

# TheBigSource

August 2013

Hello and welcome to the re-launched Big Source. Those of you who've been at Big Life for a while might remember it as a regular newsletter that summarised key developments in policy and social research, particularly relating to the areas in which The Big Life group works. This issue looks at what's happened in June and July, but future instalments will probably be monthly.

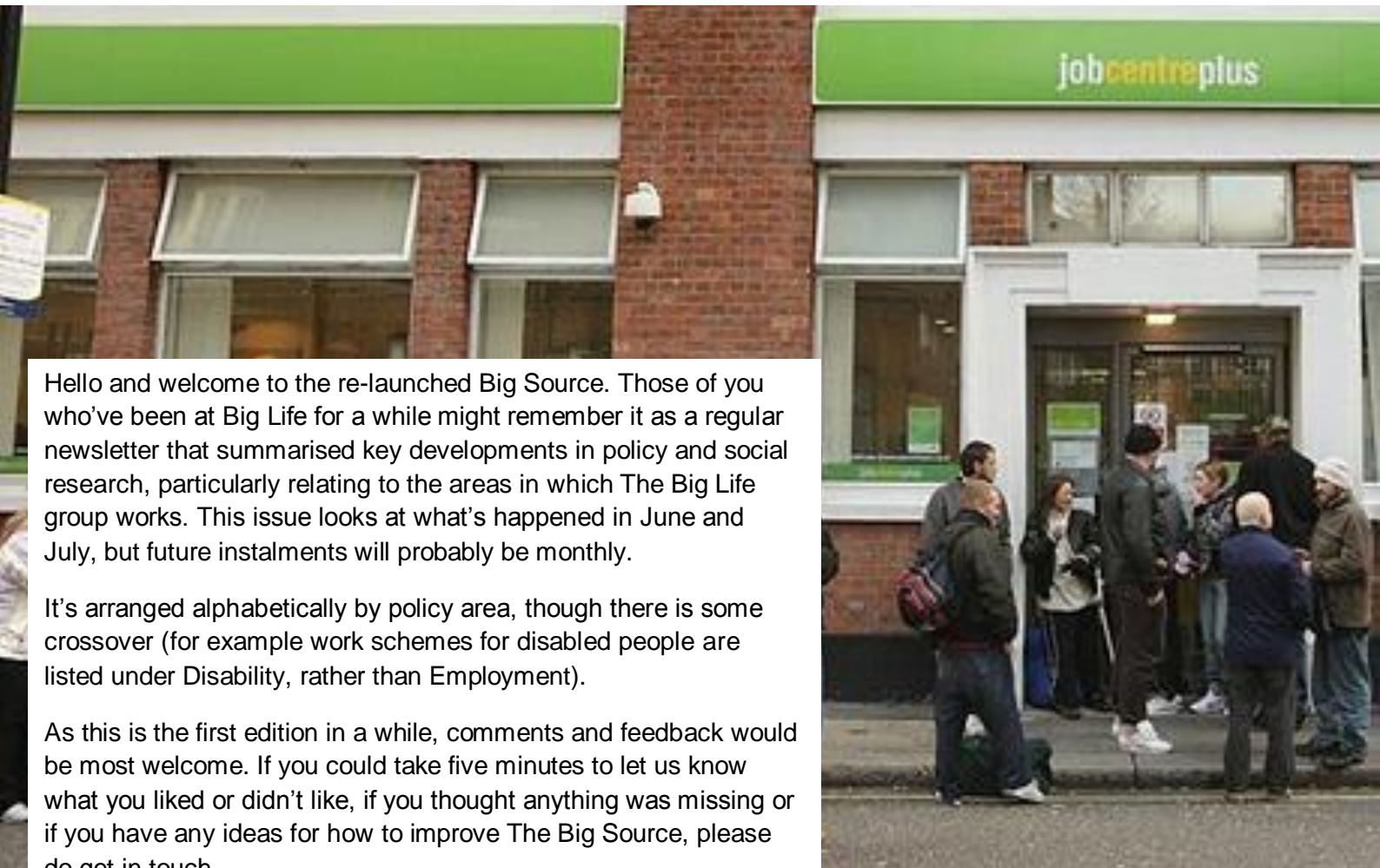
It's arranged alphabetically by policy area, though there is some crossover (for example work schemes for disabled people are listed under Disability, rather than Employment).

As this is the first edition in a while, comments and feedback would be most welcome. If you could take five minutes to let us know what you liked or didn't like, if you thought anything was missing or if you have any ideas for how to improve The Big Source, please do get in touch.

In this issue: June and July saw the rollout of **Universal Credit** reach Oldham and Warrington. The government is holding a number of **consultations** on childcare, welfare reform, apprenticeships, migrant access to the NHS, tax relief for social investments and welfare-to-work commissioning. **Research and analysis** has been published including studies of mortality rates, homelessness, parental unemployment, private rented accommodation and poverty. And the Home Office has written '**Go home**' on the side of a van and sent it to intimidate undocumented immigrants in London.

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## August 2013

### CARE

Released in July, the **Cavendish review** looks at current standards of training and support for healthcare assistants and social care support workers. The independent review, commissioned by the government, recommends standardised basic training leading to a 'Certificate of Fundamental Care' which would be a mandatory qualification.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/review-of-healthcare-assistants-and-support-workers-in-nhs-and-social-care>
- <http://www.channel4.com/news/healthcare-assistants-nhs-review-training-stafford-hospital>

### CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Researchers for the House of Commons have prepared a briefing paper on the **Children and Families Bill**. The bill, currently before the House of Lords, proposes a number of legislative reforms to adoption and care; family justice; Special Educational Needs; childcare; flexible working; and more.

- <http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2013-14/childrenandfamilies.html>

The Department for Education (DfE) hopes to reform the regulatory system for childcare providers and launched a **Consultation on Childcare Regulation** in July. The consultation seeks the views of early years and childcare providers and sector organisations; schools; parents; and local authorities. The deadline for contributions is the 30<sup>th</sup> of September.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/childcare-regulation>

DfE also released the report **More affordable childcare** which looks at the barriers parents

face to accessing childcare and how they might be overcome. The report updates the government's promises to "help families to meet the costs of childcare"; "increase the amount of affordable provision"; and "give parents the right information so they can make informed choices about childcare".

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/more-affordable-childcare>

The Institute for Public Policy Research issued a document outlining a number of childcare providers' Responses to government plans for **Early Years Reform**. The majority of responders were opposed to cutting regulation and thought looking after more children could compromise the quality or safety of their agencies' care.

- <http://www.ippr.org/publication/55/10977/early-years-reform-childminders-responses-to-government-proposals>

The Children's Society released **The Good Childhood Report 2013**. It explores and seeks to measure children's subjective well-being, finding that overall children lower levels of perceived well-being than other age groups. It has a particular focus on choice, poverty and family relationships and offers suggestions for action by national and local government, services, parents and children with an interest in improving well-being in youth.

- <http://www.childrensociety.org.uk/wellbeing>

### COMMUNITIES

The Local Government Information Unit's latest report, **Connected Localism**, outlines ideas for network of local authorities and service providers sharing best practice in localised reform of public service delivery.

- <http://www.lgiu.org.uk/connected-localism/>

The Department of Energy & Climate Change is inviting local authorities (LAs), working with their local partners, to come forward with street/area based proposals for funding to

deliver **Green Deal** plans to as many households as possible. £20m of capital funding will be available. Applications may be submitted up to 31 December 2013 for a minimum grant of £1m. LAs will be strongly encouraged to work together and with local partners to deliver.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/green-deal-communities>
- [www.localgov.co.uk/index.cfm?method=news.detail&id=110557](http://www.localgov.co.uk/index.cfm?method=news.detail&id=110557)

## **CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) released the **Criminal justice statistics quarterly update to September 2012**. According to the MoJ, the number of prosecutions and out of court disposals were both down while convictions for indictable offenses were substantially up.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-justice-statistics--2>

Numbers of **Deaths during or following police contact: Statistics for England and Wales 2012/13** were released. It shows no change on the previous year for people who died whilst in custody (15) and “a considerable rise” in suicide within 2 days of an arrest (64). The IPCC said that officers should be better trained in mental health awareness and that the figures suggested failings by the agencies that ought to support those with mental illness.

- [http://www.ipcc.gov.uk/news/Pages/pr\\_230713\\_deathsreport2012-13.aspx](http://www.ipcc.gov.uk/news/Pages/pr_230713_deathsreport2012-13.aspx)
- <http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk-news/2013/jul/23/suicides-release-police-custody-record-high>
- <http://www.policeprofessional.com/news.aspx?id=16606>

The House of Commons Library have written a short note introducing the key ideas around **Mediation and other alternatives to court**.

- <http://www.parliament.uk/briefing-papers/SN04176>

## **DISABILITY**

The government launched a ‘**Drive to get more disabled people into mainstream jobs**’. A publicity campaign announced a new training scheme for 16-to-24-year-olds with complex learning difficulties and disabilities. As part of the scheme, employers will also be “supported and encouraged” to take on more disabled people (broadly translated as a funded training scheme and a subsidy for employers with disabled employees).

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/drive-to-get-more-disabled-people-into-mainstream-jobs>
- [www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-23355252](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-23355252)

The **Fourth independent review of the Work Capability Assessment (WCA)** has begun and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) is inviting contributions to an open consultation. The call for evidence is aimed at organisations and individuals who have information on how the WCA is operating and further changes that may be needed to improve the process.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/fourth-independent-review-of-the-work-capability-assessment-wca>

The DWP is to bring in additional providers to carry out WCAs, the change in approach for contracting providers to carry out the is likely to be fully operational from summer 2014 and will provide extra capacity to help tackle waiting times. Atos Healthcare have been directed to put in place a quality improvement plan following a DWP audit which identified an ‘unacceptable reduction’ in the quality of written reports produced following assessments.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/hoban-taking-action-to-improve-the-work-capability-assessment>

The Papworth Trust published a report on how effective Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) are for disabled people. DHP may be claimed from councils if

somebody receives housing benefit or council tax benefit, but has difficulty paying the rest of their rent. They may be claimed by people whose housing benefit has been cut because of the 'bedroom tax'. The report, **Making Discretionary Housing Payments work for disabled people**, finds that 1 in 3 disabled applicants are being refused DHP and calls on government to implement a system which better takes into account the needs of disabled tenants.

- [http://www.papworth.org.uk/downloads/making-discretionaryhousingpaymentsworkfordisabledpeople\\_130710181752.pdf](http://www.papworth.org.uk/downloads/making-discretionaryhousingpaymentsworkfordisabledpeople_130710181752.pdf)

The DWP released **Residential training provision: independent advisory panel report**. The report makes recommendations about the services provided by residential training (RT) providers. It also considers non-residential training, and other options including on-line and distance support. The report finds that RT provisions offer "significant value" but are "costly in terms of job outcomes achieved". The panel found "no evidence that would support a move to reduce RT provision in the UK" and goes as far as to recommend roll-out to certain non-disabled people who face barriers to employment and training.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/residential-training-provision>

## **DRUGS AND ALCOHOL**

The **Government's response to the alcohol strategy consultation** included the decision not to introduce minimum unit pricing for alcohol. Public Health England and the British Medical Association are among those to have expressed disappointment at the government's inaction. The BMA have outlined the risks associated with alcohol use and launched a petition to introduce the minimum pricing.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/governments-response-to-the-alcohol-strategy-consultation>

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/alcohol-strategy-consultation-report-phe-response>
- <http://bma.org.uk/working-for-change/improving-and-protecting-health/alcohol>

## **EMPLOYMENT**

The Office of National Statistics (ONS) released the **Regional Labour Market Statistics, July 2013**. It found unemployment to be down 57,000 to 2.51 million. The North East has the highest unemployment rate (10%); inactivity rate (26%); and people claiming benefits principally for the reason of being unemployed (7.1%). 'Inactivity' includes retired people, those looking after the family or home, those unable to work due to illness or disability and students who choose not to look for work. Long term unemployment now affects 915,000 people, the highest number in 17 years.

- <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/lms/labour-market-statistics/july-2013/statistical-bulletin.html>
- <http://www.progressonline.org.uk/2013/07/19/everyday-unemployment/>

The government celebrated its own **Youth Contract** in a press release that stated 21,000 "job commitments" have been made through the scheme's wage incentive. Minister Mark Hoban said that "Youth unemployment has fallen by 59,000 since the Youth Contract was launched." The number of young people starting jobs, according to the figures, has risen sharply month on month since January 2013 but the number of payments made to employers for keeping young people employed for 26 weeks is extremely low.

Local authorities in the UK's eight largest cities may also bid for government support towards localised proposals to reduce long-term youth unemployment.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/businesses-offer-21000-jobs-with-support-of-the-wage-incentive>

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/cities-youth-employment-boost>
- <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/eadb6156-f2b4-11e2-802f-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2aWnwzUy>

The Department for Business, Industry and Skills is consulting on **Apprenticeships funding reform in England**. The consultation is in response to an independent review. The government has already endorsed the review recommendations, including giving employers more control over apprenticeships, and “ensur[ing] that all apprenticeships are rigorous and responsive to employers’ needs.”

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/apprenticeship-funding-reform-in-england>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-richard-review-of-apprenticeships>

Charity DrugScope is conducting a national **Routes to Employment survey** to learn more about the experiences that people with histories of drug and/or alcohol use have of looking for, preparing for and being in employment. The criteria are that people must have had experience of treatment for drug and/or alcohol use, and that they must not be permanently unable to work or volunteer owing to sickness or disability. The deadline is the end of August and there is a prize incentive of Amazon vouchers.

- [https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LDAN\\_employment](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LDAN_employment)

The University of Essex released **Adverse effects of parental unemployment on young adults labour market experience**, which looks and intergenerational unemployment and cycles of disadvantage. It found the children of unemployed fathers 20% more likely to be out of work and to be happier to be unemployed than children of fathers within low-income work.

- <https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/publication/521755>

## HEALTH

### **Life expectancy at birth and at age 65 by local areas in England and Wales, 2009-11**

found Manchester to have the lowest life expectancy for females at 79 years and Blackpool to have the lowest for males at 73. The figures reveal a margin of ten years between the areas with highest and lowest male life expectancies and seven years for females. East Dorset has the highest life expectancy for women and men, 86 and 83 respectively.

- [www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/subnational-health/life-expectancy-at-birth-and-at-age-65-by-local-areas-in-england-and-wales/2009-11/index.html](http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/subnational-health/life-expectancy-at-birth-and-at-age-65-by-local-areas-in-england-and-wales/2009-11/index.html)

The government have postponed plans to introduce **Standardised packaging of tobacco products**, citing the need for further research. The controversial decision to stall the policy has been criticised for putting private business interests over public health.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/standardised-packaging-of-tobacco-products>
- <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/9e88c622-eac6-11e2-9fcc-00144feabdc0.html#axzz2ZmAfwnocz>

The Department of Health have asked local authorities to commit to the **government’s pledge on child health**. The government says local authorities are best placed to deliver initiatives and that commitment to the pledge would reduce regional inequalities.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/local-authorities-urged-to-take-action-to-improve-childrens-health>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-pledge-to-improve-childrens-health-and-reduce-child-deaths>

Public Health England releases monthly **Bulletins**, short newsletters with key facts about public health. You can download them from the following website:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-health-england/series/phe-bulletin>

## HOMELESSNESS

The official figures for **Statutory homelessness: January to March 2013 and 2012 to 2013 England** were released in June. They found a slight increase in the number compared to the same period in the previous year and a 6% increase for the year overall. There was a 10% increase on the number of households living in temporary accommodation compared to the same period last year; a 14% increase in the number of households living in 'bed and breakfast style' accommodation; a 14% increase on people being housed outside of their local authority area, and a 3% fall in the amount of people moving out of temporary accommodation.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-homelessness-in-england-january-to-march-2013>

Shelter found that many homeless people were being moved out of London into temporary accommodation as far away as Devon and Manchester.

- [http://england.shelter.org.uk/campaigns/why\\_we\\_campaign/temporary\\_accommodation\\_out\\_of\\_borough](http://england.shelter.org.uk/campaigns/why_we_campaign/temporary_accommodation_out_of_borough)

## HOUSING

The House of Commons' Communities and Local Government Committee issued a substantial three-volume report assessing the current situation of **The Private Rented Sector**. The Committee invited submissions from interested parties covering the quality and regulation of private rented housing, and levels of rent within the sector.

It identifies a need for "better, simpler regulation"; more power for councils to enforce standards; stricter policing of letting agents; longer tenancies for families; faster eviction processes; "an end to the vicious circle whereby rents and housing benefit drive each other up;" and increased supply across all tenures of housing.

- [http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/communities-](http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/communities-and-local-government-committee/inquiries/parliament-2010/private-rented-sector/)

[and-local-government-committee/inquiries/parliament-2010/private-rented-sector/](http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/communities-and-local-government-committee/inquiries/parliament-2010/private-rented-sector/)

The government published results of their consultation of the **Right to Transfer**, proposals to make it easier for tenants to request change of ownership of social housing from councils to housing associations. Under the plans, tenant groups can serve a notice on a council saying they want their homes to be transferred to a new housing association. If certain criteria are met the council would have to co-operate, by providing facilities to help tenants carry out a feasibility study, agreeing a timetable for transfer and to provide facilities and information to help the tenants' develop their transfer option.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-tenant-power-to-help-kickstart-house-building>
- <http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/tenancies/government-sets-out-right-to-transfer-rules/6527851.article>

## IMMIGRATION AND ASYLUM

The DoH is currently consulting on **Migrant access to the NHS**. The consultation will run until August 28th, and relates to "migrants' access and financial contribution to the NHS". It proposes ending "free access to primary care for all visitors and tourists" and introducing "more practical and easier ways for the NHS to identify whether someone is not eligible for free healthcare".

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/migrants-and-overseas-visitors-use-of-the-nhs>
- <http://www.migrantsrights.org.uk/migration-pulse/2013/five-points-which-must-not-be-lost-debate-nhs-access>

The Home Office, with support from the Prime Minister have launched a new campaign to encourage undocumented immigrants in the UK to '**Go home or face arrest**'. The scheme piloted in East London was considered a success by the government and plans to

launch it nationwide are being considered. Refugee Action, said that it was “outraged and appalled” by the action and Business Secretary Vince Cable called the scheme “stupid and offensive.” The cost of the pilot campaign was £10,000 while a forced removal costs on average £15,000.

- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-23489925>
- [http://refugee-action.org.uk/about/media\\_centre/our\\_news/853\\_refugee\\_action\\_appalled\\_by\\_new\\_home\\_office\\_campaign\\_to\\_encourage\\_voluntary\\_returns](http://refugee-action.org.uk/about/media_centre/our_news/853_refugee_action_appalled_by_new_home_office_campaign_to_encourage_voluntary_returns)

## POVERTY

Manchester Citizens Advice Bureau has compiled a report that examines the scale of **Food Poverty and Food Bank Referrals** in the UK and Manchester. It finds that the main reasons for people needing food banks are problems with benefits, although there are increasing numbers of people in work who need assistance. Other reasons included relationship breakdown, debt recovery and people having no recourse to public funds because of their immigration status.

- <http://www.manchestercab.org/Food%20Poverty%20report%20FINAL.pdf>

The Trussell Trust conducted a similar nationwide study and found a disproportionate increase in food bank referrals following April's welfare reforms.

- <http://www.trusselltrust.org/resources/documents/Press/Increasing-numbers-turning-to-foodbanks-since-Aprils-welfare-reforms.pdf>

The Child Poverty Action Group published their report **Local Authorities and Child Poverty: Balancing Threats with Opportunity**. It outlines the impact of welfare reforms on children and local authorities (LAs) – including the costs to of child poverty LAs. 3.6 million children (27%) currently live below the defined poverty line. The report explores what local authorities can do to reduce and mitigate the effects of child poverty.

The report is accompanied by a spreadsheet showing the number of children living in poverty in each area and the estimated cost of child poverty to the LA. For the areas in which the Big Life group works, the figures are presented in the table below.

Bradford	33,172	£360m
Calderdale	9,054	£98m
Halton	7,859	£85m
Hull	17,124	£186m
Knowsley	11,552	£125m
Leeds	31,795	£345m
Liverpool	31,258	£340m
Manchester	41,059	£446m
N.E. Lincs	8,760	£95m
Oldham	15,981	£174m
Rochdale	14,199	£154m
Salford	14,929	£162m
Sheffield	24,383	£265m
St Helens	9,612	£104m
Stockport	9,763	£106m
Stockton	10,982	£151m
Tameside	12,098	£131m
Trafford	7,722	£84m
Wigan	13,703	£149m

- <http://www.cpag.org.uk/content/cpag-publishes-cost-child-poverty-every-local-authority-and-constituency>

## SCHOOLS

The DfE commissioned an independent **Evaluation of pupil premium** which looked at how the policy to offer extra per-pupil funding to schools with pupils in receipt of free school meals and/or in care. It suggests messages around the Pupil Premium could be clearer and identifies need for better impact monitoring. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) have issued a response through their blog.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-of-pupil-premium>
- <http://www.jrf.org.uk/blog/2013/07/pupil-premium-education-poverty>

DfE have released the first volume of its **Evaluation of SEND pathfinder programme**, to look into piloted reforms to support for pupils with special educational

needs and disability. It finds “a sense that the ‘ethos’ of the process was changing, resulting in the required movement to a more family-centred, outcomes-based and multi-agency approach.” Its findings are “broadly positive”, though identify challenges around: the levels of understanding and confidence of some key workers; insufficient involvement from children and young people; and concern around the capacity of local authorities to sustain and roll out their engagement strategy.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-of-the-send-pathfinder-programme-process-and-implementation>

### **THIRD SECTOR**

The Cabinet Office published a progress report on **Growing the social investment market**. It claims that the market grew by 22% to £202 million in 2011-12.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/growing-the-social-investment-market-a-vision-and-strategy>
- <http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/news/1188838/social-finance-market-grew-22-per-cent-2011-12-says-report/>

The Prime Minister launched a **Consultation on social investment tax relief**. “Views... are invited from a wide range of sources including individuals, organisations, and representative and professional bodies. The government especially invites comments from those directly involved in investing in, or seeking investment for, social enterprises.”

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-social-investment-tax-relief>

The Cabinet Office (CO) compiled **Social Enterprise: Market Trends** based on 2012’s small business survey. 24% of employers in small/medium enterprises (SME) considered theirs to be a social business though just 6% of businesses matched all criteria in the CO’s definition of social enterprise. Social enterprises were more commonly found in certain sectors such as food/accommodation,

health and arts/leisure and less commonly found in manufacturing, construction, information/communications, business services and administrative services. Social enterprises reported lower turnovers and less staff than the average SME.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-enterprise-market-trends>

### **WELFARE REFORM AND BENEFITS**

*The Big Life group has prepared briefing papers on current Welfare Reforms, please contact us on 0161 848 2425 for more information.*

National roll-out of the **Benefit Cap** started in July. The cap will see single parents and couples with children receive no more than £500 a week in benefits, while the limit for single people is £350, although there are some exemptions. An impact assessment conducted by the government estimated that as many as 56,000 households would be affected, losing on average about £93 a week. The government hopes roll-out will be complete by October.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-introduction-of-benefit-cap-begins>

DWP commissioned two surveys to examine perceptions of the Benefit Cap among the general public and to assess impacts of the policy prior to full implementation.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-perceptions-of-the-benefit-cap-and-pre-implementation-impacts>

In response to a Freedom of Information request, the DWP have published a list of **Disability Living Allowance claimants exempt from benefit cap by local authority**. It does not include a comparative figure of total claimants per local authority.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dla-claimants-exempt-from-benefit-cap-by-local-authority>



A legal challenge to the '**Bedroom tax**' failed. The case brought by disabled rights campaigners argued that the policy breached the Equality Act and the European Convention on Human Rights. The court ruled that the policy could not legally be seen as discriminatory. Shelter and the National Housing Federation were among those to express their disappointment.

- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-23503095>
- [http://england.shelter.org.uk/news/july\\_2013/bedroom\\_tax\\_ruling\\_devastating\\_news\\_for\\_disabled\\_families](http://england.shelter.org.uk/news/july_2013/bedroom_tax_ruling_devastating_news_for_disabled_families)
- <http://www.housing.org.uk/media/press-releases/response-to-bedroom-tax-appeal-dismissal>

The government offered an additional £35m in-year funding to the '**Spare room subsidy**', designed to support those worst-hit by the 'bedroom tax'. The figure breaks down as: £10m transitional payments distributed to all councils; £5m discretionary housing payment funding for the least densely populated areas in the country; and a 'new £20m discretionary housing payment fund'.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/spare-room-subsidy-funding-update>

**Home Truths: How to change attitudes to housing benefit**, a report by the Fabian Society for Crisis, found that despite antipathy towards the £23 billion housing benefit bill being 'deeply ingrained' and not helped by frequently 'toxic' media coverage, polling data shows public attitudes can be altered. Inside Housing suggested "Housing professionals must focus on telling the 'personal' and 'deeply emotional' experiences of people receiving housing benefit if they are to alter the prevailing negative public perception of housing support."

- <http://www.crisis.org.uk/publications-search.php?fullitem=387>
- <http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/care/struggles-of-benefit-recipients-must-be-told/6527573.article>

People on **sickness benefits** will be required to have regular meetings with doctors, occupational health nurses and therapists to help them address their barriers to work – or face losing their benefits – in a 2 year pilot scheme.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/help-for-people-on-sickness-benefits-to-address-barriers-to-work>

The Children's Society (TCS) published **Nowhere to turn? Changes to emergency support**, a report looking at reform of the Social Fund and the new Local Welfare Assistance Schemes (LWAS). It finds a real terms cut of 45% to support; 62% of local authorities no longer providing interest-free emergency loans (though in some areas credit unions are providing low-interest loans); and 81% of schemes replacing cash support with vouchers and store-cards. TCS fear the reforms will exacerbate poverty and drive vulnerable families towards loan-sharks and 'payday lenders'. TCS have published a map to help people find their local schemes

- <http://www.childrensociety.org.uk/news-views/press-release/report-decline-support-leaves-struggling-families-few-options>
- <http://www.childrensociety.org.uk/news-views/our-blog/find-your-local-welfare-assistance-scheme>

New claimants in Oldham and Warrington will now be applying for **Universal Credit (UC)**. This marks the next step of the roll-out of UC, launched in April in Tameside, followed by Wigan at the start of July. All 4 jobcentres are also trialling the UC Claimant Commitment and are signing people up to 'Universal Jobmatch'.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/universal-credit-comes-to-oldham-and-warrington>
- <http://www.localgov.co.uk/index.cfm?method=news.detail&id=110577>

DWP published **Local Authority Led Pilots: A summary of early learning from the**

**pilots**, a review of the roll-out so far of UC. It identifies actions that might be taken to reduce the challenges around:

1. Digital Inclusion (internet access)
  2. Budgeting and Financial Management
  3. Work access (local authorities' support services)
  4. Vulnerable groups and the triage process (identifying and supporting higher-need clients)
  5. Partnership development (data sharing between partners)
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-led-pilots-a-summary-of-early-learning-from-the-pilots>

The Citizens Advice Bureau report **Universal Credit Managing Migration Pilot Baseline Results**, found that 9 out of 10 claimants do not feel ready to be transferred to UC. CAB surveyed more than 1,700 of its clients who will start to receive UC from October and asked them whether they felt they would be able to cope with the key potential problem areas: 75% felt ill-prepared for budgeting; 52% for banking; 81% felt that they would struggle to keep informed about changes to their benefits; and 66% believed they would struggle to manage their claims online.

- [http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/index/pressoffice/press\\_index/press10072013.htm](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/index/pressoffice/press_index/press10072013.htm)
- <http://www.insidehousing.co.uk/tenancies/nine-in-10-claimants-not-ready-for-universal-credit/6527704.article>

The JRF have also released the findings of research into UC, **Does Universal Credit enable households to reach a minimum income standard?** It finds that “UC strengthens work incentives for some, but in many cases provides little or no incentive for additional work” and that “Many families will have limited incentive to move from part-time

to full-time work, especially if they require childcare”.

- [www.jrf.org.uk/publications/universal-credit-mis](http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/universal-credit-mis)

The New Economics Foundation's **Surviving Austerity** looks at “how a national programme of economic and social changes – from cuts in public spending and more conditional welfare, to the growth of privately delivered public services and the extension of market logic into the welfare state – are affecting people's daily lives.” It finds “a growing prevalence of precarious working conditions, zero hours and temporary contracts, underemployment and very low wages” which in turn lead to demand for health, housing and advice services.

- <http://www.neweconomics.org/publications/entry/surviving-austerity>

DWP's **Employment and Support Allowance: statistics on reassessments of incapacity benefits, July 2013** presents information on both new claims and claims undergoing reassessment of incapacity benefits for Employment and Support Allowance. It provides statistics on the outcome of completed assessments, claims still in progress and claims closed before the assessment process is complete.

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/employment-and-support-allowance-statistics-on-reassessments-of-incapacity-benefits-july-2013>

DWP is consulting on their welfare-to-work **Commissioning Strategy 2013**. The strategy “will articulate a strategic framework for DWP welfare-to-work commissioning through a series of principles which will guide DWP's commissioning activity.”

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/dwp-commissioning-strategy-2013>