

# **Poverty, Social Exclusion and Neighbourhood: Studying the area bases of social exclusion**

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## **Editorial Note**

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## **Abstract**

Area-based policies have become a significant part of the new Labour Government's approach to tackling social exclusion. This paper reviews the long-running debate about whether area-based policies can make a significant impact on poverty and social exclusion. There is a strong tradition of academic work that argues that this is a misguided strategy. The authors argue that recent work, both in the US and the UK, suggests that there may be causal factors at work which derive from area-based problems that suggest area-based solutions. However, too little is understood about what these factors are and how they might be addressed. Deeper local studies are required to tease out these effects. The paper then goes on to describe how the authors have gone about choosing twelve areas for particular study. In the course of doing so, much has been learned about the characteristics of the most deprived areas in the country and where they are.

## A Brief History of Area Debates

Running through the discussion of anti poverty strategies from the nineteenth century on has been a dispute about whether area-based strategies are appropriate or not. Different schools of thought within urban sociology and economics differ on this. So, too, do social policy writers.

For Engels the “great cities” were “the birth places of labour movements”. For Victorian reformers the depravity of urban life bred a contagion that had to be checked. For politicians concern with area-based solutions has waxed and waned over the past hundred years. We are clearly now in a waxing mood. Health Action Zones have been followed by Employment Zones and Education Action Zones built on top of Single Regeneration Budgets. These have all been followed by the Social Exclusion Unit’s report (1998) on neighbourhood renewal.

The pioneers of poverty research, Booth and Rowntree, of course, began with what were essentially area studies. They did so partly because they were working before the theory of sampling was invented. National surveys were an impossibility outside the Census. The parishes in London or York were manageable entities for house to house surveys, and later poverty studies in the 1920s and 1930s built on this tradition. The requirement of “manageable entities” underscores one of the unchanging rationales for area-based approaches. Booth produced the first area focused understanding of poverty and wealth. His *Life and Labour of the People in London* (1892) is, as the title suggests, as study of the local economy of each part of London. The poverty counts in each area are accompanied by moving and vivid pen pictures of local life and the local economy. He saw the interaction between the local labour market and the nature of poverty. He also recognised the difficulty of defining an ‘area’ and he recognised its differing social reality to those who lived there and to outsiders.

Take, for example, his introduction to south London:

*“South of the Thames lies a huge Metropolitan suburb of which I have found it difficult to form any but a most vague conception, so immense is it in size, so invertebrate in character... The broad stream of the river forms a physical but a moral separation, leaving the district not exactly London, but still only to be described in terms of London... A puzzle to the observer but for the key provided by the great bridges. On my map the main roads, coloured bright*

*red, to indicate their well to do middle class inhabitants, stand out very prominently, and suggest to the imagination something of the power and energy of life which fill the sidewalks with passengers, and the roadways and omnibuses and tramway cars.” There is little industry so “Morning and evening see the bridges crowded with those who pass their working day in London, so much so that it is difficult to cross at all against the stream which sets northwards in the morning and southwards at night.” (p261-2)*

Contrast this with his account of parts of east London – surely an early description of social exclusion.

*“Those I have attempted to count consist mainly of casual labourers of low character who pick up a living without labour of any kind. Their life is the life of savages, with vicissitudes of extreme hardship and occasional excess.”*

There follows a description that would have done Dickens proud:

*“From these (kitchens) come the battered figures who slouch through the streets, and play the beggar or the bully, or help foul the record of the unemployed; these are the worst class of corner men who hang around the doors of public houses, the young men who spring forward on any chance to earn a copper, the ready materials for disorder when occasion serves. They render no useful service, they create no wealth: more often they destroy it... They may to some extent be a necessary evil in every large city.” (p38)*

All of this was, of course, built on the marvellous legacy of house by house, street by street notebooks you can still read in the LSE Library. He also long predated the Chicago School of Urban sociologists by drawing attention to the concentric circles of extreme poverty, then reduced poverty, leading to areas of greater affluence. Above all he saw the link between the economy of the city and the patterns of extreme insecurity it fostered. Yet neither he nor Rowntree drew area-based policy conclusions from their work. They concentrated on society-wide changes – pensions, a national minimum wage, child allowances. In doing so they were followed by later writers like Townsend, and, of course, Marx and Engels.

Engels’ account of life in working class Manchester led him to conclusions about the whole economic system, not area-based policy! Hidden areas of extreme deprivation played their part in hiding the consequences of the capitalist system from those who benefited from it, areas of poor private housing provided warehouses for the reserve army

of labour the system needed, much as council estates do today. But the solutions lay in basic structural change and in revolution not area improvement. Modern Marxist writers also see the social divisions of the modern city as a microcosm of the wider capitalist system not a cause in themselves.

Near the end of his still unsurpassed study of 'Outcast (socially excluded?) London' in the Victorian period Stedman-Jones (1971) concluded:

*“Middle-class anxiety about the position of casual labour in London, like many other rooted beliefs, disappeared in the First World War. All ‘surplus’ labour was absorbed by the needs of the wartime economy. The workhouses emptied and the casual wards shut down. The phenomenon of casual labour itself almost disappeared. As the Webbs later admitted, the First World War showed that the existence of the casual poor had not been the effect of some mutation induced by the degenerating influences of city life. The casual poor were shown to have been a social and not a biological creation. Their life style had not been the result of some hereditary ‘taint’ but the simple consequence of the offer of poor housing, inadequate wages, and irregular work. Once decent and regular employment was made available, the ‘unemployables’ proved impossible to find. In fact, they had never existed, except as a phantom army called up by late Victorian and Edwardian social science to legitimate its practice.”* (p336, Peregrine Edition)

Modern underclass scholars, take note.

This could be taken as a classic Keynesian view as well as a New Left one. A high enough tide of full employment will float off all poverty stricken areas. Get the macro economy right and area policy will look after itself. There are echoes of this line of reasoning in Wilson's (1997) book on the social excluded of American cities, *When Work Disappears*.

The parallel social policy view is that an area focus is unhelpful because it hides the much wider structural reasons for inequality. This division of opinion was evident in the debate about education priority areas following the Plowden Report in the late 1960s. Critics like Jack Barnes (Barnes and Lucas, 1975) complained that there was no good reason to treat priority area schools any differently from other schools. *“For every two disadvantaged children who are in EPA schools five are outside them.”* The reasons for poor school performance lay in poverty and that had to be tackled at its roots through child benefit and anti poverty measures or through educational means addressed in all schools.

Moreover, to designate poor schools in need of help stigmatised them. We can see more recent echoes of this old debate in the present naming and shaming controversy.

The most powerful attack on the whole idea of area-based strategies came from Peter Townsend. It began in his Barnett Shine Memorial Lecture and was developed in Chapter 15 of his life work – *Poverty in the United Kingdom* (Townsend, 1979). He analysed his national sample to see where the poor were living. Ten constituencies had a third of the poor in the land. He took four areas for special study Salford East, Glasgow Shettleston, Belfast and Neath. Over half the children in these areas were living in poverty. They are described tellingly. Belfast for example, “*red haired boys using scales on a cart drawn by an emaciated pony to sell coal by the pound, teenage girls in a second-hand clothing shop buying underslips and skirts, and some of the smallest joints of meat in butcher’s windows I have ever seen.*” (p558)

Yet his conclusions are uncompromising. There is no area problem, merely national structural problems that find their place locally. “*an area strategy cannot be the cardinal means of dealing with poverty or ‘under privilege’... However we care to define economically or socially deprived areas, unless we include over half the areas in the country, there will be more poor persons or poor children living outside them than in them... The pattern of inequality within them is set nationally.*” He concludes that only national policy for all areas will provide lasting solutions (p560). However, the word “cardinal” should be noted. It implies that even he recognised that area-based policies could have a part to play.

For very different reasons free market economists take the view that poor areas are best left to themselves. As urban areas change in response to new markets and technology, so some will decline and others will grow. Areas in decline will, for a period, experience falling levels of employment, falling property values and other uncomfortable events. But these are necessary to any revival. Lower property values and cheaper labour will attract new firms at some point. To attempt to arrest this process with public spending will merely prevent it working. Areas will be forever trapped in a low but subsidised existence. If we couple this with the disastrous intervention of the state in inner city slum clearance and various ‘utopian’ ventures in large scale movement of populations from old poor areas to new peripheral estates then there is a case for a hands off view. Or alternatively there is a “leave it to the poor” view. Shantytowns developed by the poor may be a better response than Utopian planners’ failure. (Turner, 1976; Coleman, 1985)

Similarly one traditional school of urban sociology saw zones of transition as necessary to the health of modern cities. They were cheap to enter. They provided newcomers with a foothold from which they then moved on. This is the classic view of poorer areas in American cities (Park, 1952; Burgess, 1967).

Much of this scepticism of the area explanation is justified. The causes of poverty and social exclusion are, indeed, not merely national but international. But in the past decade or more we have begun to find increasing evidence first that inequality has grown sharply and secondly that it is more geographically concentrated. Growth and prosperity for the whole society does not necessarily aid the poorest areas. There is also a body of economic work of more theoretical importance. It is increasingly held that macro-economic trends are heavily influenced by micro-developments. Structural causes, notably to jobs, do lie behind these growing concentrations of deprivation but many of these structural factors are to be found in *local* situations. This not only worsens the impact of the deeper structural factors but in itself makes macro solutions more difficult. Economists and sociologists have begun to say the same kinds of things in their different languages. Macro and micro causes of deprivation, and therefore the necessary remedial policies, are interdependent.

The evidence of widening inequality is now established not just in the UK but on an international scale. (Hills, 1996, 1998; Atkinson, Rainwater and Smeeding, 1995) The growing concentration of that poverty in the UK was noted in the evidence amassed for the Rowntree Commission (Green, 1996; Noble and Smith, 1996) and has been elaborated more recently (Green and Owen, 1998). Similar effects can be seen at work in other advanced nations (OECD, 1997; Wilson, 1987, 1996; Jencks and Petersen, 1991; Cheshire, 1979; Congden, 1995; Mingione, 1996; Jargowsky, 1996; Cutler and Glaeser, 1997; Cutler, Glaeser and Vigdor, 1997; Power, 1997).

The Wilson thesis, especially in his latest book (1997), is that it is urban wide employment changes that have triggered these polarisation effects but once set in motion they become self reinforcing. As Wilson points out, in Chicago's Black Belt the incidence of poverty rose from less than a third of the population to just over a half between 1970 and 1990 while the overall rate for Chicago as a whole rose only seven per cent (p15). Moreover, that poverty is now combined with worklessness on a scale that is quite new. In Milwaukee, Jargowsky (1996) found in 1990, nearly half of all blacks and two thirds of poor blacks lived in high poverty neighbourhoods. Similar high concentrations exist for both



blacks (ghettos) and for Hispanics (barrios) in some of the large urban areas. The concentration is not true of white families in the States. Only 12 per cent of all poor people in the States live in high poverty areas. Yet, in the Mid-West, it is true of 43 per cent of African Americans. In the UK, in contrast, the worst concentrations of poverty and joblessness are not race related. The greatest concentrations of poverty occur in white areas in the north, as we shall see. Reading across from American experience can be misleading (Power and Tunstall, 1997).

Jargowsky uses econometric evidence to disentangle the effects of macro structural explanations of neighbourhood poverty from local reinforcing factors. Poor work opportunities lead to poor school performance, poor human capital leads to low productivity and low income, for example. He concludes that larger metropolitan-wide changes can explain four fifths of the higher poverty of these areas but a fifth must be associated with what economists call neighbourhood effects. He argues that the learned behaviour responses to poverty in such areas can be unwound as jobs appear and begin to provide opportunities. The 'culture' of poverty can be unlearned just as Stedman Jones argued. Evidence from Boston shows the high rate of absorption of long-term unemployed ghetto residents into the dynamic economy of the early 1990s. But, this takes time. Even at the peak of economic success the poor areas of Boston still had poverty rates nearly twice the average. Huby, Bradshaw and Corden (1998) have recently undertaken a study of York 100 years after Rowntree. York is, as they say, remarkably close to the national average in many ways, but the poor are becoming "increasingly detached from those of the rest of the population of this city" (p99).

This is where the new economic theory becomes important and is especially important for the UK economy. The reason we cannot run the economy nearer to full employment lies precisely in the fact that there are pools of people who are not effectively part of the labour market (Layard, 1997). Even when there is strong economic growth and an expansion of jobs, those most cut off from the active labour market, the long-term unemployed, the lowest skilled, are likely *not* to work (Machin, 1998; Gregg, 1998). The Bank of England has to check and turn back the economic tide long before it can ever reach the poorest areas as the labour market tightens and inflation takes off. Macro economic policy is not independent of its micro roots. It cannot be relied upon to do the job on its own. Economic and education and training policies have to be targeted on these areas otherwise they will forever be just above the high tide line. The longer they remain there the more difficult

it is for general economic policy to reach them. This partly explains why area concentration of poverty is growing. The continued expansion of the American ghettos underlines this. It has gone hand in hand with a period of unprecedented prosperity and the longest boom in US history.

Other explanations have to do with the operation of the housing market and especially the mismanagement of the public housing stock. (Power, 1997). The more unattractive the housing and the area's facilities, the more segregated the population, the lower the social and human capital of the area, the less capable are the individuals and the area of attracting jobs. Given the new micro foundations for economic theory, the more important area-based policy is in affecting government's capacity to create jobs.

Economic research linking education performance and later earnings is also coming up with important results. Even when poverty, family background and initial abilities are taken into account, being in a class with many other poor children has an additional effect. Such children's school performance is worse and their later earnings are lower. The impact is lasting. This is the latest conclusion from the 1958 cohort study (Robertson and Symonds, 1996).

Finally, new American work on families and children living in poor areas suggests the concentration of poverty has disproportionate impacts on their well-being (Brooks-Gunn, Duncan and Aber, 1997). A whole range of outcomes are affected according to a range of these studies – from low birth rates and infant deaths, to child behaviour and child abuse to school drop-out.

We define social exclusion as the exclusion of individuals and groups from the main stream activities of that society. Social exclusion is about more than income poverty, but area studies in Britain have yet to demonstrate how social exclusion develops, how far it is an individual or locational problem, and how important area factors are in this process. The new research we have summarised suggests that area factors matter. It only gives us a partial glimpse as to how and why it matters. We need to look much more closely at individual areas and the dynamics that are at work in them.

## **The Case for a Another Look at Areas**

Two specific questions remain. First, how relevant are area-based policies and how effective can they be in achieving progress or recovery? And second, what is the impact of area conditions of themselves on

people who live in poor areas? These two questions need to be asked both separately and in relation to one another. It remains unclear how the interaction evolves between people living in poor areas and area conditions per se, how this interaction influences social exclusion, and how it is affected by area policies. If area effects are important in shaping social exclusion, to what extent does this influence the argument for area-based policies? (See Alcock, Craig, Dalglish and Pearson, 1995.)

We suggest that for two reasons, the current context lends fresh importance to the study of areas, and particularly to the study of area change. Firstly, the increasing spatial concentration of poverty indicates that the influences on area fortunes may be changing, and that there may be a stronger case for area-based policies to redress growing area inequalities. This is worthy of further investigation. If it is the case that poor areas are becoming increasingly disconnected from the benefits of improvements in wealth and living standards and from the intended effects of national policies aimed at improving the lot of people on low incomes, why is this happening? How much is the increasing concentration of poverty due to a decline in the fortunes of existing area residents and how much to housing or transport factors which have increasingly driven the poorest people into fewer areas, while the more affluent have fled? How much is decline due to structural factors such as the loss of traditional industries, how much to market forces such as housing supply and quality, and how much to changes in housing policy, or decline in local services or area stigma? Why do poor areas matter to the extent that people with choice refuse to live in them or invest in them? How far does this de-selection by people with choice make matters worse? How do area concentrations of deprivation *in themselves* result in a diminution of the life chances of their residents?

The second reason why dynamic area studies are particularly needed in the current context relates to New Labour's strong emphasis on tackling social exclusion. The study of poor areas can provide us with the detailed evidence we need to understand the inter-relationship of problems which contribute to social exclusion, and the impact of social exclusion on the residents of such areas. Although we have plenty of evidence (most recently set out in the Social Exclusion Unit's (1998) report *Bringing Britain Together*) of the coincidence of problems in poor areas, there has been no UK study to show how these problems interact. Poor areas provide an opportunity to put 'joined-up thinking' – an integral part of the government's approach to social exclusion – into practice. But this demands a good understanding of the links between

different aspects of disadvantage. How do housing policy and housing management contribute to educational prospects? How much do transport links affect employment chances or the ability of families to provide healthy diets on low incomes? How does pre-school provision affect later delinquency or employment prospects in areas where jobs are, in any case, hard to come by? Area studies conducted over time help us to track 'joined-up problems', and to know how they differ in different areas of the country. They also give us the opportunity for critical evaluation of government policy on social exclusion, both national and area-based, and to understand the circumstances which make some policies effective and others not. For example, how much will the New Deal for Communities programme be able to have an impact in areas where long term structural unemployment is the major problem? How will the New Deal for the Unemployed work in areas which have concentrations of vulnerable people with poor educational, social and organisational skills, or where an informal economy has developed?

## **CASE's 'Area Strand'**

Ultimately, large-scale statistical studies may help us gain firmer answers to some of these questions. As we stand now, they have taken us about as far as we can go without a better understanding of how social exclusion works at a micro level. CASE's 'Area Strand' is set up to deliver a better understanding of area dynamics, area effects and the impact of area policies. It has two parts:

- the close tracking over time of 12 low income areas, some of which are showing signs of recovery or progress, others of which are not;
- interviews with 200 families about how the areas affect their children's and their own life chances.

In the following section, we explain how we selected the 12 areas and what we have learned about the spatial concentrations of poverty in the process.

## **The Distribution of Poor Areas**

The starting point for our study was to identify areas of concentrated poverty with up to 20,000 people in each. We used electoral wards as the basis of analysis. The basic parameters were that the areas should

generally reflect the national concentration of poverty including some poverty areas within more successful regions. They should cover a range of area types and regions.

We encountered some immediate hurdles. Firstly there are many ways of measuring basic poverty, but there is no agreement on which is the most accurate predictor of social exclusion. The measure chosen affects the number of people it includes and their geographical distribution. This in turn can change the boundaries and definition of poverty areas (DETR, 1998).

We examined both European and American studies of area poverty in an attempt to identify the most robust basis for our area selection. In Britain, worklessness or income poverty per se are not generally accepted as adequate measures of exclusion. Most deprivation indicators used in Britain are composites of different variables, including measures of economic deprivation such as unemployment, along with measures of social deprivation such as household overcrowding. In the USA, where there is a fixed poverty line and the census collects income information, it is the convention to identify and analyse poverty concentrations using income poverty as the base. Income poverty can then be related to many other variables such as race, family status, education, employment, and residence.

Some important American studies have identified poverty areas by census tract (about 4000 people) using the measure of at least 40% of the population living in households below the fixed poverty line. Both William Julius Wilson (1987, 1996) and Paul Jargowsky (1996) used this cut-off based on observations of conditions in areas known to have concentrated poverty at different levels. They both concluded that a 40% cut-off reflected the point at which area conditions became noticeably more difficult. Poverty tracts above this level tend to be clustered together in inner city neighbourhoods, most often as part of sprawling ghettos housing overwhelmingly ethnic minority populations. The role of race and racial divisions provides the most powerful undercurrent in the US urban debate about urban poverty.

Both studies show how area conditions, poverty, race, individual performance and opportunity interact with regional, national and international pressures. Both conclude that wider economic change is a main driving force behind area conditions, rather than race or personal characteristics per se, although they also play a part. However, they also conclude that the interaction of wider and more local factors play into each other in a vicious circle that has many of its roots in American

urban history, and produces starkly reinforced problems in areas with high poverty concentrations.

The interaction of poverty, race and the economy propounded by Jargowsky is a disputed thesis, but it does provide a framework for identifying areas of concentrated poverty on the basis of which area problems can be analysed (Wacquant, 1998).

We wanted to use a simple, recognisable measure of basic income poverty, from which we could then identify the other characteristics that clustered around low income (Lee, Murie and Gordon, 1995). In Britain we do not collect income figures in the census, so we could not use this clear and simple method of identifying concentrated poverty areas nation-wide. In addition, Britain does not have anything approaching the racial divide that renders extremely controversial all poverty studies in the USA. On the contrary, there is some evidence that ethnic minorities, particularly Afro-Caribbeans, are becoming less concentrated in the UK (Peach, 1996). Therefore, we decided to choose measures of poverty that would answer two basic questions:

- Do poor people cluster in certain areas?
- Do poor areas cluster together, creating wider areas of poverty, particularly in large cities?

A close proxy for both low income and exclusion is worklessness among able-bodied working age people. Reflecting this, we eventually chose the following measure for identifying high poverty areas: the proportion of people of working age without work, not studying and not part of a government training scheme – a measure we define as ‘work poor’. The source of this information was the 1991 Census. The 5% of wards with the highest concentration of work poor adults numbered 468. In these wards, which were most densely concentrated in the North East, North West, Merseyside and South Wales, at least 38% of working age adults were not working. This placed our poverty measure very close to Wilson and Jargowsky’s. Table 1(a) shows the regional distribution of the 5% most work poor wards.

In some wards, work poverty was extremely severe. In 47 wards half or more of all adults were work-poor. In four wards over 60% of able bodied, working-age adults were not working. The highest concentrations of non-working adults of working age were in the Knowsley/Liverpool cluster.

**Table 1: Regional Distribution of ‘Work-Poor’ and ‘Deprived’ Wards, 1991**

<b>Region (GoR)</b>	<b>(a) Number of work poor wards within the 5% most work poor wards in England &amp; Wales</b>	<b>(b) Number of deprived wards within the 5% most deprived wards in England &amp; Wales</b>
North East	105	88
North West	67	60
Merseyside	46	36
Yorkshire & Humberside	36	39
East Midlands	32	21
West Midlands	20	21
Eastern	6	5
London	39	151
South East	10	9
South West	4	6
Wales	103	32

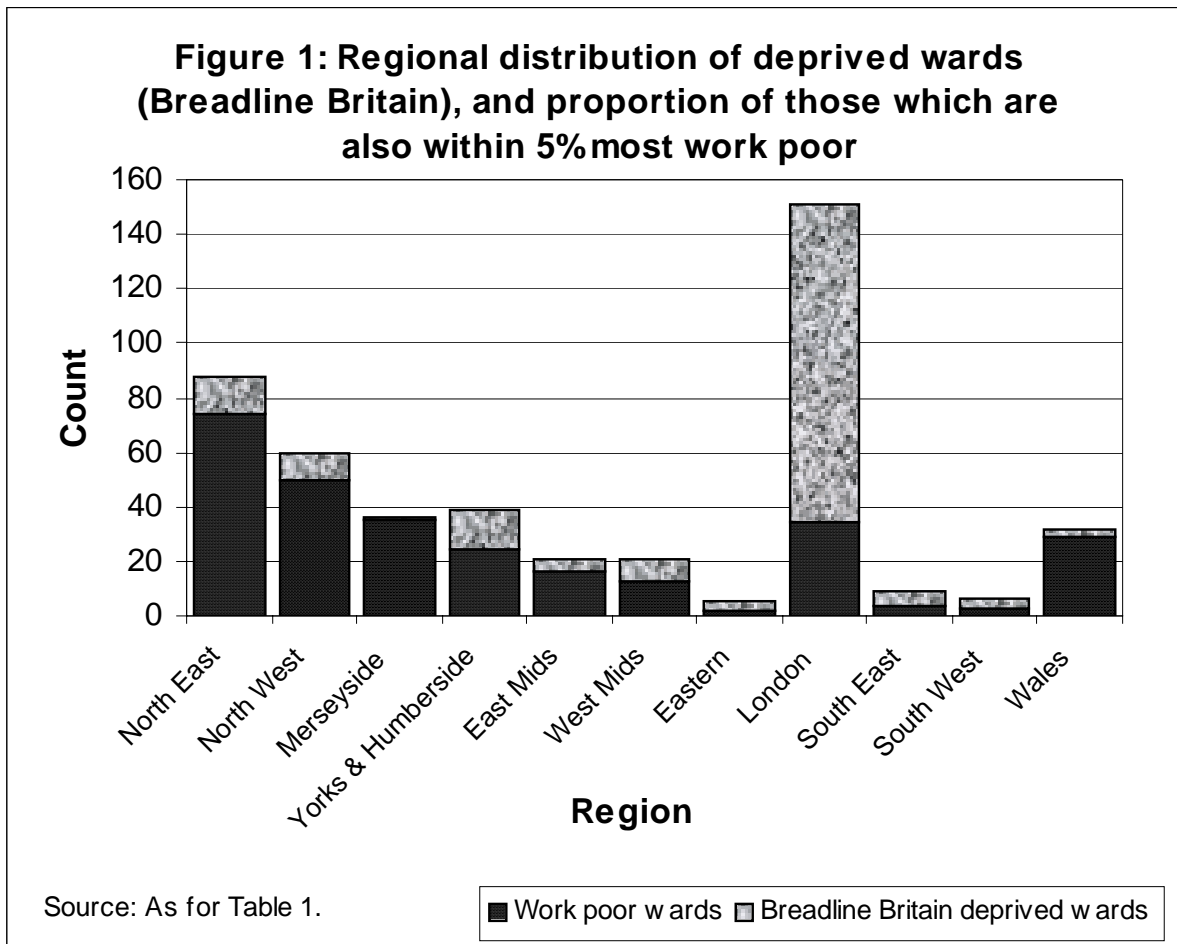
**Note:** Ward populations vary between regions. The average ward population is around 5000 but they can range from 1000 to 32000.

**Source:** 1991 Census data; Forrest and Gordon (1993); Gordon and Forrest (1995).

This measure skewed our findings towards regions with structural and long-run unemployment problems. Therefore we compared this finding with the Breadline Britain Index which is a broader measure of deprivation (see Lee, Murie and Gordon (1995) for the arguments on which we based this choice). The Breadline Britain Index contains 6 measures including car ownership, which is considered by some as the most reliable predictor of poverty. This index weighted each measure according to its relationship with income poverty. It is a more sophisticated and robust measure than most, although its weakness is that it interprets deprivation rather than simply measuring basic poverty, which we wanted as our starting point. We decided that by identifying the 5% most deprived wards on the Breadline Britain index and comparing them with our list of the 5% most work-poor wards, we would certainly be able to identify at least 12 areas for study. The 5% most deprived wards (using the Breadline Britain index) are shown by region in Table 1 (b).

284 of the 468 ‘work-poor’ wards (61% of the total) also appeared in the top 5% in the Breadline Britain ranking. The wards that did not overlap were concentrated in London, which scored much higher on

deprivation, and Wales which scored much higher on work poverty. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate this. All other regions had relatively small gaps, as Table 1 illustrates. We are confident that the 284 wards that appear on both scores are indeed poor. We refer to these as 'poverty wards'.

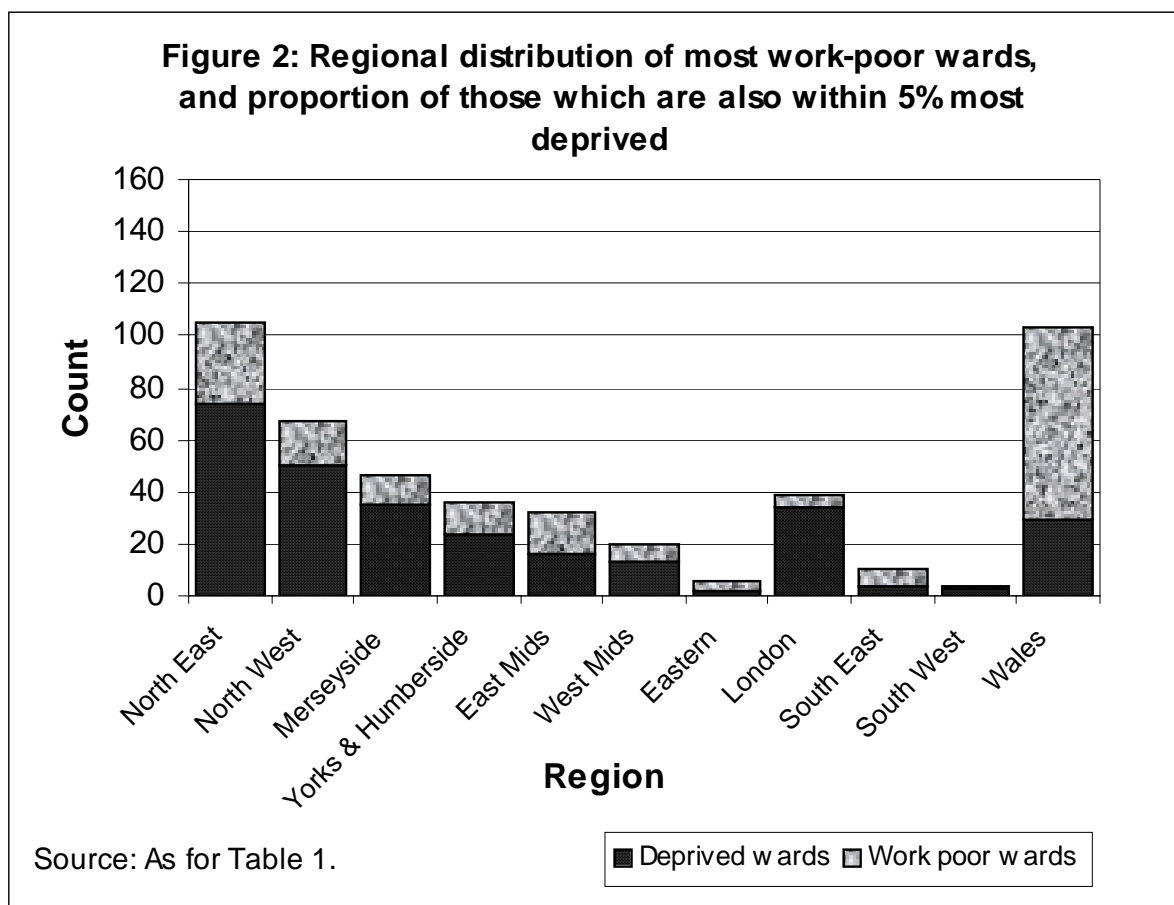


The 284 poverty wards were located in 101 local authority districts (83 in England and 18 in Wales). A full list of the wards, sorted by local authority district, is attached as Appendix 1. They are distributed across the country, albeit with disproportionate concentrations in the North East, North West, Merseyside, South Wales and London. Apart from a small number of stray wards located in areas like Milton Keynes and Kings Lynn, the vast majority of poverty wards we identified were in areas of established decline and disadvantage. One third of the wards were in just 9 local authorities; Sunderland, Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Middlesbrough in the North East; Liverpool and Knowsley on Merseyside; Manchester, Birmingham, Tower Hamlets and Hackney.

The 284 wards housed 2.4 million people in 1991. Table 2 shows the regional distribution of populations within our poverty wards. It



underlines the much lower concentration of poverty wards in the Eastern, South and South Western regions of the country. The 9 local authorities listed above contained 37% of the total poverty ward population.



Wards are units of political organisation and vary enormously in size. The largest poverty ward had a population of 28,000, while the smallest had just 1250 residents. One ward in Birmingham could have the same population as ten in South Wales. We therefore looked at the extent to which the poverty wards clustered together, forming ‘clumps’ of poverty and deprivation, and the population size of these clumps.

182 wards (65%) were in ‘clumps’; that is to say they were immediately adjacent to at least one other poverty ward. Together, these formed 51 clumps. Over two-thirds (69%) of the people resident in the poverty wards lived in these clumps.

**Table 2: Number and Population of Poverty Wards, by Region**

<b>Region (GoR)</b>	<b>Number of poverty wards</b>	<b>Population of poverty wards (000s)</b>	<b>% of regional population living in these wards</b>
North East	74	462	18
North West	50	425	8
Merseyside	35	366	26
Yorkshire & Humberside	24	274	6
East Midlands	16	111	3
West Midlands	13	244	5
Eastern	2	9	0.1
London	34	280	4
South East	4	27	0.4
South West	3	34	1
Wales	29	139	5

**Source:** As for Table 1.

Many of these clumps were single small towns or identifiable neighbourhoods, rather than huge tracts of land representing whole cities or significant slices of cities. In fact, many of the smaller clumps in non-metropolitan areas had smaller populations than an average ward in a large city. Table 3 shows that more than half the clumps had a population of less than 20,000.

**Table 3: Population Sizes of 'Poverty Clumps'**

<b>Population Size of Clump</b>	<b>Number of Clumps</b>
< 10,000	13
10,000 – 20,000	15
20,000 – 30,000	8
30,000 – 40,000	8
40,000 – 50,000	2
50,000 or more	5
- 50,000 to 100,000	2
- 100,000 to 150,000	0
- 150,000 to 200,000	2
- more than 200,000	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>51</b>

**Source:** As for Table 1.

There are, however, a small number of extremely large poverty tracts; the largest being the Liverpool cluster with over 250,000 people living in a single uninterrupted stretch of adjacent poor areas. This is equivalent to the entire population of a city like Newcastle-upon-Tyne or Hull. The five largest clumps (Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield and Tower Hamlets) account for over 750,000 people, or 32% of the entire poverty ward population. We also identified the number of work-poor and deprived wards not in clumps but within the same local authorities. Table 4 shows the populations of the largest clumps.

**Table 4: The Concentration of Poverty Wards in Some Local Authorities**

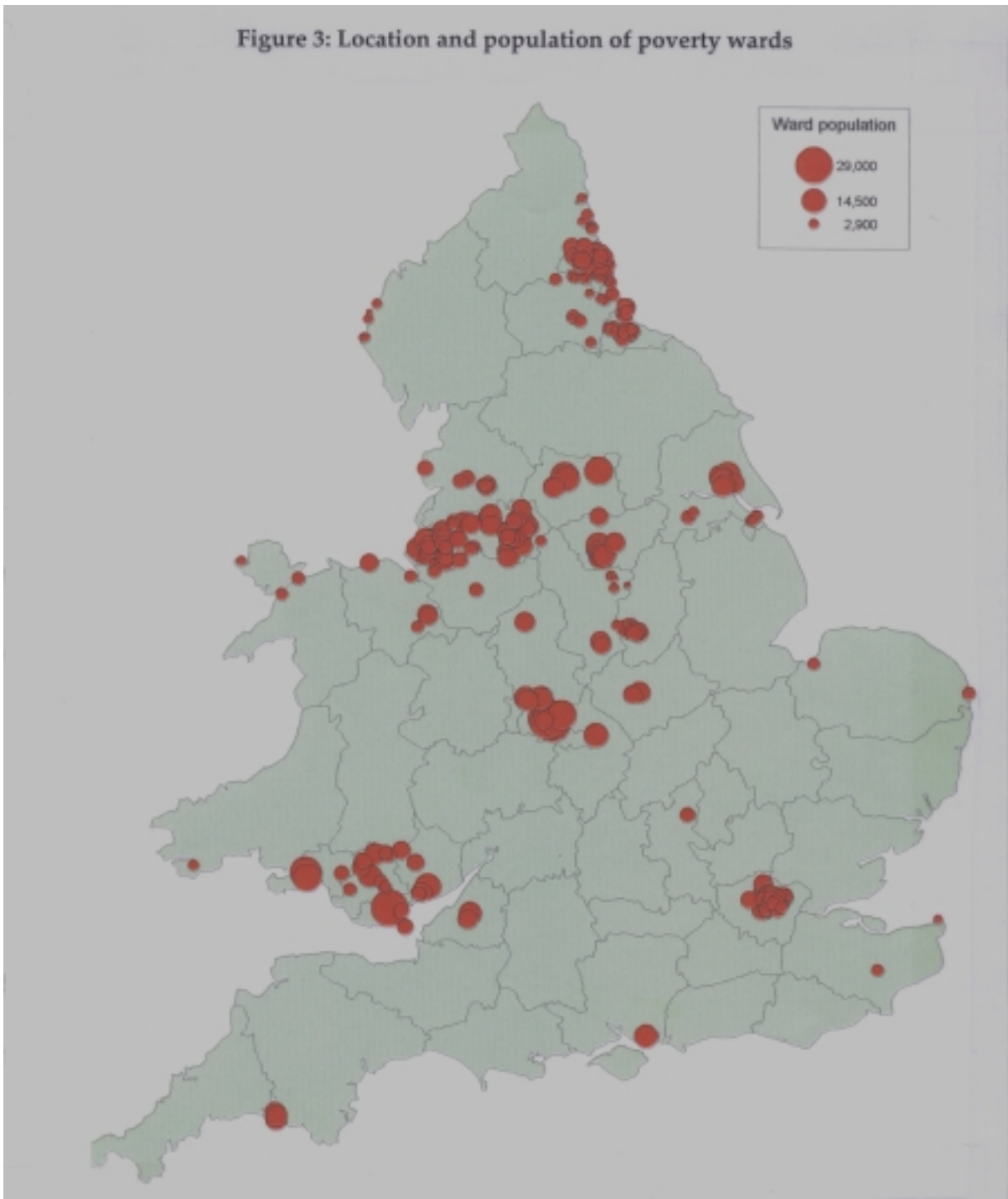
Clump name	LA	Population of clump (000s)	No. of wards in clump	No. of other poverty wards in LA	Total population in poverty wards as % of LA population
Liverpool (23)	Liverpool	259	26	4	49
	Knowsley			2	54
	Sefton			0	4
Manchester (13)	Manchester	175	16	2	38
	Trafford			0	5
	Salford			0	21
Birmingham Central (31)	Birmingham	162	7	1	18
	Sandwell			0	3
Sheffield (30)	Sheffield	89	6	0	18
Tower Hamlets (51)	Tower Hamlets	67	8	3	57
Middlesbrough (42)	Middlesbrough	44	8	4	46
Wirral (20)	Wirral	42	3	0	13
Sunderland (26)	Sunderland	39	4	3	25
Speke (21)	Liverpool	37	4	17	49
	Knowsley			10	54
South Tyneside (25)	South Tyneside	37	5	1	29
Manningham (33)	Bradford	33	2	0	8
Newcastle West End (43)	Newcastle-upon-Tyne	35	4	4	27
Gateshead (24)	Gateshead	34	4	1	21

Lenton (29)		34	4		
	Nottingham			2	21
Sunderland N (45)		33	4		
	Sunderland			4	25
Newcastle East End (44)		27	3		
	Newcastle-upon-Tyne			5	27
University (18)		26	2		
	Kingston-upon-Hull			4	30
Wolverhampton (32)		25	2		
	Wolverhampton			0	10
Wythenshawe (14)		24	2		
	Manchester			11	38
Bolton (12)		24	2		
	Bolton			0	9
Blackburn (37)		24	4		
	Blackburn			1	21
Marfleet (19)		23	2		
	Kingston-upon-Hull			2	30
Strelley (28)		20	2		
	Nottingham			4	21
Derby (6)		20	2		
	Derby			0	9
North Peckham (48)		19	2		
	Southwark			2	17
Valley (22)		19	2		
	Liverpool			17	49
St Hilda (1)		19	3		
	Hartlepool			2	39
Spitalfields (50)		19	2		
	Tower Hamlets			9	57
Eastdown (41)		17	2		
	Hackney			5	31
Stockton-on-Tees (4)		17	3		
	Stockton-on-Tees			1	13
Haggerston (49)		16	2		
	Hackney			5	31
Middlesbrough Riverside (40)		16	3		
	Middlesbrough			9	46
Rochdale (15)		16	2		
	Rochdale			1	13
Langbaugh-on-Tees (3)		15	3		
	Langbaugh-on-Tees			0	11

**Note:** The table gives details of adjacent poverty wards (or ‘clumps’) with a total population greater than 15,000.

The clusters of poverty wards we identified are shown on the map (Figure 3). This map shows a pattern of concentrated area poverty that is familiar to researchers, policy makers and local authority staff, clustered mainly in large cities and regions of industrial decline.

Figure 3: Location and population of poverty wards



This analysis illustrates the very different circumstances faced by residents of poverty wards. Many are in relatively small poverty areas with significantly greater deprivation levels than the surrounding wards. In Leeds, for example, only 3% of the city's population lived in a poverty ward in 1991. By contrast, in Tower Hamlets, 57% of the population lives in a poverty ward; and in Knowsley, 54%. Large stretches of poverty pose different problems for residents and policy makers than isolated pockets.

We are currently conducting further analysis to explore :

- the characteristics of poverty wards and clumps relative to other wards, and the extent to which these characteristics differ by region and type of area;
- the characteristics of the wards that were in the worst 5% on only one of our two measures "work poor" or "deprived";
- what the pattern of deprivation and 'clumping' looks like when we apply the analysis to the top 10% of poverty wards, or to individual indices; and
- the differences between 1981 and 1991. To what extent is poverty becoming more geographically concentrated?

## Selecting Poverty Areas

Having reached this point, we were ready to select 12 areas for detailed study. We rejected the idea of selecting areas purely on a regional basis (the standard case study pattern) in case we missed a range of types of area or failed to reflect particularly intense regional concentrations. To identify 'types of area', we decided to examine the distribution of our poverty clumps and our single wards according to the ONS classification of all local authority districts in the UK. These broadly reflect different kinds of local economy.

There are 6 main families, 12 groups within these and 34 clusters distributed across the groups. Appendix 2 shows the ONS classification in full. The vast majority of our poverty wards fall within three main ONS families: Inner London, Mining and Industrial, and Urban Centres. Within these families, they mainly fall into five groups or clusters: Inner London; Areas with Inner City Characteristics; Coastal Industry; Coalfields; and Manufacturing. Table 5 shows this distribution.

**Table 5: ONS Classifications of Local Authorities (LADS) Containing Poverty Wards**

Family	Group/Cluster	LADS with Poverty Wards	No. of Poverty Wards	% of all Poverty Wards	% population of poverty wards (2.4m)
Inner London	Inner London	9	33	12	11
Mining and Industrial	Areas with Inner City Characteristics	8	72	26	29
	Coastal Industry	7	39	14	16
	Coalfields	33	34	12	16
Urban Centres	Manufacturing	14	67	23	19
Other	Other	30	39	14	8
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>101</b>	<b>284</b>		

The table reinforces the extent of ‘clumping’ of poverty wards within large cities. Although one third of all local authority districts with one or more poverty wards are in coalfield areas, these districts only account for 12% of the wards and 16% of the total poverty ward population. ‘Other’ areas (outside the five most common ONS groups or clusters), account for nearly another one third of the local authority districts, but only 14% of the wards and 8% of the poverty ward population are in these areas. In other words, 76% of the total poverty ward population is concentrated in one-third of the local authorities with poverty wards.

The structure of local government also affects the way we look at this pattern. *Clusters* of poverty tend to fall within cities managed by large metropolitan authorities. *Pockets* of poverty tend to occur in non-urban areas managed by much smaller authorities, often with a two tier model of local government. Of the 25 authorities which had the highest poverty-ward populations, 17 were Metropolitan Borough Councils, 4 were London Boroughs and 4 were English Unitary Authorities. Of the 25 which had at least one poverty ward but had the lowest poverty-ward populations, only 1 was an English Unitary Authority. All the other English authorities in this group were District Councils.<sup>1</sup> In the

<sup>1</sup> This analysis is complicated by the fact that all our ward data is based on 1991 authorities. Some authorities containing poverty wards have been affected by the subsequent Local Government Review. This paragraph refers to the current structure. All Welsh authorities are now unitary.

North East, there were eight authorities (mainly District Councils) classified as 'coalfield' authorities. These had a combined population of 800,000. The proportion of residents living in poverty wards was typically between 10% and 20%. This compared with the five North-East authorities classified as 'coastal industry' (all Metropolitan authorities), which had a combined population of 1,100,000, and in which the proportion of people living in poverty wards was typically between 20% and 30%.

This relationship between the distribution of poverty clusters and the structure of local authorities has implications for resource allocation to poor areas. In terms of our approach, it means that selection based on the number of districts in each ONS group or cluster would give an unrepresentative picture of poor areas.

To make sure that our selection reflected the areas where poor people live, rather than the organisation of local government, we developed a framework for selection based on the wards, and the proportion of the of poverty population within districts, rather than on districts per se. However, it would be local authorities with whom we would set up the research; local authorities whose policies we would be reviewing. So we would decide on the *number* and *type* of areas on the basis of wards, and then identify local authorities containing such wards in order to move forward with our research.

Because population densities are higher in cities, selecting on the basis of population alone could lead to an emphasis on inner city areas where large numbers of people live in poor areas with significant uniformity of cause and condition. Smaller communities affected by loss of industry, lack of opportunity or their peripheral position might be omitted. Therefore, we selected on the basis of the number of wards of each type, although this broadly reflected population distribution except for the "other" category of single wards. This would give us a better range of types of poverty area.

We chose to use ONS type as our first criterion, and then to ensure that a representative regional distribution was achieved. To do this, we worked out how many areas we would need to select in each ONS group/cluster and each region. This is shown in Tables 6 and 7. Where a calculation showed that we should select approximately 1.5 areas, we rounded up or down to a whole number, for obvious reasons.



**Table 6: Selection of Districts by ONS Cluster**

ONS Group/Cluster	% of population in all poverty wards	% of all poverty wards	Number of areas to be selected (population)	Number of areas to be selected (wards)
Inner London	11	12	1	1 or 2
Areas with Inner City Characteristics	29	26	3 or 4	2 or 3
Coastal Industry	16	14	2	1 or 2
Coalfields	16	12	2	1 or 2
Manufacturing	19	23	2	2 or 3
Other	8	14	1	1 or 2

**Table 7: Selection of Districts by Region**

Region	% of population in all poverty wards	% of all poverty wards	Number of Areas to be selected (population)	Number of Areas to be selected (wards)
North East	19	26	2	3
North West	18	18	2	2
Merseyside	15	12	2	1 or 2
Yorkshire and Humberside	12	8	1 or 2	1
East Midlands	5	6	0 or 1	0 or 1
West Midlands	10	5	1	0 or 1
Eastern	0	1	0	0
London	12	12	1 or 2	1 or 2
South East	1	1	0	0
South West	1	1	0	0
Wales	6	10	0 or 1	1

Table 6 led us to select two areas from within each of the six groups/clusters. This would give us the advantage of comparison within each group or cluster. To get our regional spread, we used Table 8, which shows all the local authority districts by ONS classification, DETR region and number of poverty wards.

For each ONS classification, we selected a region (or 2) from which the areas could reasonably be selected. For example, it was clear that both Merseyside and the North-West must be represented by an area in ONS Group 'Areas with Inner City Characteristics', since this is what characterises poverty in those regions. Coalfield areas must be selected from the North-East and Wales, and so on. We drew up a shortlist of

districts with poverty wards which would meet the ONS and regional distribution criteria. Where there were a number of authorities that could have been shortlisted, we included those which were most 'typical' of the region and classification and/or those which contained the greatest number of poverty wards. We drew on own knowledge of the range of districts in which poverty wards are found and the factors which are effecting their decline or recovery. We bore in mind the need to include large cities, smaller towns and very small coalfield communities; inland and coastal areas; those with good transport links and those which are isolated; those with growing economies and those which are declining; ethnically diverse areas and those with a predominantly white British population, and so on. Table 9 shows this shortlist.

In getting to this shortlist, we departed from the regional distribution suggested by Table 7 just twice. We decided to select two North East areas rather than three, and to select two areas in Yorkshire and Humberside; and we took an area in the South East rather than one in the East Midlands. These departures were influenced by the need to choose 'other' areas (i.e. those not falling in the main ONS groups) which were distinctly different from the rest, so adding to the range of poverty areas in the study. We chose Leeds, which has one poverty area within an otherwise booming Northern city, and Thanet, which has suffered from the decline of tourism, agriculture and its port industry and stands out as a pocket of poverty in an affluent region and in a county which will benefit greatly from the Channel Tunnel and closer links with Europe.

Local authorities from the list were approached and a final selection was made on the basis of practical considerations (for instance, that the local authority or district was not already the subject of other similar research).

Within each local authority district, we then began the selection of a smaller area (up to 20,000 population) to study in detail. We refer to these areas as 'areas' to distinguish them from the larger local authority districts in which they are located and from the smaller neighbourhoods, estates and housing areas which are contained within them.

**Table 8: Location of Poverty Wards**

DETR REGION/ ONS classification	Inner London	Areas with Inner City Characteristics	Coastal Industry	Coalfields	Manufacturing	Other	No. of Wards	No. of Districts
North East		Middlesbrough (12)	Newcastle (8) Sunderland (7) South Tyneside (6) Gateshead (5) North Tyneside (2)	Hartlepool (6) Easington (5) Stockton on Tees (4) Langbaugh on Tees (3) Derwentside (3) Wear Valley (2) Wansbeck (2) Sedgefield (1)		Blyth Valley (3) Chester-le-Street (2) Darlington (1) Durham (1) Castle Morpeth (1)	74	19
North West		Manchester (13)	Salford (5)	Wigan (2) Copeland (2) Halton (1)	Blackburn (5) Oldham (3) Rochdale (3) Bolton (2) Preston (2)	Allerdale (3) Warrington (2) West Lancs (2) Blackpool (1) Stockport (1) Trafford (1) Ellesmere Port (1) Vale Royal (1)	50	18
Merseyside		Liverpool (18) Knowsley (12)		Wirral (3) St Helens (1) Sefton (1)			35	5
Yorkshire and Humberside		Kingston upon Hull (6) Great Grimsby (4)	Sheffield (6)	Scunthorpe (2) Barnsley (1) Rotherham (1)	Bradford (2) Calderdale (1)	Leeds (1)	24	9
East Midlands		Nottingham (6)		Chesterfield (2) Bolsover (1)	Derby (2) Leicester (2)	High Peak (1) Erewash (1) North East Derbys (1)	16	8
West Midlands				Stoke-on-Trent (1)	Birmingham (7) Wolverhampton (2) Coventry (1) Sandwell (1) Walsall (1)		13	6
Eastern						Great Yarmouth (1) Kings Lynn (1)	2	2

London	Tower Hamlets (1) Hackney (7) Newham (4) Southwark (4) Greenwich (3) Haringey (1) K+C (1) Lambeth (1) Lewisham (1)	Barking and Dagenham (1)					34	10
South East						Milton Keynes (1) Portsmouth (1) Thanet (1) Ashford (1)	4	4
South West						Bristol (2) Plymouth (1)	3	2
Wales				Wrexham Maelor (3) Taff-Ely (3) Rhondda (2) Rhymney Valley (2) Cardiff (2) Swansea (2) Port Talbot (1) Newport (3) Torfaen (1) Cynon Valley (1) Merthyr Tydfil (1) Ogwr (1) Bleanau Gwent (1)		Arfon (2) Rhuddlan (1) Delyn (1) South Pembrokeshire (1) Ynys Mon-Isle (1)	29	18
Number of Wards	33	47	39	92	34	39	284	
Number of Districts	9	8	7	33	14	30		101

**Table 9: Shortlist of Districts and Final Selection**

<b>ONS Group/Cluster</b>	<b>Possible Regions and number of poverty wards in each</b>	<b>Selected Region</b>	<b>Shortlisted Districts</b>	<b><i>Final Selection</i></b>
Inner London	London (33)	London	Tower Hamlets Hackney Newham Southwark	Hackney Newham
Areas with Inner City Characteristics	North-East (12) North-West (13) Merseyside (30) Yorks /Humberside (10) East Midlands (6) London (1)	North-West Merseyside	Knowsley Liverpool Manchester	Knowsley Manchester
Coastal Industry	North-East (28) North West (5) Yorks /Humberside (6)	North East Yorks/ Humberside	Newcastle South Tyneside Sheffield	Newcastle Sheffield
Coalfields	North-East (26) North-West (5) Merseyside (5) Yorks/ Humberside (4) East Midlands (3) West Midlands (1) Wales (23)	North-East Wales	Langbaurgh-on-Tees* Rhymney Valley* Rhondda* Merthyr*	Langbaurgh – on-Tees* Rhymney Valley *
Manufacturing	North-West (15) Yorks /Humberside (3) East Midlands (4) West Midlands (12)	North-West West Midlands	Blackburn Birmingham	Blackburn Birmingham
Other	North-East (8) North-West (12) Yorks /Humberside (1) East Midlands (3) Eastern (2) South-East (4) South-West (3) Wales (6)	Yorks/ Humberside, South-East	Leeds Portsmouth Thanet	Leeds Thanet

**Note:** \* local authority structure and names have changed since 1991. Names used here are 1991 authorities.

Underlying the selection process were two basic principles:

- The areas must all be part of at least one poverty ward. We could therefore start our selection process by looking at poverty wards, although we recognised that the final selected areas need not be based on ward boundaries if other boundaries were more logical. It would be important to identify coherent areas that made sense to local people.
- The areas should not be untypical of their ONS classification.

Based on these principles, the small areas should represent a range of types of poverty area. We identified eight characteristics which we selected within local authorities:

- (a) we could find out prior to beginning detailed study of the area;
- (b) could have an impact on area trajectories;
- (c) reflect all the main 'types' of areas

Each of the eight characteristics would have a simple measure (on/off definition), allowing us to assess our proposed areas against these characteristics. Our aim was to have at least two areas with each characteristic.

### **Known Characteristics Used in Selection of Poverty Areas**

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Measure</b>
Poverty cluster	Whether clustered with other poverty wards or single ward
Proportion owner-occupied housing	Whether more than 35% of households owner-occupied (average for poverty wards)
Proportion social housing	Whether 53% of households or more social housing (average for poverty wards)
Housing Type	Whether 50% or more terraced housing, 50% or more purpose built flats, or no dominant housing type
Size of Private Rented Sector	Whether 5% or more households renting privately (average for poverty wards)
Ethnic Mix	Whether 15% of the population or more from an ethnic minority, or not.
Location	Whether inner urban, outer city, or other type of settlement
Rate of Unemployment among persons of working age	Whether very high unemployment (30% of people of working age or more) or not
% of children living in lone adult households	Whether a very high rate (30% or more of children living in lone adult households) or not

**Note:** Data used was from the 1991 Census

Data was presented in this form for all of the poverty wards in the selected local authority districts. From this, we selected 12 poverty areas (one or more poverty wards) which together gave us two areas with each of the characteristics. This would enable comparison of pairs of areas not just within the same ONS classification or region, but across the range of relevant area characteristics.

On this basis, we then approached local authorities to confirm the selection. This stage of the process, which is still underway, enables us to establish that the selected areas, as a group:

- reflect the range of actions, interventions and reactions to poverty, such as local authority approaches, private investment and government programmes;
- include areas across the spectrum of decline and recovery; those in decline or showing signs of decline, stable areas, and those recovering or showing signs of recovery.

These two additional requirements are central to the whole study as they will help us answer our original questions. In the event that these criteria are not met, we can select another area from the same authority, if possible, or review the overall selection of districts in order to maintain the desired balance.

Table 10 shows the selection of small areas and their characteristics, so far as they are agreed, and indicates where final decisions still need to be made.

The final stage of the process is to define, in each case, the boundary of a coherent area which makes sense to local people and permits measurement, and to identify, within the area, any distinct neighbourhoods which demanded closer attention.

**Table 10: Characteristics of Selected Areas**

ONS Region	District	Area	Clump	No clump	Above average owner occ for pov. wards	Above average social housing for pov. wards	Above average private renting for pov.wards (5%)	Mainly terraced (50%+)	Mainly flats (50%+)	Significant ethnic population (15%+)	Mainly white	Very high unemployment (30%+)	Very high lone parents (30%+)	inner	outer	Other	Total of characteristics out of 8
Inner London	Hackney	Shoreditch	✓			✓			✓	✓			✓	✓			6
	Newham	Beckton/Ordinance	✓			✓			✓	✓			✓	✓			6
Areas with Inner City Characteristics	Knowsley	North Huyton	✓			✓		✓			✓	✓			✓		6
	Manchester*	Cheetham	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓			7
Coastal Industry	Newcastle	East End	✓			✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓			7
	Sheffield	Burngreave	✓		✓		✓			✓				✓			5
Manufacturing	Blackburn	Higher Croft/Shadsworth/Queens Park		✓		✓		✓			✓		✓		✓		6
	Birmingham	Sparkbrook	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓		✓		✓			7
Coalfields	Caerphilly	Upper Rhymney Valley	✓		✓			✓			✓					✓	5
	Redcar and Cleveland	Grangetown, South Bank, Eston	✓			✓		✓			✓	✓	✓			✓	7
Other	Leeds	Seacroft		✓		✓					✓			✓			4
	Thanet	Margate		✓		✓	✓				✓		✓			✓	6
Total number of areas with characteristics			9	3	4	8	4	7	2	5	7	5	6	7	2	3	

**Note:** \* participation of Local Authority and choice of area still to be confirmed at time of writing.



## Identifying and Defining Poverty Areas

The study of areas introduces a key research problem faced by many past researchers. We used ward level data for our initial research, because it is the most accessible neighbourhood level at which area information is held. But wards rarely reflect neighbourhood or service boundaries. Few people outside political sophisticates even know where a ward boundary is. What makes an area? How do we define area identity? And what factors comprise area conditions? Our initial visits and explorations underlined the complexity of these questions. In the sense of 'knowing your neighbours', areas are very small – a street, a block, or a few houses clustered together. In the sense of the catchment area for local shops, a primary school, the GP, areas may be much bigger. Some facilities like health centres or secondary schools may cover much wider catchment areas. Areas have different boundaries for different purposes, and these boundaries overlap. But in cities there are many passers-through and many people do not have a strong sense of belonging to *an* area. Increasing travel-to-work distances and increasing mobility more generally are a cause of major changes in perceptions of neighbourhoods.

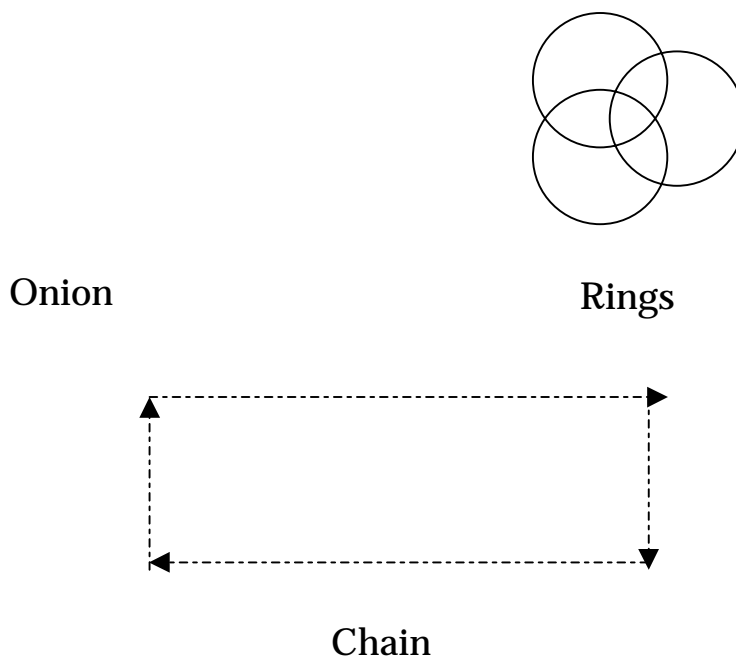
We therefore decided to start with statistically selected areas of concentrated poverty – of approximately 20,000 people. We would then identify much smaller areas based on local knowledge and perceptions for closer study. We conceived the study as looking at a series of interactions in layers, with bigger and bigger areas defined by the different aspects of residents' personal lives and perceptions; the range within which they consider they have neighbours, their daily walking, shopping and other activity patterns, and the larger communities with which they identify such as local authority areas or regions. We called this the *onion* approach.

At the same time we would examine the overlapping circles of neighbourhoods and areas determined by different external agencies such as schools, shops, health agencies, transport, work and other services – the overlapping *rings* approach.

Lastly we would examine areas from the point of view of actions feeding into the area from outside (such as government programmes) and actions feeding out from within (such as crime, or school performance); also the effects of one problem on another, such as education and economic opportunity; the inwards *and* outwards

dynamics of factors such as reputation and stigma which influence population movements in both directions. We call this the *chain* effect.

The following Figure 4 illustrates these 3 approaches:



## **The Families Study**

The aim of the families' study is to identify small areas where we will interview 200 families with children of varying ages twice yearly over 5 years. We will ask them about their views of the area, its organisation, institutions, services and problems; about how their children and family find growing up in the area, the benefits, disadvantages and problems they encounter. By following as many families as we can keep in touch with over an extended period, we will learn about how individual families interact with their neighbourhoods and how their circumstances and fortunes are affected by the area they live in. This part of our work will add a totally new qualitative dimension to the area strand. Residents will be able to explain, in their own way, how they see their neighbourhood and how they feel about bringing up children in it. We will understand much more about the pressures they are under, the hopes and hurdles of their lives, the interaction at close quarters of all the factors making these areas less popular and more difficult. A

subsequent discussion paper will discuss the methodology we are adopting for this study.

## Concluding Thoughts

The interest in area-based policies and the evidence of the existence of area effects make our study of what happens in poor areas over time both topical and significant for the understanding of poverty. What impacts on area change? Which of the many views emerging from the last generation of urban studies have most relevance today? There are some key questions which should form the basis of our enquiry.

- Is it the wider economy, the broad rise and fall of wealth creation, jobs and spending power that most strongly drives area change, as Wilson and Jargowsky argue. In which case, will even very poor neighbourhoods be 'dragged' up by economic growth? Alternatively, do policies that reinforce area and income polarisation, such as the weak US urban policies in relation to racial ghettos, predominate over wider economic forces, as Massey and Denton (1993) argue in their powerful book, *American Apartheid*? Do local housing policies exacerbate the economic problems of some areas as may be the case in the UK?
- Should area change be seen as market-driven, with areas rising and falling in relation to changing choices and needs? If so, how do market forces work to influence areas? Does an area become obsolete when the workforce is no longer needed or no longer has the right skills or when its infrastructure becomes redundant and profit is no longer sufficient from within the area? Alternatively does the collapse of the market mean that an area starts to revive after it has hit rock bottom and the scope for new investment is completely open? This may be happening in the Isle of Dogs and Southwark docks in London and the semi-abandoned inner areas of Chicago. Can area decline be reversed by market forces?
- Is government intervention a key factor in area change? Many would agree that urban regeneration programmes, coupled with widespread Welfare State provision, have prevented the decline of European cities and towns on an American scale. But is government intervention sufficient to prevent or reverse these trends which may simply be slowed down or disguised by external programmes, as appears to be the case in Newcastle? And does government intervention detract from essential 'clearing out',

diverting essential resources into 'lame ducks', rather than facilitating the recovery of the more dynamic areas?

- Is area decline a symptom of dynamic inward and outward migration, fuelling the economic engine? One of the most firmly established views of neighbourhood decline is that certain areas of cities (usually inner areas) are bound to be more or less permanently in the bottom layer as they provide 'zones of transition', housing new migrants, often from overseas, who then move out as they move up. This perspective is confounded by the seeming permanence of racial ghettos in American cities, by the development of impoverished settlements on the edges of major European cities, and by the long-run cumulative decay that is occurring in British inner city areas. Does this decay spread and trap people, particularly if they are an identifiable minority? Or do people escape to slightly better areas thereby legitimising the existence of low-level, start-up areas, which are inevitably problematic?
- Do areas gather their own momentum of decline, and how does this happen? One of best documented views of unpopular neighbourhoods is the 'broken windows' theory of Wilson and Kelling (1982) which attributes a loss of social control to the gradual growth in 'incivilities' – that is, the lack of informal social control through neighbourhood instability and poor services leads to people tolerating broken windows and other minor damage. This results in a disorderly environment from which more law-abiding people withdraw. The resulting social space becomes increasingly disorganised until more serious crime and disorder take over. At this point the neighbourhood 'tips' into steep decline (Tipton, 1995). Our study of riot areas suggests that this phenomenon of "tipping" may be occurring (Power and Tunstall, 1997).
- Are area problems created by the people who live in them? This most contentious and in some ways most powerful interpretation of area conditions uses the idea of the culture of poverty and transmitted deprivation to rationalise the existence of a so-called underclass of people who cannot or do not want to help themselves or their children. They have a life-style that conflicts with main stream values and that creates or helps to drive area decline. Lord Salisbury's question to the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes (1885); – 'Does the pig make the sty?' – underlines how long-running the behaviour debate is, as

shown by our introduction (Royal Commission on the Housing of the Working Classes, 1885).

Other major issues stem from a behavioural interpretation of conditions:

- how far back does an area's history of problems go? How far is the stigma that attaches to negative area histories, a determinant of area conditions? For example, does reputation based on history determine who moves in or out and who refuses to go there?
- to what extent does a broad social mix of residents affect area conditions and to what extent is it possible to attract and retain such a mix of residents under conditions of decline? Is there a threshold of area problems that then determines the loss of a beneficial social mix? Alternatively is there a threshold of concentrated poverty that generates area segregation and decline?
- does design determine behaviour? To what extent, if at all, does design prevent or assist other remedies? Is the idea of defensible space a key determinant of area problems? Or is area success more a question of organic neighbourhood developments, encompassing mixed uses and broken-up patterns of development? Would most areas survive over time if they were self-regulating?

It is our contention that it is only by following the interaction of policy regimes at a local level and by understanding the lives of people caught up in these areas, that we shall begin to answer some of these questions.

## **Next Steps**

The next stages in our study of areas are:

- collection of core data in our 12 areas
- determination of the form of the detailed small area studies
- selection of areas for the close range family study
- development of the family study based on our initial understanding of the chosen area.

## Appendix 1: Poverty Wards listed by Region and District

Region	Local Authority District	Number of Wards	Ward
North East	Gateshead	5	Bede
			Bensham
			Felling
			High Fell
			Teams
	Newcastle upon Tyne	8	Benwell
			Byker
			Elswick
			Monkchester
			Scotswood
Walker			
West City			
Woolsington			
North Tyneside	2	Longbenton	
		Riverside	
South Tyneside	6	All Saints	
		Bede	
		Biddick Hall	
		Cleadon Park	
		Rekendyke	
Sunderland	7	Tyne Dock	
		Castletown	
		Colliery	
		Grindon	
		South Hylton	
		Southwick	
		Thorney Close	
Town End Farm			
Hartlepool	6	Brus	
		Dyke House	
		Owton	
		Rossmere	
		St. Hilda	
		Stranton	
Langbaurgh-On-Tees	3	Church Lane	
		Grangetown	
		South Bank	
Middlesbrough	12	Ayresome	
		Beckfield	
		Beechwood	
		Berwick Hills	

			Easterside Grove Hill Hemlington Pallister Park End St. Hilda's Southfield Thorntree
	Stockton-on-Tees	4	Hardwick Mile House Portrack And Tille Roseworth
	Chester-le-Street	2	Chester West Pelton Fell
	Darlington	1	Eastbourne South
	Derwentside	3	Consett South Craghead South Stanley
	Durham	1	Pelaw
	Easington	5	Deneside Eden Hill High Colliery Thornley Wheatley Hill
	Sedgefield	1	Thickley
	Wear Valley	2	St.Helen's Woodhouse Close
	Blyth Valley	3	Cowpen Croft Plessey
	Castle Morpeth	1	Chevington
	Wansbeck	2	Choppington Hirst
	<b>TOTAL North East</b>	<b>74</b>	
<b>North West</b>	Bolton	2	Central Derby
	Manchester	13	Ardwick Benchill Beswick and Clayton Bradford Central Cheetham Gorton South Harpurhey Hulme Longsight

		Moss Side Newton Heath Woodhouse Park
Oldham	3	Alexandra Coldhurst Hollinwood
Rochdale	3	Central and Faling Middleton Central Middleton West
Salford	5	Blackfriars Broughton Little Hulton Ordsall Pendleton
Stockport	1	Brinnington
Trafford	1	Clifford
Wigan	2	Ince Norley
Ellesmere Port	1	Grange
Halton	1	Castlefields
Vale Royal	1	Over Two
Warrington	2	Bewsey Longford
Allerdale	3	Ewanrigg Northside Salterbeck
Copeland	2	Mirehouse West Sandwith
Blackburn	5	Bank Top Cathedral Green Bank Higher Croft Shadsworth
Blackpool	1	Park
Preston	2	Central Ribbleton
West Lancashire	2	Digmoor Tanhouse
<b>TOTAL North West</b>	<b>50</b>	

<b>Merseyside</b>	Knowsley	12	Cantril Farm Cherryfield Halewood South Halewood West Kirkby Central Longview Northwood
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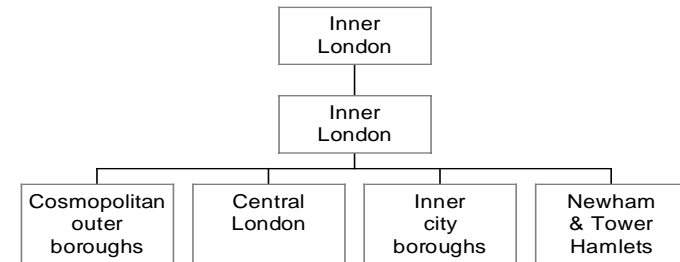
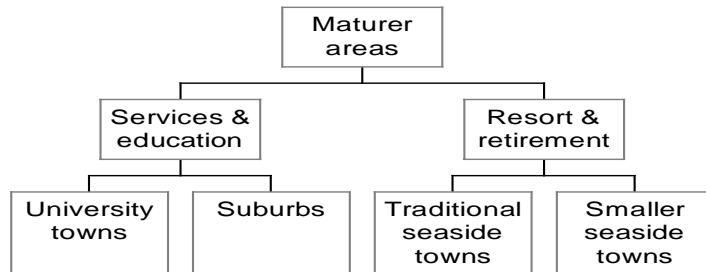
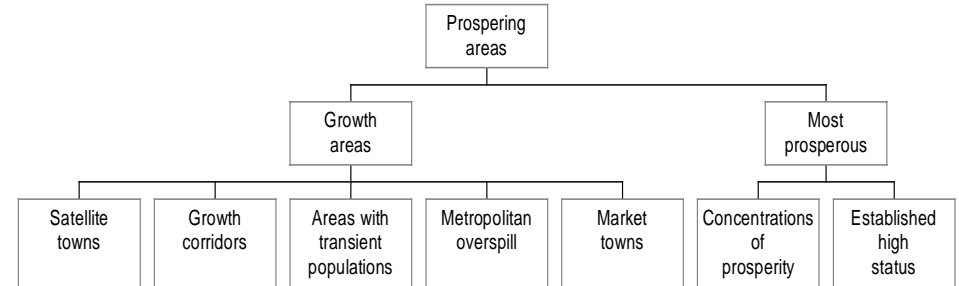
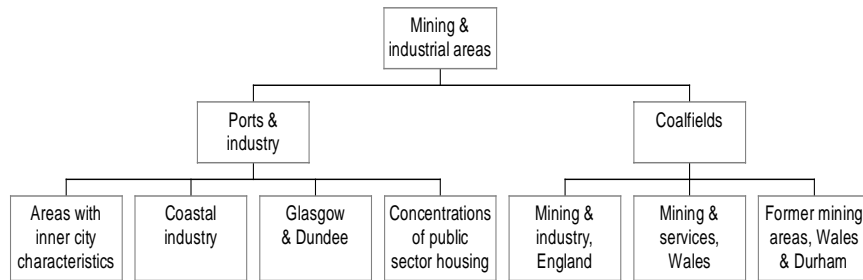
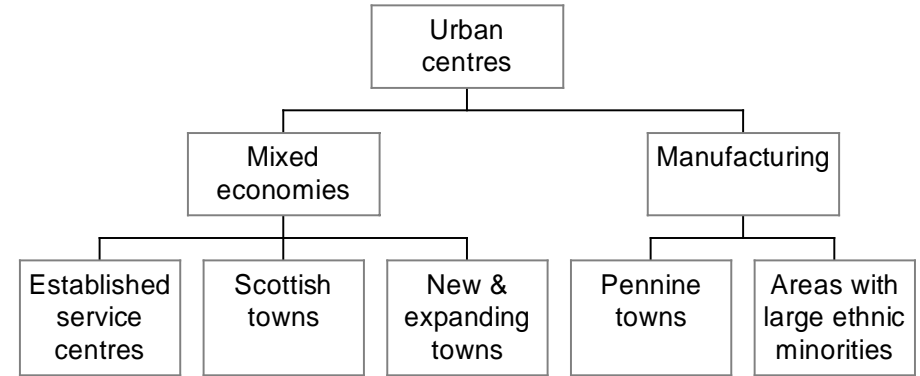
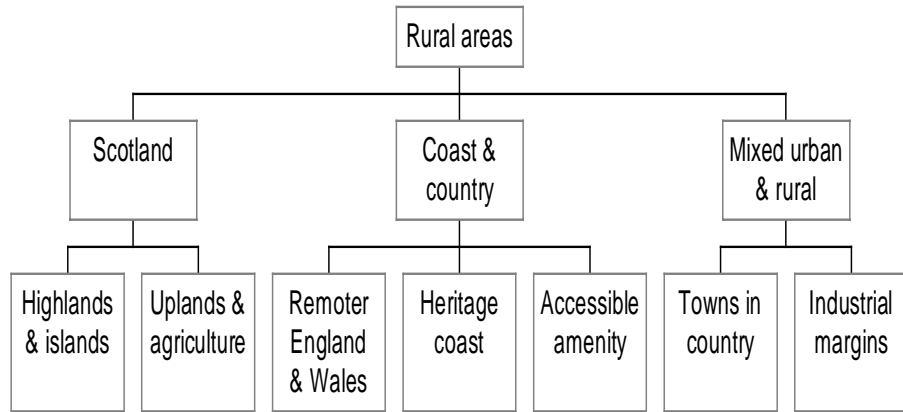
			Page Moss Princess St.Gabriels St.Michaels Tower Hill
	Liverpool	18	Abercromby Breckfield Clubmoor County Dingle Dovecot Everton Gillmoss Granby Kensington Melrose Netherley Pirrie St. Mary's Smithdown Speke Valley Vauxhall
	St. Helens	1	Parr and Hardshaw
	Sefton	1	Linacre
	Wirral	3	Bidston Birkenhead Tranmere
	<b>TOTAL Merseyside</b>	<b>35</b>	
<b>Yorks &amp; Humbs</b>	Barnsley	1	Athersley
	Rotherham	1	Herringthorpe
	Sheffield	6	Burngreave Castle Firth Park Manor Park Southey Green
	Bradford	2	Little Horton University
	Calderdale	1	St.John's
	Leeds	1	Seacroft
	Great Grimsby	4	Bradley Humber Nunthorpe Victoria

	Kingston Upon H	6	Marfleet Myton Noddle Hill Orchard Park St.Andrews University
	Scunthorpe	2	Brumby West Crosby Town South
	<b>TOTAL Yorks and Humberside</b>	<b>24</b>	
<b>East Mids</b>	Bolsover	1	Shirebrook North-W
	Chesterfield	2	Markham Middlecroft
	Derby	2	Litchurch Osmaston
	Erewash	1	Ilkeston North
	High Peak	1	Gamesley
	North East Derbyshire	1	Holmewood and Heaton
	Leicester	2	North Braunstone Wycliffe
	Nottingham	6	Aspley Lenton Manvers Radford St.Anne's Strelley
	<b>TOTAL East Midlands</b>	<b>16</b>	
<b>West Mids</b>	Birmingham	7	Aston Handsworth Kingsbury Ladywood Nechells Soho Sparkbrook
	Coventry	1	St. Michael's
	Sandwell	1	Soho and Victoria
	Walsall	1	Blakenall
	Wolverhampton	2	Heath Town Low Hill
	Stoke-on-Trent	1	Brookhouse
	<b>TOTAL West Midlands</b>	<b>13</b>	
<b>Eastern</b>	Great Yarmouth	1	Nelson
	Kings Lynn	1	Lynn North

<b>TOTAL Eastern</b>				
<b>London</b>	Barking and Dagenham	1	Gascoigne	
	Greenwich	3	Ferrier Nightingale St. Mary's	
	Hackney	7	Chatham Eastdown Haggerston Kings Park New River Queensbridge Wenlock	
	Haringey	1	White Hart Lane	
	Kensington and Chelsea	1	Golborne	
	Lambeth	1	Angell	
	Lewisham	1	Evelyn	
	Newham	4	Beckton Castle Ordnance Plasht	
	Southwark	4	Consort Faraday Friary Liddle	
	Tower Hamlets	11	Blackwall Bromley Holy Trinity Lansbury Limehouse Park Redcoat St.Dunstan's Shadwell Spitalfields Weavers	
	<b>TOTAL London</b>		<b>34</b>	
	<b>South East</b>	Milton Keynes	1	Eaton
		Portsmouth	1	Charles Dickens
		Ashford	1	Stanhope
Thanet		1	Pier	
<b>TOTAL South East</b>		<b>4</b>		
<b>South West</b>	Bristol	2	Filwood Lawrence Hill	

	Plymouth	1	St.Peter
	<b>TOTAL South West</b>	<b>3</b>	
<b>Wales</b>	Delyn	1	Castle
	Rhuddlan	1	Rhyl West
	Wrexham Maelor	3	Caia Park Plas Madoc Queensway
	South Pembrokeshire	1	Pembroke Monkton
	Blaenau Gwent	1	Nantyglo
	Newport	3	Pillgwenlly Ringland Tredegar Park
	Torfaen	1	Trevethin
	Arfon	2	Marchog Peblig
	Ynys Mon-Isle o	1	Morawelon
	Cynon Valley	1	Pen-y-waun
	Merthyr Tydfil	1	Gurnos
	Ogwr	1	Bettws
	Rhondda	2	Maerdy Tylorstown
	Rhymney Valley	2	Moriah Twyn Carno
	Taff-Ely	3	Glyncoch Ilan Rhydfelen Central
	Cardiff	2	Butetown Ely
	Port Talbot	1	Cymmer
	Swansea	2	Penderry Townhill
	<b>TOTAL Wales</b>	<b>29</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>284</b>	

## Appendix 2: ONS Classification of Local Authority Districts



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