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Thousands pack up and leave area

SEFTON has been named as one of the country's leading boroughs for emigration overseas.

According to recent figures from the Office of National Statistics, Sefton has the sixth highest rate out of all English boroughs for residents moving abroad.

Around 3,500 people left the borough between 2001 and 2006, for countries such as Australia, South Africa and France, while just 1,800 immigrants arrived during the same period.

By KATHRYN CARR

The news comes as no surprise to Paul Arthur, director of North West specialists, The Emigration Group.

Paul explained: "Middle England is on the move and it's well-off commuter towns in areas like the Sefton which are the hot spots for emigration.

"Australia and New Zealand are among the most popular choices.

"The figures from July 2006 to July 2007 show 12,273 Brits emigrated to New Zealand,

three years earlier this figure was 8,165, a 50 per cent increase.

"Australia is no different - it has seen a massive increase. Emigration numbers have tripled over the last five years - 24,800 Brits emigrated down under during 2006/7 compared to 8,749 in 2001/2."

Paul believes there are many factors that could be fuelling emigration in the UK, with crime, tax, and even unhappiness over current levels of immigration, among the main concerns.

He added: "Many of the clients I advise are basically looking for a better life both for themselves and their children and they see emigration as a way of achieving this.

"The huge shortfalls of skilled labour in Australia and New Zealand are acting as a major driving force for emigration.

"Immigration policies in these countries have been revised to actively encourage our skilled tradespeople and professionals to emigrate."