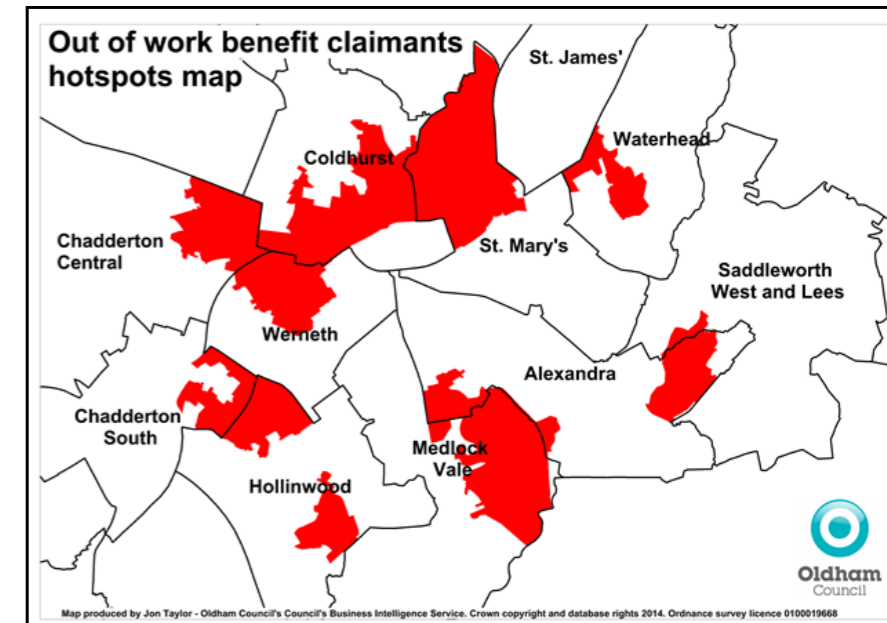
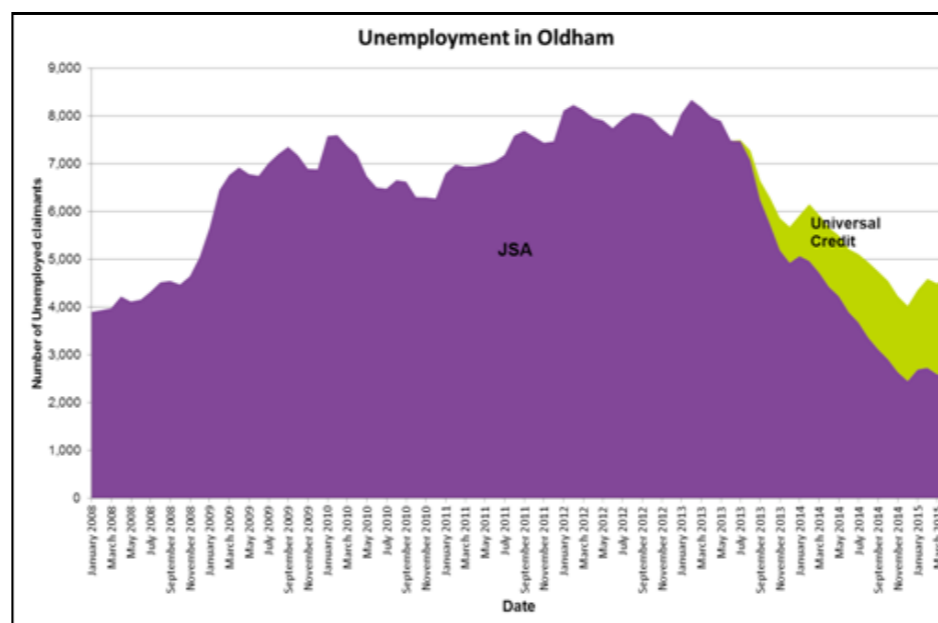


Oldham's Welfare Reform Dashboard – May 2015

Benefits

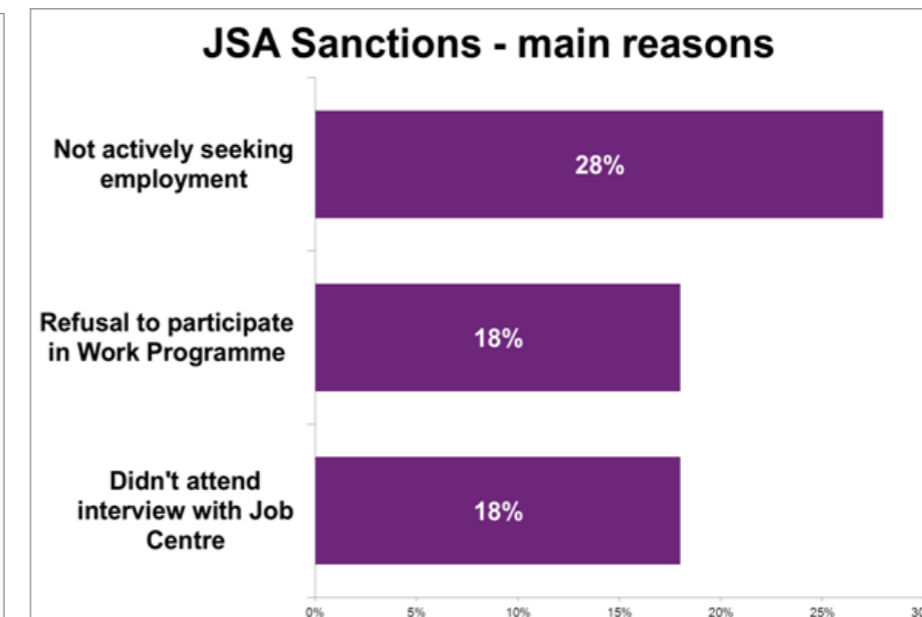
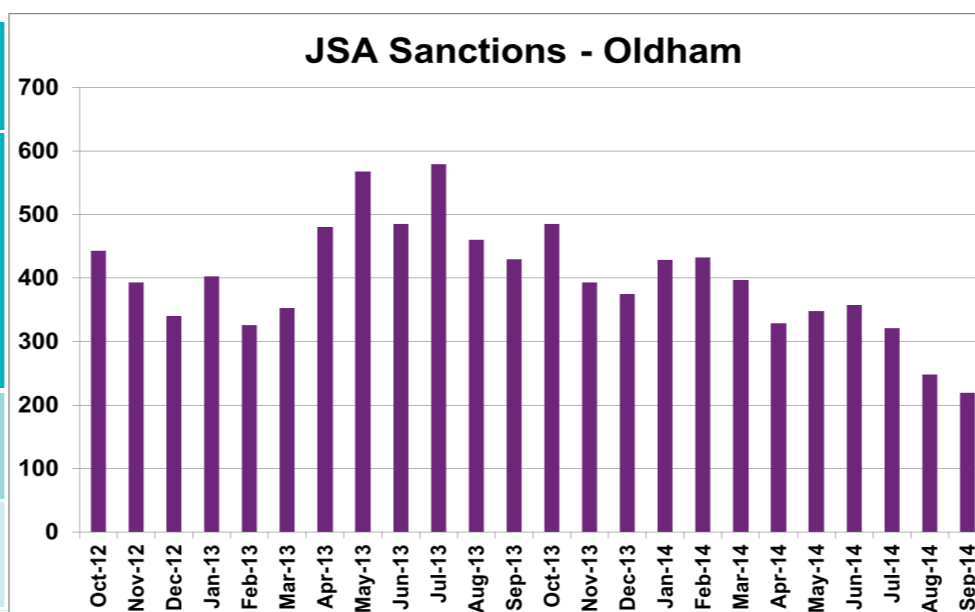
Benefit claimants (aged 16-64) - Source: DWP 2015				
	Number of claimants	%	Trend	Date
JSA	2,732	1.9	↓	Mar-15
ESA	11,730	8.3	↑	Aug-14
ESA claimants found fit for work	1,440	22%	↑	Mar-14
Universal Credit (unemployed claimants)	1,930	1.4	↑	Mar-15
Number of families impacted by Benefit Cap	90	n/a	↓	Nov-14
Employment Rate	91,000	64.1	↓	Sept-14



Having fallen since early 2013, unemployment in Oldham has now stabilised– the coming months will show whether this represents a plateau or the start of an upward trend. ESA figures have also now levelled off after previous sustained falls, and may be on the cusp of rising. Oldham has currently 90 families impacted by the benefit cap, most of those capped having large families with 4, 5 or more children.

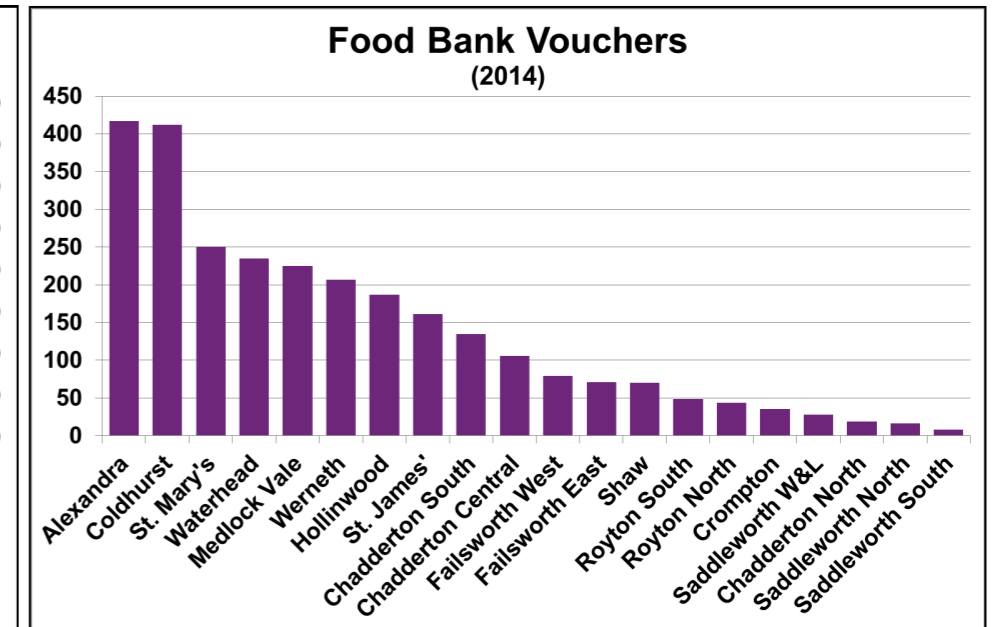
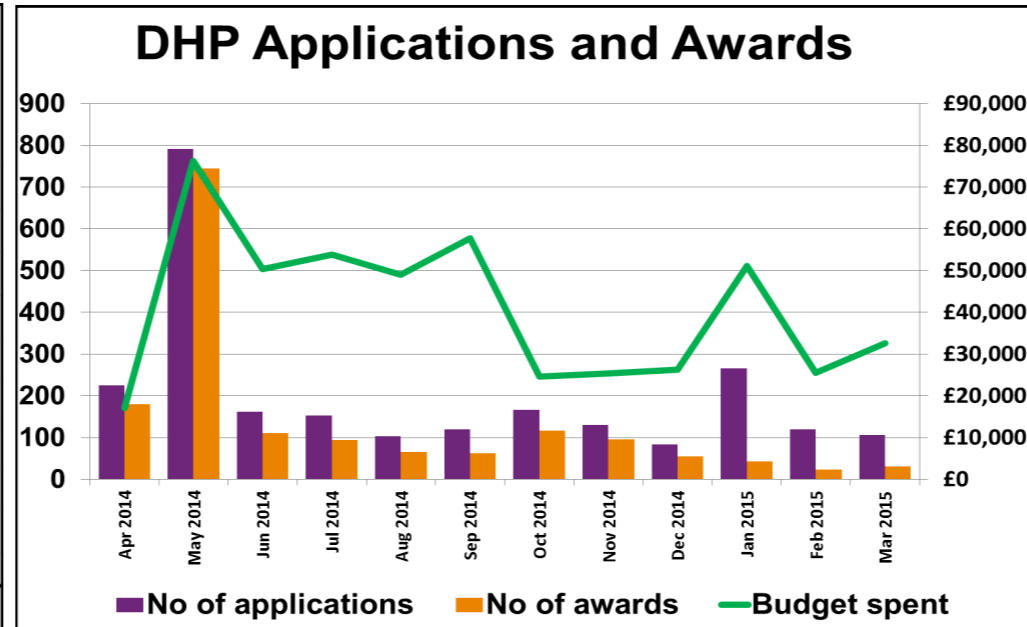
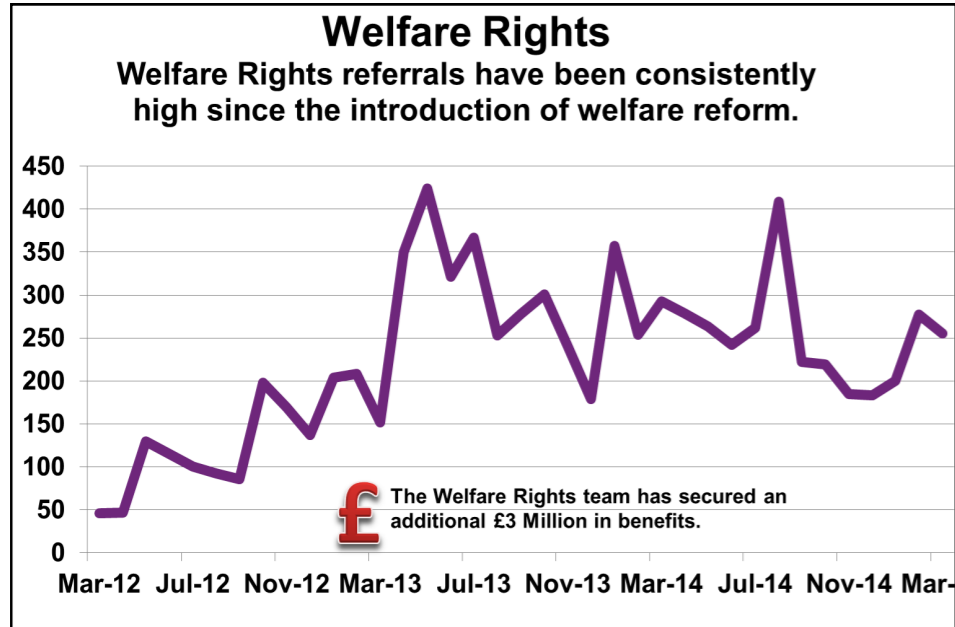
Sanctions

Out of Work Benefit Sanctions - Source: DWP 2014			
	Number of adverse sanctions imposed (Sept 2014)	% of claimants	Number of adverse sanctions imposed (October 2012- Sept 2014)
JSA claimants	219	7%	9,594
ESA claimants	43	0.4%	454



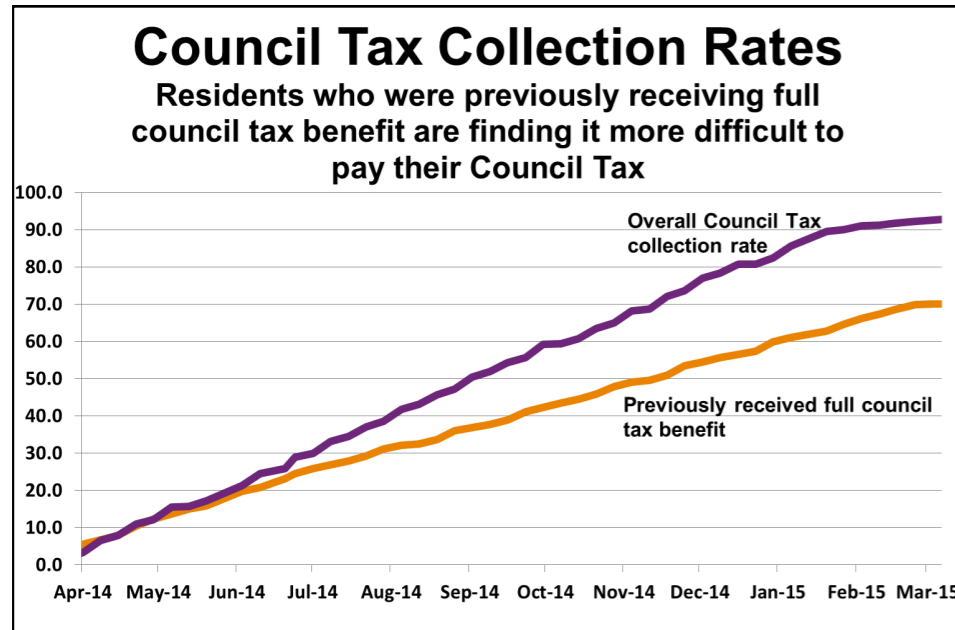
Since the introduction of tougher conditions and rules for the main social security benefits, claimants have been more readily sanctioned. JSA sanctions are currently falling, but still constitute 7% of claimants per month. ESA sanctions, while low, have been rising substantially. The main reasons for sanctions include refusal of claimants to participate in the DWP Work Programme, or that claimants have not been actively seeking employment (according to DWP guidelines).

Access to advice and support



Since the introduction of Welfare Reform, the number of Oldham residents accessing advice or requiring financial support from the Council has increased. The welfare rights team has supported many residents to maximise their income. In 2014/15 £503,792 out of a budget of £520,000 was allocated for DHP applications, with the majority being allocated to subsidise households impacted by the 'size criteria' ('bedroom tax'). £235,215 was also allocated for LWP with 1570 items being awarded. Use of food banks varies greatly by ward. The wards that have higher levels of deprivation, particularly those that surround the Oldham Town Centre, have been allocated a higher number of vouchers.

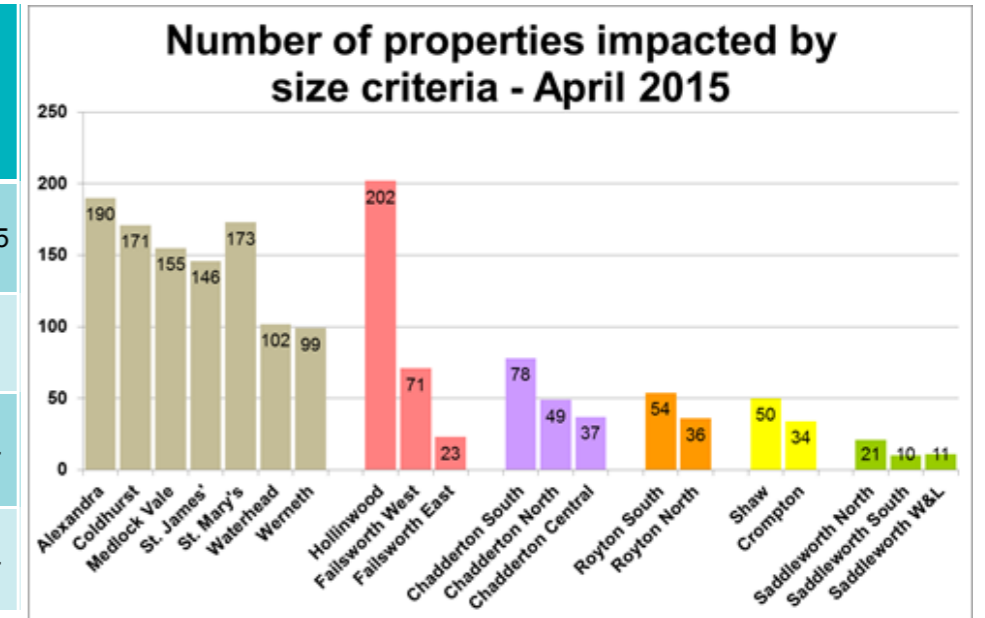
Financial Impact for Council



Residents who were previously receiving full Council Tax benefit are finding it more difficult to pay their Council Tax. The collection rate for these residents is however higher than originally predicted.

Housing

Housing Indicators	Number of households affected	Trend	Date
Size Criteria (Bedroom Tax)	1,712	↓	Apr-15
Families rehoused as result of size criteria	Awaiting data		
Number of terminations	656		Mar-14
Number of families in rent arrears	1,774	↓	Feb-14



The number of properties impacted by 'size criteria' ('bedroom tax') has reduced from 2,334 in May 2013 to 1,712 in April 2015. There are currently 1,452 properties under occupying by one room and 260 by two or more. The number of families in rent arrears is reducing.