

Regional Equality and Diversity Partnership (REDP)

Report on the

Impact of the Government Cuts on Voluntary
and Community sector in the East Midlands
Region



2012

Report on the Impact of Government Cuts in the East Midlands

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1. INTRODUCTION

The credit crunch, double dip recession, spending reviews, deficit reduction plans, salary freezes, job losses, shrinking economy, tax rises, bankruptcies, benefit reductions, increase in university fees, rising food and fuel prices are just some of the words and phrases that have been consistently used to describe the ongoing distressing economic situation that has faced Britain since the bubble burst in 2008.

When the coalition government came into power in 2010 they made it their priority to sort out (as they put it) the financial 'problems' created by the previous government and went about introducing measures towards stabilising the economy and getting Britain out of the recession and back on its feet again. The government conducted the Comprehensive Spending Review and produced the Deficit Reduction Plan - the key drivers in tackling the huge overspend that's facing Britain today. The Comprehensive Spending Review announced cuts in public spending of 28% for the period 2011/12 to 2014/15, with 2011/12 alone bearing a 12% reduction rather than the cuts being evenly spread over the 4 years.

In terms of poverty and deprivation, Chancellor of the Exchequer George Osborne claimed in his speech that:

"those on the highest incomes will contribute more towards this entire fiscal consolidation, not just in cash terms, but also as a proportion of their income and consumption of public services combined".¹

The Reed Study as reported in The Observer (27/06/2010):

"...the poorest 10% of households, earning under £14,200, will see a cut equivalent to more than one fifth of their income. By contrast the richest, those earning over £49,700, will suffer a cut of just 3.6%. The second poorest group in the country – households earning £14,200 to £16,900 – face cuts of 13.6%, with about 7% for those in the middle of the spectrum..."

The Government also introduced the concept of Big Society the main element of which has been to empower citizens to take a more active role in their communities. They continued to introduce provisions in relation to the Equality Act 2010, although somewhat hesitantly, delaying some provisions that were initially proposed such as introducing a public sector duty regarding socio-economic inequalities, gender pay gap information and combined discrimination: dual characteristics.

How effective has all this been so far? Is the comprehensive review and deficit reduction plan working? Is what George Osborne said happening in reality or are we beginning to see more of what leading economists had predicted. How is the 'Big Society' idea empowering local people when most are feeling deflated and powerless by the situation? The important question here is what does all this mean to ordinary people? The ones who rely on public services, especially on voluntary organisations, that have for a long time been supported by the local government bodies to fulfil some of the responsibilities to help local people address and overcome disadvantage. What about the employees of these organisations, many of whom have lost their jobs and those that remain have are expected to do a lot more for less? Has the government itself developed measures to assess the equality impact of the proposals outlined in their comprehensive spending review and the deficit reduction plan and how are they encouraging local public bodies to assess the equality impact of these cuts on the diverse members of our society?

¹ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/oct/20/spending-review-economists-experts-respond>

This report has been produced by the Regional Equality and Diversity Partnership (REDP) and explores these issues further. The first main part of the report provides an overview of the government cuts nationally. It gives information on UK demographics, the concept of big society and highlights the main provisions of the Equality Act 2010. It then goes on to provide examples of national cuts and the impact these are having in the ordinary people. The second part of the report focuses closely on the East Midlands and aims to highlight the equality implications of these cuts so far on various voluntary and community sector organisations across the different geographical areas of the region which provide essential support services to a diverse range of groups and individuals.

2. AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE REPORT

2.1 Aim

The aim of this paper is to highlight the impact of the government cuts in the East Midlands region, particularly on Voluntary and Community Sector organisations and groups which work to support the various Protected Characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010.

2.1 Objectives

- To present an overview of the government cuts nationally and its commitment to and implications on the equality agenda;
- To provide an summary of national and regional demographic data;
- To provide an outline of spending cuts affecting East Midlands region and the impact of these cuts on different voluntary and community based groups within specific geographical areas of the region;
- Give recommendations on what the government/local authorities could be doing to support vulnerable groups, prevent discrimination/disadvantage and advance equality of opportunity for all.

3. THE ROLE OF REGIONAL EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP (REDP)

REDP is a partnership of voluntary and community sector organisations working across the East Midlands. REDP is made up of 25 organisations representing all protected characteristics, working to agreed terms of reference. REDP works to ensure that equality, diversity and human rights are embedded in decision-making processes followed regionally, nationally and locally and adopt a collective and collaborative approach to equality and diversity practice. REDP's work includes: -

- Regional involvement events with the Voluntary and Community Sector
- Conferences
- Equality updates and briefings
- Newsletters
- Training
- Equality surgeries
- Consultation and response to policy and legislation
- Research and analysis of regional and national developments and trends
- Representing and advocating for the sector at regional and national level

4. METHODOLOGY

Research information in this report has been derived from the collation and analysis of secondary data. Research on secondary data has provided information on:

- Overall Central Government cuts
- National/regional and local demographic data
- Cuts in the East Midlands region and examples of cuts in each county area, to include Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire, Rutland.
- Cuts affecting particular organisations

5. PART 1 – THE NATIONAL PICTURE

5.1 The comprehensive spending review (CSR) and the deficit reduction plan (DRP)

When the current Government took over power it stated that it's most urgent priority was is to tackle the UK's record deficit in order to restore confidence in the economy and support the recovery. The Treasury said: *"The government's priority is to deal with the deficit. Unless the deficit is tackled, there won't be the economic confidence to support job and wealth creation."*

The Government has prioritised its Spending Review decisions to support **growth**, **fairness** and public sector **reform** in its long term phased programme to reduce Britain's deficit as highlighted in The Spending Review 2010 document from the Treasury: -

Growth

The government felt that the economy had become unbalanced and too reliant on public spending and unsustainable debt and committed itself to promoting growth by tackling the deficit, rebalancing the economy and creating the right conditions to support a private sector-led recovery and less reliance on the public sector.

Fairness

The Spending Review sets out a new vision for a fairer Britain. It sets out a programme of reform that will ensure those who need it most continue to receive support, but with a greater focus on services that offer opportunities for social mobility. Tackling the deficit fairly means that all sections of society that are able to contribute, should do, with more support available to the poorest.

Reform

The Spending Review is underpinned by a radical programme of public service reform, changing the way services are delivered by redistributing power away from central government and enabling sustainable, long-term improvements in services. This programme is built on the Coalition principles of increasing freedom and sharing responsibility.

The government has phased its deficit reduction plan to stabilise the economy. The Comprehensive Spending Review announced cuts in public spending of 28% for the

period 2011/12 to 2014/15. However, these cuts are front-loaded rather than spread evenly over four years, with 2011/12 alone bearing a 12% reduction. In summary, the cuts announced included:-

- 28% cut in the welfare budget.
- 27% cut in funding for local government over the next four years.
- Police funding to be cut by 4% a year, with an estimated loss of 18,000 police jobs.
- Cabinet Office budget cut by £55m.
- Treasury Office budget cut by 33%.
- 23% cut in the Home Office and Justice Department budget.
- 25% cut in further education budget and a rise in fees.
- Social Care budget to be protected in the light of Council Tax freezes.
- State pension age to reach 66 in 2020.
- New universal tax credit system will replace benefits and tax credits.
- NHS spending is set to grow by 1.3% over 4 years, but is considered insufficient to meet the rising demand and drug cost.
- Department of culture, media and sport will cut admin costs by 41%.
- Sure Start services protected.
- 15 hours free early education for disadvantaged two year olds.
- Disabled Facilities Grants will be protected.
- Cuts to housing benefits.
- 40% cut in higher education – the teaching grant will be replaced by higher fees of up to £9,000 per student.
- Bus service subsidies to be cut by 20%.
- School spending will grow by less than 1% over four years, including the £2.5bn pupil premium (cuts to school transport and school buildings, school support staff will be particularly vulnerable).²

5.2 The Big Society

The Big Society is the idea of the 2010 Conservative Party general election manifesto and forms part of the legislative programme of the Conservative – Liberal Democrat Coalition Agreement. As stated by the government during the Building the Big Society launch in May 2010 the aim is *“to create a climate that empowers local people and communities, building a big society that will ‘take power away from politicians and give it to people’.”*

The Big Society's stated priorities are:

- Give communities more powers
- Encourage people to take an active role in their communities
- Transfer power from central to local government
- Support co-ops, mutual's, charities and social enterprises
- Publish government data³

The policy was launched in the 2010 Conservative manifesto, laid out in 'Building the Big society', and has recently launched a Big Society Capital Group which aims to support social investment sector to support local communities by lending money to charities and

² Comprehensive Spending Review 2010, HM Treasury, October 2010 http://cdn.hm-treasury.gov.uk/sr2010_completetereport.pdf

³ Building the Big Society 2010 launch, May 2010

social enterprises. It is funded with money from unclaimed assets in dormant bank accounts, believed to be worth around £400million over the next four years, and with £200million from four major high-street banks. Further details about the Big Society programmes can be found at www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/big-society.

5.3 The Equality Act 2010

The Act replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single act to make the law simpler and to remove inconsistencies. This makes the law easier for people to understand and comply with. The Act also strengthened protection in some situations.

The Act covers nine protected characteristics. Every person has one or more of the protected characteristics, so the act protects everyone against unfair treatment. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Like previous equality legislation, the Equality Act sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone, such as direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failing to make a reasonable adjustment for a disabled person.

The Act prohibits unfair treatment in the workplace, when providing goods, facilities and services, when exercising public functions, in the disposal and management of premises, in education and by associations (such as private clubs).

A further provision that came into force in April 2011 was the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Public Sector Equality Duty

The Public Sector Equality Duty, of the Equality Act 2010, requires public bodies to consider all individuals when carrying out their day to day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

The Equality Duty supports good decision making – it encourages public bodies to understand how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people's needs. By understanding the effect of their activities on different people, and how inclusive public services can support and open up people's opportunities, public bodies can be more efficient and effective. The Equality Duty therefore helps public bodies to deliver the Government's overall objectives for public services.

The Equality Duty applies across Great Britain to the public bodies listed in Schedule 19 to the Act, and to any other organisation when it is carrying out a public function.

As with equality legislation relating to disability, gender and race, that came before the Equality Act, the government has created a set of specific duties to enable organisations to comply with the General Duty:-

Specific Duties

The Specific Duties help public bodies to implement the Equality Duty. They do this by requiring public bodies to be transparent about how they are responding to the Equality Duty – requiring them to publish relevant, proportionate information showing compliance

with the Equality Duty, and to set equality objectives. The Government believes that public bodies should be accountable to their service users. Publishing information about decision-making and the equality data which underpins those decisions will open public bodies up to informed public scrutiny. It will give the public the information they need to challenge public bodies and hold them to account for their performance on equality. Moreover, knowing that such information will be published will help to focus the minds of decision-makers on giving proper consideration to equality issues.

Although many of the provisions of the Equality Act have been introduced, there are certain provisions that the government has decided not to take forward currently and ministers are still making decisions on these for example

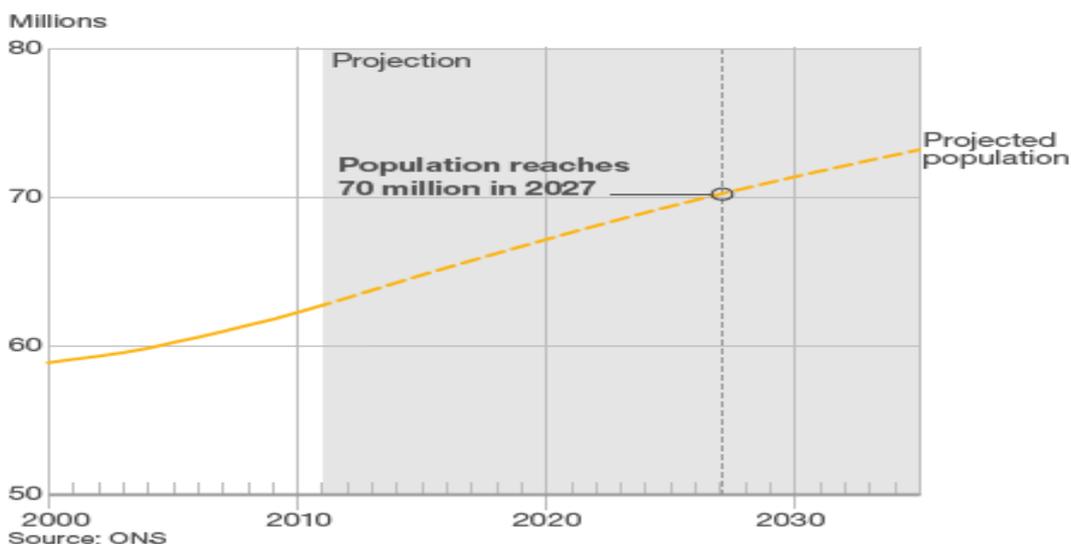
- Public sector duty regarding socio-economic inequalities;
- Gender pay gap information;
- Combined discrimination: dual characteristics.

Britain has come a long way over the last 40 years with regards to anti-discrimination legislation. The last few years has probably seen the main changes taking place especially in relation to putting the onus on organisations to develop mechanisms to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations. These cuts may be inevitable, but to ensure that the government fulfils its obligations to fairness as stated in their CSR documentation, it is essential for them to emphasise the importance of measuring the equality impact of the deficit reduction process. This will help central and local government bodies measure the impact of these cuts on the different protected characteristics and enable them to firstly, consider whether there is a need for such action and secondly, think of alternative options to support vulnerable groups and individuals. It is important therefore, for both central and local government bodies, to link the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Duties in line with all CSR proposals.

5.4 Demographics (information from the Office for National Statistics – ONS)

Data from the Office for National Statistics show the current population of the UK to be around 62.3m, an increase by 3.1 million people between 2001 and 2010, is gradually rising and is on course to reach 70 million over the next 16 years.

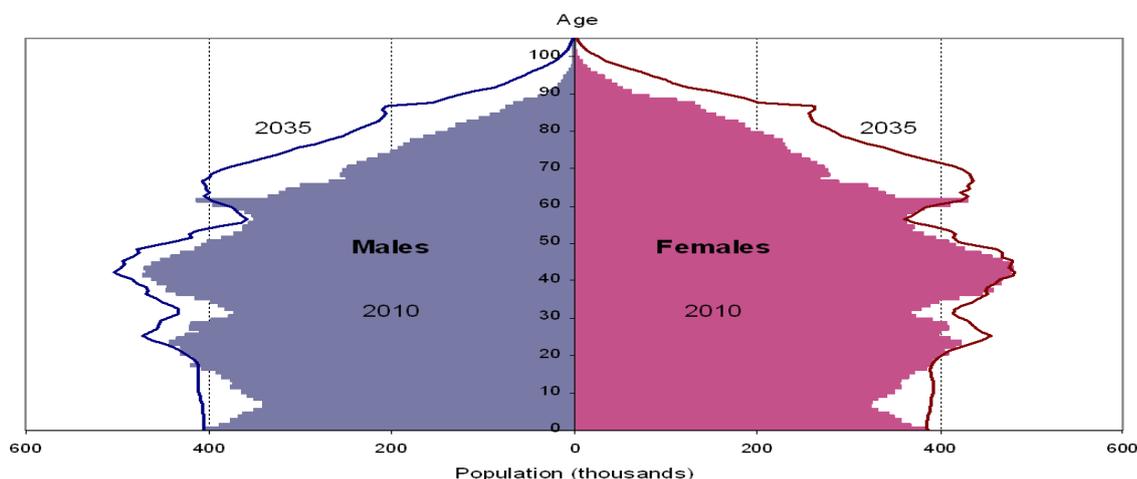
UK projected population



Gender differences:

Although boys outnumber girls from birth to late teens, overall there are more women than men in the UK and they live longer, despite the fact that women spend more years in poor health than men.

Estimated and projected age structure of the United Kingdom population, mid-2010 and mid-2035



The ONS state that the rising population is mainly due to 'Natural change' – the difference between the numbers of births and deaths – rising fertility among UK-born women and more inward migration of women of childbearing age is a factor contributing to births outstripping deaths.

Age:

The population is also aging. The number aged over 85 is expected to more than double over 25 years from 1.4 million in 2010 to 1.9 million by 2020 and 3.5 million by 2035. Those people aged 90 and above are projected to more than triple by 2035, and the number aged at least 95 are projected to more than quadruple. The number of centenarians is set to rise from 13,000 in 2010 to 110,000 in 2035, an increase of more than eight-fold.⁴

Ethnicity:

According to the 2001 census racial minority groups made up nearly 8% of the total population. A report published in July 2010 by researchers from the University of Leeds predicts that this figure will rise to approx 20% by 2051 when ethnic minorities will make up one-fifth of the population. The study also projects that the mixed ethnic population is expected to treble in size and indicates that the UK will become far less segregated as ethnic groups disperse throughout the country.⁵

Sexual orientation:

Almost three-quarters of a million UK adults say they are gay, lesbian or bisexual - equivalent to 1.5% of the population.

⁴ ONS statistical bulletin June 2011: Annual Mid-year population estimates, 2010

⁵ School of Geography, University of Leeds, July 2010, Ethnic Population Projections for the UK and Local Areas, 2001-2051

Information taken from the ONS integrated Household Survey April 2010 to March 2011 indicates that:

- 94 per cent of adults identified themselves as Heterosexual/Straight
- 1 per cent of the surveyed population, approximately 490,000 adults, identified themselves as Gay or Lesbian
- 0.5 per cent of the surveyed population, approximately 239,000 adults, identified themselves as Bisexual
- 0.4 per cent as 'Other'
- 3.6 per cent of adults stated they 'Don't know' or refused the question
- 0.7 per cent of respondents provided 'No response' to the question
- London had the highest percentage of those polled who identified as gay, Lesbian or bisexual and Northern Ireland lowest.⁶

Religion/belief:

2001 census showed the results from the question on religion to indicate that Christians were largest group followed by Muslims, then Hindus.

However, a parliamentary research paper (12/05) compares the size of Britain's religious populations in the fourth quarters of 2004 and 2010. Between these periods, the estimated number of Christians fell by 3.4 million, from 44.8 million to 41.4 million, which is equivalent to around 570,000 fewer people each year.

At the same time, the number of people with no religion increased by 4.4 million, from 9.0 million to 13.4 million. This represents growth of 49% over the six-year period, equivalent to around 730,000 more people each year.

During the same period, the Muslim population grew by an estimated 690,000, from around 1.9 million to around 2.6 million, which represents growth over the period of 43%. Other categories of religious affiliation that saw high growth rates were Hindus (43%), Buddhists (74%) and the category for any other religion (57%), although each of these was starting from a lower base than Muslims and people with no religion.⁷

Marriage and Civil Partnership/Pregnancy and Maternity

Currently there is very little relevant data on marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment so any reference to these areas in this report will be based on very little evidential data.

Disability:

According to data derived from the Office for Disability Issues HMS government:-

- There are over ten million people with a limiting long term illness, impairment or disability in Great Britain
- The most commonly-reported impairments are those that affect mobility, lifting or carrying
- The prevalence of disability rises with age. Around one in 20 children are disabled, compared to around one in seven working age adults (Working Age refers to men aged 16-64 and women aged 16-59); and almost one in two people over state-pension age (State Pension Age refers to men aged 65 and over and women aged 60 and over) in Great Britain.

⁶ ONS integrated Household Survey April 2010 to March 2011: Experimental Statistics, September 2011

⁷ www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN06189.pdf

- A substantially higher proportion of individuals who live in families with disabled members live in poverty, compared to individuals who live in families where no one is disabled
- The employment-rate gap between disabled and non-disabled people has decreased from around 36 per cent in 2002 to around 30 per cent in 2009
- However, disabled people remain far less likely to be in employment. In 2011, the employment rate of disabled people was 48.8 per cent, compared with 77.5 per cent of non-disabled people
- Disabled people are significantly more likely to experience unfair treatment at work than non-disabled people. In 2008, 19 per cent of disabled people experienced unfair treatment at work compared to 13 per cent of non-disabled people
- Around a third of disabled people experience difficulties related to their impairment in accessing public, commercial and leisure goods and services⁸

Data from the Office for Budgetary Responsibility (OBR) identify nationally that:

- 1,000,000 extra people on the dole due to Coalition Government cuts.
- 15 times the poorest households in Britain will be hit more than the richest by government cuts, according to TUC research.
- £25 billion - amount the public purse loses through tax avoidance by wealthy individuals and multinational companies.
- 53,150 planned NHS job cuts, according to research by www.falseeconomy.org.uk.
- £2,700 annual amount lost in tax credit cuts by a minimum wage couple with two kids after the cuts.
- £2,226 annual amount lost by a typical pensioner couple due to the cuts.
- 28,000 police jobs to be lost throughout England and Wales in the next four years, according to the Association of Chief Police Officers
- 7,000 fire and rescue service jobs under threat in the next four years, according to the Fire Brigade Union, after 1,700 jobs lost in the last year.
- 170,582 council jobs under threat, according to GMB figures.
- 468,000 predicted private sector job losses as a result of spending cuts, according to Price Waterhouse Coopers.
- £20 billion - is the amount a fairer tax on UK banks would raise to protect the poorest from the worst of the cuts.
- 213% UK Government Debt as a proportion of GDP in 1948, when the NHS was created by a Labour government.
- 61.3% UK Government Debt as a proportion of GDP in 2011 as the Government slashes NHS jobs.⁹

Employment rates: According to the latest figures released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS): -

- Unemployment rose by 118,000 in the three months to November 2011, bringing the total figure to 2.685 million,
- In the three months to November, 18,000 people gained work, but this was greatly outweighed by the 118,000 who lost their jobs over the same period.
- The total figure of 2.685 million is the highest jobless total since 1994. When broken down by gender this means a rounded male unemployment figure of 1.56 million - the highest since 1995 - and a female rounded unemployment figure of 1.13 million, the highest since 1987.

⁸ Office for Disability Issues HMS Government; Dec 2011, disability Statistics and research

⁹ http://fullfact.org/factchecks/unemployment_benefits_claimants_OBR_Budget_forecasts-2616

- The outlook for youth unemployment continues to be bleak, with a further drop in employment among those aged between 16 and 24. The number of unemployed young people rose by 22,000 to 1.04 million, 22.3% of that age group.¹⁰

As stated in a press release on the website Union-News.co.uk “The TUC is concerned that the ongoing cuts in public sector employment will make it even harder for those out of work to get back into the labour market, raising the prospect that long-term unemployment will become the grim reality for many thousands more people.”¹¹

Homelessness

Official figures show numbers of homeless people and rough sleepers have increased in recent months. There was a 25% average cut in funding for homeless charities in 2011-12 (a quarter of whom say they can now support less homeless people as a result); funding for supported housing has been slashed dramatically.

Some of the reasons why young people presented as homelessness over the past 12 months are pretty much unchanged from the previous years: domestic violence or abuse; poor housing conditions; and eviction. However the greatest factor more recently has been the economic downturn and growing household financial pressures: relationship breakdown with family and friends; drug and alcohol problems; mental illness and a link between rising youth unemployment and youth homelessness.

The charity Homeless Link published a survey (December 2011) of charities and local authorities in England, and the main findings were:-

- Nearly half of homelessness services (44%) and councils (48%) have seen an increase in young people seeking help because they are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless
- The number one cause for homelessness among this age group is relationship breakdowns with family and friends, and cases of this have increased
- The majority (62%) of young homeless clients seen by charities were not in education, employment or training, [and] 46% were in financial difficulties
- A quarter of young clients (26%) seen by services had experience of sleeping rough.

The above is one thing but the other is how charities and local authorities are coping with the demand. The survey found:

- 48% of homeless agencies reported turning away young single homeless people because their resources were fully stretched;
- Nearly one in five local authorities (17%) feel they are not meeting their legal requirements for homeless young people aged 16-17;
- Half of local authorities report using B&Bs [bed and breakfasts] as emergency accommodation for young people, despite Government guidelines which advise against their use;
- More than 70% of local authorities said they had no shared accommodation private sector provision for young people, despite this being the only option for young people on housing benefit; and

¹⁰ ONS: Labour market statistics: February 2012; Statistical Bulletin

¹¹ January 1012, <http://union-news.co.uk/2012/01/job-cuts-will-have-devastating-impact-in-regions-says-tuc-research>

- 53% of homeless agencies have experienced closures or threats of closure to youth services in their area.¹²

Education

Research conducted by the Guardian suggests that shrinking budgets are significantly reducing the range and quality of education on offer to all pupils across England, from toddlers to teenagers and highlights some of the facts relating to the cuts on education:

- In the 2010 spending review, the government announced a freeze, in cash terms, of funding per pupil.
- Schools have been asked to find £1bn in savings between 2010-11 and 2014-15 from back-office functions and procurement
- But schools also receive £488 per pupil on free school meals this year – the pupil premium. This will rise to £600 in April.
- The government has pledged that no school will see more than a 1.5% per pupil funding reduction in 2012-13 budgets, compared to 2011-12. (This is before the pupil premium is added.)
- The Institute for Fiscal Studies published a report in October that found spending on education between now and 2014-15 will fall by 13% - the fastest fall in any four-year period since the 1950s.
- The same report found that almost three-quarters of primary schools in England and about 90% of secondary schools will see a real-terms cut over the next year. Just 5% of primary schools and 2% of secondary schools will see a real-terms increase.
- Between 2011 and 2015, pupil numbers in state nurseries and primary schools are projected to increase by 9%. Pupil numbers in secondary schools will continue to decline until 2016.

(Shepard J, Monday 26 December 2011 Careers service and literacy hit by schools funding cuts, Guardian article)

Social Care

A crisis in social care funding since the coalition government came to power has left many elderly people in greater hardship, struggling with higher charges and less specialist support. Government figures show that councils' annual budgets for help for the over-65s have fallen by £1.3bn since 2010, with cuts hitting nursing homes and support for the most vulnerable.

Black and minority ethnic service users and carers are experiencing one of the largest increases in health inequalities and largest reductions in social mobility since the Second World War, coupled with the biggest cuts in public expenditure by a government in a lifetime.

Many community organisations are being closed at short notice, along with frontline services for communities in need, such as lunch clubs, respite care, day centres and advocacy services.

(Devabhai N, Monday 5 March 2012, Social care cuts are hitting black and minority ethnic communities hardest, Guardian article)

¹² Butler, P. guardian.co.uk, Monday 5 December 2011

5.5 Examples of National Voluntary Sector Cuts

Information for this section has been derived from <http://voluntarysectorcuts.org.uk> website

Age: young people

Example 1: The Connexions careers and advice centre in Lewisham, south-east London is among the many organisations affected by the cuts. In one of the country's most deprived neighbourhoods, this organisation had all its funding cut, triggering the loss of 35 jobs. As a result, teenagers who have not thrived at school and face unemployment will no longer get specialist help.

Disability

Example 2: 600 children with severe learning disabilities, many of them unable to speak, will no longer benefit from music therapy when the Northern Ireland Music Therapy Trust loses its budget. These children have learned to express themselves with the help of percussion instruments, pianos and guitars; the decision will have a "major impact on this already vulnerable and disadvantaged group of people," the charity's director says.

Sex: Women

Example 3: Forty years ago Refuge opened the world's first 'safe house' for abused women and children in Chiswick, west London. Since then it has grown to become the country's largest provider of domestic violence services. On any given day its services supports more than 1,600 women and children. Refuge, and other women's charities in the UK, are vibrant, innovative and resilient. But they are being stretched to breaking point. Refuge has shouldered cuts to 50% of its contracts. On an average day last year 230 women were turned away from Refuge because there was simply not enough space for them.

The impact of these cuts will be devastating. Without services such as Refuge, more women and children will be trapped in violent relationships. Refuge – along with other women's charities – are facing tough times. The gradual removal of statutory funding has made Refuge even more reliant on voluntary income, but fundraising is an uphill battle. Women and children experiencing domestic violence today are being left to deal with fear and abuse on their own something that was happening years ago. Cuts in these important services seems to be taking society backwards rather than forwards, and dismantling the good work that has been done for many years.

Part 1 of the report gave an overview of the national picture with regards to the changing demographics, provided a summary of the government cuts and highlighted examples of impact that this is having on specific community organisations and groups representing particular protected characteristics. Part 2 looks closer at the East Midlands region and provides further examples of different voluntary and community organisations that have been affected by the cuts within each geographical area.

6. PART 2 – THE EAST MIDLANDS REGIONAL PICTURE

6.1 Demographics

Although the effect of the cuts has been nationwide, REDP has a regional remit and for the purpose of this report, in part 2, the focus is on the East Midlands region.



The East Midlands is one of the nine English regions, comprising of the counties of Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland.

There are approximately 400 third sector support (infrastructure) organisations within the East Midlands operating at both local and regional level. These organisations are diverse in their nature and objectives and collectively support a wider network of approximately 35,000 front line organisations which in turn reflect the needs and diversity of the communities across the region (Wikipedia)

Useful background statistics (information derived from One East Midlands)

- The region has a total population of 4.3 million, expected to rise to 4.8 million by 2028 - Between 1994 and 2004 growing significantly faster than the national average, including 8.8% increase in pensionable age group - the second largest of all regions behind East of England.
- The region is the third most rural of the English regions, with 29.5% of the population living in rural settlements. – ranging the Peak District National Park to former coalfields in the North and the Lincolnshire coastline.
- The non-UK born population of the region is 6.2%, including a growing number of economic migrants, primarily from the EU.
- The racial minority population of the region is 9% making it the third most ethnically diverse in England.
- East Midland's residents have slightly poorer health than the national average – they are more likely to suffer circulatory diseases, accidents, obesity or suicide than the national average but have lower than average mortality from cancer.
- Employment in the region consistently remains higher than the national average, despite the recession - linked to the presence of multiple economic centres (e.g. Derby, Nottingham and Leicester) supporting a more stable economy than areas with a single economic centre.
- There are inequalities in health in the East Midlands which are closely associated to deprivation for example the health of people in Harborough, Rushcliffe and south Northamptonshire is generally better than the England average and the east Midlands average, whilst the health of the people in Mansfield, Nottingham and Derby is generally worse (Department of Health East Midlands Health Profile 2010)¹³

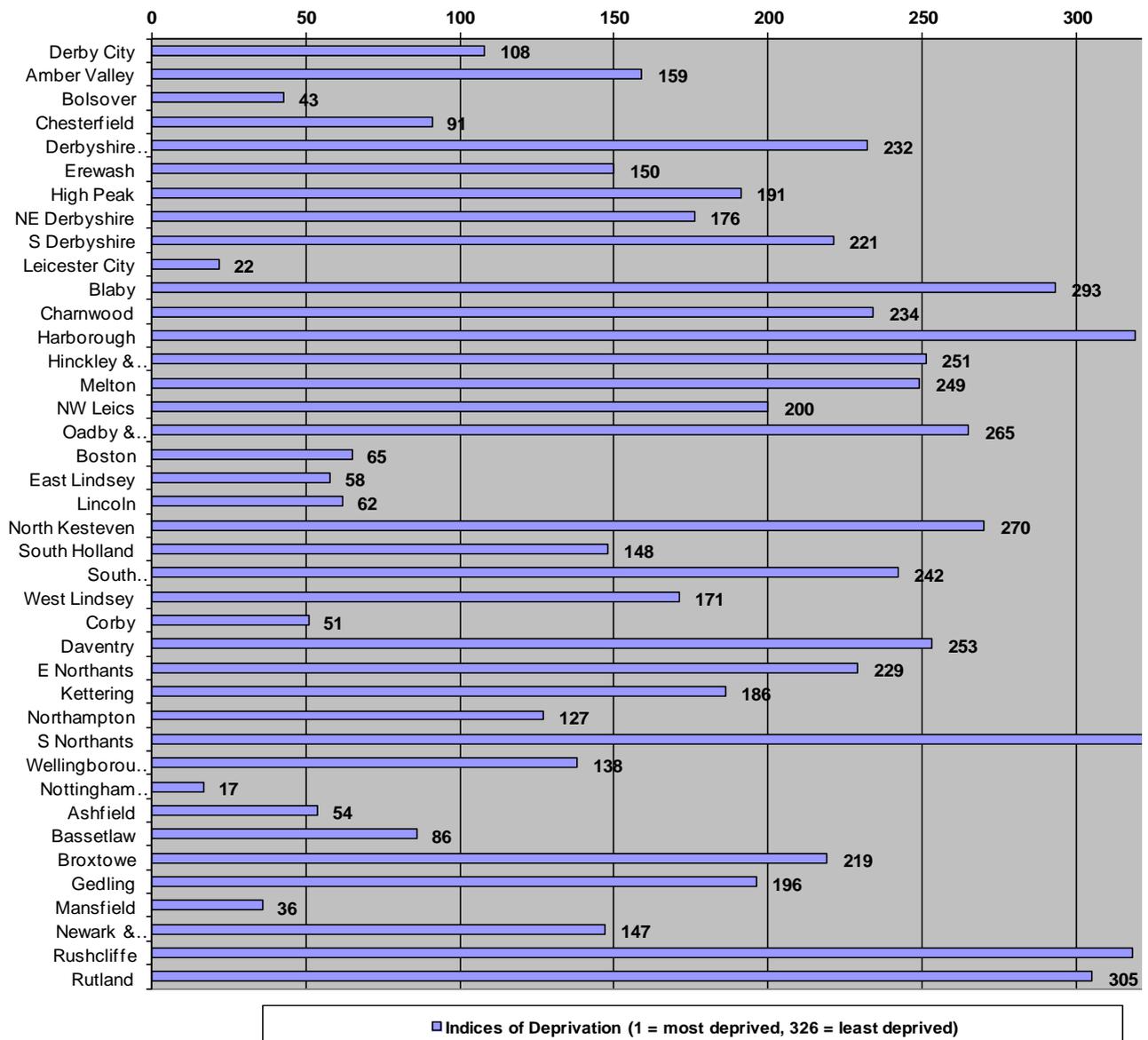
¹³ http://www.oneeastmidlands.org.uk/viewpage.php?page_id=67

6.2 Deprivation in the East Midlands

Patterns of deprivation across England are complex, with the most and least deprived areas spread throughout all nine regions of England, however the number and concentration of these varies in each. Overall, according to the 2010 Indices of Deprivation, the East Midlands is the fourth most deprived region, behind Yorkshire and Humber and ahead of the West Midlands, containing 7% of the 20% most deprived areas in the country.

Chart 1 on page 17 shows the English Indices of Deprivation, 2010. Please note that the **shorter** the bar, the **more deprived** an area is.

Chart 1 – The English Indices of Deprivation, 2010
Source: Department of Communities and Local Government



The average scores in the East Midlands from the English Indices of Deprivation 2010 overall and for each individual domain, are outlined below, alongside the most and least deprived local authorities.

	East Midlands average	Most deprived local authority	Least deprived local authority
Overall deprivation	18.8	City of Nottingham	South Northamptonshire
Income	0.12	City of Leicester	South Northamptonshire
Employment	0.09	Mansfield	South Northamptonshire
Health deprivation & disability	-0.10	City of Nottingham	South Northamptonshire
Health deprivation & disability	-0.10	City of Nottingham	South Northamptonshire
Education, skills & training	-23.01	Mansfield	Rushcliffe
Barriers to housing & services	-17.78	Derbyshire Dales	Erewash
Crime & disorder	-0.04	City of Nottingham	North Kesteven
Living environment	-14.28	Harborough	City of Derby

Taking the above into account it is inevitable that overall some areas of the region are going to be far more resilient than others in relation to the effects of the cuts.

The resilience calculation is based upon:

- Business: strength of the business base and the types of business in the area (are they the sort of businesses which can easily adapt to changing circumstances), insolvency rates, business start-ups
- Community: disposable income, benefits claimants,
- People: age profile, types of jobs held, skill levels, earnings
- Place: crime rates, house prices, green spaces

Each area is ranked in terms of resilience from 1 (highest reliance to cuts in government spending) to 324 (lowest resilience to cuts in government spending – most vulnerable). Therefore the **shorter** the bar on the chart 2 below, the **more resilient** that area will be to cuts in government spending. The longer the bar, the more that area will feel the implications of the cuts. For example: Harborough area will be far more resilient than Leicester City.

Chart 2 – Resilience Ranking

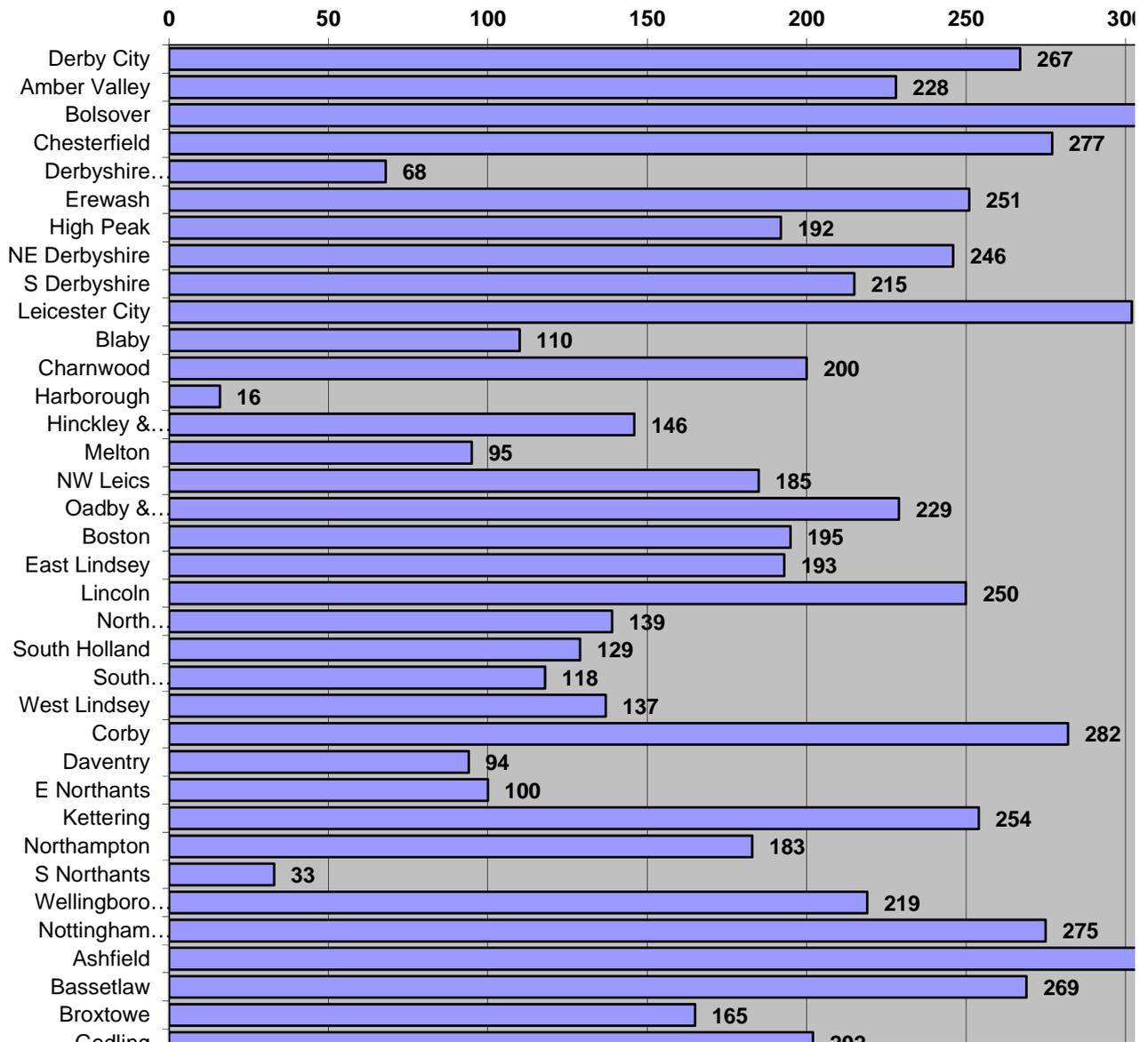


Chart 2 shows how vulnerable places are to cuts in public spending. It highlights which areas will fare better and which will find it hardest.

However, even within these resilient areas there may still be specific protected characteristic that suffer disadvantage. The impact on these individuals/groups may be similar or in some cases worse due to the isolation felt by many people living in these areas. Therefore examples of cuts given in this report will cover different parts of the East Midlands region. Moreover, the areas which seem least resistant are, from current studies showing the greater level of cuts to voluntary sector organisations which themselves were formed in part to assist those communities and individuals in greatest need and least able to influence decisions made which impact on their survival.

6.3 Impact of Cuts in the East Midlands Region

The financial year 2011/12 has come to an end so has another year of cuts to a number of grants, contracts and job opportunities within voluntary and community organisations. The actual impact of the cuts has now started to become real for many. The government's decision to cut spending by £95bn over five years has been the hot topic of conversation for some time now and has dominated the news causing debates amongst the left and the right political parties, unions and the general public. Almost every day the news highlights at least one story relating to some aspect of the current economic climate.

For some these cuts mean nothing and they can go about their usual business unaffected. They will continue to work, shop, eat and drink, go on holidays, have the required health care/treatment and their children will receive the best education. For the majority however, those working mainly in the low paid local government, voluntary and community sector organisations, these cuts have started or will start to have a real impact on their lives. These simple, and for many, everyday things will need a lot more thought and consideration. Women, parents, carers, disabled people, teenagers, certain racial minority groups and elderly people and those who rely mainly on the state are likely to be the most affected.

The smaller voluntary sector organisations are mainly staffed by employees who are not very well paid, but have a huge passion and commitment to what they do. The sector which has always been good at working in line with the concept of 'big society', and see this as nothing new, is often misused, mistreated, discriminated against and trodden on by the bigger players like central and local government bodies even private sector organisations. They are often left powerless to voice their opinions and suffer in silence enduring the consequences of what has been decided for them. The elimination of these services through pulling away their grants is beginning to have a drastic impact on not only the passionate and committed employees who worked for these organisations, but the wider community they serve – communities that have been reliant on them for many years.

Like national cuts, the cuts in the east midlands region affect a wide spectrum of projects in a multitude of ways from reductions in grants to loss of jobs and for some complete shut down for example:-

- Youth offending teams
- Probation staff
- Refugee advice centres
- Sure Start services
- Domestic violence centres
- HIV-prevention schemes
- Lollipop wardens
- Help for women with postnatal depression
- Work schemes for people who are registered blind
- Day centres for street drinkers
- Debt advice services
- Fire stations

But the services highlighted here represent only a small selection of what are just the first few stages of cuts. The full impact of the cuts in public spending will come gradually as changes to the welfare system and the NHS, and cuts to housing benefit and police services will be staggered over the next few years.

Throughout this period, the government's has given the same message that we should all learn to do more for less, but the consequences of this and the disappearance of the jobs and services outlined here suggests that many will simply end up with far less.

Further to this, according to a report '*Protecting independence: the voluntary sector 2012*' produced by the Independence Panel, voluntary sector organisations and charities that provide public services are increasingly reluctant to speak out against social injustice because they fear they will lose their funding.

The Independence Panel a commission set up to monitor the voluntary sector as it struggles with huge cuts in public funding, said service provider charities that traditionally have also had an advocacy role are keeping publically quiet for fear of reprisals from local authority and central government funders. The report said. "*Some organisations that rely on state funding are fearful of challenging government or local authorities, in case this could lead to reprisals,*"

It appears that more and more voluntary sector organisations, originally there to advocate on behalf of others, usually very vocal, are now beginning to lose their confidence to speak out, unwilling and afraid to rattle the cages of the big players. Instead those who are able to continue working seem to be getting on as best as they can, within limited resources, to support vulnerable individuals and groups through an instilled compassion and commitment.

6.4 THE REALITY – EXAMPLES OF CUTS IN DIFFERENT GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS OF THE EAST MIDLANDS

This part of the report focuses on the different geographical areas of the Midlands region. It provides a summary of background data some of which links to particular protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 and then goes on to provide examples of voluntary and community organisations that have been affected by the cuts and the impact that this has had on these and other groups.

LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE

ONS Population Estimates by Ethnic Group 2002 – 2009 shows the population of Leicester to be 304,700 and Leicestershire 644,800 a total of 945,500 for the entire area.

Some facts about Leicester City:

- Leicester City has a racial minority population of nearly 40% (increase from 36% in the 2001 census)
- In the top ranking of the areas in the East Midlands least resilient to cuts in government spending
- Leicester City is the most densely populated area in the East Midlands
- Leicester City is the 23rd most deprived district in England (out of 354 districts)
- Leicester has the highest level of unemployment in the region at 6.7%
- Out of all the East Midlands areas, Leicester has the highest youngest population (0-15):19.4% (England 18.8%) and the lowest of pensionable age, 14.2% (England 19.1%)
- The working population accounts for 66.4% of the population

- Disabled people in Leicester: 18.8%, slightly higher than the average for England (17.9%)
- 44.7% of the population in Leicester are Christians – much lower than the English average (71.7%) 11% are Muslim, 14.7% Hindus, 4.2% Sikhs, 0.2% Buddhists and 0.2% Jews.

Some facts about the Leicestershire:

- Racial minority groups in the county areas account for approximately 12% (with Oadby and Wigston having the highest racial minority population of nearly 20%)
- Higher proportion of people over retirement age (with the exception of Charnwood) compared with England's average
- Younger people (0-15) virtually on par with England's average of 18.8%, with the exception of Charnwood, Hinckley, Bosworth, Oadby and Wigston where there are fewer younger people
- Less disabled people than the average for England (17.9%) except for NW Leicestershire (17.8%), Melton, Blaby and Harborough (14%)
- Employment rate for disabled people 37.1% (non-disabled people 81%)
- A higher proportion of Christians with lower numbers of Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus with the greatest proportion of non-Christians living in Oadby and Wigston where Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus account for 13% of the population.

Examples of Cuts in Leicester and Leicestershire

Note: Information relating to examples of cuts in Leicester and Leicestershire and other geographical areas described in this part of the report has been taken from the following websites: -

- **One East Midlands:** Works to ensure that the voluntary and community sector is actively engaged with key partners, from across the public, statutory, business and social enterprise sectors. The organisation is compiling a 'Big List' of cuts impacting on voluntary and community organisations in the East Midlands. <http://www.oneeastmidlands.org.uk>.
- **Voluntary Sector Cuts:** is a new collaborative project which maps intelligence about voluntary groups experiencing reductions in public sector funding. <http://voluntarysectorcuts.org.uk>

Example 1: Marlene Reid Centre Community Action (2011-12)

Funded by: Leicestershire County Council

Services: Benefits; Debt; Carers; Volunteering; Service Delivery; Older people; Local; Infrastructure; Advice

Funding: £121000

- DEBT & BENEFITS ADVICE - £21,000 - entire service, delivered by 1.5 equivalent posts to be decommissioned from April 2011. Last year their debt advice worker dealt with 149 debts and helped 262 clients with benefits. The service, including home visits outreaching to the most vulnerable clients is not being replaced and demand is increasing dramatically.
- CARERS SUPPORT - £32,159 - This entire service, delivered by two part time workers, is expected to be decommissioned from April 2011. A contact list of 400 unpaid carers will no longer have localised support & information, local forums & peer support. Personalisation is a key change in the market; people are living longer and there are increasing diagnosis of conditions, e.g. ASD, requiring care.
- COMMUNITY HUB (infrastructure) services. £68,000

Example 2: Leicestershire & Rutland Community Safer Sex Project (2011-12)

Funded by: Central Government; Teenage Pregnancy Strategy; Leicestershire County Council; NHS; Connexions.

Services: Advice on Health; Service Delivery; Youth Services; Training; Local; Education; Advice

Funding: £75000

After 10 years of working to reduce teenage pregnancy in Leicestershire and Rutland the LRCSSP is being cut severely. The 2 development worker posts have been cut from the end of March, leaving just the coordinator and the shape of the project is yet to be decided, but may end up with just a trainer post training what will be un-supported practitioners in the community. This project carries out 10000 safer sex interventions a year, with 2000 new service users across over 100 community based sites county-wide. 48 percent of users are male - an incredible achievement. It is possible that with no central coordination practice will reduce in quality and young people will drift away and consequently not access sexual health services at all. The rates of teenage pregnancy in the county have just started to show a sharp drop after 10 years hard work by the partnership. The LRCSSP constituted a third of the budget, so was a considerable contributor to this work. Major partners are also being cut (e.g. the county's youth service and Connexions), and the capacity to find new partners will just not be there. The project also runs an innovative texting service which has, in the past year, with new branding, proven increasingly popular and useful to young people needing help and support on relationships and sexual health issues. The future of this service is also now under threat. The project is trying to find alternative funding and ways of working but time is running out.

Example 3: Skillshare International (2011-12)

Funders: Central Government; Department for International Development local authority area Leicestershire

Loss of PPA (Strategic Grant), and end of funding agreements that they have held for some 40 years and major reduction of their programme. At least half the staff being made redundant.

Example 4: Lighthouse Learning (2011-12) – education and training

Funder: local government – Leicestershire

Funding: £293299

Work with NEET young people will be affected in two ways at the end of March. Contract with the local authority to deliver additional support to NEETs is not being extended beyond March and Voluntary funding also ends at the end March, so volunteering opportunities for those young people will also disappear.

NOTTINGHAM AND NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

The Mid Year Population estimates for 2009 published the ONS show the population for Nottinghamshire to be 776,600 and for Nottingham City to be 300,800 with a total estimate of just over 1m for the entire area. Nottingham in the top ranking of the areas in the East Midlands least resilient to cuts in government spending

Some facts about Nottinghamshire

- Comprises of Bassetlaw, Mansfield, Ashfield, Gedling, Newark & Sherwood, Broxtowe, Rushcliffe

- 12th most deprived district in England – especially former coalfield districts of Mansfield, Ashfield and Bassetlaw
- In Nottingham City 75.8% of population are White British. 8% Asian, 4.7% Black and 3.3% mixed race
- Employment rate: BME 62.5% (whites 77%)
- Educational attainment: every ethnic group lower in Notts., except Asian people who perform better
- In Nottingham City 57.7% are Christian, 4.6% Muslim and 1.2% Sikh 0.8% Hindu, 34.6% do not declare a religion
- Violent crimes accounts for 13.7 crimes per 1,000 of population (DoH Health Profile 2011) – England average 15.8/1,000
- Homeless: 1.21 homeless people per 1,000 households (DoH Health Profile 2011) – England average 1.86/1000
- Long-term unemployed: 4.9% 2010 (DoH Health Profile 2011) – England average 6.2%
- Next 10 years - 15.6% growth in numbers of pensioners (England 10.1%). Working age population to increase by 10.1% (England 7.7%)
- Disabled people make up 20.1% of population (England 18%)
- Mortality rates: higher than English average, esp. for cancer
- 69.3% of pop fall into the 20% most health deprived. In Mansfield this is 57.6%.

Example of Cuts in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire

Example 1: Meadows Advice Group (2012-13)

Funders: Local Government Nottinghamshire

40% cut in local authority funding to service providing debt and welfare rights advice to residents in the Meadows area of Nottingham. The service has lost 1 member of staff (debt advisor) and opening hours of centre have been cut from 5 full days a week to 5 half days. Receptionist post reduced from 37 hours a week to 16 hours p/w.

Example 2: Partnership Council (2011-12)

Have never experienced in year cuts before. Although a medium sized organisation, the amount of monies received for overheads is small and thus will not really feel any cuts made this year. However, it is next year that they are really concerned about. At the moment they have secured just under 9% of their funding for next year. Their Government sources of funding are all saying that either there will definitely be no money next year or unlikely to be.

Example 3: Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire £80,000

£40,000 lost to cover delivery of core activities and another

£40,000 lost for project work, leading to a great reduction in services for older people.

Example 4: Disability Nottinghamshire

based on 10/11 figures, 35%, equating to £13,300 The charity would no longer be able to continue operating as its running costs would not be covered. This would affect their clients, who have increased by 20% in the last 12 months, their carers, families, friends and other professionals who rely on their services, which include their general disability and advice centre that would have to close.

DERBY AND DERBYSHIRE

Some facts about Derbyshire

Derbyshire comprises: South Derbyshire, NE Derbyshire, Derbyshire Dales, Erewash, Amber Valley, Chesterfield, Bolsover, High Peak District. Derbyshire accounts for 17.3% of the East Midlands population. Bolsover is the 40th most deprived district in England. Within the East Midlands region, Bolsover has the third highest occurrence of health deprivation after Nottingham and Mansfield. Chesterfield is also an area of higher than average deprivation.

- In Derbyshire County, excluding Derby City, 94.8% of the population are White British
- Outside of Derby City there is a much higher proportion of Christians with all areas, particularly NE Derbyshire, having higher proportions than the national average
- Outside of Derby City, the county of Derbyshire has a higher proportion of retired people compared with England's average (with the exception of South Derbyshire). The number of younger people (0-15) is just slightly lower than England's average of 18.8%, with the exception of South Derbyshire where there is a higher proportion of younger people
- The proportion of disabled people in Derbyshire largely reflects the average for England at 17.9%. With the exception of Chesterfield at 23.1% and N E Derbyshire at 21.7%. Bolsover, at 25.8%, has the highest proportion of people with disabilities in the entire East Midlands
- Mortality rates for circulatory disease, cancer and respiratory disease are higher than the English average.

Some facts about Derby City

- Derby City accounts for 5.4 of the East Midlands population (238.00 people)
- There are more younger people (0-15) in Derby City 19.6% compared with England's average of 18.8%
- There are fewer people of retirement age: 18.3% compared with England's average of 19.1%
- The proportion of disabled people is estimated at 19.3% (England average 17.9%)
- Mortality rates for circulatory disease, cancer and respiratory disease are higher than the English average
- 81.4% of the population describe themselves as White British, 9% describe themselves as Asian, 2% black and 2% mixed race. Racial minority groups are said to be concentrated in wards to the South of the city
- There is a lower proportion (67.4%) of Christians compared with the English average (71.7%). Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus make up 8.3% of the population
- Less than 55% of children gain 5 GDSEs between A*-C. While the average for England was 64.5%
- Derby has lower employment rates (71.8%) than the average for the East Midlands (75.9%)
- Unemployment and youth unemployment is lower than other cities of the East Midlands.

Examples of cuts within Derby and Derbyshire

Example 1: Derbyshire Unemployed Workers' Centre's (2011-12)

Funder: local government /local authority - Derbyshire

Funding: £33000

Have received an annual grant from Derbyshire County Council for 20 years. This is worth £33,000. The council have informed them that they will no longer be awarding this grant from April onwards. This money is going to be given instead to CABx working in the more affluent south of the county – whilst the centre worked in the former coalfield areas of the north and east side of Derbyshire. As a result, 1 full time post will be made redundant, and two part timers on temporary contracts will not have these renewed. The centre currently have over 700 tribunals pending in their files (mostly ESA) and will only have 2 full time advisers to deal with these. Drop in sessions will have to be reduced leading to longer queues and waiting times.

Example 2: Derbyshire Autism Services Group (2011-12)

Funder: Local Government; Non Departmental Public Body

Services: Provide services to Children; Community; Grant; Contract; Adult Services; Volunteering; Disability; Advice

Funding: £62000

Have lost a City contract worth £31K, and come to the end of a funding grant on another worth £32k. Added to that the local authority for the county area has not determined funding levels for remaining work. The whole uncertainty is a nightmare. Services to Derby City families have had to cease completely. The cost in emotional terms as well as additional care costs once this happens will far outweigh the original funding that they received.

NORTHAMPTON AND NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Some facts about Northampton and Northamptonshire

Northamptonshire comprises: E Northants, Wellingborough, Kettering, Corby, Daventry, Northampton and S Northants. Northampton: population 205,000 (30% of county) 15.3% of E Midlands population. Fastest growing county in England (10.9%: last 10 yrs – EM: 6.3%, Eng: 4.6%). Population growth to 880,000 over 15 years mainly around Corby, Northampton, Wellingborough, Daventry and Kettering (20-25% increase 2026). This area located in the top ranking of the areas in the East Midlands least resilient to cuts in government spending

- Corby: 66th most deprived district in England
- S Northants: one of least deprived areas in England (351st out of 354 areas)
- In Northamptonshire 85.5% of the population are White British, 1.6% mixed race, 3.3% Asian and 1.8% black
- 68.3% of the population in Northampton Town are Christians – lower than the English average. 2.1% are Muslim, 1.2% Hindus, 0.4% Sikhs, 0.4% Buddhists and 0.2% Jews. Northampton Town, Corby and Wellingborough have lower % of Christians than the English average. Wellingborough has a higher proportion of Hindus than the rest of the county
- Northampton Town - Slightly higher proportion of younger people (0-15) compared with England's average of 18.8%. Fewer people of retirement age: 16.4% compared with England's average of 19.1%.
- The working age population of 64.3% is greater than England's average of 62.1%
- Northamptonshire has a slightly lower proportion of population of retirement age compared with England's average. Conversely, the number of younger people (0-15) is slightly higher than England's average of 18.8%
- Northampton: disabled people 15.9% (Eng 17.9%)

- Northamptonshire: lower %s of disabled people than English average (exception: Corby)
- Northamptonshire: mortality rates for circulatory disease, cancer and respiratory disease is lower than the average for England. South Northamptonshire: least occurrence of health deprivation in the East Midlands region
- Northamptonshire: highest levels of employment in the EM region, particularly S Northants
- Higher skills profile than the rest of the region.

Example of cuts in Northampton and Northamptonshire

Wellingborough Welfare Rights Advice Group (2011-12)

Funder: Northants County Council

Services: Advice, big society, volunteering, older people BME, disability

Funding: £28000

Cuts proposed in funding from Northamptonshire County Council. Support over 800 clients a year to claim their welfare benefit entitlements. Client groups include the elderly, disabled and disproportionately people from ethnic minority groups (50% of all clients).

Example 2: The Kirkby Trust (2011-12)

Funders: Local Government

Services: Service Delivery; Youth Services; Housing

Funding: £318000

Have received detailed proposals from Nottinghamshire County Council and they intend to cut both Supporting People contracts that they run currently. One will be decommissioned in July 2011 and the other in March 2012.

Example 3: Out Proud & Equal in Northamptonshire (2011-12)

Funder: Local Government; District Council; NHS

Services: Sexuality, equality advice and support

Funding: £1500

Will be unable to fully support individuals. Will not always be there to answer the phone, will not always have trained volunteers to support with enquiries. Customers may have to wait for weeks for support, or have to signposted to other services which may not be as good or effective.

LINCOLN AND LINCOLNSHIRE

Some facts about Lincoln and Lincolnshire

Areas of deprivation occur along Lincolnshire coastline mainly due to access to services and employment.

- Far higher proportion of those at retirement age compared with England's average
- The number of younger people (0-15) is virtually on par with England's average of 18.8%, with the exception of East Lindsey where there are far fewer younger people. East Lindsey is in the top ranking of the areas in the East Midlands least resilient to cuts in government spending
- **19.2%**, of population with disabilities (England at 17.9%). East Lindsey: 23.7%. County in general has higher %'s of disabled people
England: Employment rate: disabled people **37.1%** (non-disabled 81%)
- **96.8%** of the population are White British, **1.2%** Asian, **0.6%** Black and **1.2%** mixed race. However, BME population has increased to **3.1%** over recent years

- In all areas of Lincolnshire there is a higher proportion of Christians compared with England's average (**71.7%**). The lowest proportion of Christians can be found in the city of Lincoln (**73.9%**). Here Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus account for **0.7%**. The highest proportion of Christians can be found in South Holland (**82.6%**).

Examples of cuts in Lincoln and Lincolnshire

Example 1: Lincoln Contact Club (Mental Health) (2011-12)

Funding: local government Lincolnshire.

Services: Service delivery, community, disability

Funding: £7500

The Contact Club has been running since 1988 on a shoestring but now that has been totally withdrawn. The club is for people who live in the community and have mental health problems. It runs day time groups and evening socials plus holidays and has been funded by the NHS originally and for the last 2 years by Lincolnshire County Council. Informed by letter in September last year the funding would cease at the end of March 11. The impact on our beneficiaries is immense as they depend on the club for their social life and losing it will impact on their mental health also.

Example 2: Lincolnshire Association of People with disabilities (2011-12)

Funders: Local government

Funding: £85,000

Have made one staff member redundant and cut the hours of the remaining member of staff. Have to cut back on the work as short of money to travel to meetings to represent the disabled sector. Have not got the man power to answer all enquiries and keep web site up dated. Finding it difficult arranging training for members, who are all disabled and represent our/their organisation and they need support to be able to do this, possibly 250 members are left without support to be able to play a full role within their communities.

RUTLAND

Some facts about Rutland

- Population of 38,000 (0.9%) of the East Midlands population with a 15.7% population growth over last 10 years
- One of the least deprived areas in England (335th out of 354 areas)
- 93% of population describe themselves as White British, 1.5% Asian, 0.8% Black and 1% mix race
- 80% of population describe themselves as Christians 0.5% Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus, 19.2% declared no religion
- High rates of employment compared with the rest of the East Midlands
- Higher proportions of both younger (0-15) and retired people compared with England's average
- Pensionable age group accounts for 21% of the population. Working age population lower than England's average
- 14% disabled people (England 18%)
- Least occurrence of health deprivation in East Midlands
- Mortality rates for circulatory disease, cancer and respiratory disease lower than average in England
- Men, on average earn £114 more per week than women
- Earnings for men in the region lower than the UK average
- Employment rates for women 71.6% (men 79.8%).

Note: No specific examples could be sourced with regards to cuts in Rutland, however despite it being identified as an area of greater resistance to the cuts those voluntary sector organisations assisting any of the protected characteristics may still face similar financial issues as in other areas and the impact on these groups would be comparable.

7. MEASURING THE EQUALITY IMPACT

Conducting Equality Impact Assessments is one way public bodies can show their commitment to working in line with the public sector duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities. In collecting information to produce this report very little evidence was found showing that central government and local public bodies have taken time out to conduct equality impact assessments when proposing substantial cuts to funding in voluntary and community sector organisations. It is highly important that the government needs to demonstrate their commitment to the requirements of the Equality Act. Further cuts have yet to be made in this financial year 2012/13 as well as in 2013/14 and, in proposing these, our main recommendation is (as already mentioned in part 1 of the report), that central government and local public bodies take essential steps to measure the equality impact of future cuts on those being served by voluntary and community sector equality organisations. This will help them to identify potential adverse impact on different protected characteristics and enable them to consider different ways they can continue supporting the vital work of those voluntary and community sector equality organisations who are accustomed to responding to and supporting the diverse needs of disadvantaged individuals and groups in society.

8. CONCLUSION

This report has only managed to touch the tip of the iceberg in describing what effects the cuts are having on the diverse population of Britain today and especially within the East Midlands region. As the cuts are still in their early stages, there appears to be a great deal of uncertainty amongst many voluntary and community organisations and groups that are continuing with their work. Having this dark shadow cast over them is currently leaving staff feeling frustrated, undermined and deflated.

Local cuts have been the direct result of central government announcements to make substantial savings to reduce the deficit. The examples of cuts given in this report highlight the effect that these cuts are having on individuals, groups and communities from different protected characteristics. The government may have its reasons for proposing and making such savings but they also have a responsibility to ensure that things are done in a fair and equitable way and in compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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