Freedom of Information request 1171/2013

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Information request and DWP response

In relation to the Bedroom Tax, the following information, why when this is more designed to those living below Yorkshire and in the South!
Why have you no regard to those living above these areas i.e. the North of England? This is going to cause more anguish than good within these areas and I suspect even possible suicide? I hope that I am wrong?
What does the Government know in relation to the effect of this working within the North of England, rather than just blanketing the country with one policy?

Across Great Britain, we estimate that approximately 31% of working age Housing Benefit claimants living in the social rented sector are likely to be affected by the measure. Each region will be affected differently depending upon the level of under occupation and rent levels in the area.

We estimate that around 22% of working age Housing Benefit claimants in the social rented sector will be affected in London, with average reductions of around £21. Areas in the North of England and Wales are more likely to have a higher proportion of working age Housing Benefit social sector tenants affected by the measure, but average reductions will tend to be lower than London and the South of England. For example we estimate that around 43% of working age Housing Benefit claimants in the social rented sector will be affected in Yorkshire and Humberside, with average reductions of around £13.

The full equality impact assessment is available on our website
http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/eia-social-sector-housing-under-occupation-wr2011.pdf

Also in light of the recent News with relation to the Archbishop of Canterbury's challenge with the rest of the Bishops of the Church of England in a letter in connection to the increase of Welfare Benefits overall of only 1%, and particularly in connection to children and others being below the breadline.
With connection to the response given by the Department of Work and Pensions that in times of austerity it is helping the Welfare system to survive!
I would like to challenge the Department what supporting evidence does it have to support this response?
I hazard a guess that due consideration to the challenge rather than consideration of the possible isolation of the Government, and loss of and

increased complacency and robbing the poor to pay the rich syndrome is behind the governments thinking?
Also trying to ensure financial donations to fight the next general election and will respond so in reply and include that this will help people back to work but much more so it will drive some people to perhaps thoughts of committing suicide or suffering with serious mental health difficulties?
When will this coalition government wake up and realise that attacking the poor and cutting Welfare rather than other budgets will simply not work and drive people away from voting at the next general election and allow loan sharks the chance to thrive!
Due to also giving the assurance that loan sharks will be tackled?

Between 1997/98 and 2010/11 welfare spending in Great Britain increased by over 60% in real terms, from £123 billion to £199 billion. Last year, welfare spending accounted for around £200 billion - £1 in every £4 that Government spends. It is unavoidable that welfare spending will play a role in reducing the deficit.

The up-rating of certain working-age benefits and tax credits by 1%, rather than the Consumer Prices Index, for three years from 2013-14 is expected to yield significant savings, which will reduce pressure on spending on our public services. The 2013 Social Security Benefits Up-rating Order takes forward the 1% decision for 2013-14 up-rating. The Welfare Benefits Up-rating Bill takes forward the 1% decision for 2014-15 and 2015-16 up-rating. Both have been subject to scrutiny by Parliament.

Benefits that help to cover additional disability needs - such as Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, and Carer's Allowance - have been excluded from the 1% decision, and will be subject to the usual annual up-rating process. The Government has also kept its 'triple lock' commitment to up-rate the basic State Pension by the higher of prices, average earnings, or 2.5%, so that in April 2013 the basic State Pension will increase by 2.5% to £110.15.

Further information regards the savings and impacts of the 1% decision is available in the Impact Assessments which accompany the Order (http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/574/impacts)

and the Bill (http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2012-13/welfarebenefitsuprating/documents.html).