

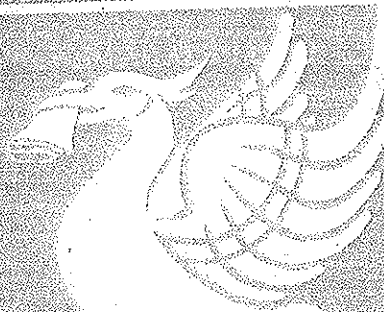
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Submitted by Mr P Fisher for Shree's Farm

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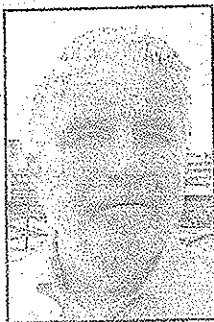
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Knowsley tops 'real' jobless rate

KNOWSLEY has the highest rate of "real unemployment" in the UK according to academics who say the recession is hitting the area even harder than official figures show.

Researchers at Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) have produced a report focusing on "hidden unemployment", where people who are out of work either fail to qualify for jobseeker's allowance (JSA) or are diverted onto other benefits.

Unemployment is most often measured by the number of people claiming JSA. In Knowsley, that now stands at 6,480 - which works out at 6.7% of the total



REPORT: Professor Steve Fothergill

working population.

But SHU's report, *The Real Level of Unemployment 2012*, shows Knowsley's

unemployment rate actually stands at 16.200 - some 16.8%.

Liverpool is in sixth place in the 'real' national table with a rate of 16.1%. Halton is in 15th place with 14.4%.

This is the fourth report into unemployment that SHU has produced since 1997. It calculates its figures using statistics from the Census, the Office for National Statistics and the Department for Work and Pensions.

Professor Steve Fothergill, one of the report's co-authors, said poorer areas like Merseyside had the highest levels of hidden unemployment.

He said the figures showed "large and continuing shortfalls in job opportunities" in those regions, and said the Government should reconsider the way it dealt with unemployed people.