

**AGENDA ITEM: 7**

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Meeting	Audit Committee
Date	29 June 2009
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Annual Report of the Corporate Anti Fraud Team 2008/09</b>
Report of	Corporate Anti Fraud Team Manager and Acting Deputy Director of Corporate Governance
Summary	The Committee is asked to note the Annual Report of the Corporate Anti Fraud Team 2008/09

Officer Contributors	Val Lambe, Corporate Anti Fraud Team Manager Shahin Farjami, Acting Deputy Director of Corporate Governance
Status (public or exempt)	Public
Wards affected	N/A
Enclosures	Annual Report of the Corporate Anti Fraud Team 2008/09
For decision by	Audit Committee
Function of	Council
Reason for urgency / exemption from call-in (if appropriate)	N/A

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## **1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 That the Committee note the contents of the Corporate Anti Fraud Team's Annual Report for 2008/09.**

## **2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS**

- 2.1 The Corporate Anti Fraud Team (CAFT) was launched on 7th May 2004 (delegated powers report, ref: BT/2004-05 -2 March 2004)
- 2.2 On 10<sup>th</sup> March 2009, the Audit Committee included in the work programme for 2009/10, that that an annual report on the work of the Corporate Anti- Fraud Team be produced to this meeting.

## **3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 The Council's Corporate Plan has set six key objectives to achieve 'More Choice Better Value' over the next four years, the work of the Corporate Anti Fraud Team supports this by delivering value for money through better use of resources.
- 3.2 Crime, anti-social behaviour (ASB) and community safety have continued to be top priorities for Barnet residents. These concerns are reflected in the Corporate Plan (the Clean, Green and Safe Corporate Priority) and in the Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2018, (Safer, Stronger and Cleaner Barnet theme). These concerns are also reflected in the Safer Communities Strategy 2008 – 2011 and the targets within the supporting action plan and Local Area Agreement 2008 - 2011.

## **4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

- 4.1 I have considered whether the issues involved are likely to raise significant levels of public concern or give rise to policy considerations. The proposals do not give rise to significant levels of public concern or give rise to policy considerations as they are about improving our current ability to address existing priorities.

## **5. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 5.1 The Corporate Anti Fraud Team is committed to promoting equality, challenging discrimination and developing community cohesion. This will be demonstrated through our Annual Report and our service delivery.
- 5.2 The Annual Report will have no adverse impact or diversity issues. CAFT have worked closely with the Benefits Service in ensuring that forms and leaflets have been modified and adapted so that all members of the community, especially vulnerable groups, have an understanding of the services provided and reduce the likelihood of intentional or other fraud being committed.

## **6. USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (Finance, Procurement, Performance & Value for Money, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)**

6.1 None.

## **7. LEGAL ISSUES**

7.1 None identified outside the context of this report.

## **8. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS**

8.1 The Constitution, Part 3, Paragraph 2, details the functions of the Audit Committee including, "To monitor Council policies on Raising Concerns at Work" and the anti-fraud and anti-corruption strategy and the Council's complaints process".

## **9 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

9.1 CAFT is a specialist investigative unit which was established in May 2004 to investigate allegations of Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit and General Fraud within the London Borough of Barnet. Our aim is to assist the Council in protecting the public purse through the facilitation of sound strategies, procedures and controls in the prevention, detection, investigation and deterrence of fraud and corruption.

9.2 CAFT is part of the Corporate Governance Directorate; this directorate was launched on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2006 to "promote the highest standards of conduct, accountability, and transparency in the way the Council and its partnerships operate". Corporate Governance is responsible for safeguarding the Council's legal interests and democratic responsibilities, providing independent audit assurance and, assisting in delivering the anti-crime strategy.

9.3 CAFT has worked throughout 2008/09 collectively with the Directorate's Community Protection Group (CPG) in the delivery and promotion of the anti-crime strategy. One of our clear objectives has been to ensure that the intelligence gathered throughout our investigations was collated and disseminated to all the relevant anti-crime teams to assist with their partnership working which is aimed at promoting and improving community safety and reducing the fear of crime in the community.

## **10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

10.1 None

Legal: SAL

CFO: CM

LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET

CAFT

CORPORATE ANTI FRAUD TEAM

ANNUAL REPORT

2008/09



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# Introduction

The Corporate Anti Fraud Team is a specialist investigative unit which was established back in May 2004 to investigate allegations of Housing Benefit, Council Tax Benefit and General Fraud within the London Borough of Barnet. Our aim is to assist the Council in protecting the public purse through the facilitation of sound strategies, procedures and controls in the prevention, detection, investigation and deterrence of Fraud and Corruption.

Fraud is defined as a criminal deception committed by a person who acts in a false and deceitful way and experts have revealed that Fraud costs the UK a minimum £14 billion a year.

Fraud comes in many guises: Mortgage fraud, internet fraud, identity fraud, benefit fraud, insider fraud, electoral fraud, carousel fraud, credit card fraud and expenses fraud to name but a few.

As the financial, social and personal cost of fraud continues to spiral, it is evident that a clear and co-ordinated approach to combating fraud is required. Fraudsters respond and adapt to changing social circumstances so it is vital that we, the Corporate Anti Fraud Team are ahead of our game and continue to work smarter at anticipating the fraudsters and deliver a message of zero tolerance towards Fraud and Corruption.

It is believed that advances in technology will continue to facilitate new types of fraud and provide opportunities for criminals to profit illegally. In response to this we introduced a training and development programme throughout 2008/09 and this programme tackled the underlying factors that allow fraud to be committed and equipped our Investigators and the rest of the team with the knowledge and skills required to adapt to this ever changing environment of fraud.

With this approach we were able to enhance and maximise our counter-fraud efforts in 2008/09 and strengthen our response and counter-fraud strategy.

I do hope that you find this 2008/09 Annual Report informative and that it captures and demonstrates the effective workings of CAFT, whilst instilling confidence in our drive and commitment for 2009/10 in the prevention, detection and deterrence of fraud and corruption within the Council.

Val Lambe  
Corporate Anti Fraud Team Manager

# How We Operate

CAFT provides a specialist investigation service to the Council as well as giving advice and assistance, and providing a comprehensive Fraud Awareness Training and Education programme throughout the organisation. The team operates within the Counter Fraud Framework which consists of a set of comprehensive documents, these detail the Council's Fraud Response Plan, Fraud Reporting Toolkit, Prosecution Policy and the Whistle Blowing Policy.

The Council is committed to demonstrating that services represent value for money and that there is a continuous drive to improve quality, efficiency and effectiveness of services. CAFT supports this whilst delivering a ZERO tolerance agenda on Fraud and Corruption within the Council.

The team is responsible for the investigation of internal fraud and corruption, the investigation of Housing and Council Tax Benefit fraud, providing assistance in the identification of incorrect Housing and Council Tax Benefit awards, the administration of the Housing Benefit Data Matching Service (HBMS) data matches and the delivery of a comprehensive Fraud Awareness Training and Education Programme.

CAFT consists of individual teams of Verification Officers, Benefit Investigators, Corporate Investigators, Intelligence Officers and Support Officers. Each team works and contributes towards the overall aims and objectives of CAFT, whether it be by achieving performance indicators set by the Department of Work & Pensions (DWP) or by following good practice procedures that promote efficiency and professionalism. Below are some details on the work of these individual teams.

## The Verification Team

The Verification Team comprises of five officers who are each responsible for the verification of existing Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit (HB/CTB) claims and through this process they ensure that benefit entitlement is accurate and the correct amount of benefit is in payment.

The officers interrogate the Council's Benefit System 'Pericles' searching for anomalies and scrutinise the monthly data-matches received in CAFT from the Housing Benefit Data Matching Service (HBDMS).

The HBDMS matches data held on 'Pericles' against data held by all other Local Authorities and Government Organisations and any identified discrepancies are passed to CAFT to examine and investigate. These data-matches greatly assist the Verification Team in their role in safeguarding the Benefit System against fraud and error.

The officers worked very closely with the Benefit Investigators in CAFT and resolved 1,729 data-matches.

The Verification Team is funded on a yearly basis by the DWP who set the performance standards and targets for the team. For 2008/09 the DWP set the National Performance Indicator NI 180 "The Right Benefit Indicator" which was based on a 'New Local Performance Framework for HB and CTB'.

The Verification Team reassessed 2,147 HB/CTB claims that had an incorrect benefit entitlement award and these contributed towards the National Performance Indicator NI 180.

During 2008/09 they detected incorrect awards of HB amounting to £644,968.00 and incorrect awards of CTB amounting to £180,594.93 and so far £228,526.02 has been recovered and repaid to the Benefit Service. This is an ongoing recovery process by the Benefit Service which will continue until the debt has been fully repaid.

# How We Operate

## The Benefit Investigation Team

All allegations of fraud concerning HB/CTB claims are passed to the Benefit Investigation team. All the Investigators are fully trained to prosecution standard and have all attained the Government recognised qualification in Professionalism in Security (PINS)

The Benefit Investigators deal largely with offences committed under the Social Security Administration Act 1992 and adhere to the Council's Prosecution Policy which is contained within the Counter Fraud Framework.

Throughout 2008/09 the Benefit Investigators underwent an intensive internal training and development programme in corporate fraud and financial investigations. The training programme was very specific and was intended to enhance and expand the investigative skills that they already held and introduce them to new legislative and investigative tools.

This co-ordinated activity programme aimed to build on the excellent work already undertaken by the Investigators in combating benefit fraud. The programme tackled the underlying factors that allow these offences to be committed and equipped the Investigators with the relevant skills required to adapt to this ever changing environment of fraud.

The Investigators were coached and mentored by the Metropolitan Police Crime Payback Unit in financial investigations and through this active learning they gained an understanding of the world of economic fraud and how fraudsters respond and adapt to changing social circumstances.

During the last year the Benefit Investigation team has: -

- Investigated 995 HB/CTB referrals
- Resulting in the issue of 18 formal cautions.
- 112 administrative penalties.
- 28 successful prosecutions.
- Identified £557,662.06 in recoverable HB Fraud Overpayments.
- Identified £93,643.90 in recoverable CTB Fraud Overpayments.

During 2008/09 the total amount of fraudulent HB overpayments recovered and repaid to the Benefit Service amounted to £99,891.39. This is an ongoing recovery process by the Benefit Service which will continue until the debt has been fully repaid.

# How We Operate

## The Intelligence Team

The Intelligence team throughout 2008/09 continued to maintain and develop its role as the central 'intelligence hub' for the Community Protection Group (CPG), Corporate Governance Directorate and Partners. The Intelligence team has matured and advanced in the last year and through the workings and engagement of the Crime Intelligence Analyst, Intelligence Officers, the Information Sharing Officer, the Borough Watch Coordinator and the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) they have effectively gathered, evaluated and disseminated information to other anti crime teams. This intelligence is a valuable tool and has assisted and allowed a more intelligence led approach to Crime and Disorder.

An example of this is where the team assisted the Metropolitan Police and profiled the London Borough of Barnet's Prolific Priority Offenders (PPOs) using the available intelligence and information from within the CDRP. The aim was to analyse common denominators in their offending behaviour and lifestyles both now and when they were growing up and identify pathways that led to their prolific criminal lifestyle.

The intelligence gathered provided the CDRP with potential trigger signs to look out for in young people which could give an early indication of the young person's vulnerability in following the path of becoming a prolific criminal and identify the individuals that the agencies should be working with.

## The Corporate Investigation Team

The Corporate Investigators deal with all allegations of fraud and/or corruption within or against Council. They also regularly provide advice and assistance to Heads of Service, department managers and staff members on a range of matters, including the identification of "risk of fraud" within their service, recommendations of preventative measures to tackle the risk and the strengthening of operational procedures.

Throughout 2008/09 the Corporate Investigators underwent an intensive internal training and development programme in HB/CTB fraud investigations. The training programme was very specific and was intended to enhance and expand the investigative skills that they already held and introduce them to new legislative and investigative tools.

Six members of CAFT have now completed their Financial Investigation training; four are now fully qualified and accredited by the National Police Improvement Agency (NPIA) and have powers under Part 8 of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 as Financial Investigators/Intelligence Officers. The remaining two are due to complete their qualifications within the next two months.

It has long been accepted by criminals that the possibility of arrest and imprisonment are occupational hazards. It was often the case that once a sentence was served, the criminal, having served their time, was free to share and enjoy their ill gotten gains. The Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 set out to redress this and is some of the most powerful and effective legislation to be introduced in the fight against crime.

The Corporate Investigators also investigate all referrals received under the Council's Whistle Blowing Policy and all referrals of Blue Badge misuse. Details of these investigations are provided below.

During the last year the Corporate Investigation Team has:-

- Investigated 53 referrals of Fraud or Corruption.
- As a result of our investigations - 5 staff members were dismissed.
- Two investigations are expected to come to trial in the summer 2009. (Op Diplomat and Op Diablo)

# How We Operate

## Whistle Blowing Investigations

The Council's Whistle Blowing Policy was drawn up in conjunction with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. The Act establishes a framework for responsible whistle blowing and is intended to encourage employees and the public to report any concerns that they may have of improper conduct or malpractice or abuse within the Council or to any of its service users. The London Borough of Barnet strongly endorses this policy; promoting how committed we are as an authority, to being open, honest and accountable.

During 2008/09 the Whistle Blowing leaflet was revised and a 24 hour Whistle Blowing Hotline was introduced.

The Corporate Investigation team:-

- Received 3 Whistle Blowing referrals.
- Investigated and closed 3 Whistle Blowing cases.

One of the referrals resulted in disciplinary action being taken against the Council employee as evidence of improper conduct and malpractice was found.

## Blue Badge Investigations

The Blue Badge Scheme allows genuine disabled persons to park, in most places, free from normal parking restrictions and in many cases free of charge and without limit of time. The scheme is administered by Local Authorities on behalf of the Department for Transport and operates throughout the European Union.

It is clearly stated on the badge that misuse may constitute a criminal offence, which is contrary to the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 and if convicted the offender can receive a maximum fine of £1000.

CAFT have been involved in five Blue Badge Operations this year with the Metropolitan Police. They have been extremely successful and residents have expressed their delight that the Council is targeting Blue Badge abuse.

During these five operations there were 6 arrests, 57 Blue Badges were seized and 51 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) were issued.

During the last year the Corporate Investigation team has:-

- Received 122 referrals alleging misuse of Blue Badge.
- Of those, 49 cases have been closed as no evidence of misuse found.
- 43 offenders received a 1<sup>st</sup> warning letter.
- 1 offender pleaded guilty to 3 counts of misuse of a blue badge and was fined £150 on each count, along with £250 court costs and a £15 victim surcharge.
- 1 offender was arrested during a blue badge operation with the Metropolitan Police and was subsequently cautioned for Fraud by False Representation
- 3 cases referred to other Local Authorities as the misuse offence was committed within their borough.

# How We Operate

Please refer to a few examples of cases that the Corporate Investigators have investigated.

## Operation 01/SX/21350/07 – Mrs Ilhan Yusuf

- This investigation relates to a referral received from the Benefit Service who had inadvertently paid a HB recipient, Mrs Yusuf, rental payments belonging to her landlord.
- The payments were made directly into her bank account and totalled £34,439.00. Although she had been contacted several times by telephone she had not returned any of the calls or telephone messages and the Benefit Service were very concerned. *A further £9,762.76 belonging to the landlord was due to clear in her account on the following Monday.*
- CAFT immediately contacted Barclays Bank and established that Mrs Yusuf had received these rental payments totalling £34,439.38 but only £1,650.00 remained in the account.
- CAFT contacted the Metropolitan Police who agreed to assist. The Corporate Investigators accompanied the Metropolitan Police and conducted a search of Mrs Yusuf's property under section 32 of PACE. The sum of £20,660.00 was found in cash in one of her handbags and the cash was seized.
- A further credit at £9,762.76 belonging to the landlord was due to clear so CAFT contacted the bank and froze this account along with all other accounts linked to her. The total amount frozen in the Barclay accounts totalled £23,023.76.
- CAFT managed to recoup and freeze monies totalling £43,623.76 within three days of receiving the referral.
- Mrs Yusuf attended Harrow Crown Court and was subsequently found 'Not Guilty'.

## Operation Charger – Ms Tilly Muwonge

- This investigation relates to a referral from the Benefit Service who alleged that Ms Muwonge, a HB Assessor had accessed Pericles and input false information resulting in a payment of £1,596.96 being sent and credited into her rent account. This payment was to cover the rent arrears which had accrued on her account
- The Police were contacted by CAFT and Ms Muwonge was arrested for 'Fraud by Abuse of Position'.
- She was formally interviewed under caution by a CAFT Investigator and during this interview she admitted that she had made the payment to her rent account. She confirmed that she knew that this was wrong and that she was having financial difficulties, her rent arrears totalled £1,800 and she did this out of desperation.
- She was formally charged with 'Fraud by abuse of Position' contrary to sections 1 & 4 of the Fraud Act 2006 and instructed to appear at Hendon Magistrates Court for Plea and direction.
- Ms Muwonge pleaded guilty to all the offences and sentenced to 24 weeks imprisonment suspended for 12 months. She was also ordered to pay compensation of £1,596.96 and costs of £70 which would be collected at a rate of £50 per month.

# Joint Working

## Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) Joint Working

CAFT have an excellent joint working relationship with the DWP. We have regular liaison meetings where we meet to discuss joint investigations, legislative changes and joint working strategies.

In order to maximise the prosecution of benefit offenders, we work and adhere to a Fraud Partnership Agreement.

During 2008/09 CAFT joined the DWP in their new poster campaign "We're closing in". This campaign was to target benefit thieves and was launched on 23 September 2008.

The message was very clear, "Deliberately withholding information that affects your claim is stealing. That's why we are targeting benefit thieves! The DWP and the Local Authority take benefit theft very seriously. Although the vast majority of people who claim benefits are honest, those who steal benefits are picking the pockets of law-abiding taxpayers. In 2007-08 benefit thieves stole an estimated £800 million from public funds, that's why we are determined to catch them"

The posters were adapted to meet the requirements of CAFT and advertised our 24 hour Fraud Hotline and our on line contact details.

Fraud Hotline referrals increased by 68% as a result of this poster campaign.

Please find below an example of joint working between ourselves and DWP;

### Mrs Kasule Kantu

- This relates to an investigation into a Housing and Council Tax Benefit claimant who was in receipt of benefit on the basis of being a single parent in receipt of Income Support.
- The DWP contacted us to say they had an allegation that Mrs Kantu was in full time employment. At the interview under caution Mrs Kantu admitted that she had been working.
- As a result of the investigation, her benefit entitlement was reassessed resulting in an overpayment of £1,213.60 Housing Benefit and £373.20 Council Tax Benefit. The Income Support overpayment was £25,586.11.
- Mrs Kantu pleaded guilty to 2 counts of dishonestly obtaining benefit and was given a community sentence for 200 hours for each offence.
- The Housing Benefit overpayment has been recovered and repaid in full and a total of £254.91 has been recovered and repaid towards the Council Tax Benefit overpayment.

# Joint Working

## Metropolitan Police

CAFT have a very good relationship with the Metropolitan Police and have built this through effective networking, joint investigations and the sharing and dissemination of intelligence.

An example of this is when CAFT were contacted by New Scotland Yard regarding Miss Zara Porsche.

## Miss Zara Porsche

- A phone call was received from an officer at New Scotland Yard concerning Miss Porsche who was in receipt of Housing Benefit.
- The allegation received was that Miss Porsche also used the name Zara Jagger as an alias was claiming Housing Benefit on a property where land registry showed her to be the owner.
- Intelligence checks showed that Miss Porsche had confirmed on her Housing Benefit claim form that her landlords were a Mr & Mrs Jagger.
- Miss Porsche was interviewed under caution at Kennington Police Station and admitted that she had falsely completed her benefit claim forms.
- This resulted in an overpayment of £6,637.50 Housing Benefit.
- Miss Porsche pleaded guilty to one count of false accounting and was given a 12 month community order. A confiscation order was also granted by the court and the sum of £6,637.50 was repaid to Barnet Council from this money.
- The Housing Benefit overpayment has been recovered and repaid in full.

# Joint Working

## UK Border Agency

An Officer from the UK Border Agency (UKBA) is currently on secondment and working in CAFT. This partnership is an important initiative as it allows us to ensure that only those eligible to receive benefits and services from the Council do so.

The other range of benefits are that the Officer assists the Council by helping in areas such as;

- Verification of the immigration status of individuals who apply for relevant services, such as housing.
- Notification of changes in immigration status.
- Properties of concern in the private rented sector.
- Identifying and combating criminality.
- Alleviating the burden of supporting migrants from local taxpayers.

Please find below an example of joint working between ourselves and the UKBA;

## Advice & Assistance 13 – Mr Reda Khelfa

- This investigation relates to a National Fraud Initiative (NFI) match between the London Borough of Barnet and Watford Council. Both Councils had recorded that a member of Barnet staff was using the same National Insurance Number as a benefit claimant in the Watford area.
- The Barnet employee concerned, Mr Khelfa was working as a refuse collector operating out of the Mill Hill Depot.
- Checks carried out with the DWP revealed that the National Insurance Number supplied did not correspond with the employee's details. As a direct result of this details on his French passport were checked by the UKBA Officer based in CAFT and the passport was suspected of being a forgery.
- He was formally interviewed under caution by a CAFT Investigator and the UKBA Officer. In the interview he confirmed that he had supplied forged documents and that he was in fact an asylum seeker from Algeria and he was aware that he did not have the right to work in the United Kingdom.
- Details of the interview were given to the Deputy Head of Highways and Environment and a letter of suspension was immediately drafted and served on the suspect.
- This case was passed to the UKBA Officer for further action to be taken under the Immigration Act.
- Mr Khelfa was advised that disciplinary action would be taken. However before this was initiated the suspect sent a letter to the HR Department advising that he was resigning with immediate effect.

# Joint Working

## Housing Benefit Data Matching Service (HBDMS)

The Housing Benefit Data Matching Service (HBDMS) matches the Council's Benefit System (Pericles) against data held by other Local Authorities and Government Organisations. The data is all cross checked and discrepancies are identified and passed to CAFT. The team ensure that all the data matches are investigated and resolved. This is an excellent process in the detection of fraud and error and a successful method of effective joint working.

Please find below two cases that have resulted in successful prosecutions from this joint working.

### **Miss Helen Pascoe**

- This relates to a Housing and Council Tax Benefit claim for Miss Pascoe who was in receipt of benefit on the basis that her only income was State Retirement Pension and former Employment Pension.
- A referral was received from the HBDMS stating that Miss Pascoe had capital that she had failed to declare.
- Miss Pascoe was visited by one of the Verification Officers and stated that she did not hold any other accounts other than that she had already declared.
- Subsequent checks confirmed that she held two accounts with the Catholic Building Society and the amount held was in excess of £16,000.
- Miss Pascoe was interviewed under caution regarding the matter and claimed that the accounts had just slipped her mind.
- As a result of our investigation, the claim was reassessed and resulted in an overpayment of £10,270.41 Housing Benefit and £1,700.59 Council Tax Benefit.
- Miss Pascoe pleaded guilty to 5 counts of dishonestly obtaining benefit and was fined £800 for each offence, along with £941.60 costs and a victim surcharge of £15.
- The Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit overpayment has been recovered and repaid in full.

### **Mrs Wendy Farmer**

- This relates to a Housing and Council Tax Benefit claim for Mrs Farmer who was in receipt of benefit on the basis that she lived with her partner and they were both in receipt of various benefits.
- A referral was received from the HBDMS stating that Mrs Farmer had capital that had not been declared.
- Mrs Farmer was asked to attend interviews under caution on various occasions, but did not do so.
- Subsequent checks showed that she had capital well in excess of £16,000.
- As a result of our investigation, the claim was reassessed and resulted in an overpayment of £20,852.01 Housing Benefit and £5,737.61 Council Tax Benefit.
- Mrs Farmer pleaded guilty to 6 counts of dishonestly making false representations to obtain benefit. She was sentenced to 13 weeks imprisonment, suspended for 1 year.
- The Housing Benefit overpayment is currently being recovered from her continuing Housing Benefit entitlement at £12.80 per week and £668.00 has been repaid to the Benefit Service. The Council Tax Benefit overpayment is with the Bailiffs and being collected separately.

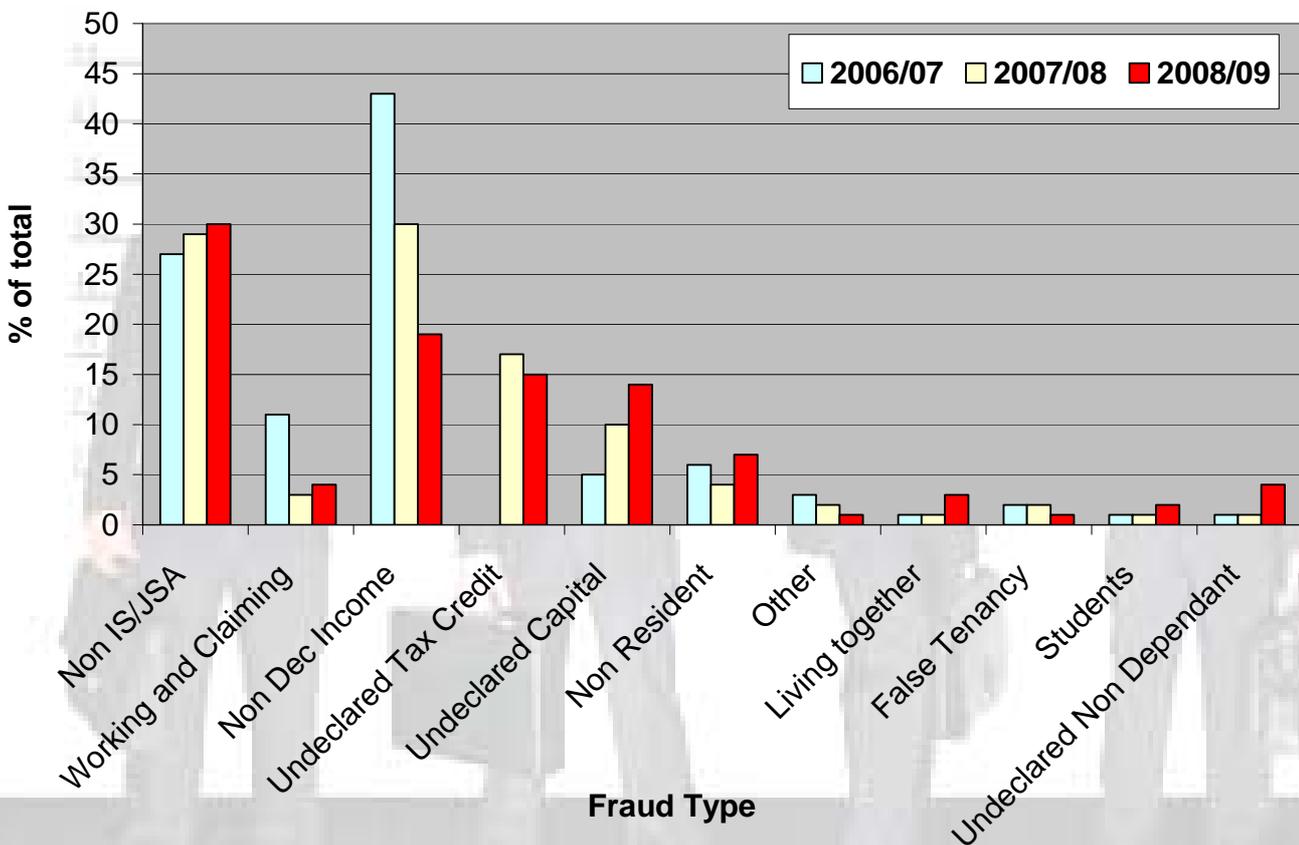
# Analysis

CAFT's Crime Intelligence Analyst has analysed all our fraud investigations that resulted with a successful sanction during 2008/09. A sanction is classified as a "successful prosecution, an administrative penalty or a formal caution"

The following results are his findings and depict the profiles of the fraudulent claimants, establishing, age, marital status, housing tenure and the fraud types committed in 2006/07, 2007/08 & 2008/09 and a geographic analysis of the residence of the fraudulent claimants in the last two years.

## Comparison Charts:

### Fraud Types Resulting In Prosecution & Sanctions 2008/09 against 2006/2007 & 2007/08

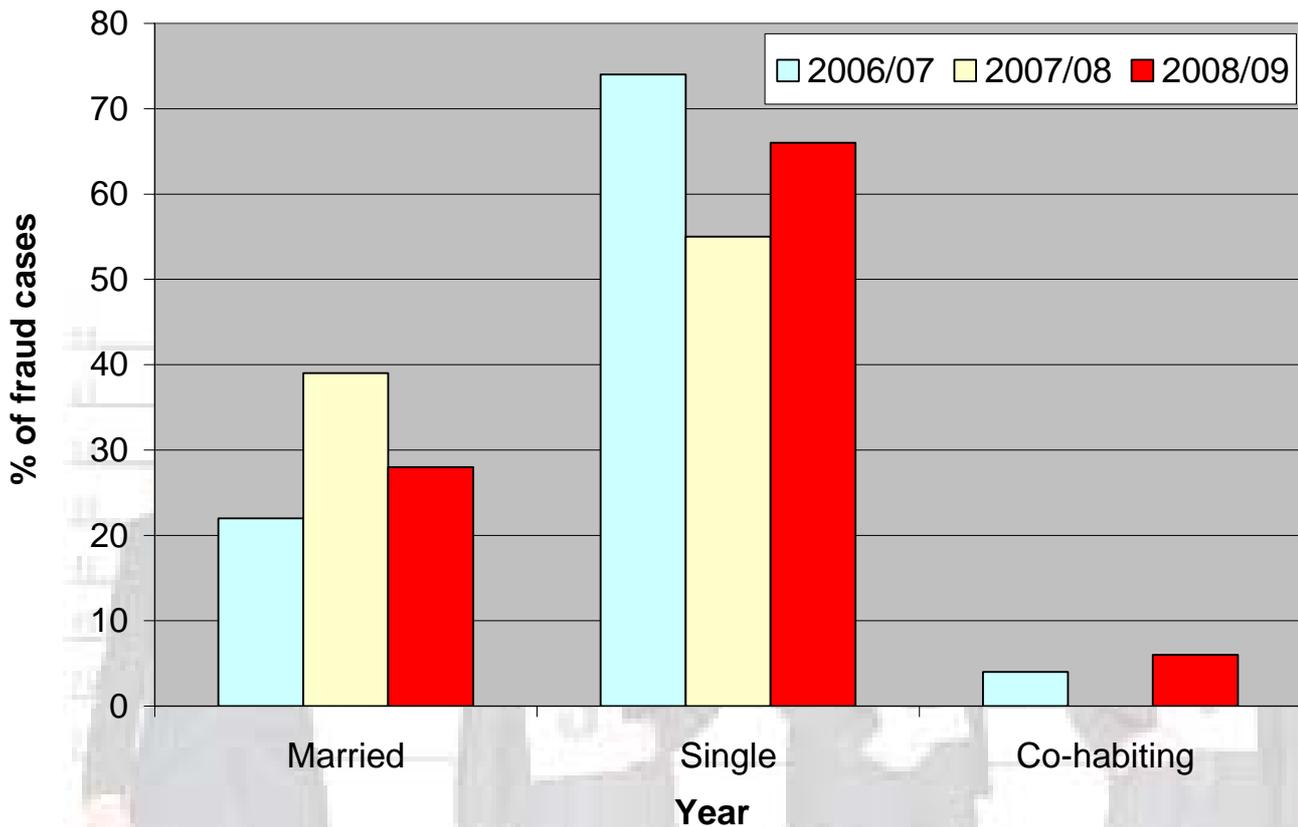


In 2008/09 the highest numbers of sanctions (30%) were classified as fraud type Non IS/JSA. This increased from 27% in 2006/07 and 28% from 2007/08. In previous years Non Declared Income was the highest fraud type with 43% share of the total in 2006/07 and 30% of the share in 2007/08 but it has dropped to just 19% in 2008/09.

# Analysis

## Profile of Fraudulent Claimants

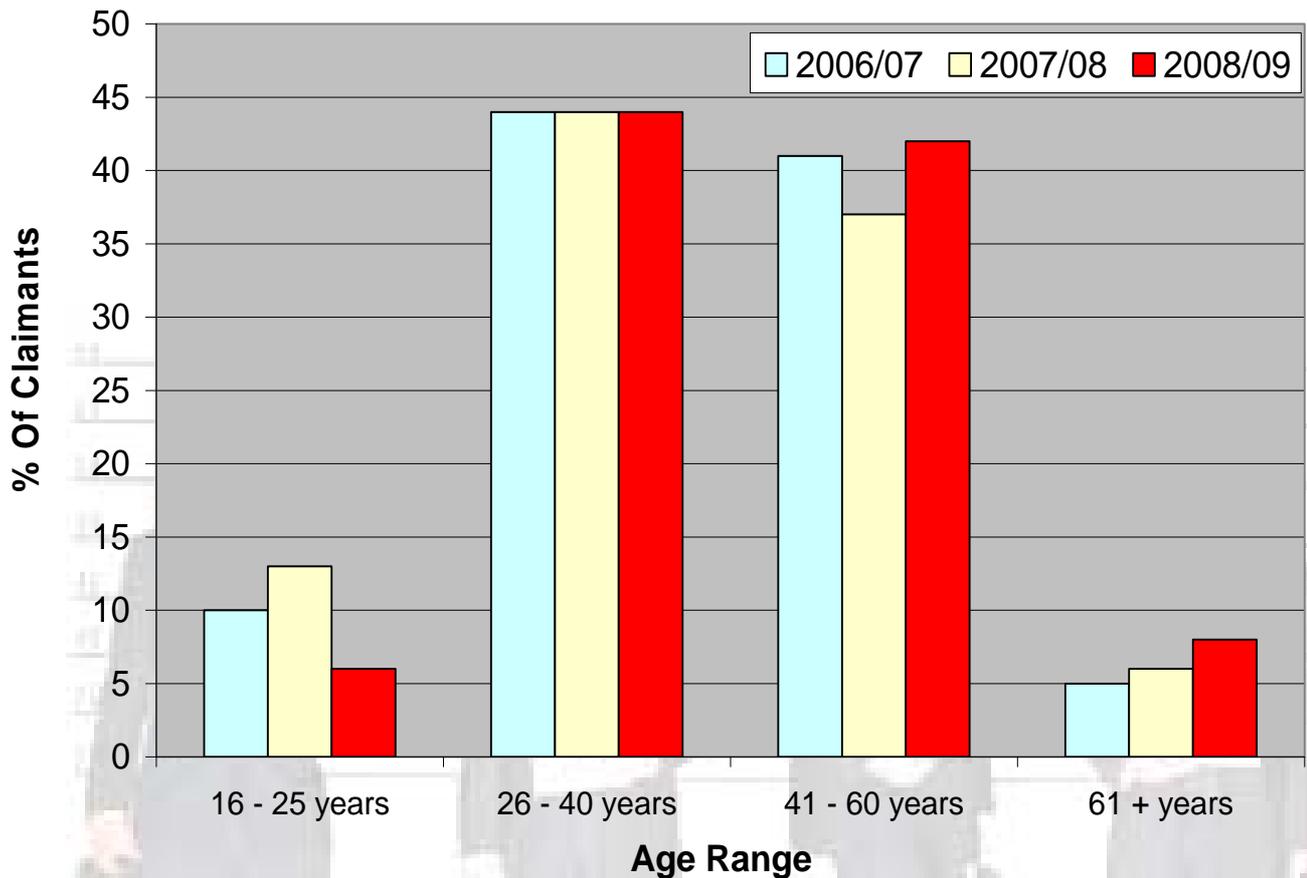
### Marital Status Of Claimants 2006/07, 2007/08 & 2008/09



With regards to the marital status of our fraudulent claimants 66% of the total claimants were single, 28% were married and 6% were co-habiting. Compared to previous years the results are similar to that of 2006/07 rather than 2007/08 when 39% of fraudulent claimants were married and only 55% single. Also to note is that in 2008/09 6% of total claimants were co-habiting compared to none in 2007/08.

# Analysis

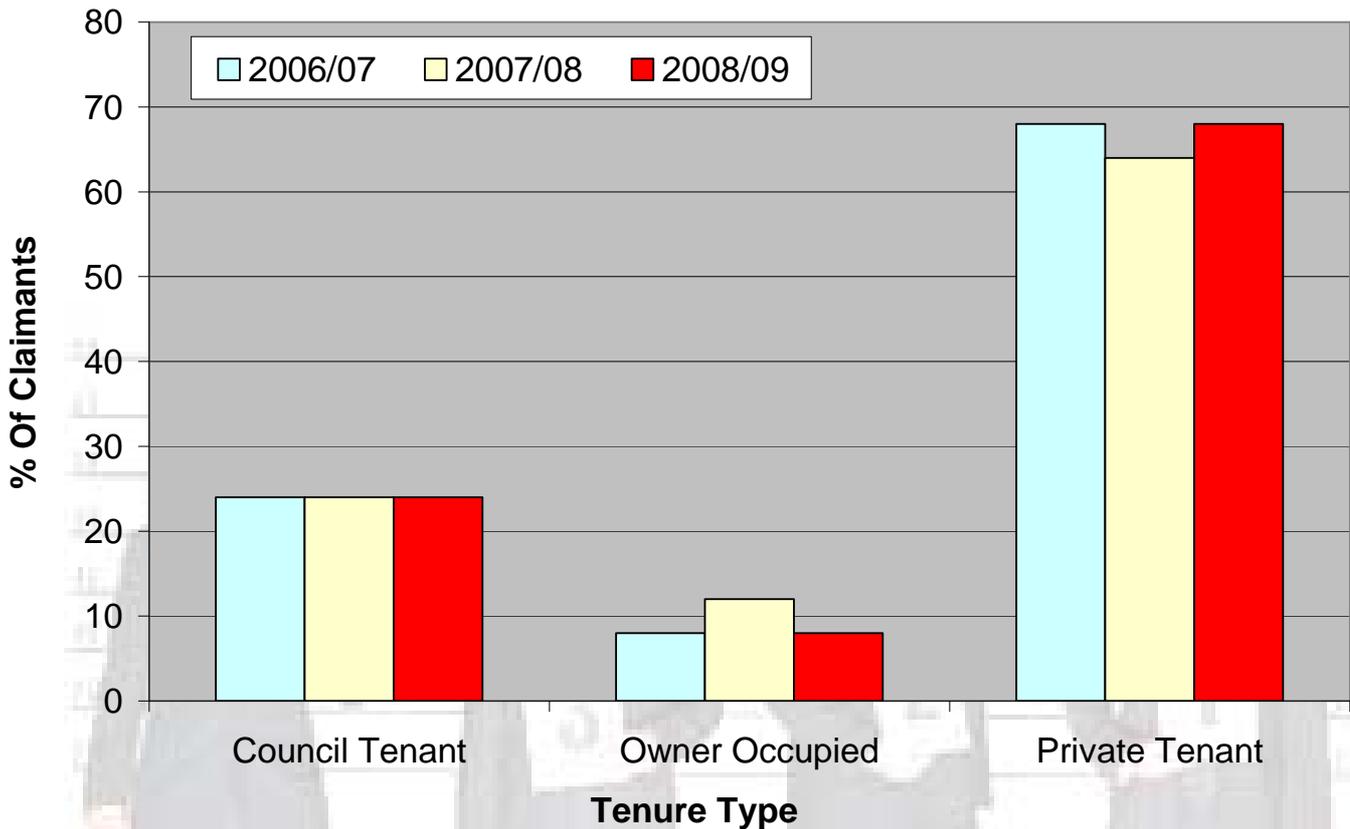
## Age Range Of Claimants 2006/07, 2007/08 & 2008/09



In 2008/09 the highest proportion of fraudulent claimants were aged between 26 to 40 years and as per the previous two years they made up 44% of the total.

# Analysis

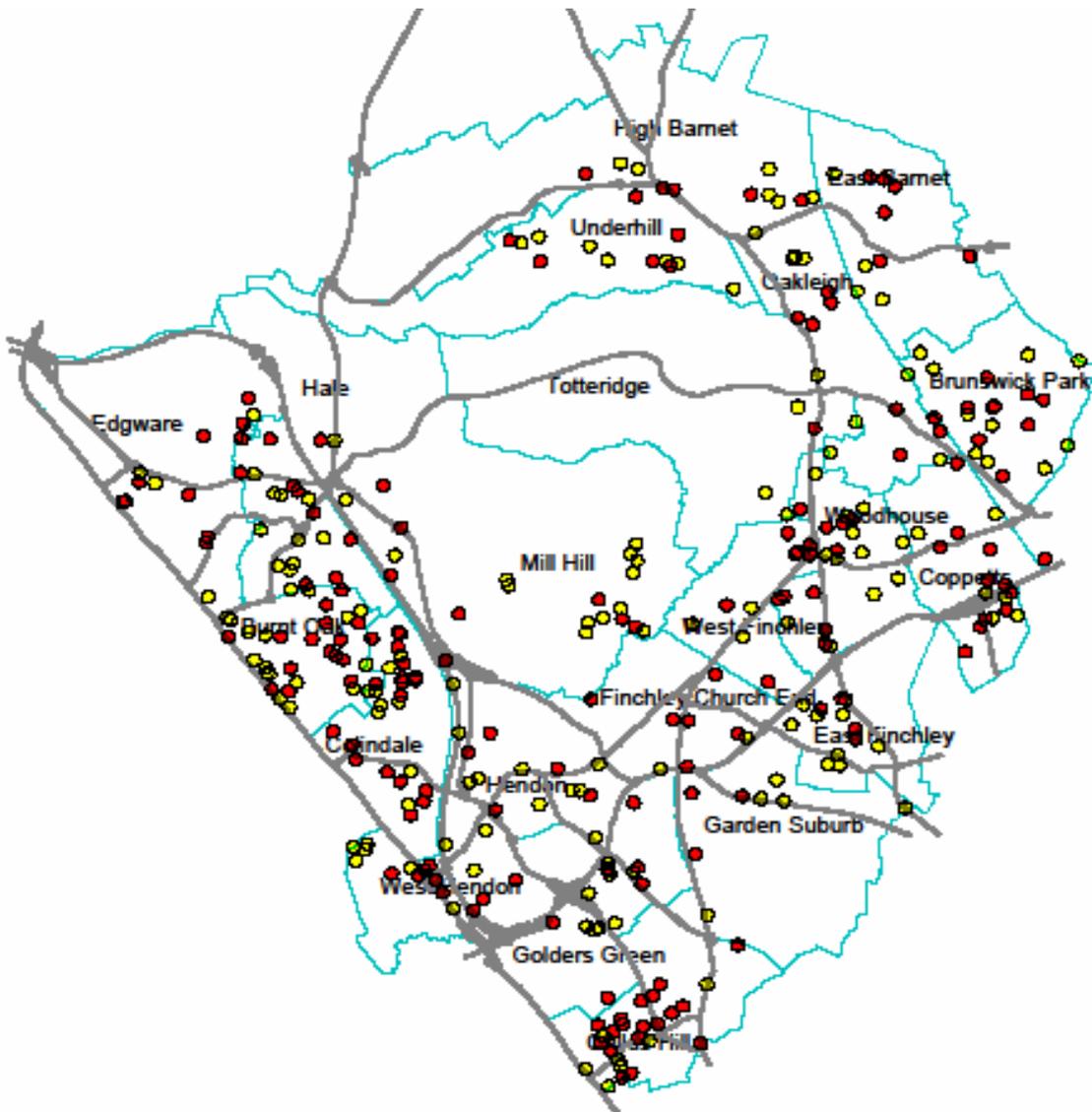
## Tenure Of Claimants 2006/07, 2007/08 & 2008/09



The split between the residential tenure statuses of fraudulent claimants showed barely any change from the previous two years. The proportion of private tenants still being by far the highest at 68% of the total, followed by council tenants at 24% of the total and owner occupied at 8% of the total.

# Analysis

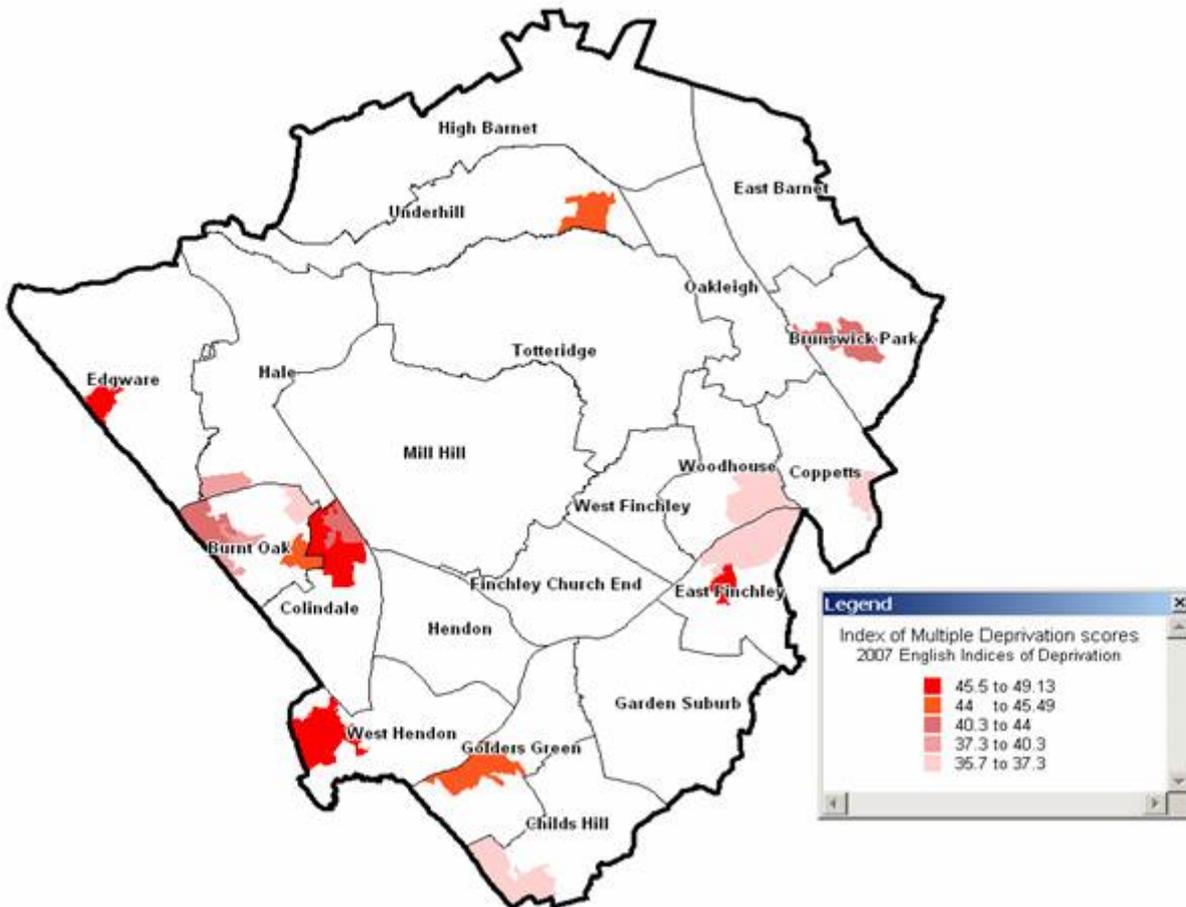
Map 1: Geographical Analysis Of The Residence of The Fraudulent Claimants  
In 2007/08 And 2008/09



Fraud Cases – 2008/09 ●

Fraud Cases – 2007/08 ●

# Analysis



Map 1 shows the residential addresses of the proven fraudulent benefit claimants in both 2007/08 and 2008/09. The two most obvious clusters appear in Burnt Oak, Colindale and Childs Hill wards. There are also smaller clusters of addresses in Coppetts, West Hendon and Brunswick Park.

Map 2 shows the twenty super output areas according to the 2007 index of multiple deprivation which are the most deprived in the borough. Super Output areas are the geography used to split up boroughs into many smaller areas for easy comparison due to a consistency in population and geographical size.

There is definite correlation between those areas with a cluster of residential addresses of fraudulent benefit claimants over the last two years and the areas of Barnet which are most deprived. Unemployment by ward is also an interesting comparison and again a link can be seen between the wards which are residence to fraudulent benefit claimants and those out of work.

In order of the highest unemployment Burnt Oak, Colindale, West Hendon, Golders Green, Childs Hill are the top five wards in the borough and as discussed above four of these wards are home to the highest numbers of fraudulent claimants.