. Five per cent of gross household income came from other sources, including investments, rents received, grants and allowances.
  - Among the working-age population, the age group most likely to receive state support (with 54%) is where the head of the family is aged 35-44 years. This is mainly because of the high proportion receiving Child Benefit.
  - In the social rented sector, 60% of households were in receipt of an income-related benefit (though this is a reduction on the 2019 figure of 62%). This is still more than three times the average across all types of tenure.
  - A large proportion of such households (45%) received Housing Benefit. A minority (15%) received Universal Credit, more than double the seven per cent receiving the benefit in 2018 to 2019.
  
  **Housing**
  - The percentage of households owning their property outright has increased gradually over the past decade, and is now 36%, equivalent to those in rented accommodation.
  - For younger age groups, the decade has seen a shift away from home ownership with a mortgage, and towards private sector renting. Households headed by those aged 35-44 years have seen the largest increase of any age group, with 26% renting private accommodation in 2020, versus 17% a decade ago.
  - For households headed by an under 25 year-old, the figures were 69% in 2020 versus 63% in 2010; and a similar increase in private renting has occurred among those aged 25-34 years (increasing from 36% to 42% over the decade).
  - The increase in private renting at younger ages is matched in part by a smaller proportion who bought their property with a mortgage.
  - There has also been a notable decrease in social renting among younger adults.

  **Disability**
  - 14.1 million people reported a disability, an increase of 2.7 million since 2010, where disability was reported by 11.4 million people. The percentage of people who reported a disability has increased to 22%, up from 19% in 2010.
  - The main drivers of this change since 2010 were increases in the percentage of working-age adults (15% to 19%) and children (6% to 8% per cent) reporting a disability
  - For those of State Pension age, the percentage reporting a disability has been between 44% and 46% in every year of the past decade
  - For working-age adults, the percentage reporting a disability has not changed from 2018, having remained at 19%. The percentage of children reporting a disability also remained stable at 8% over that two-year period
  - 24% of females (7.8 million) reported a disability, an increase from 19% (6.1 million) in 2010.
  - Reporting a disability amongst males increased from 18% (5.3 million) in 2010 to 19% (6.3 million).
Over the last three years, mental health is the only category of impairment to have increased. This category has seen a four per cent increase (25% to 29%) since 2017 to 2018. This is equivalent to an increase of 700,000 people (3.4 million to 4.1 million over those three years).

This increase of four per cent, puts mental health as the third most prevalent impairment category, with 49% of disabled people saying that this applied to them. This figure has been broadly stable over the past three years.

Mobility impairments are again the most prevalent category, with 49% of disabled people saying that this applied to them. Learning impairment was the second most prevalent for children, with 35%. A mental health impairment was reported for 31% of disabled children, making it the third most prevalent impairment type reported by this age group.

Care

Seven per cent of UK people were informal carers in 2020. Females were more likely to be informal care providers, with 2.7 million versus 1.8 million males.

Those aged between 55 and 64 were the largest single group of informal care providers. Individuals in the 45 to 54 and 65 to 74-year old age groups were also more likely to be informal carers than other age groups.

In all age groups, up to the age of 74 years, the proportion of females providing informal care was greater than males. This trend reversed for all age groups over 75 years, where males were more likely to be informal carers.

In all age groups from 45-54 and above, females were more likely than males to receive informal care. This is most clearly visible in those aged 85 and over, where 32% of women were care recipients in comparison with 21% of men.

The main recipients of informal care were parents. Of all informal carers, 33% provided care to parents living outside their household, with a further six per cent providing informal care for parents living inside their household.

Of all informal carers, 44% provided care for someone living within their household and 58% provided care to someone living outside their household.

53% of informal carers were in employment with 36% working full-time.

Savings and investment

Half of all families had savings of more than £1,500, with a fifth having savings of more than £20,000. The level of saving increased with age, and nearly half of pensioner couples had savings exceeding £20,000.

Half of all families had either no savings, or less than £1,500 in savings.

One parent families were substantially more likely to have savings at this lower level than other types of family; 84% of those who were single parents, reported savings of either zero or less than £1,500.

Singles living alone (of working age) had lower levels of saving than average, with 70% of men and 69% of women having either zero or less than £1,500 saved.

Food Security

Most households were food secure, with high household food security (87%) or marginal household food security (6%).

A minority of households were food insecure, with low household food security (4%) or very low household food security (4%).

Households with gross incomes of less than £200 per week (7% of households) were the least likely to be food secure (74% high; 7% marginal).

Households with gross incomes of £1,000 or more per week (26% of households) were the most likely to be food secure (96% high; 3% marginal).

Indian households were the most likely to be food secure (89% high; 6% marginal).

While the proportion of food insecure White households (3% low; 4% very low) was small, the absolute number of these households was substantially larger than those of other ethnicities, due to population size.
- Households where the head was Black were most likely to be food insecure (11% low; 8% very low)
- Households with one adult and one or more children were more likely to experience food insecurity than both the overall rate nationally and for all households with children.
- This increased as the number of children increased: 11% of single parent households with one child had very low food security, compared to 19% of single parent households with three or more children.

- ONS: Which Groups Find it Hardest to Find a Job Following a Period Out of Work?
  https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/unemployment/articles/whichgroupsfindithardesttofindajobfollowingaperiodoutofwork/2021-03-30
  - Those who had spent more time out of work were less likely to find a job.
    - Between 2007 and 2020, 41.4% of people who had been out of work for up to 3 months returned to work within the next three months. This reduced to 28.5% of people who had been out of work for up to six months, and 23.3% of people who had been out of a job for six to nine months.
    - Only 7.1% of people who had been out of work for between 5 and 8 years returned to work within the next three months.
  - Disabled people and those with diagnosed health conditions were less likely to return to work
    - Between 2007 and 2020, 7.6% of disabled people who were out of work, but had previously had a job, returned to employment in the next three months. This is compared with 26.8% of out-of-work non-disabled people.
    - Being disabled was found to be one of the strongest negative associations to people’s chances of returning to work. Disabled people’s chances of finding a job were 7.4 percentage points lower on average than those of non-disabled people.
    - As with those out of work for more than a year, the positive effects of higher qualifications were less pronounced among disabled people.
  - People from ethnic minorities were less likely to return to work than those from a white ethnic background
    - Between 2007 and 2020, people from mixed, Asian, or Chinese and Other minority ethnic backgrounds have returned to work at the rate of 21.9%, 19.3% and 18%, respectively. In contrast people of white or black ethnicity have returned to work at slightly lower rates, 17.9% and 16.9% respectively.
    - Some ethnic minority groups were even more disproportionately affected. For example, Asian women were less likely to return to work than Asian men. This is in contrast to women in the total population, who were on average slightly more likely to return to work than men.
  - Likelihood of returning to work decreases with age.
    - Between 2007 and 2020, just 31.5% of people aged 22 to 24 years returned to work within three months. This dropped to 20.2% of people in their thirties, and 12.2% of people in their fifties.
  - The local unemployment rate significantly affects a person’s chances of returning to work.
    - Those living in areas with lower unemployment rates saw better chances of finding a job than those in areas with higher unemployment rates. This was more pronounced among people who previously worked in the hospitality sector, and among people of Asian ethnicity

- Learning and work institute: Facing the Future - Employment Prospects for Young People After Coronavirus
  - In addition to being overrepresented in the sectors hit hardest by the pandemic, young people also tend to be overrepresented in the sectors that are forecast to see a slower recovery and lower
employment in the long term, and underrepresented in occupations which are likely to see the strongest job growth. This means that young people will increasingly bear the brunt of the unemployment crisis.

- The economic cost of higher youth unemployment in terms of lost national output is forecast to be £5.9bn in 2021, peaking at £6.9bn in 2022 and falling to £2.1bn in 2025;
- The fiscal cost of higher youth unemployment in the form of lower tax revenue and higher benefit spending is forecast to be £2.5bn in 2021, peaking at £2.9bn in 2022 and falling to £0.9bn in 2025;
- The long-running scarring cost for young people entering the labour market in 2021 alone is forecast to be £14.4bn over the next 7 years. This relates to the impact on employment and earnings they are likely to suffer due to entering the labour market at a time of higher unemployment.

The pandemic has and will continue to exacerbate pre-existing inequalities. The decline in working hours for young people with no qualifications (34%) has been five times higher than the decline for those with a degree level qualification (7%). Alongside this, the decline in working hours among Black young people (49%) was three times larger than the decline for White young people (16%).

The fact that demand for employees with lower level qualifications is projected to fall in the short, medium and long-term also raises concerns about the employment prospects of young people who lack higher level qualifications. It highlights the importance of coherent and high-quality education options, particularly at levels 2 and 3, which provide pathways to higher level skills and jobs.

**British Social Attitudes Survey: Post Brexit Public Policy (migration and business regulation)**

[https://bmisa.natcen.ac.uk/media/39375/bsa37_post-brexit-public-policy.pdf](https://bmisa.natcen.ac.uk/media/39375/bsa37_post-brexit-public-policy.pdf)

- **Migration:** There is widespread support for ending freedom of movement and not discriminating between migrants on the basis of their country of origin. This mood is to be found among many Remain voters as well as being common among Leave supporters.
  - 62% of people are currently in favour of requiring potential migrants from the EU to apply to do so.
  - 65% are in favour of requiring people from Britain who want to live and work in an EU country to apply to do so in the same way as anybody else from outside the EU has to do.
  - People are more likely to think that it should be relatively easy for someone from Australia (35%) to migrate to the UK than they are someone from France (28%) or Poland (23%).
  - 80% think doctors who wish to come to the UK should be given relative priority, only 18% say the same about bankers.
  - In contrast, as many as 60% believe that care workers should have priority.
  - 55% believe that potential migrants should not have to earn more than £15,000 to be eligible for admission to the UK. Just over one in three respondents consistently oppose any minimum income requirement at all, while another fifth or so say the minimum should be no more than £15,000 a year. Only around 15% believe that the minimum income should be £30,000 or higher.
- **Business Regulation:** There is no consistent evidence of a wish to roll back EU regulations on food safety or consumer standards..
  - 80% think British airlines should continue to follow EU rules on flight compensation, while 69% want to keep the EU rules that limit the cost of calls made abroad.
  - 88% say that the UK should not allow hormone treated beef, 75% say the same about chlorinated chicken, 59% wish to maintain the ban on GM crops.
  - Around two-thirds of voters are broadly in favour of the principle of farm subsidies while only around one in three are opposed
  - 66% are in favour of a ban on the sale of ‘light bulbs that come on more quickly but use more electricity’.
  - However, 53% are opposed to a ban on the sale of powerful vacuum cleaners.