



Estimating changes in the population of Brent

Aims

The size of the population is a key determinant of grants given to local authorities and primary care trusts through central government. An untapped source of information about the local population is from the administrative databases maintained by local public agencies. In 2005 Brent Council and Brent Primary Care Trust asked us to undertake a project to estimate the population of Brent using administrative data sources. In 2007 we revisited these population estimates using the same methodology.

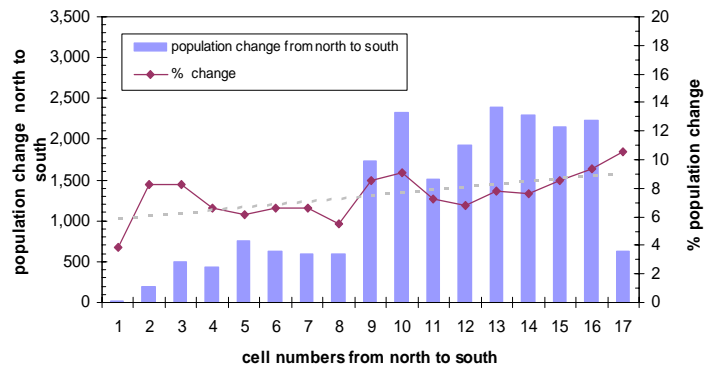


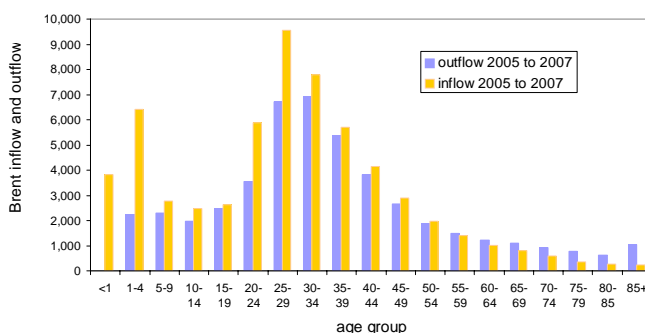
Fig 1: Changes in population between 2005 and 2007 from north south in 0.5 km steps

What we did

We linked data from the GP register with the local property gazetteer and to other data sets. Applying the same methodology we estimated the population at both points in time, analysed turnover by address and also inflows and outflows. We produced estimates of changes in household composition and size, changes in income levels based on benefit entitlement and trends in the distribution of population by geographical area.

Results

We found that the 'confirmed' population of Brent was 289.1k at March 31st 2007, 17.7k (6.5%) higher than the 2006 ONS mid-year estimate of 271.4k, and 19.3k (7.2%) higher than our previous estimate of 269.8k in 2005. The Greater London Authority (GLA), using a different methodology to us and to ONS, estimates a population of 279.2k for 2007 but rising to 290k by 2011. We found that most of the growth in Brent was from north to south and from west to east (see Figure 1). Based on changes of address there was a large surplus of inflows over outflows especially in children and young adults (see Figure 2). There was higher occupancy per address, more 3-generational households, more single parent households, more families and fewer single person households. People were also slightly better off than they were in 2005 with marginally fewer on benefits. The main beneficiaries were young working age adults.



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Fig. 2 : Population inflows and outflows to Brent by age based on changes of address

Tailoring services to local needs