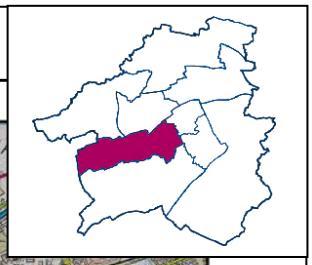
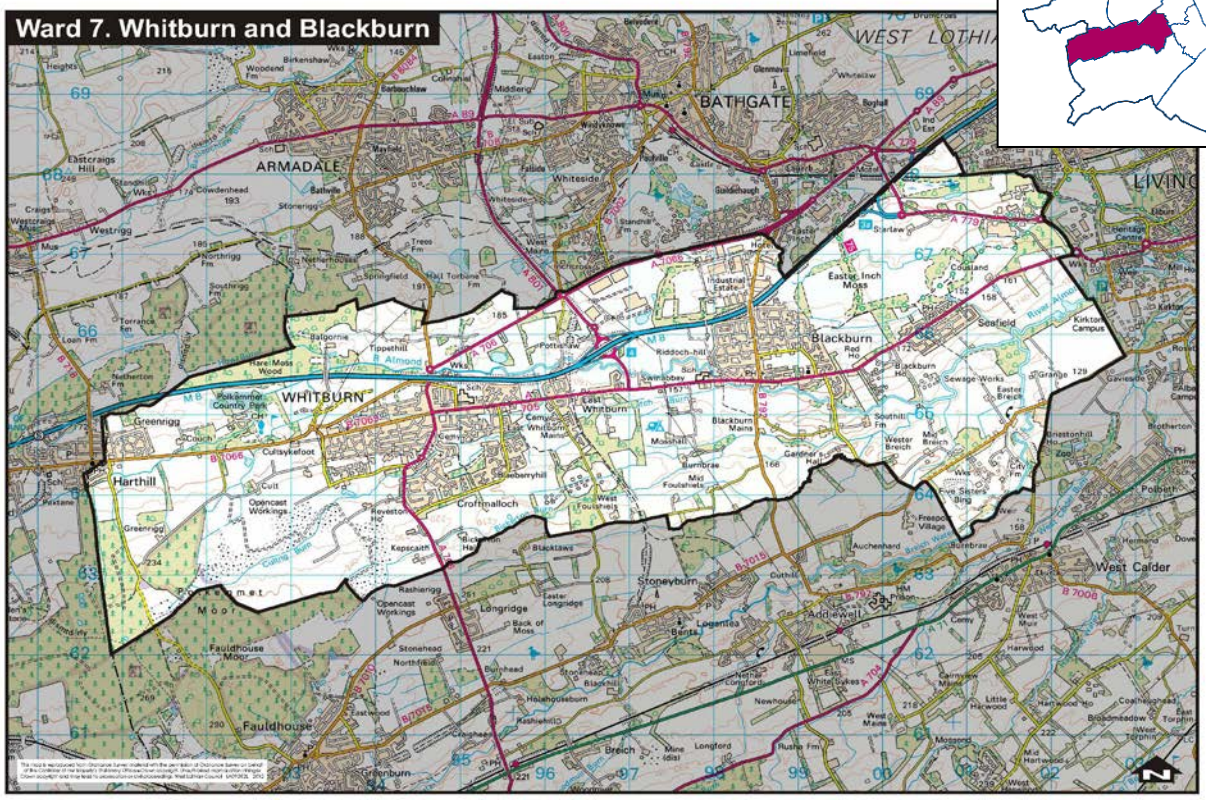
WARD PROFILE 7 : WHITBURN AND BLACKBURN





MAIN SETTLEMENTS

This is the fifth largest ward with a population of 19,229 (based on Mid-2010 GRO Population Estimates) and includes the communities of Blackburn, Greenrigg, Seafield and Whitburn / East Whitburn. The largest settlement in the ward is Whitburn which combined with East Whitburn has 11,730 residents (Mid-2010 GRO Population Estimates), It has close links to the M8 motorway which bypasses the town. The Heartlands project is developing on the west of the town, renovating the disused land surrounding the old Polkemmet Colliery and will have a positive impact on the local economy and make-up of the town and surrounding communities.

Blackburn has a population of 5,250 although there have been housing developments within the village since that count and there is continued development around Easter Inch. The first Local Nature Reserve (LNR) in West Lothian is located on over 400 acres of public land between Blackburn and Seafield (population 1,360). Both Seafield and Greenrigg (1,164) have recently experienced increases in their populations.

ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

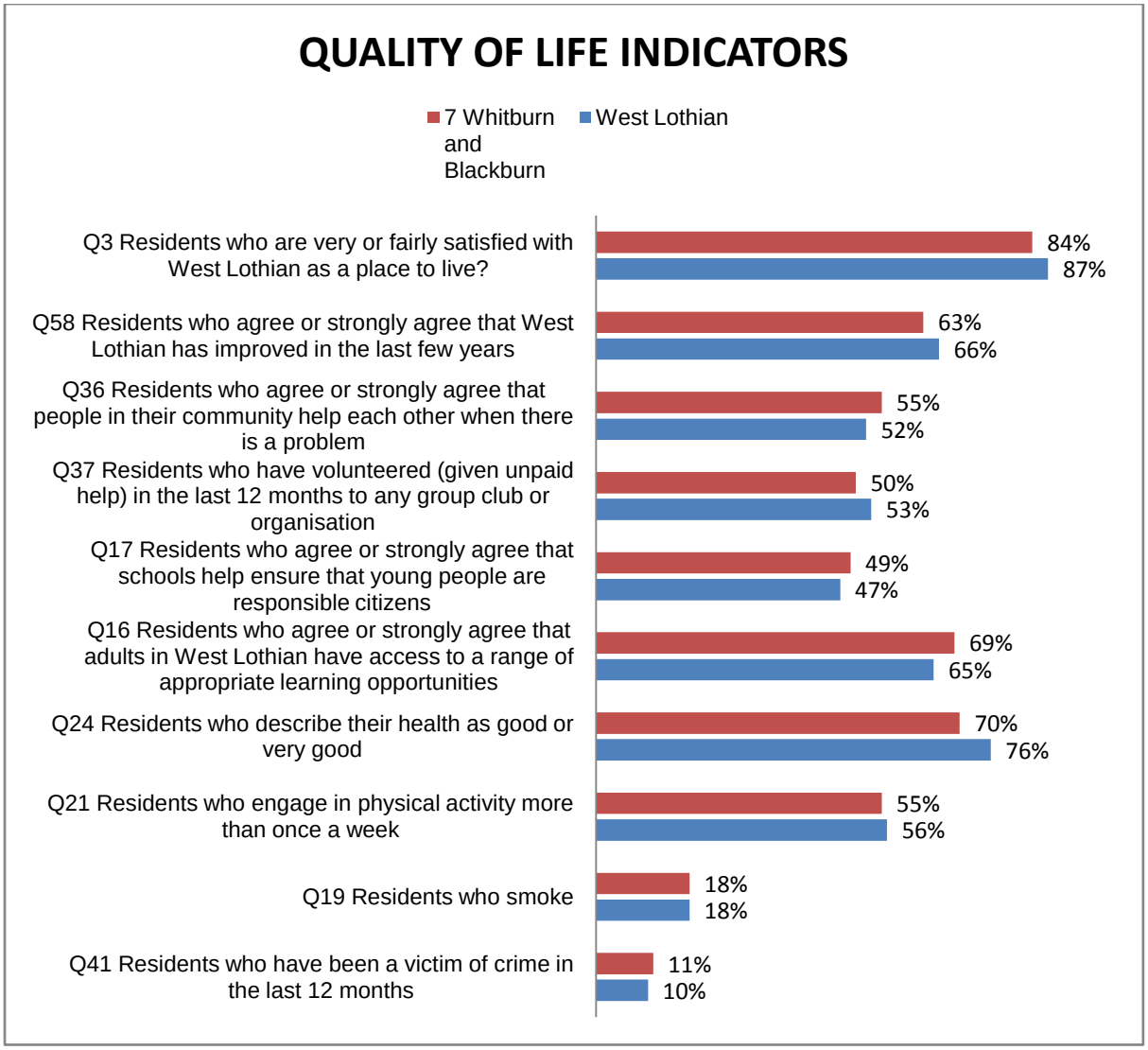
The Whitburn and Blackburn ward has four councillors, all of whom are elected on a proportional voting system to represent the whole ward. The four councillors meet regularly as a Local Area Committee. The Chair is George Paul. Those elected in May 2012 for five years are :-

	Jim Dickson (Scottish National Party)		Mary Dickson (Scottish National Party)		George Paul (Scottish Labour Party)		Barry Robertson (Scottish Labour Party)	

The ward is largely within the Linlithgow constituency for the Scottish Parliament which is represented by Fiona Hyslop MSP. An area to the east of Blackburn, including Seafield, is in the Almond Valley constituency which is represented by Angela Constance MSP. There are also seven list MSPs for the Lothians whose details are on the Scottish Parliament website.

The ward is divided between the Livingston and the Linlithgow and East Falkirk constituencies for the Westminister Parliament. The dividing line runs through Blackburn with the area to the west in Linlithgow and Falkirk, represented by Michael Connarty MP, and the area to the east is in Livingston represented by Graeme Morrice MP.

There are six Members of the European Parliament who represent the whole of Scotland. Information on these is available on the European Parliament website www.europarl.org.uk



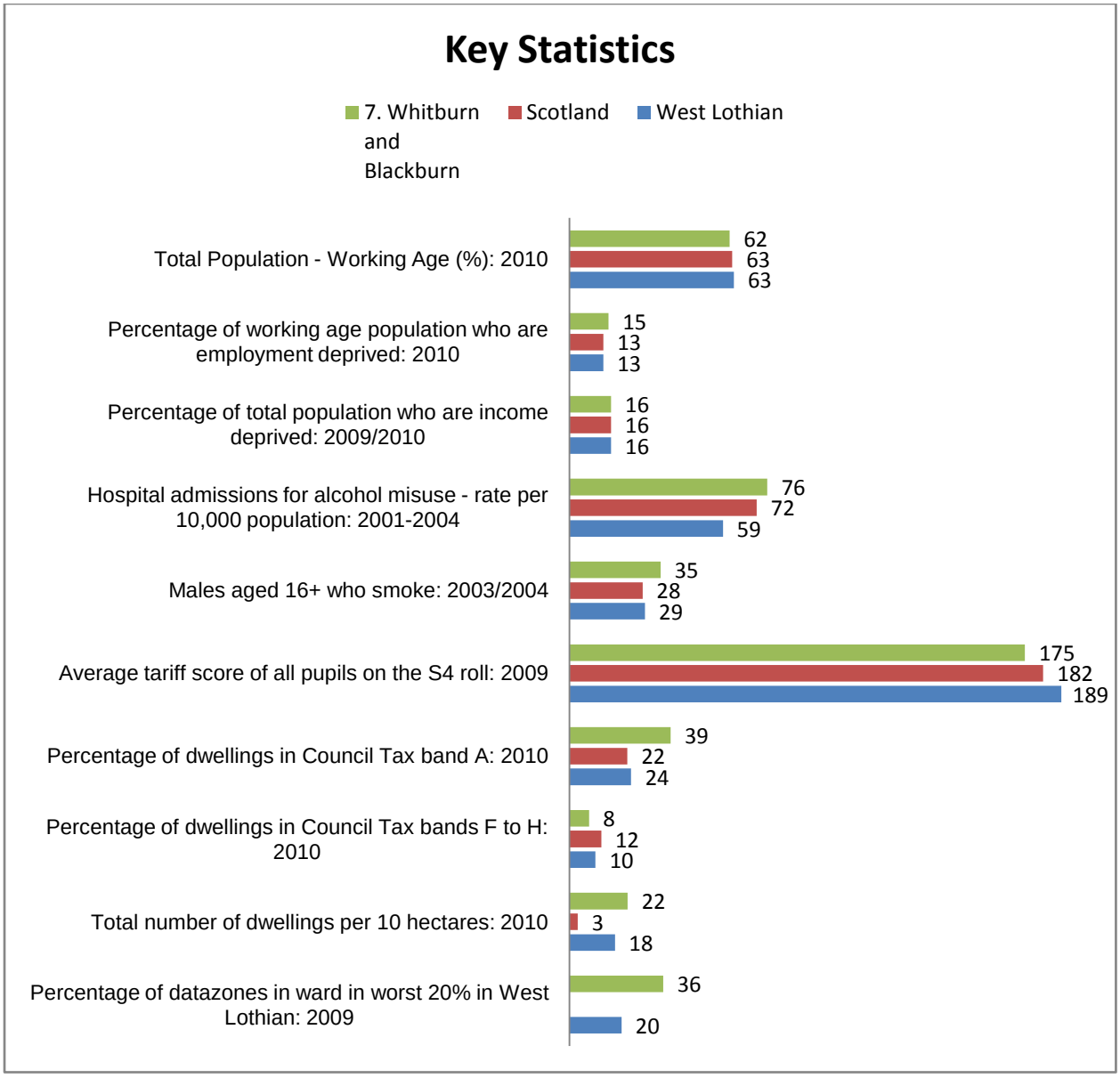
The fifth West Lothian Quality of Life Survey for the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) was carried out in 2010 through the Citizens Panel. The Panel is structured to be completely representative of the West Lothian population, and representative at a multi member ward level. 70% of the 2,911 Panel members completed the 2010 survey.

A range of questions across a variety of subjects gave the CPP useful information about peoples perceptions and experience of living in West Lothian. The CPP will use this information to plan, direct and prioritise services over the coming years. A sample of questions and results for West Lothian and the Whitburn and Blackburn ward are shown in the table above.

The levels of satisfaction with West Lothian as a place to live are very strong, remaining at a consistent 87% between the last survey in 2007 and 2010 one. In the Whitburn and Blackburn ward the satisfaction level was slightly lower at 84% which is also the same as 2007.

In general the Whitburn and Blackburn indicator levels are similar to the West Lothian figures with some being slightly higher and some slightly lower. The biggest difference is “residents who describe their health as good or very good” which is only 70% in the Whitburn and Blackburn ward compared to 76% across West Lothian.

The Summary of Key Findings and Commentary on the West Lothian Citizens’ Panel Quality of Life Survey 2010 Research Report is at :- http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/media/downloaddoc/1799465/lcp/QoL2010Results



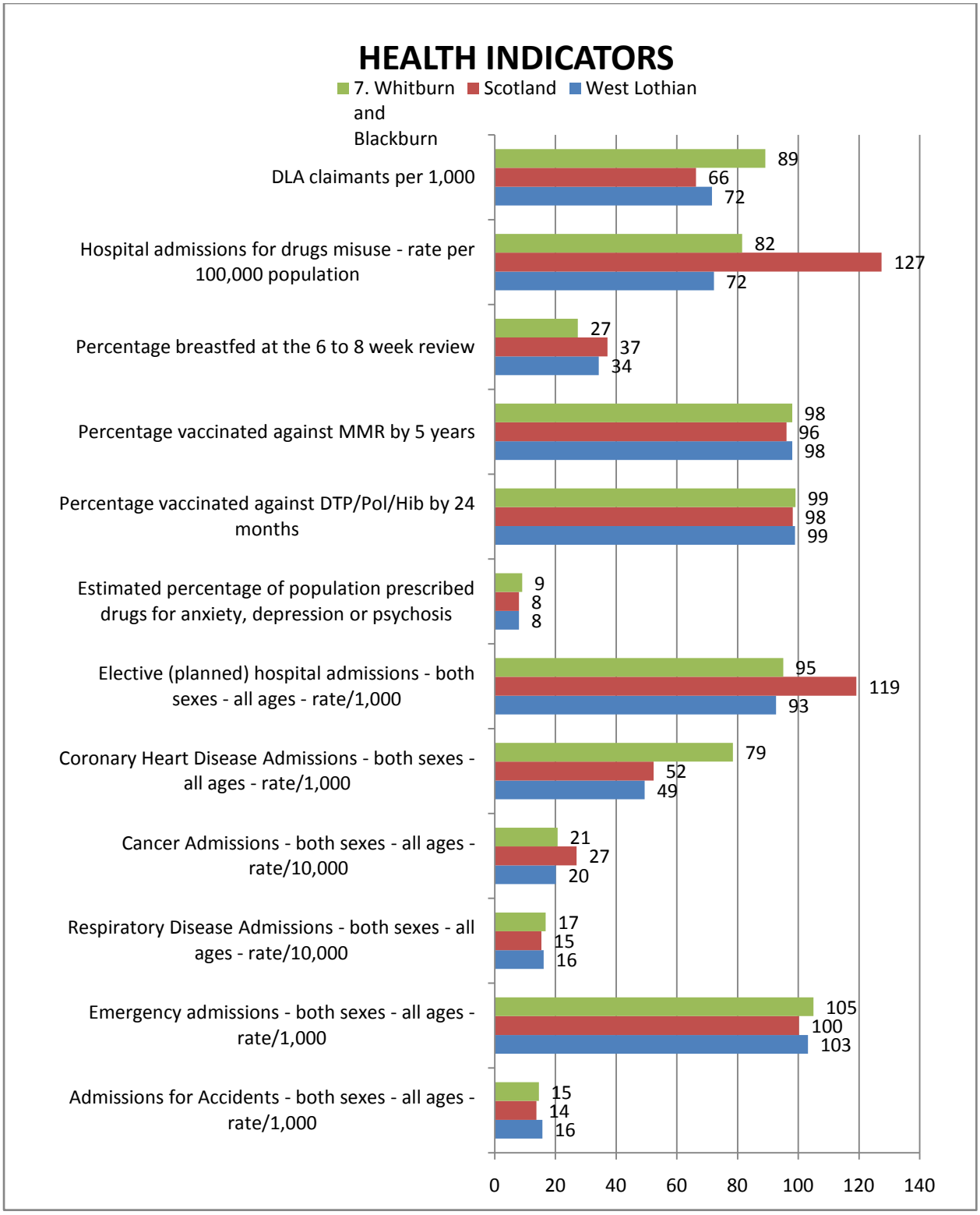
The statistical indicators in the table above are taken from the Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics Area Profile site at :- http://www.sns.gov.uk/Reports/AreaProfile.aspx

Whitburn and Blackburn is one of the larger wards in West Lothian with 19,229 residents, 11.2% of the total West Lothian population. There are 25 “datazones” in the ward – these are small areas with around 750 residents used to identify concentrations of multiple deprivation using indicators such as unemployment, income and health. There are 25 datazones in the Whitburn and Blackburn ward and 9 of these (36%) are in the worst 20% in West Lothian, significantly higher than the average.

The proportion of the population who are of “working age” is 62% compared to 63% for both West Lothian and Scotland. Whitburn and Blackburn ward has a significantly higher rate of employment deprivation at 15% as against 13% for West Lothian and Scotland. The ward has similar levels of income deprivation to West Lothian and Scotland.

The Health statistics are poorer than the West Lothian and Scotland figures for example hospital related admissions for alcohol misuse are higher. The number of adult males who smoke is 35%, significantly higher than 29% for West Lothian and 28% for Scotland.

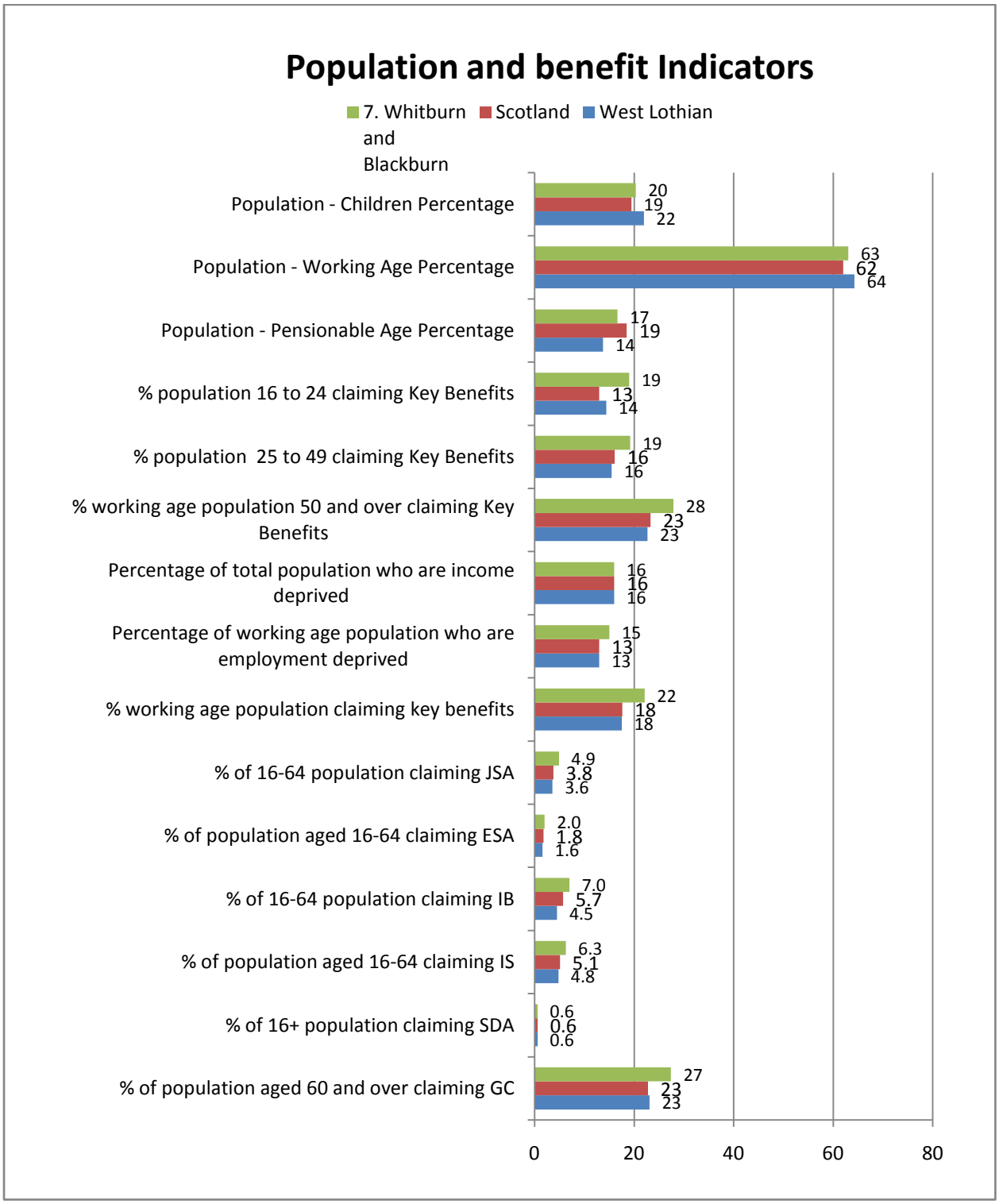
There is a higher percentage of homes in the lowest council tax band and a lower percentage of homes in the highest council tax bands than is the case across wider West Lothian and Scotland. There is also a higher density of housing in the ward in comparison to West Lothian and Scotland reflecting the urban nature of the ward.



The above indicators allow a comparison between key heath indicators in the ward against West Lothian and Scotland. They show that Whitburn and Blackburn has a significantly higher proportion of people claiming Disability Living Allowance than West Lothian and Scotland. There are significantly fewer hospital admissions related to drugs misuse than there are across Scotland however, the figure is comparatively higher than for West Lothian. In addition there is a much lower percentage of babies being breast fed at the 6-8 week review than the West Lothian average..

Hospital Admissions are broadly similar to the West Lothian average with the exception of Coronary Heart Disease which is 79% higher than the West Lothian figure.

The health indicators in the table above are taken from the Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics site at: - http://www.sns.gov.uk



The above indicators allow a comparison between key populations and benefit claimants in the ward against West Lothian and Scotland. They show that Whitburn and Blackburn has an older population profile than West Lothian with a smaller proportion of both children and working age adults and a higher proportion of those of pensionable age.

The ward has a significantly higher proportion of working age benefit claimants with 22% against 18% for both West Lothian and Scotland, and a similarly higher proportion of those aged 60+ claiming Guaranteed Credits which is a passport benefit for those on low incomes.. The proportion of people who are income deprived is the same as for West Lothian and Scotland awhile the proportion of residents that are employment deprived is slightly higher.

The population and benefit indicators in the table above are taken from the Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics site at: - http://www.sns.gov.uk

COMMUNITY COUNCILS

Community Councils are directly elected bodies which find out and express the views of the community to local authorities and other public bodies, and take action which they feel is in the interests of its community. There are three community councils in the ward – Blackburn, Seafield and Whitburn & Greenrigg. More information and contact details at :-
http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/Council_and_government/pol_elec_democracy/820/776

SCHOOLS

There are two secondary schools in the ward – St Kentigerns Academy and Whitburn Academy; nine primary schools - Blackburn, Croftmalloch (Whitburn), Greenrigg, Murrayfield, Our Lady of Lourdes (Blackburn), Polkemmet, Seafield, St Joseph's Primary (Whitburn) and Whitdale (Whitburn); and two special schools – Burnhouse (Whitburn) and Pinewood (Blackburn). Blackburn, Murrayfield and Pinewood are in the Bathgate Academy catchment area. Seafield is in the Deans Community High School catchment area. The other non-denominational schools are in the Whitburn Academy catchment.

KEY COMMUNITY BUILDINGS

Whitburn

Whitburn CIS: 5 East Main Street; 01506 775000; marilyn.taylor@westlothian.gov.uk Provides CIS service. The Housing Office is upstairs of this and the Burgh Halls are open for use to community groups.

Whitburn Community Centre: Manse Road, 01501 678890; ian.ross@westlothian.gov.uk The centre hosts a variety of youth work and adult education programmes. There are also a number of local recreational and community groups of all ages that use the centre, a gym and sports hall which is primarily used for 5 a sides.

Whitburn Community Development Trust building: 61 West Main Street, 01501 748708;whitburncdt@yahoo.co.uk
Building recently leased to primarily deliver the Whitburn Older People's Partnership which includes services that provides a signposting services for financial and advice services. However, as the Trust expand their activities and partnership working this will likely adopt wider community services in response to other community needs.

Whitburn Library Union Road, 01501 678050; sandra.valaitis@westlothian.gov.uk As well as library services, this provides computer and internet access for local people. Access2 employment have their local base within the library, accessible to clients on an appointment basis.

Tenants Resource Centre: 207 West Main Street; dyann.weir@westlothian.gov.uk Located in the west of the town, the facility is a learning resource for tenants and tenants groups in West Lothian, but is also used by parent and toddlers groups and other services such as Family Mediation.

East Whitburn Community Centre: Hens Nest Road, 01501 740938; janette.wood@wled.org.uk This is governed by a Community Education Association and a number of local recreational and community groups of all ages that use the centre.

Blackburn

*Blackburn Connected;*10 Sycamore Walk, 01506 776162; marilyn.taylor@westlothian.gov.uk This provides both library and CIS services as well as surgery rooms used by services including Housing and Access2employment. Blackburn and Seafield Credit Union operate from the premises.

Blackburn Community Centre; Ash Grove, 01506 653014; andrew.davidson@westlothian.gov.uk The Fun to Fives early years programmes are primarily delivered within the building. Youth Action Project and Youth Services also provide youth work from the Youth Drop-In facility and Sports Hall, itself used mainly for football.

Blackburn Family Centre; 1a Whitehill Road, 01506 633438; blackburnfamilycentre@hotmail.co.uk Provides childcare and out of school care from the facilities of Trindleyknowe and the Family Unit to the rear of Our Lady of Lourdes Primary School. Also provide the health programme which aims to work with disadvantaged parents in the community.

Proposed Blackburn Partnership Centre: This facility is programmed into the council's Capital Programme and will look to bring together health and community facilities in the village.

Greenrigg

Greenrigg Community Wing: Polkemmet Road, 01501 751334; iain.mcdermott@wled.org.uk This is an annexe to the primary school building, used by local groups and is available for community use.

Seafield

Seafield Community Education Centre: Redhouse Road, 01506 631791; caroline.fraser@wled.org.uk Programme includes a range of activities covering all ages. The building has a dedicated youth facility within it. The Community Education Association have recently signed up to a Partnership Agreement with Area Services.

FUTURE KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- Major housing growth is directed to Whitburn where the Heartlands Development has permission for 1970 units;
- Blackburn currently has planned housing growth of 173 units on a number of sites in the town;
- Council house building at Dixon Terrace, Whitburn has seen phase 1 (49 units) completed with phases 2 & 3 (116 units) currently under construction;
- West Lothian Local Plan 2009 safeguards a new junction onto the M8 at Cowhill, Whitburn;
- Heartlands Business Park at Cowhill, Whitburn;
- Key road infrastructure to the west of Whitburn is in place;
- A new partnership centre is planned for Blackburn.

MAIN SETLEMENTS

This ward includes the communities of Blackburn, Greenrigg, Seafield and Whitburn / East Whitburn.

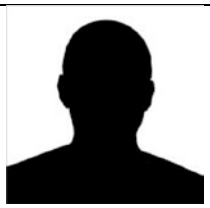
Whitburn is the largest settlement in the ward and has close links to the M8 motorway which bypasses the town. The Heartlands project is developing on the west of the town, renovating the disused land surrounding the old Polkemmet Colliery and will have an impact on the local economy and make-up of the town and surrounding communities. Combined with East Whitburn, the total population of the area was 11,631 (source: GRO(S) Mid Year Estimates 2009).

Blackburn has a population of 5,264 although there have been housing developments within the village since that count. This recent growth, as well as the growth in population of the adjacent village of Easter Inch, will present challenges and opportunities for service provision within the village in future.

The first Local Nature Reserve (LNR) in West Lothian is located on over 400 acres of public land between Blackburn and Seafield (population 1,318). Both Seafield and Greenrigg (1,031) have increasing their populations.

ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

The Whitburn and Blackburn ward has four councillors, all of whom are elected on a proportional voting system to represent the whole ward. The four councillors meet regularly as a Local Area Committee. Those elected in May 2012 for five years are :-

							
	Councillor A		***Councillor B***		***Councillor C***		***Councillor D***

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