

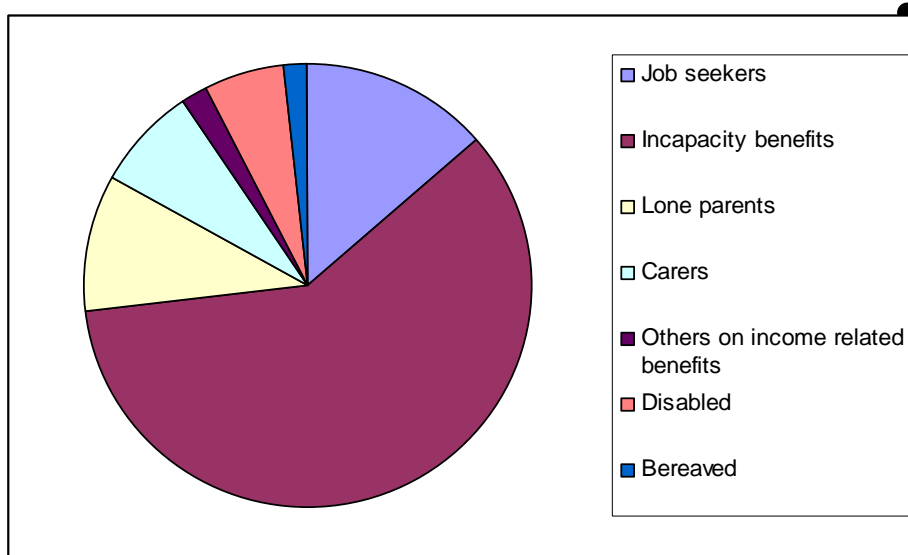
# Reducing worklessness in Wigan – the story so far

Kevin Walsh

Environmental Services

21 August 2008

# Worklessness is not new

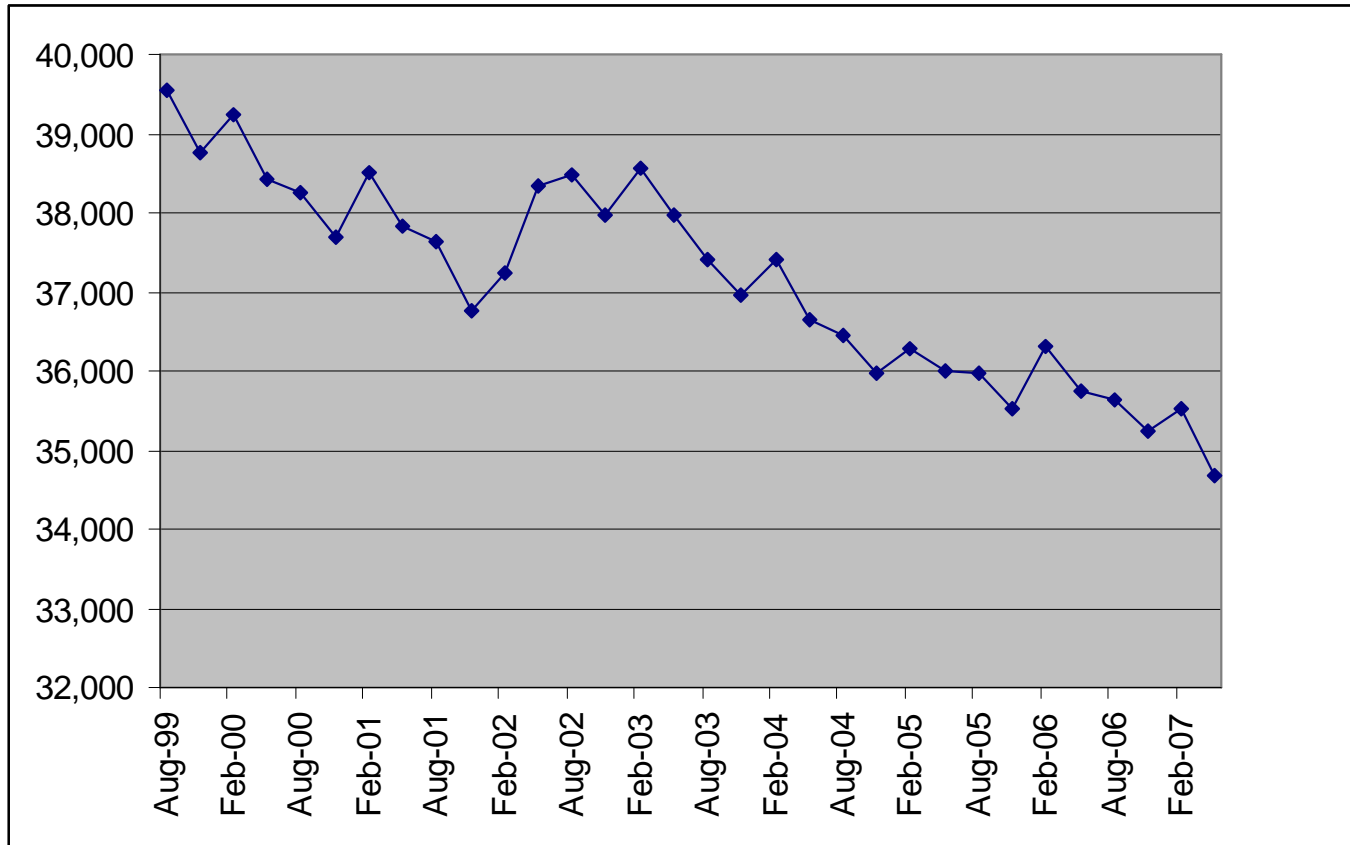


Identified as a key issue 4 years ago

- High numbers of Incapacity benefit claimants
- Increasing numbers of people stating mental health as primary condition
- Concentrated in areas of deprivation

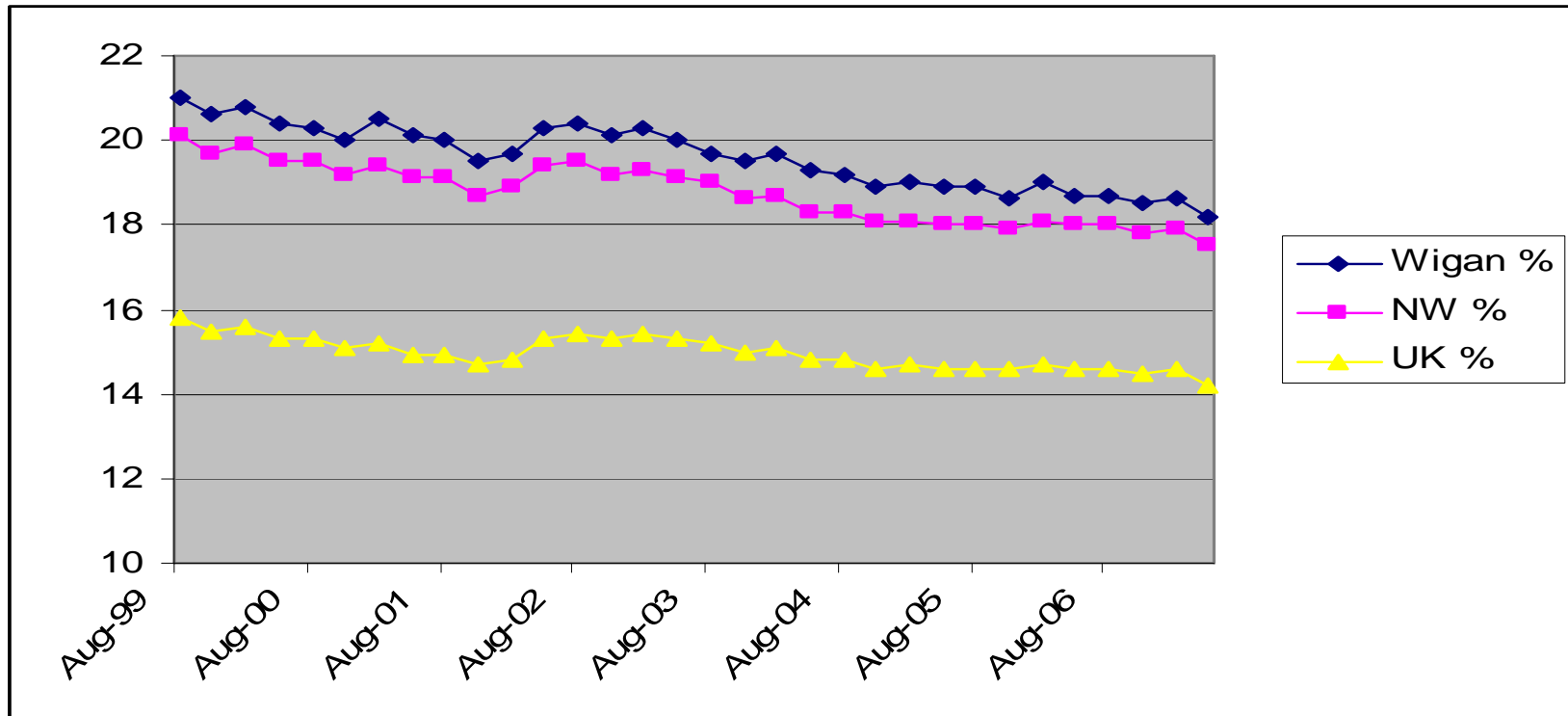
- Unfortunately no resources to address the issue

# Good progress ?

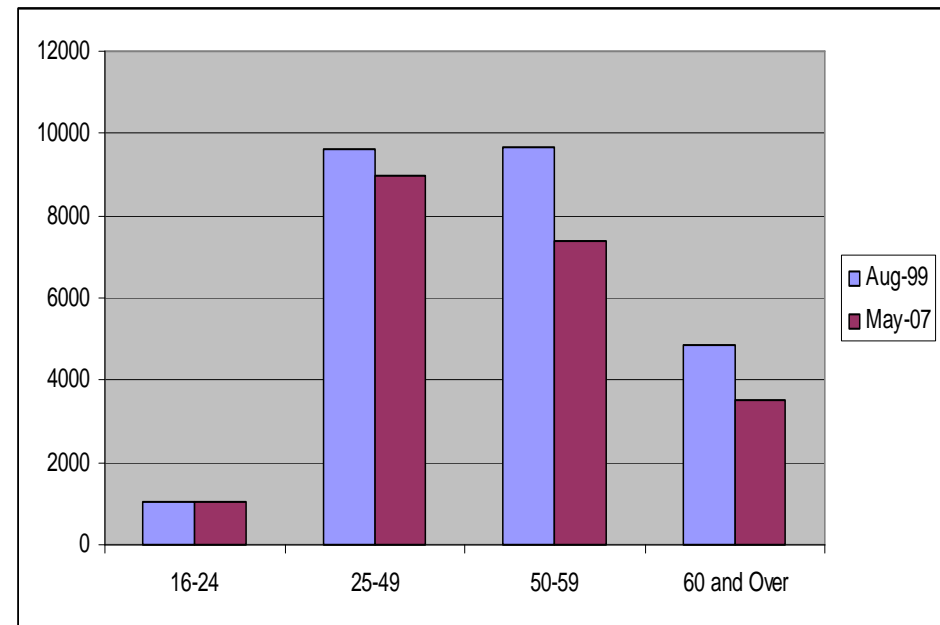
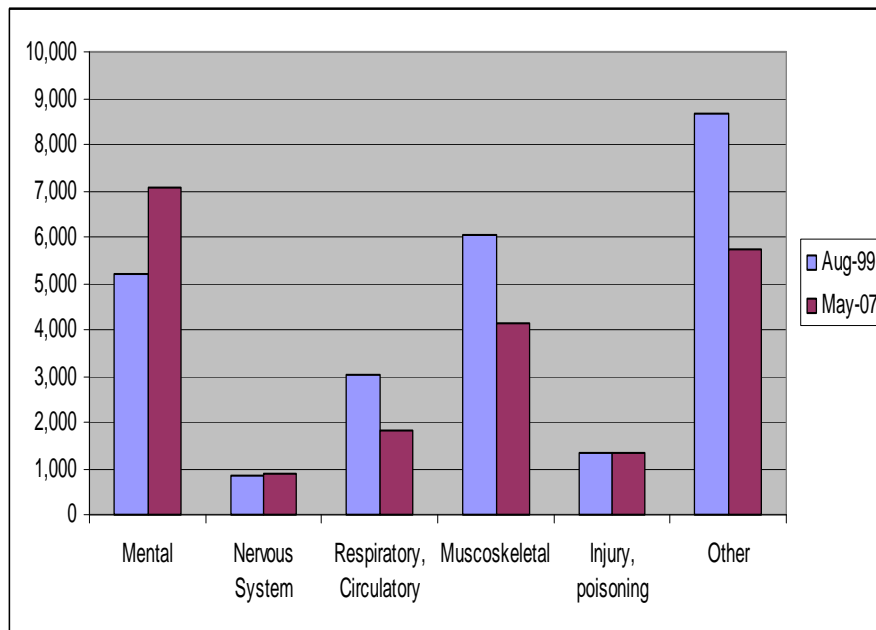


Number of people classed as workless in Wigan

# Well not really!

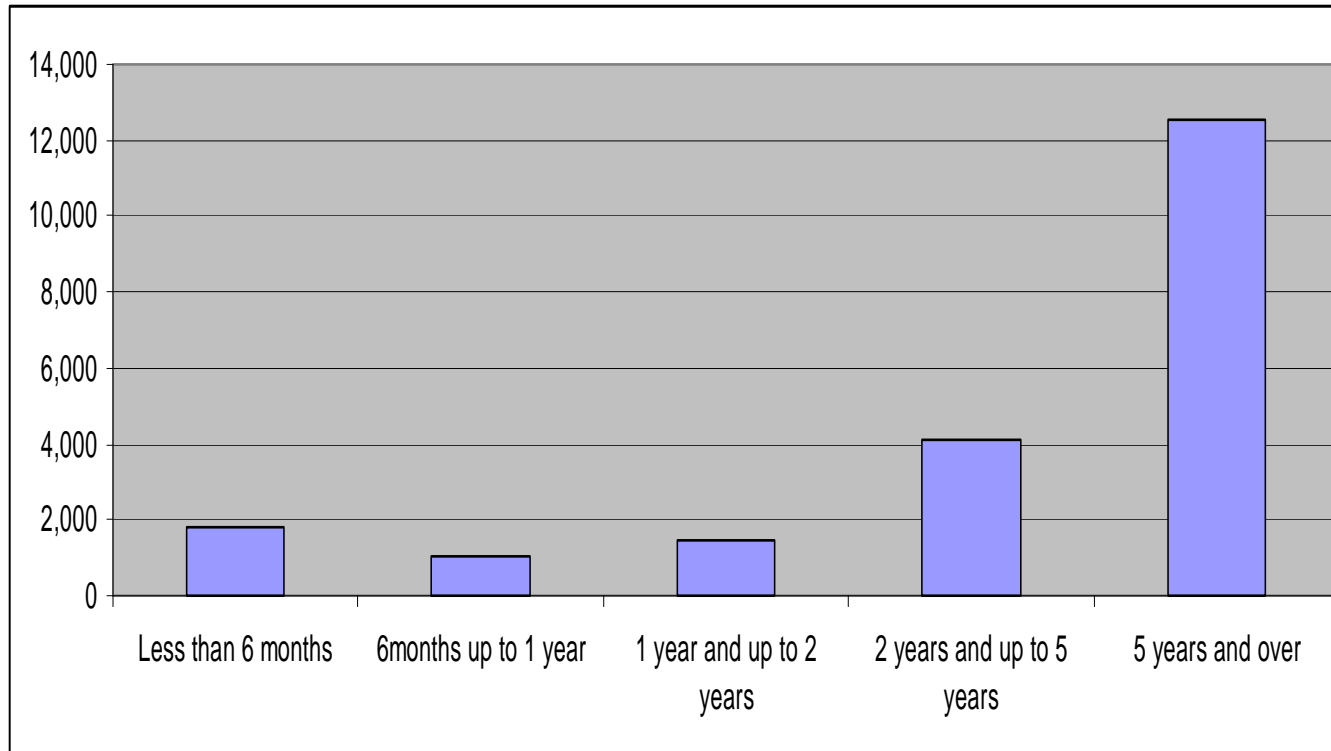


# So why the general decline?



Industrial legacy

# “Stock”



Job Centre Plus statistics show that you are unlikely ever to work again if you have been on IB for 2 years or more

# So have we done anything?

- Neighbourhood Renewal Funding (£1.3 million)
  - Focus on Enterprise activity
  - Focus on IB/Mental Health (Pilot)
- Skills Shops
  - Retail (Grand Arcade) – 550 jobs
  - Leigh Sports Village – 50 basic skills, 180 vocational – readiness for recruitment

# Worklessness Strategy

Three sections:

- Evidence base/analysis – understand the problem and related issues
- Action plans – what we need to do
- Commissioning framework – how we ensure effective delivery

# Working Neighbourhoods Fund

- Government recognition of the worklessness issue
- 3 year, £1.5 billion funding programme to address:
  - Worklessness
  - Skills
  - Enterprise
- Wigan has been allocated £21 million

# Worklessness Strategy

Identified priorities:

- Inequalities – high concentrations of worklessness in our deprived areas
- Mental Health – only growing category of Incapacity Benefit claimant
- Young people – Lone Parent, Job Seekers and even Incapacity Benefit – persistent

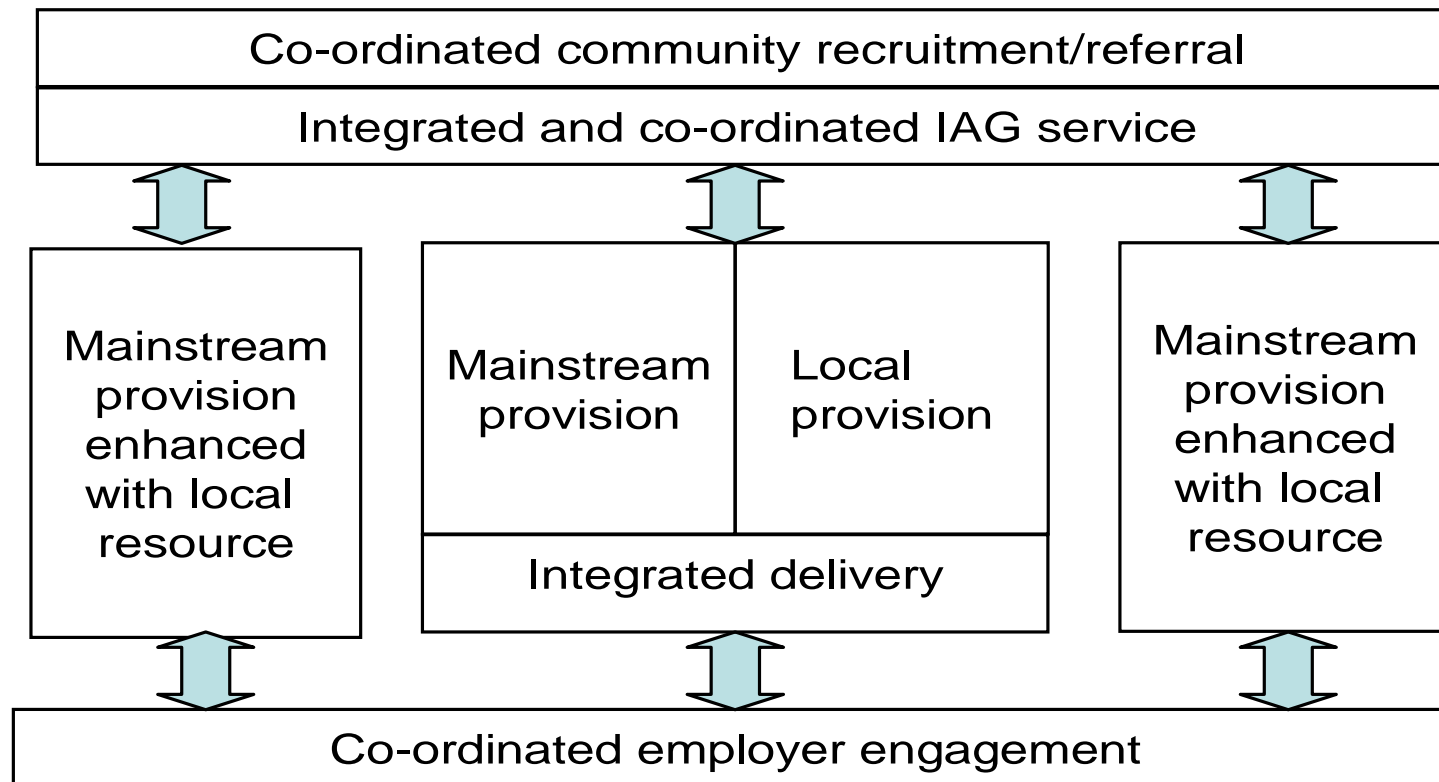
# Worklessness Strategy

Traditional “Silo” approach to project delivery:

Community engagement and recruitment	Community engagement and recruitment	Community engagement and recruitment	Community engagement and recruitment	Community engagement and recruitment
Information advice and Guidance (IAG)	Information advice and Guidance (IAG)	Information advice and Guidance (IAG)	Information advice and Guidance (IAG)	Information advice and Guidance (IAG)
Mainstream Intervention	Funded Intervention	Mainstream Intervention	Funded Intervention	Mainstream Intervention
Employer engagement	Employer engagement	Employer engagement	Employer engagement	Employer engagement

# Worklessness Strategy

Integrated, co-ordinated approach to project delivery:



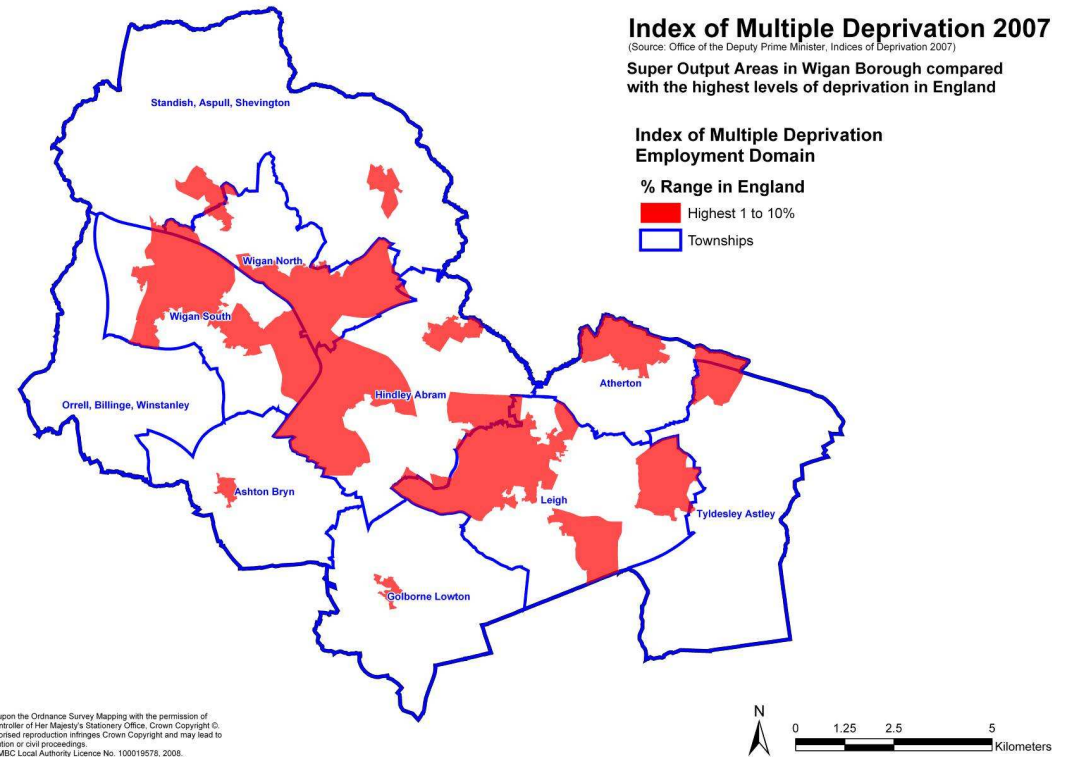
# Worklessness Strategy

- Supports Wigan's Local Area Agreement (LAA)
- Reducing worklessness – key priority in LAA
- LAA targets will inform Action Plans

# Worklessness – The Challenge

## Deprived areas:

- Home to 48,758 people
- Over 29,000 of working age
- 9,500 Workless (32.4%)



# Worklessness – The Challenge

- Between **NOW** and 2011 we need to reduce worklessness rate by 4.4% in our most deprived areas to 28%!
- This is an approximate **NET** reduction of 1,300 people from the claimant count
- For the period May 2000 to May 2007, the number of people classed as workless in our deprived areas reduced by just **515!**

# Stepping Stones to Change



The definition of insanity is  
doing the same thing over  
and over and expecting  
different results.

**Benjamin Franklin**

Thank you  
Questions?