

Rural West of England  
Economic Profile  
July 2003



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## Methodology: Defining Rurality

In order to establish a 'rural profile' for the four unitary authorities of Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire, it was first necessary to define 'rural'.

It quickly became clear that there were few definitions of 'rural' that could be usefully applied to this particular project. As the project was largely concerned with gathering data from secondary sources, the existing parameters used by former agencies and individuals when collecting the data, dictated the rural 'boundary' in most cases. This has meant that the project includes data from various sources which do not have a common boundary.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the most recent information included within this report was collected by the Countryside Agency and published in two reports, the South West Regional Rural Services Survey, 2001 and The State of the Countryside Report, South West, 2003.

The State of the Countryside report, however, draws its data from many sources based around twenty 'indicator themes'. Both reports provide information which can be broken down to ward level for each of the four unitary authorities concerned.

The Countryside Agency (CA) has undertaken a national project to define the rurality of each area or ward of the nation. Electoral ward boundaries have been tested by a set of criteria in order to establish which wards should be classed as rural wards. Crucially, however the CA used the 'old' electoral boundaries for the areas concerned. This has meant that new data based upon current ward boundaries could not easily be aggregated with the CA definition. These 'rural' wards were then used as the basis for the Parish Council survey which formed the dataset for the South West Regional Rural Services Survey, 2001.

The listing produced by the Countryside Agency, however, proves to be further problematic in that certain wards have been included from areas traditionally classed as 'urban' by the unitary authority concerned.<sup>2</sup>

Further complications resulted from ward boundary changes and the creation of the unitary authorities of Bath & North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire in 1996. For example, Office of National Statistics (ONS) data from the new 2001 census does not necessarily correlate with data from a similar area from the previous census.

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<sup>1</sup> The question of how rurality is to be defined is one which has vexed many agencies and researchers and is one which is yet to be resolved. An interesting discussion of the issues was put forward in a South West Observatory report on **Rural deprivation and service need: a review of the literature and an assessment of indicators for rural service planning. October 2002**

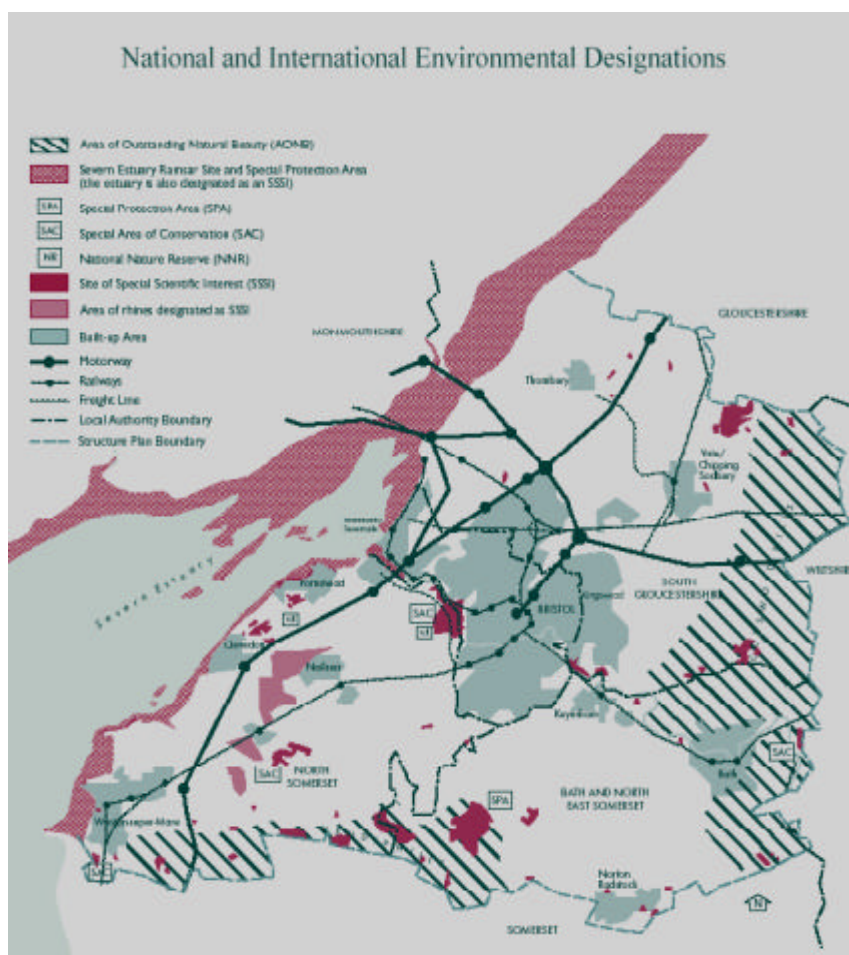
<sup>2</sup> These included areas such as parts of Weston-super-Mare and Clevedon in North Somerset, Yate, Thornbury and Frampton Cotterell in South Gloucestershire, Midsomer Norton and Radstock in Bath & NE Somerset and Avonmouth in Bristol.



The method finally used for selection of 'rural' wards was, in the end, a very cursory affair. In consultation with officers from each of the unitary authorities a list of rural wards was determined (Appendix 1) and wherever possible reference to rural areas of the West of England relates to this list. It is appreciated, however, that this definition of 'rural' may not sit easily with every reader and is bound to cause further discussion, especially with regard to the 'fringe' areas and commuter belts.



## Environmental Context (Topology and Biodiversity)



- Over three quarters of the West of England (which totals 1332 square km in area) is made up of **countryside**, as diverse as the limestone uplands of the Cotswolds and the Mendips and the salt marshes and coastal levels of the Severn Estuary. The Cotswold and Mendip Hills are among the areas designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Other designations are in force, for example through the Environmentally Sensitive Areas scheme (10 in the West of England) and that assigned to the coastal zone in South Gloucestershire, which is designated as an International Site of Importance to Wildlife.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Bath & North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Joint Replacement Structure Plan: Adopted September 2002



- The ongoing rise of the population is creating increased stress upon this environment, not least in **the growth of the level of traffic**. In **Bath & North East Somerset** (B&NES), for example, it is the areas outside Bath that could experience substantial traffic growth: the national forecasts for A-roads suggest an increase of 41% by 2010 and on 'B' and minor roads of 18%. (Local data given in the B&NES RTRA Report predicts a continuing growth in the number of car journeys in line with historical data.)<sup>4</sup>
- In **South Gloucestershire** Traffic growth into the North Fringe grew by 32% between 1991 and 1996, largely due to major growth in employment in the area. A further consequence has been the re-distribution of traffic onto inappropriate roads through environmentally sensitive areas as key parts of the network reach capacity.<sup>5</sup>
- It is the environment that is under threat which also provides distinct **economic benefits** to the area, particularly through tourism it attracts. Although less than 1% of the population of the three unitary authorities are employed in Agriculture or Fishing<sup>6</sup>, this sector plays in a key role in managing the landscape.
- Current data for **tourism** to rural areas is not yet available<sup>7</sup>. (v. the **Tourism** chapter)

Visitors to the South West, including the unitary authorities of the West of England generate considerable income for the area<sup>8</sup>.

	UK residents			Overseas residents		
	Trips (million)	Nights (million)	Spending (£ million)	Trips (million)	Nights (million)	Spending (£ million)
UAs	2.4	6.4	347	0.32	2.7	109
South West	19.8	75.9	3,291	1.37	11.7	434

- While much of this tourism will be to the urban and coastal areas, the figures for employment in tourism-related industries in South Gloucestershire (which is likely to be in largely rural areas) are indicative of its importance to the economy and to the environment. 5% of the total employment of South Gloucestershire (6,468 actual jobs / 4,734 FTE jobs) is calculated to be in the tourism-related industries.<sup>9</sup>
- **Habitats** in the West of England support a number of plant, animal and insect species (specifically a significant number of butterfly species) that are regarded as vulnerable nationally.

<sup>4</sup> B&NES Report under the Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997

<sup>5</sup> South Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan 2000

<sup>6</sup> Annual Business Inquiry 2001, NOMIS

<sup>7</sup> The as yet unpublished report, 'The Value of Tourism in the South West, 2003' by South West Tourism, will set out accurate up-to-date data on tourism employment figures and revenue etc to be found in the local area.

<sup>8</sup> South West Tourism, 2001

<sup>9</sup> Tourism Task Force, Regional Survey, 2002



- The Avon **Biodiversity Partnership** is working with the National Biodiversity Network SW Pilot Project (EN) to use priority habitat mapping to set targets and monitor action for biodiversity in the West of England.<sup>10</sup>
- Unitary Authority Biodiversity **Action Plans** (such as the Bath and North East Somerset Wild Things initiative) provide the mechanism for co-ordinating local action.

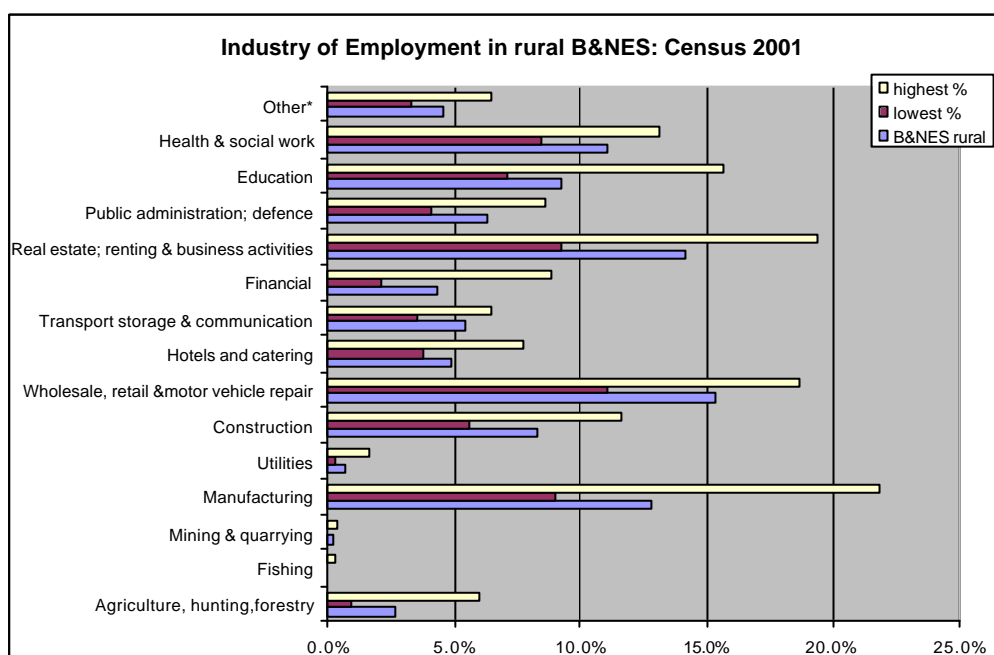
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<sup>10</sup> Avon Wildlife Trust, 2003



## Economic Structure

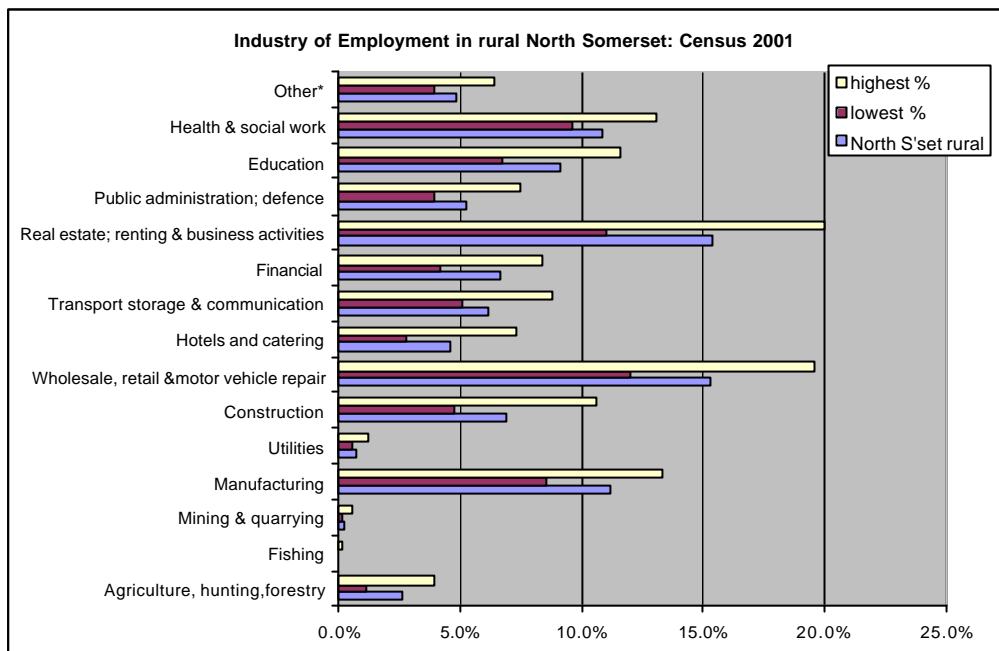
- **Employment by industry**, as recorded in the Census 2001, clearly demonstrates how agricultural work accounts for just a small percentage of economically active residents in the rural wards. Industries which feature as significant job-sources for each of the unitary authorities are:
  - health & social work
  - education
  - real estate and general business
  - wholesale, retail and motor vehicle trades
  - construction
  - manufacturing



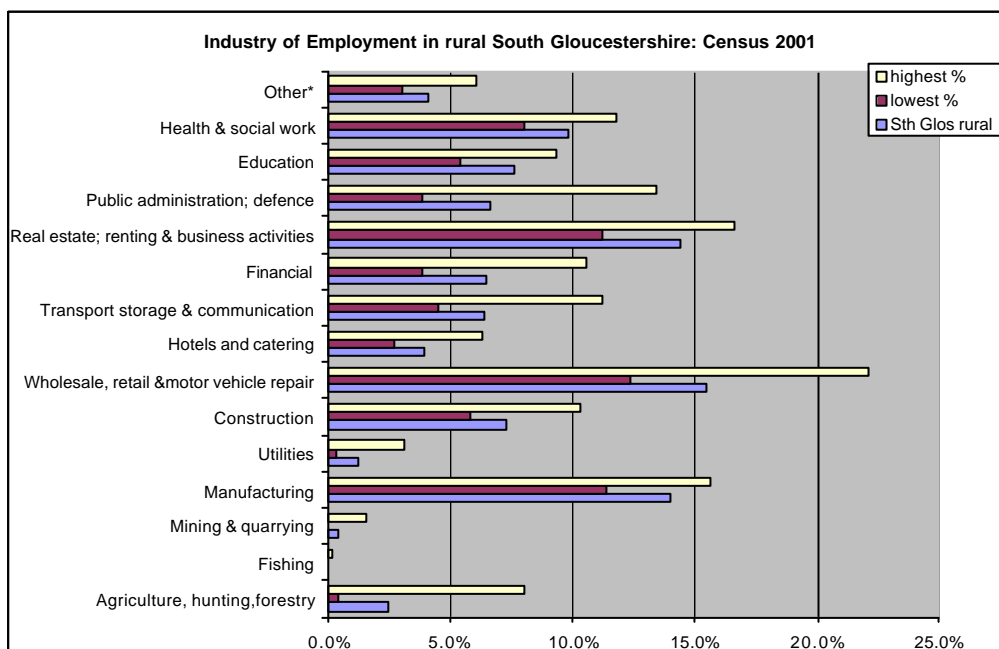
Note: Other includes; other community; social and personal service activities; private households with employed people and extra-territorial organisations and bodies

**Highest** refers to the highest percentage recorded in any one B&NES ward for each sector of employment.

**Lowest** refers to the lowest percentage recorded in any one B&NES ward for each sector of employment.



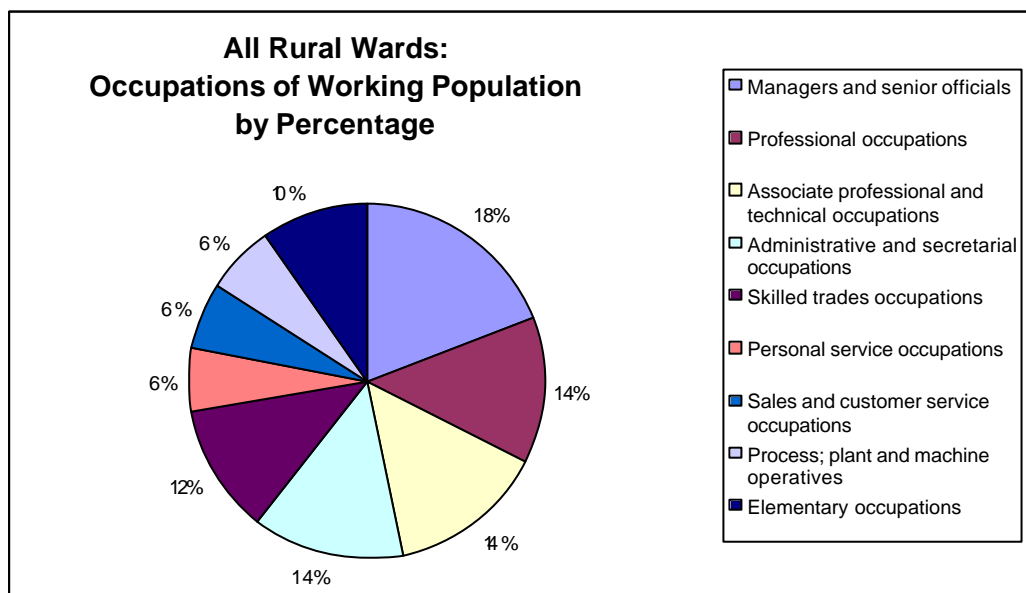
Note: Other, highest and lowest as above



Note: Other, highest and lowest as above



- 65% of the population aged 16-74 are **economically active**, of whom c.12.5% are **self-employed**.<sup>11</sup>
- Only 1.6% of the working-age population are classified as **unemployed** 6% are classified as looking after the **home /family**.
- 13.4% of the working population **work from home**.
- c.32.6% of the working population are engaged in **managerial or professional** occupations:



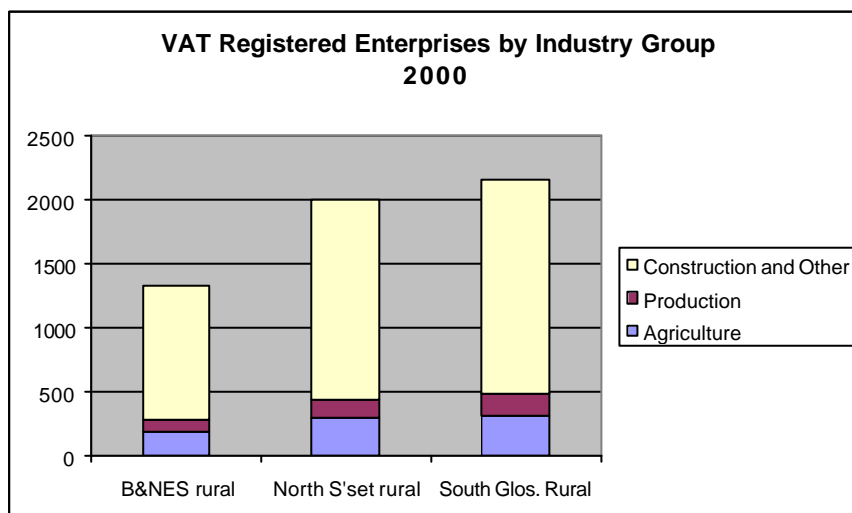
<sup>11</sup> Census 2001



- Rural West of England has c.5,000 **VAT registered businesses**<sup>12</sup>, the vast majority of which employ fewer than 50 people:

VAT Registered Enterprises 2000			
	With 1 to 49 Employees	With 50 to 249 Employees	Total
<b>B&amp;NES rural</b>	1295	10	1305
<b>North S'set rural</b>	1970	15	1985
<b>Sth Glos. Rural</b>	2100	20	2130

- Detailed analysis by sector is not available but a similar proportion within each unitary authority is **agricultural** (c.14%) or **manufacturing-based** (6-8%):



<sup>12</sup> VAT Registered Enterprises by Industry Group, March 2000; Office of National Statistics  
Note that detailed data may be purchased from the Inter Departmental Business Register of the Office of National Statistics.



- An indication of the varying performance of the rural wards in the three unitary authorities is provided by the maps generated from [www.localknowledge.co.uk](http://www.localknowledge.co.uk) for the proportion of VAT-registered businesses engaged in **Production** activity<sup>13</sup>



- An area of important potential growth for the rural economy is in the '**knowledge economy**'. In a report<sup>14</sup> commissioned to study the extent to which rural areas are evolving as knowledge-driven economies and the implications for rural economic policies and organisations, the Local Futures Group used the EC definition of knowledge-intensive industries as those where graduates make up at least 25% of the workforce (excluding public services such as health, social work and education.)
  - Employment and the business stock of the knowledge economy grew faster in rural areas than urban areas between 1991 and 2001.
  - The average skills level of the working age population (as measured by NVQ-or NVQ-equivalent qualifications) was higher in rural areas, as can be seen from Census 2001 data for the rural wards of the three unitary

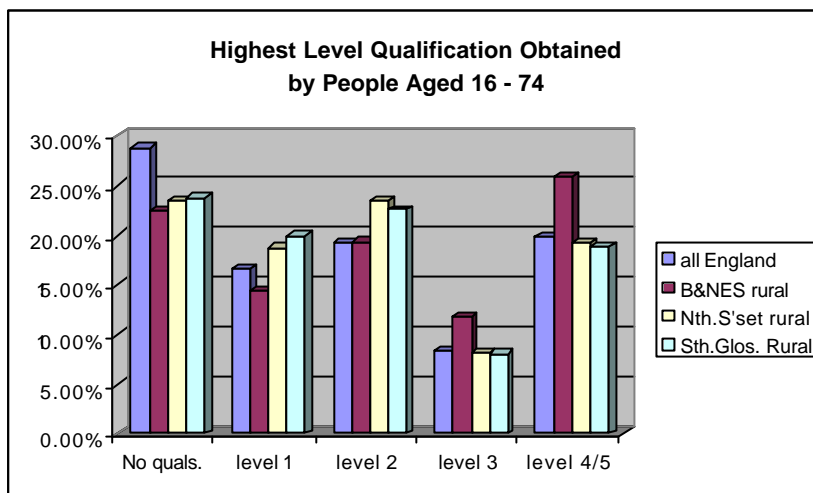
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<sup>13</sup> Based on SIC 92 codes 10.1 – 41; data from the Inter Departmental Business Register. The SIC92 codes (which are too numerous to list and have since been modified) are available from the Office of National Statistics.

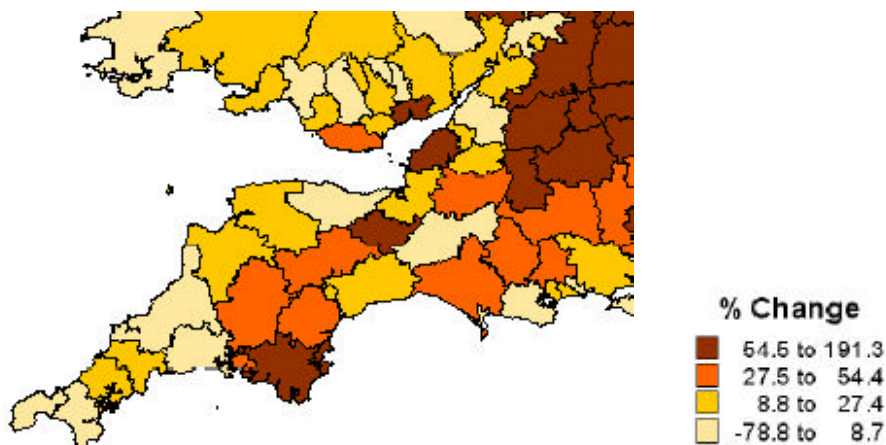
<sup>14</sup> The Knowledge Economy and the Future of Rural Britain; the Local Futures Group in collaboration with ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England), April 2003



authorities:

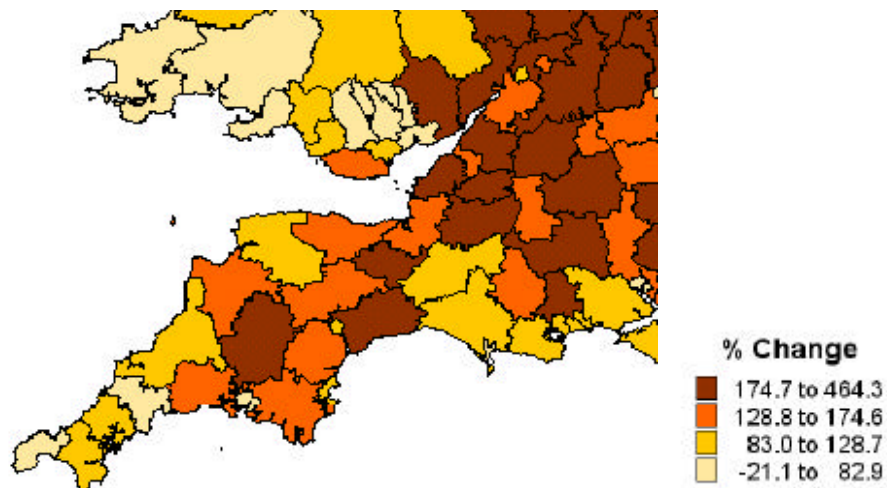


- As can be seen from the following images depicting the **geography of a) employment change in knowledge-intensive sectors** and b) the change in the business stock of knowledge-intensive sectors by local authority district 1991-2001, the West of England (and therefore, one assumes by implication the rural areas of the West of England) performed unevenly:

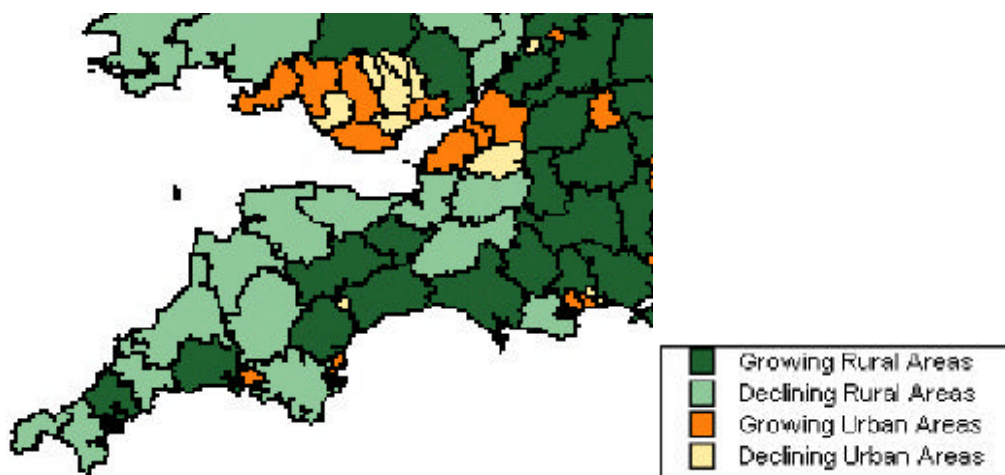


Employment change in knowledge-intensive sectors by local authority district 1991-2001<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Local Futures Group, derived from ONS data

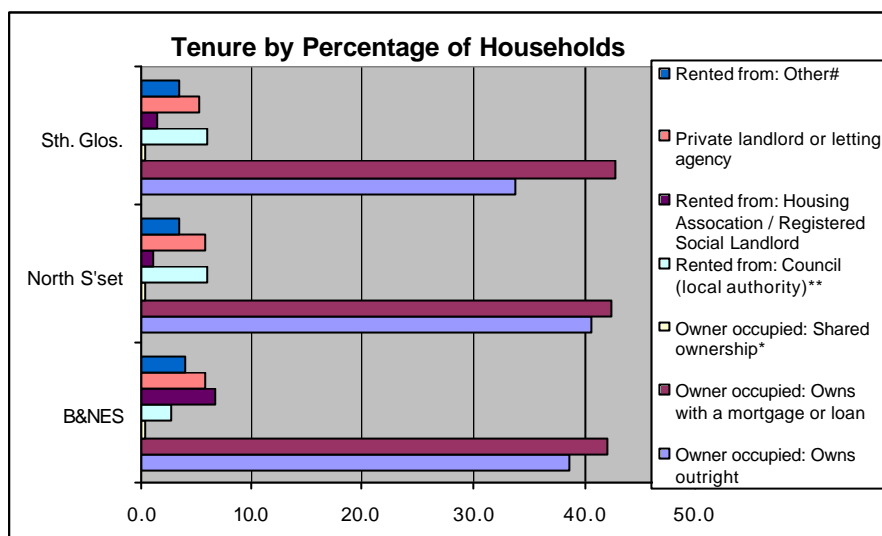


Change In The Business Stock Of Knowledge-Intensive Sectors  
By Local Authority District 1991-2001



Growth and Decline in the Knowledge Economy, 1995-2001

- 80% of **households are owner-occupied**, approximately evenly distributed between households which are owned outright and those owned through a mortgage or loan.
- There is no discernible difference between the unitary authorities for the data for all types of **tenure**, other than that in B&NES a smaller proportion are rented through the Council and more from Housing Associations or Registered Social Landlords due to policy relating to transfer of housing stock.



- The West of England has an important rural **social economy**, which is active in the process of combating social exclusion, whether it be through the provision of community transport or for support groups for people with disabilities, ill health or mental illness etc.. However, it has been noted by the South West Forum that 'outside the urban areas, no public sector agency ... had a corporate policy or strategy for working with the voluntary and community sector.'<sup>16</sup>
- One example of this is the **difficulty in obtaining detailed information from a single source** relating the total number, type and spheres of activity of voluntary and community organisations, particularly working in the rural areas. As a result of an audit of learning programmes offered by voluntary and community groups commissioned by the North Somerset Lifelong Learning Partnership in 2002 a single contact list of c.900 organisations now exists for that unitary authority – one which was compiled by consultants from at least five separate but occasionally overlapping sets of information.<sup>17</sup> It is not known, however, whether a similar list exists for each of the other unitary authorities or indeed what steps have been taken to maintain the currency of the information.
- Details of the **extent and commitment of voluntary and community organisations** operating in Thornbury and surrounding district of South Gloucestershire are provided in the 1999 Local Voluntary Activity Survey<sup>18</sup>. Some 304 organisations participated in the study ranging from cultural and arts associations to ethnic minority-specific community, scouting and self-help groups:

<sup>16</sup> A Study of the Infrastructure of the Voluntary and Community Sector in the South West; Hannah Reynolds Associates for the South West Forum

<sup>17</sup> North Somerset Adult Learning Audit, Neill Enstock Ltd, March 2002

<sup>18</sup> Home Office, Research, Development and Statistics Directorate, June 1999



Mean no. of volunteers per organisation	29.5
Mean voluntary hours per organisation per week	63.6
Mean hours per volunteer per week	2.5

- On the basis of these figures the survey indicates that in a typical week in the Thornbury area **c.9,000 individuals** are engaged in voluntary activities (though this number may be inflated by the existence of individuals active in more than one community group), contributing over **19,000 volunteering hours**. However, the low level of connectivity between these organisations and others led the researchers to conclude that “organisations in Thornbury ranked low on the overall ‘embeddedness’ measure<sup>19</sup> .
- It is noted elsewhere (e.g. in Transport) how the social economy often augments and even **replaces a private or public sector service loss**, for example in ensuring the provision of transport for out patients etc. to and from hospital services. This is confirmed in a report commissioned by the Community Regeneration in the South West Partnership (CRISP), the Regional Social Economy Partnership and Business Link<sup>20</sup> .
- Elsewhere in the report it is commented that:

“the former Avon area .... is covered by Avon Co-operative Development Agency (the whole area), Bristol Area Community Enterprise Network (BACEN, excludes North Somerset) and Avon Community Action (excludes Bristol). Both BACEN and Avon CDA have a stronger focus on their urban based work in Bristol and, to a lesser extent, Bath. The area with least focus is the rural hinterland around Bristol and Bath. “

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<sup>19</sup> This overall measure of how well organisations in an area are “connected” to each other is based on four measures of how organisations reported being connected to other organisations.

<sup>20</sup> Regional Infrastructure for the Social Economy, Atlantic Consultants, October 2001



## Education, Training and Skills

- As can be seen from the following table (extracted from the DfES summary of **Key Stage 2 achievement** rates, 2002), the unitary authorities are performing slightly above the national average for pupils achieving at Level 4 or above:

	English	Mathematics	Science	Average point score
	L4+ / A/D	L4+ / A/D	L4+ / A/D	
England Average	75%	73%	86%	27.4
<b>B&amp;NES</b>				
LEA Average	77.9%	77.9%	89.3%	27.9
<b>North Somerset</b>				
LEA Average	78.4%	74.8%	89.6%	27.7
<b>South Gloucestershire</b>				
LEA Average	77.0%	75.8%	89.2%	27.7

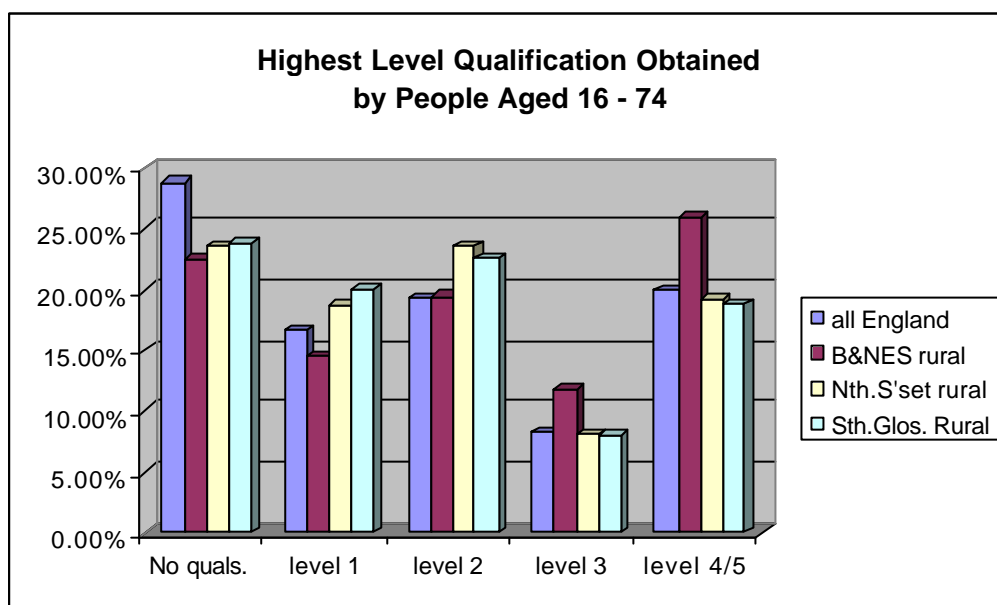
- Detailed analysis is available by rural school and/or postcode from the DfES ([http://www.dfes.gov.uk/performance/tables/primary\\_02.shtml](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/performance/tables/primary_02.shtml))
- The following data is available for the **achievement of GCSEs** by children within the relevant LEAs:

	5+ A* - C %	5+ A* - G %	No passes %	Average capped point score
England Average	51.6	88.9	5.4	34.7
<b>B&amp;NES</b>				
LEA Average	58.4	90.8	5.5	36.8
<b>North Somerset</b>				
LEA Average	53.3	90.4	4.5	35.9
<b>South Gloucestershire</b>				
LEA Average	52.4	93.7	3.3	35.9

- As above the **performance of local schools** is slightly above the average national level.
- Detailed analysis is available by rural school and/or postcode from the DfES ([http://www.dfes.gov.uk/performance/tables/schools\\_02.shtml](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/performance/tables/schools_02.shtml))
- Turning to the **qualifications attained by all people aged 16-74** within the rural wards of **Bath & North East Somerset** (B&NES), North Somerset and South Gloucestershire, the West of England area presents a mixed picture.



- The information displayed below for each of the rural unitary authorities has been obtained from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) website and displays the most recent data available, taken from the Key Statistics of the 2001 census, released June 2003. Only rural wards have been displayed.<sup>21</sup>



<sup>21</sup> Office of National Statistics: Census 2001

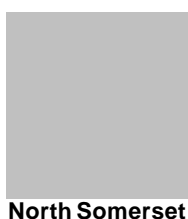
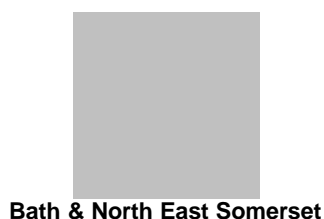


	All people aged 16 – 74	People aged 16 – 74 with				
		No quals.	Highest qualification attained level 1	Highest qualification attained level 2	Highest qualification attained level 3	Highest qualification attained level 4/5
<b>England</b>	35,532,091	10,251,674	5,909,093	6,877,530	2,962,282	7,072,052
%		28.85%	16.63%	19.36%	8.34%	19.90%
<b>B&amp;NES</b>	123,167	27,696	17,803	23,931	14,539	31,904
%		22.49%	14.45%	19.43%	11.80%	25.90%
<b>North Somerset</b>	134,132	31,531	25,028	31,552	10,869	25,747
%		23.51%	18.66%	23.52%	8.10%	19.20%
<b>South Glos.</b>	179,071	42,496	35,743	40,495	14,424	33,707
%		23.73%	19.96%	22.61%	8.05%	18.82%

- **B&NES** residents are generally better qualified than the national average with fewer having no qualifications or qualifications to level 2 standard (56.37% compared with 64.84% for England) and consequently more qualified to level 3 standard or to level 4 or above (11.8% and 25.9% compared with national averages of 8.34% and 19.9%).
- In both **North Somerset** and **South Gloucestershire** there were fewer people without qualifications than in the national average but significantly there were more with only either a level 1 or 2 qualification. Achievements at level 3 and above broadly match the national average.



- An interesting perspective on the qualifications and education levels of the rural areas is through the mapping of successful university admissions, provided by [www.localknowledge.co.uk](http://www.localknowledge.co.uk) using data from Oxford University and UCAS:



- **Unemployment** remains relatively level in the 3 unitary authorities with figures at June 2003 of:  
B&NES: 1.2%  
North Somerset: 1.2%  
South Gloucestershire: 1.0%

compared with the UK average of 2.6%.<sup>22</sup>

Detailed information was not available for a more specific analysis by rural area.

- The 2001 WESTEC Employers Survey listed by significance the following **skill needs** for the whole area:
  1. Basic IT skills (12.8% of employers)
  2. Customer service skills (11.7%)
  3. Intermediate/advanced IT skills (5.9%)
  4. General / financial management skills (5.5%)

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<sup>22</sup> Office of National Statistics: Claimant Count June 2003



5. Child/OAP care skills (4.0%)
6. Electrical/mechanical engineering craft skills (5.2%)
7. Cooking/chef skills (2.6%)
8. Construction skills (particularly carpentry/joinery) (2.2%)
9. Vehicle maintenance skills (2.0%)

- Increasing skill demands were, however, identified by 63% of establishments with strong and rising demand for skills of particular types in related sectors – interpersonal skills in the hotels and restaurants sector, construction skills in the construction sector, production skills in manufacturing and so on.<sup>23</sup>
- The following table<sup>24</sup> sets out the pattern of skills demand voiced by organisations in different sectors in the 2001 Westec Employer Survey:

	Primary	Manuf.	Constr.	Retail/ Whole.	Hotels	Transp.	Bus. & Fin.	Welfare	Other Services	Total
Business Management	3.5	6.6	6.6	1.6	10.0	1.5	12.6	15.5	16.9	85
Admin. & office		2.2	1.9	3.8	1.4	1.4	4.0	0.9	3.5	27
IT systems	12.2	22.3	7.3	15.8	9.9	28.8	43.0	23.1	20.1	23.8
Production manufacture – professional & technical levels		8.9	4.3	0.6		0.1	7.2	1.1	4.1	33
Production manufacture – craft/manual level		37.9	4.8	5.6		0.6	5.0	0.5	0.1	63
Architecture & construction		6.1	84.5	4.5		2.6	8.7	4.2		96
Transport		1.6	1.4	12.4		28.5	1.3		0.7	58
Communications / education		6.6		0.8	0.6		5.7	5.7	10.0	36
Interpersonal care		6.0	2.5	30.0	39.8	9.1	13.0	49.4	21.0	22.6
Regulatory		1.5		0.1	5.6		4.8	2.3	2.3	21
Basic subjects		0.8		2.1			4.8	1.0	3.5	21
Agriculture & horticulture	27.8			2.4				0.7	3.7	15
Other		1.0	0.2	0.1			0.7			03
None	60.3	32.7	32.8	41.4	55.1	41.9	26.9	28.7	45.7	36.9
Unweighted base	26	198	72	235	70	75	283	161	80	1200

Table not additive: respondents could mention more than one skill in growing demand

**Table 18: Skills in growing demand: percentages of establishments mentioning each skill group by SECTOR**

<sup>23</sup>

Employers Survey 2001, WESTEC

<sup>24</sup>

(recreated from the original). Please note that the shading is as used in the original survey report and indicates percentages believed to be significant



- It should be noted that this survey includes all areas covered by the then Training and Enterprise Council; the figures therefore do not necessarily reflect the true picture for rural West of England alone.



- Analysis by Unitary Authority area (following) suggests that employers in Bristol and **Bath and NE Somerset** are most conscious of growing skill demand, particularly for IT skills, and to a lesser degree, for managerial skills. South Gloucestershire's manufacturing base generates above average demand for production skills at craft level:

	Bristol	B&NES	Nth S'set	Sth. Glos	Total
Business Management	11.2	9.2	5.4	4.4	8.5
Admin. & office	3.1	2.3	0.1	4.3	2.7
IT systems	27.3	28.3	18.7	16.4	23.8
Production manufacture – professional & technical levels	3.6	3.0	3.4	3.0	3.3
Production manufacture – craft/manual level	6.1	6.0	5.1	8.3	6.3
Architecture & construction	11.0	9.6	8.6	7.4	9.6
Transport	5.1	4.9	6.0	8.1	5.8
Communications / education	4.7	4.4	2.1	1.8	3.6
Interpersonal care	23.8	22.9	22.4	19.6	22.6
Regulatory	2.5	2.3	1.8	1.9	2.1
Basic subjects	2.3	1.8	1.6	2.2	2.1
Agriculture & horticulture	1.9	1.2	1.0	1.6	1.5
Other	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.3
None	32.1	34.2	42.9	44.8	36.9
<i>Unweighted base</i>	341	281	291	287	1200

Table not additive: respondents could mention more than one skill in growing demand

**Table 20: Skills in growing demand: percentages of establishments mentioning each skill group by UNITARY AUTHORITY**

- This analysis is stable, with its broad thrust evident in the area for some years.
- It is also evident that growing skills demand tends to be weighted towards demand driven by expectations of business growth – that is, **cyclical demand** – rather than by fundamental changes of procedures, processes, products, and technologies – that is *structural* demand.
- Overall, 30% of organisations had **recruitment difficulty** or 50% of those organisations which recruited. Sectorally, the 'welfare' (public administration, health, education) sector had much the greatest difficulty. Manufacturing, despite its similarly publicised travails and pressures, also had above-average difficulty.
- However it is the city economy of Bristol where stresses are greatest – reflecting the 'large establishment' character and high levels of health and education employment of the area.
- Cyclical skill shortage, driven by business growth, is seen as the **reason for difficulty in recruiting** higher level and skilled and semi-skilled manual jobs. With



clerical, personal services, sales and unskilled opportunities the low response rate to advertisements was mentioned as the most frequent reason for difficulty in these groups, along with non-competitive wages or unsocial hours. Skills was most frequently mentioned in relation to managerial or skilled manual recruitment difficulties:

- Detailed **analysis is not available at the rural ward level** Local Community Profiles provide a richer analysis of the level of skills needs, though once again not providing sufficient information about rural needs.
- A limited study of skills needs in the Norton Radstock area suggested that the need most commonly expressed by employers was for IT skills with some requirement for care and engineering skills to meet specific sector shortages.<sup>25</sup>
- An analysis of **Basic Skills** data relating to the key rural wards of the three unitary authorities reveals the following information<sup>26</sup>:

	Literacy				Numeracy			
	Low (%)	Lower (%)	Very low (%)	Total Poor (%)	Low (%)	Lower (%)	Very low (%)	Total Poor (%)
<b>B&amp;NES</b>	8.34	2.39	1.65	12.39	6.69	3.32	2.01	12.01
Sub-total	24.77				24.03			
<b>North S, set</b>	12.13	3.01	2.18	17.31	8.63	4.46	2.57	15.66
Sub-total	34.63				31.32			
<b>South Glos.</b>	8.23	2.01	1.39	11.63	6.37	2.50	1.53	10.41
Sub-total	23.27				20.82			
<b>West of England LSC area<sup>27</sup></b>	14.5	4.1	3.7	22.3	11.3	6.3	4.8	22.4
Sub-total	44.6				44.8			

- From this it can be seen that the rural areas are considerably less disadvantaged in terms of Basic Skills than the whole West of England area, particularly in B&NES and South Gloucestershire.

<sup>25</sup> Mapping The Skills And Training Needs Of Rural Employers In Norton Radstock; West of England LSC, 2002

<sup>26</sup> Basic Skills Agency 1997

<sup>27</sup> Provided as a point of comparison



## Housing

- Data from the second quarter of 2003 indicates that **average housing prices across the South West** had in the previous twelve months risen by 21.8% to £144,903, compared with a national average of 21.1% (£125,382). The upward movement appeared to be slowing down in comparison with other parts of the UK<sup>28</sup>. This is illustrated in the following table

Region	Annual % change		Average price, £ All Properties		Average FTB price, £*	FOO price, £** Average
	2003 Q2 - 2002 Q2	2003 Q1 - 2002 Q1	2003 Q2	2003 Q1	2003 Q2	2003 Q2
South West	21.8	27.6	144,903	140,709	112,743	164,606
UK	21.1	25.8	125,382	119,938	99,231	147,098

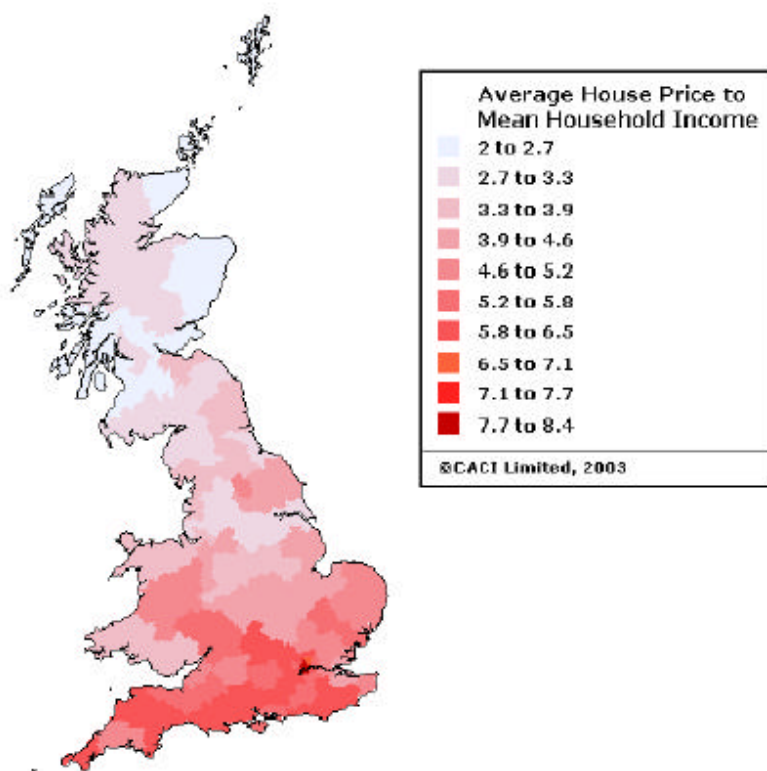
\* Average First Time Buyer price. \*\* Average Former Owner Occupier

- Land Registry data at May 2003 provides the following **analysis by unitary authority**<sup>29</sup>:

Breakdown of property prices by property type and/or region										
Data last updated:06/05/2003										
Region/Area	Detached		Semi-Detached		Terraced		Flat/Maisonette		Overall	
	Av Price £	Sales	Av Price £	Sales	Av Price £	Sales	Av Price £	Sales	Av Price £	Sales
Bath & North East Somerset	278201	115	190508	123	161281	264	153568	118	187298	620
North Somerset	228167	251	148658	272	121566	266	102527	204	152021	993
South Gloucestershire	233805	221	144861	290	119287	366	101995	88	151621	965

- Mapping the ratio of the **average house price to average income** for different parts of the country clearly shows there are dramatic differences, as illustrated in the mapping of average house prices to mean household income across the country. (below) The ratio varies dramatically across the UK, with a ratio as high as 8 in places.<sup>30</sup> While other parts of the South West experience greater difficulties, the ratio for the West of England area falls between 3.3 and 4.6.

<sup>28</sup> Nationwide  
<sup>29</sup> HM Land Registry 2003  
<sup>30</sup> Wealth of the Nation, 2003, CACI



- The Countryside Agency has reported on the **declining affordability of all housing** in the rural regions of the South West.<sup>31</sup>
- The **incidence of second home ownership** (for weekend and/or holiday accommodation), is slightly higher than the national average and may be seen to be a contributory factor to social exclusion where local residents are priced out of the limited housing market.<sup>32</sup>
- Local data reflects the **shortfall in affordable accommodation** in rural areas.
- For example in **North Somerset** the Housing Strategy 2002-2005 indicates that in the 'fringe', (viz. rural) areas, there is a net deficit of c.500 affordable units, primarily in one-bedroom flats.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> The Countryside Agency South West State of the Countryside Report 2003

<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> North Somerset Council Housing Strategy 2002-2005



- In **Bath & North East Somerset** (B&NES), where property prices are the highest for the South West region, the gap between need for and supply of affordable housing in B&NES is growing year-on-year<sup>34</sup>, as illustrated by the following data extracted from the Housing Survey 2000:

**Required location, size and type of accommodation (New/concealed households)**

	Semi-detached (2 & 3 beds)	Flat (1 & 2 beds)	Bedsit/shared house	Terraced (2 & 3 beds)	Detached (2,3,4 beds)
Midsomer Norton	158	76	9	130	0
Radstock	45	61	9	89	0
Other rural	210	176	32	125	23

- In **South Gloucestershire**, In 2000 the average house price was £101,857 which is 4.7 times the average salary<sup>35</sup> and where the average house price in South Gloucestershire is 4.7 times the average wage, there is a particular problem with affordability in some rural areas. A survey has been commissioned to finalise the scale of the problem.
- In response to perceived and evidenced needs the unitary authorities of B&NES, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire formed a '**Rural Housing Partnership**' to promote joint working with other organisations such as The Housing Corporation and The Rural Housing Trust.
- A **Rural Housing Enabler** has been appointed to work at local and parish levels to support the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs in rural communities. The partners supporting this post include the unitary authorities, The Housing Corporation, Knightstone Housing Association, the Countryside Agency, English Rural Housing Association and the Rural Housing Trust.

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<sup>34</sup> B&NES Housing Strategy 2002-2011

<sup>35</sup> South Gloucestershire Housing Strategy 2002-2005



## ICT

- Specific data for the penetration of **broadband** into rural areas is not yet available. A mapping exercise is currently under way (commissioned by the South West Regional Development Agency). A database will be launched on [www.connectingsw.net](http://www.connectingsw.net) in autumn 2003 which will enable a search by ward level showing what the potential for broadband is, what the existing take-up is by companies and households etc.
- Key data gathered by the Countryside Agency<sup>36</sup> illustrates the extent to which individuals, households and businesses in **rural areas significantly lag behind** their urban counterparts:
  - ~ only 7% of rural villages have access to affordable<sup>37</sup> broadband Internet connections (cf. 95% of the urban population)
  - ~ 6% of rural businesses use affordable broadband (cf. 17% of urban)
  - ~ 54% of rural households are within 2km of a Public Internet Access Point (cf. 90% of urban) (through libraries, schools, Community Learning Centres etc.)

<i>Population (household) coverage by mass-market broadband by area type<sup>38</sup></i>				
	<b>DSL</b>	<b>Cable</b>	<b>FWA</b>	<b>Total</b>
<i>Urban Centres</i>				
<b>(50% UK population)</b>	89%	60%	22%	95%
<i>Suburban Centres</i>				
<b>(25% UK population)</b>	52%	33%	3%	55%
<i>Market Towns</i>				
<b>(15% UK population)</b>	21%	11%	1%	25%
<i>Rural villages</i>				
<b>(7% UK population)</b>	6%	1%	0%	7%
<i>Remote rural</i>				
<b>(3% UK population)</b>	1%	0%	0%	1%
<b>Overall</b>	61%	40%	12%	67%

<sup>36</sup> State of the Countryside 2003

<sup>37</sup> The report states that "at the time of publication some Internet service providers were offering DSL introductory offers for just below £20 per month with varying charges for connection and modem provision, these prices vary between the £30 to £40 mark. In contrast, a satellite connection will cost around the £400 mark with a monthly subscription charge of £20 to £30."

<sup>38</sup> "Figures for FWA will tend to overestimate coverage since line of sight issues may decrease effective coverage. This is not accounted for in the FWA coverage figures presented in this report."



- Data commissioned by the Agency from MORI shows **personal Internet usage** in rural areas steadily increasing from August 2000 (from c.30% to a peak of 48%) but dropping in the last three quarters of 2002 to 42%.
- The main channels of **regional/local initiatives for ICT education** are through the library networks, colleges and UK Online centres. Research in North Somerset also indicated the existence in that authority of a number of local community-based initiatives in rural areas, such as Wrington Cyber Reading Rooms, many of which receive no government funding.<sup>39</sup> It is reasonable to assume that similar programmes and initiatives exist in the other unitary authorities.
- A report, commissioned by the DfES and the Countryside Agency, is scheduled for publication in the autumn which will evaluate the success of the CMF<sup>40</sup>-funded UK online centres which serve rural communities in England.<sup>41</sup>
- UK online centres in or close to rural areas are currently located as follows:

B&NES	Midsomer Norton Library Paulton Library Norton Radstock Library Saltford Library Norton Radstock College Learning Centre Peasedown Community centre Somervale School (plus centres in the city of Bath)
North Somerset	None in rural areas (centres in Weston-super-Mare and Worle) – though it should be noted that support for rural areas is provided through an outreach project worker based in the Weston-super-Mare office.
South Gloucestershire	None in rural areas (centres in Filton College, Bristol)

<sup>39</sup> Promoting ICT Learning Through Community-Based Providers, North Somerset Lifelong Learning Partnership, May 2002

<sup>40</sup> viz. DfES Capital Modernisation Fund

<sup>41</sup> contact: Sarah Goodall, ERM, 020 7465 7662, [sarah.goodall@erm.com](mailto:sarah.goodall@erm.com) or John Hudson, DfES, 0114 259 1386, [john.hudson@dfes.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:john.hudson@dfes.gsi.gov.uk)



## Rural Accessibility and Services

- In the rural areas of the West of England **access to services** varies from good to a level of inaccessibility which places 4 wards within the 10% of the most deprived wards in England<sup>42</sup> and a further 18 within the 25% band:

	10%	Position*	25%	Position
<b>B&amp;NES</b>			Bathavon South Newton St. Loe Cameley Chew Valley North and Clutton Chew Valley South Chew Valley West	1416 1707 1762 1794 1816 1895
<b>North Somerset</b>	Blagdon	796	Wraxall Gordano Winford Banwell Backwell North Weston Churchill	992 1218 1461 1899 1955 2094 2098
<b>South Glos.</b>	Cotswold Edge Oldbury-on-Severn Pucklechurch	650 673 777	Alveston Charfield Almondsbury Siston Ladden Brook	1374 1403 1498 1508 1876

\* figures refer to the position in the Deprivation Index with 1 as the most deprived.

- As with other rural areas there is evidence that even where there is no formally acknowledged deprivation, **dependency on the urban areas** for employment and services has grown.
- The **dispersal of population** contributes to deprivation and social exclusion through the difficulties inherent in the provision of a comprehensive public transport service.

<sup>42</sup> Index of Deprivation 2000, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.  
The criteria used to measure accessibility deprivation are:

- Access to a post office (General Post Office Counters) for April 1998
- Access to food shops (Data Consultancy) 1998
- Access to a GP (NHS, BMA, Scottish Health Service) for October 1997
- Access to a primary school (DfEE) for 1999



- **The location of other services** such as education also impact on rural residents, with colleges of further education, for example, located in areas of major conurbation. This may become an increasing issue with the extension of the plans for the delivery of the 14-19 curriculum through a range of providers working in partnership. Rural learners may find their options limited.
- A study of access to rural services, as measured by distance of households from key services, indicates that many households in rural West of England do not have **ready access to services of major importance** to them. It should be noted however that in comparison with other parts of the South West the West of England is relatively well served.
- In considering **distance travelled to key services**, key factors to be borne in mind are the variability of public and/or community transport availability and the consequent dependency on the private car. The elderly, infirm and others without means of private transport are disproportionately disadvantaged.
- In **South Gloucestershire** nearly 20% of households live more than 4km from the nearest supermarket. This figure exceeds the average for the South West and for England. **Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES)** and **North Somerset** are better served:

<b>Geographical Availability: % of households within distance</b>				
<b>Supermarkets<sup>43</sup></b>	<b>0-2km</b>	<b>2-4km</b>	<b>4-8km</b>	<b>&gt;8km</b>
B&NES	69.7	23.7	6.6	0.0
North Somerset	70.6	24.3	5.1	0.0
South Gloucestershire	55.5	25.3	18.3	0.9
South West	63.5	15.9	15.9	4.7
England	60.9	18.1	17.0	4.0

- In terms of **access to local produce** available through small shops, over half of all small settlements in the area had access:

<b>Availability of local produce in small shops within settlements.<sup>44</sup></b>		
	<b>Settlements with no local produce</b>	<b>Settlements with some local produce</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
B&NES	64.6	35.4
North Somerset	57.4	42.6
South Gloucestershire	58.7	41.3

<sup>43</sup> CACI, 2001

<sup>44</sup> Countryside Agency, Rural Services Survey, Parish Questionnaire, 2000



- A **grant aid scheme** has been established by the three unitary authorities and Community Action <sup>45</sup> to support village shops in villages with fewer than 3,000 residents.
- Similar data reflects the lack of access for many households to **post offices, banks and cash points**:

Geographical Availability: % of households within distance			
Post Offices <sup>46</sup>	0-2km	2-4km	>4km
B&NES	94.9	5.1	0.0
Bristol	99.8	0.2	0.0
North Somerset	96.8	3.2	0.0
South Gloucestershire	92.4	7.6	0.0
South West	93.9	5.8	0.4
England	93.5	6.0	0.5

#### Banks and Building Societies

Geographical Availability: % of households within distance				
Banks and Building Societies <sup>47</sup>	0-2km	2-4km	4-8km	>8km
B&NES	48.5	29.0	22.4	0.1
North Somerset	77.3	20.6	2.1	0.0
South Gloucestershire	51.0	27.7	20.9	0.4
South West	63.2	18.0	16.0	2.8
England	58.0	20.3	18.3	3.3

#### Cashpoints

Geographical Availability: % of households within distance				
Cashpoints <sup>48</sup>	0-2km	2-4km	4-8km	>8km
B&NES	54.1	27.8	17.9	0.1
North Somerset	72.7	22.4	4.9	0.0
South Gloucestershire	61.7	27.4	8.8	2.1
South West	65.2	15.1	15.9	3.8
England	61.1	18.2	16.9	3.8

- Data is not available for the rate of **closure of post offices** in these areas but it should be noted that nationally there was a reduction of 52% in the rate of closures, particularly in rural areas, as a result in part of DTI initiatives to support or re-open post offices.

<sup>45</sup> The Rural Community Council serving the unitary authorities of Bath & North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.

<sup>46</sup> Post Office, 2001; Rural Services Survey, Countryside Agency 2000

<sup>47</sup> CACI, 2001

<sup>48</sup> LINK, 2000



- **Access to health care** is easier for residents of B&NES (as can be seen from the following map<sup>49</sup>) but 10% of households of South Gloucestershire are located more than 4km to a doctor and more than 30% are situated in excess of 8km from the nearest hospital. North Somerset residents are better served, with accessibility close to norms for the South West and England:

#### Doctors' Surgeries

Geographical Availability: % of households within distance				
Doctors' surgeries <sup>50</sup>	0-2km	2-4km	4-8km	>8km
B&NES	73.2	21.6	5.2	0.0
Bristol	99.8	0.2	0.0	0.0
North Somerset	66.8	30.8	2.4	0.0
South Gloucestershire	69.9	20.1	10.0	0.0
South West	67.5	19.0	12.4	1.2
England	66.2	19.6	12.8	1.5

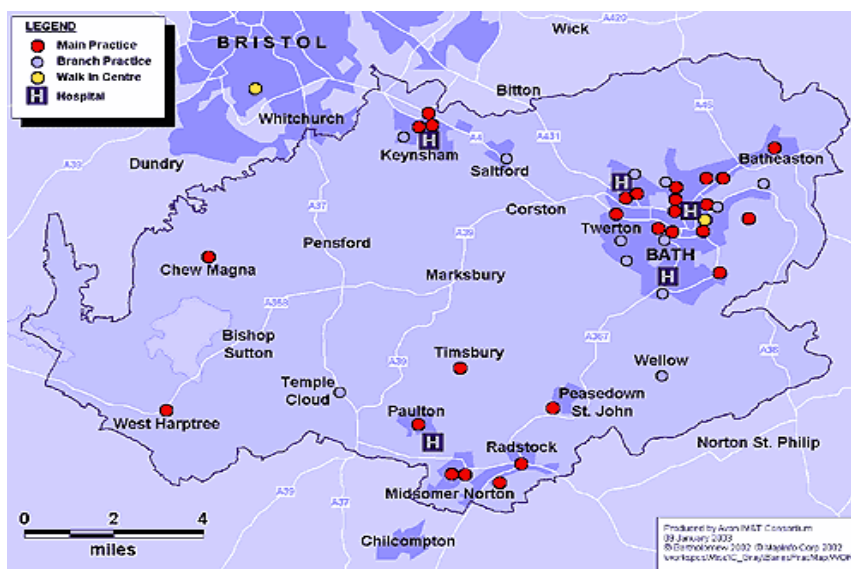
#### Hospitals

Geographical Availability: % of households within distance				
Hospitals <sup>51</sup>	0-4km	4-8km	8-12km	>12km
B&NES	66.7	24.7	7.8	0.7
Bristol	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
North Somerset	34.5	50.2	13.4	1.9
South Gloucestershire	29.8	36.4	31.3	2.5
South West	56.5	24.6	12.2	6.7
England	44.7	29.4	16.4	9.5

<sup>49</sup> Bath and North East Somerset Primary Care Trust

<sup>50</sup> Binley's, 2001

<sup>51</sup> Yellow Pages, 2001, Department of Health, 2001



Location of doctors' surgeries within Bath & North East Somerset.

- **Access to schooling** is an issue for residents of B&NES with c.15% of households situated more than 2km from the nearest primary school and over 20% more than 4km from the nearest secondary school. Data for North Somerset and South Gloucestershire reflects a better situation than the norm for the South West and England:

#### Primary Schools

Geographical Availability: % of households within distance			
Primary schools <sup>32</sup>	0-2km	2-4km	>4km
Bath and North East Somerset	84.1	15.9	0.0
Bristol	99.8	0.2	0.0
North Somerset	96.4	3.6	0.0
South Gloucestershire	94.6	5.4	0.0
South West	91.5	7.6	0.9
England	91.6	7.4	1.0

<sup>52</sup> DfEE, 2000



## Secondary Schools

Geographical Availability: % of households within distance				
Secondary schools <sup>53</sup>	0-2km	2-4km	4-8km	>8km
Bath and North East Somerset	52.9	23.9	23.2	0.0
Bristol	93.9	6.1	0.0	0.0
North Somerset	61.5	24.9	13.7	0.0
South Gloucestershire	62.8	25.5	11.7	0.0
South West	60.4	17.8	17.7	4.2
England	57.2	21.3	17.9	3.5

- Data is not available at a unitary authority level for the **incidence of village halls and other community facilities**. Recent Countryside Agency data<sup>54</sup> suggests that in the South West it is only the smallest of parishes/settlements (generally below 100 population) which have no village hall or meeting place, with the larger ones (of 1,000 residents or more) having several.
- Village halls are vital to the life of a village as a venue for services such as:
  - ~ child care
  - ~ training and adult learning opportunities
  - ~ health-check clinics
  - ~ social opportunities for the elderlyetc.

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<sup>53</sup> DfEE, 2000

<sup>54</sup> Countryside Agency, South West Regional Rural Services Survey 2001



## Rural Transport

- The National Travel Survey showed that **85% of rural households owned a car** (compared with 63-78% in metropolitan, urban and built-up areas.) Car ownership is higher, particularly amongst low-income households.<sup>55</sup>
- National data<sup>56</sup> highlights the **limitations on the provision of public transport services** to all but the larger parishes with only a relatively small number of parishes enjoying alternative (community) transport services to supplement public transport provision. Approximately just less than one in five parishes have some alternative transport service.
- The importance of transport is illustrated by the data for numbers of people walking to work. In North Somerset it is reported that in many parishes there were no journeys to work on foot, compared with 11.7% for Weston-super-Mare.<sup>57</sup> Those rural parishes through which important bus routes operate have relatively high public transport use for journeys to work, for example Cleeve has 11.8% and Flax Bourton 12.5%.
- Financial constraints, disability or age – even the use of the sole household car – are seen to lead to **isolation**.
- **Detailed local data** relating to rural areas (rather than unitary authorities as a whole) is limited but where available confirms the national findings. In **Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES)**, for example, 13 of the 47 parishes had a population of less than 300 and most had very limited access to conventional public transport. The remaining parishes had varying levels of unmet need with only fifteen, more populated parishes located on main bus corridors. Even there outlying housing was often relatively inaccessible to conventional transport.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> The Countryside Agency: <http://www.countryside.gov.uk/ruraltransport/#4>

<sup>56</sup> The Countryside Agency South West Regional Rural Services Survey 2001 parish questionnaire  
<sup>57</sup> North Somerset Council Local Transport Plan 2000

<sup>58</sup> Duthie, Alison, 1998, 'Research on the Unmet Needs of the Rural Areas of Bath and North-East Somerset', Community Action



- In **South Gloucestershire** about 40% of rural residents work outside the rural area – in Bristol or outside the authority’s boundaries. The majority of rural settlements are served with a two-hourly frequency bus service with an additional service for peak hours. However the Local Transport Plan notes that the pattern of journeys is becoming increasingly diverse with a consequent growing reliance on private transport.<sup>59</sup>
- In **North Somerset** travel to work patterns indicate that 35% of economically active residents work in Greater Bristol with a further 8% working elsewhere (i.e. out of the authority.) A significant number of those who live and work within North Somerset are travelling within its boundaries for their employment<sup>60</sup>:

Place of Residence	Place of Work							
	Weston	Clevedon	Portishead	Nailsea	Nth. S'set*	West of England**	Elsewhere***	
Weston	71%	1%	-	-	1%	17%	8%	
Clevedon	3%	38%	2%	5%	8%	37%	7%	
Portishead	1%	4%	25%	2%	7%	54%	7%	
Nailsea	2%	3%	1%	29%	10%	48%	7%	
elsewhere	10%	3%	1%	3%	35%	41%	8%	

\* i.e. not including Weston, Clevedon, Portishead or Nailsea

\*\* i.e. Greater Bristol or South Gloucestershire but excluding B&NES

\*\*\* i.e. not in North Somerset, Greater Bristol or South Gloucestershire

- The final set of data for ‘elsewhere in North Somerset’ appears to indicate that 65% of the economically active residents of the non-urban areas are travelling on a regular basis for work.
- **Expenditure** on rural areas through the Local Transport Plan indicates that in B&NES, for example, 39% was directed at rural areas.
- **Public transport** receives a considerable subsidy from the public purse. £300,000 is allocated by North Somerset, for example, to support bus services in order to reduce social exclusion. Additional funding is available through a range of additional initiatives, including Defra, Special Rural Bus Grant, Rural Bus Challenge and Rural Transport Partnership funding.

<sup>59</sup> South Gloucestershire Council Five Year Transport Plan July 2000

<sup>60</sup> North Somerset Council Local Transport Plan 2000





- No data was made available to show the range or coverage of **community transport schemes**. Considerable subsidies have been made available from local authority revenue budgets, with North Somerset allocating over £80,000 per annum since 2000/2001.<sup>62</sup> This includes a contribution towards the employment of a Community Action Rural Transport Officer (jointly with B&NES and South Gloucestershire Council), who is responsible for promoting community transport schemes by developing partnerships and bids for funding.
- A range of **community and voluntary initiatives** are known or believed to be operating, such as Dial-a-ride schemes, Rural Car clubs etc. The Portishead Porters, for example, provide transport to and from hospital visits. Other initiatives include Farmborough Good Neighbours and The Ridings Car Link and the Keynsham Dial-a Ride scheme.
- **Pedestrian safety** is a concern expressed in Local Transport Plans, particularly for school children. Many of the schools without a continuous pedestrian link are in rural areas.

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<sup>62</sup> North Somerset Council Local Transport Plan 2000



## Social Exclusion

- The following table sets out the ranking in the DETR **Indices of Deprivation** Study 2000 for the rural wards of the West of England as defined for this report<sup>63</sup>:

Variable	Multiple deprivation	Income domain	Employment domain	Health domain	Education domain	Housing domain	Access domain	Child poverty index
	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank	Rank
<b>Bathavon North</b>	6815	5939	5852	6772	7070	6073	<b>2538</b>	5780
<b>Bathavon South</b>	7177	7181	6845	7513	5994	7706	<b>1416</b>	6269
<b>Chew Valley North and Clutton</b>	6199	5437	6125	6365	5317	7558	<b>1794</b>	5723
<b>Chew Valley South</b>	7433	6228	7314	6855	7977	7481	<b>1816</b>	7561
Farmborough and High Littleton	6535	5753	6681	6821	3411	7255	3394	4908
Paulton	7184	4923	6448	6267	6928	7145	5000	4788
<b>Peasedown</b>	4227	4945	5681	6105	<b>728</b>	3931	5884	4553
Saltford	8135	7779	7249	7457	7447	7035	3418	7617
<b>Timsbury</b>	4872	4463	4634	4401	<b>2602</b>	6589	5865	4791
<b>Backwell</b>	6709	6560	5827	5261	7742	6811	<b>1955</b>	7225
<b>Banwell</b>	4695	4838	5348	4886	<b>2732</b>	6836	<b>1899</b>	4193
<b>Blagdon</b>	6251	6154	8082	7839	5651	4161	<b>796</b>	5601
<b>Churchill</b>	7766	7325	7717	7527	6815	6463	<b>2098</b>	7980
<b>Congresbury</b>	6564	4826	6476	5700	7570	7185	<b>2328</b>	4737
Easton-in-Gordano	4491	4290	4909	4598	1899	4967	6068	3683
<b>Gordano</b>	6918	7358	6471	6475	6263	8005	<b>1218</b>	5746
<b>Hutton</b>	6262	7230	5679	4845	4048	8088	<b>2437</b>	6438
<b>Locking</b>	6341	7135	7097	5621	<b>2700</b>	7889	<b>2343</b>	6031
Long Ashton	7591	6608	6186	6194	7772	7226	3674	6346
<b>Winford</b>	6140	6717	5798	6157	4788	7149	<b>1461</b>	6301
<b>Winscombe</b>	7929	7284	7342	6867	7902	7613	<b>2483</b>	6183
<b>Wraxall</b>	7144	7988	7320	6764	6182	7503	<b>992</b>	7615
<b>Wrington</b>	6782	7897	5048	5590	8081	5064	<b>2242</b>	7957
<b>Yatton</b>	6831	5879	6382	6120	7082	6040	<b>2497</b>	6107
<b>Almondsbury</b>	6107	6933	6113	4839	5348	6621	<b>1498</b>	6893
<b>Alveston</b>	7429	7153	7343	7552	7687	6231	<b>1374</b>	7354
<b>Bitton</b>	7157	5408	7063	7211	5516	6967	3544	5579
<b>Charfield</b>	7963	7950	8160	8202	7884	6696	<b>1403</b>	6814
<b>Cotswold Edge</b>	6637	7649	7930	7887	5965	4293	<b>650</b>	7296
<b>Ladden Brook</b>	7645	6423	7958	8089	7029	6649	<b>1876</b>	5969

<sup>63</sup> Shaded wards are those which fall within the most deprived 3,000 wards and are therefore seen to demonstrate specific aspects of deprivation.



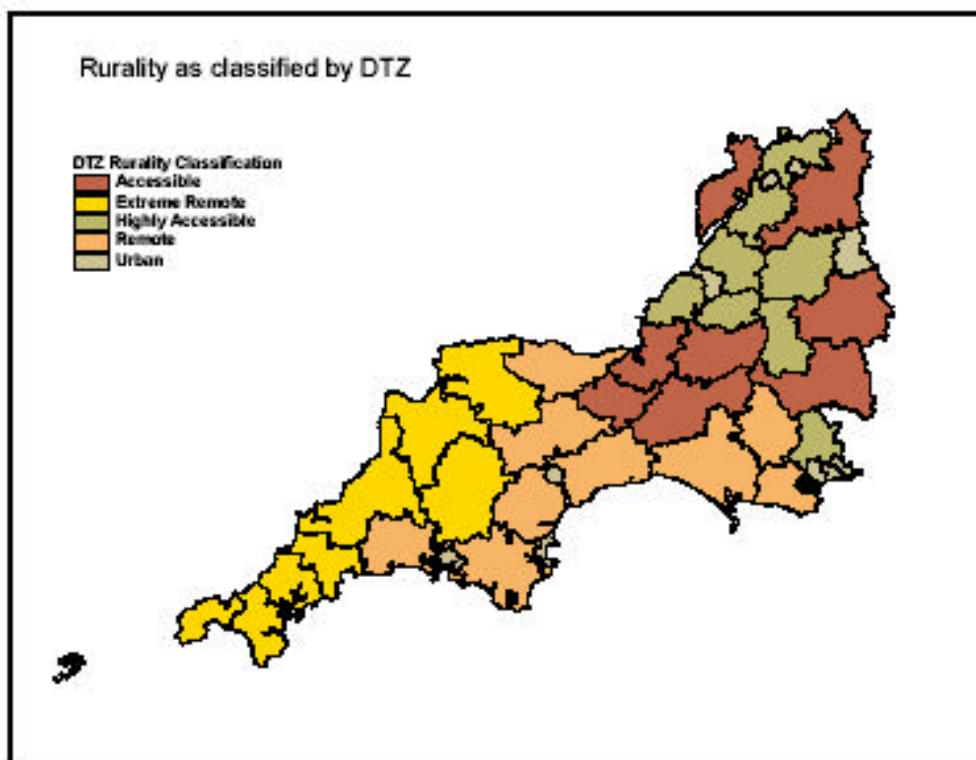
<b>Pilning and Severn Beach</b>	5081	5153	6068	5561	5038	<b>1892</b>	<b>2512</b>	5119
<b>Siston</b>	4966	5273	5984	5496	3257	5149	<b>1508</b>	4388
Thornbury North	7972	6879	6686	6477	7575	7159	4928	6479
Thornbury South	7796	5842	6554	6353	7285	7238	6144	5847
<b>Westerleigh</b>	5761	6301	5123	4843	5695	5049	<b>2190</b>	7178

- At the launch of the (then) DfEE and New Opportunities Fund UK Online investment programme, the stated focus was on wards which:
  - fell within the most deprived 2000 in England (as measured by the 1998 Index of Multiple Deprivation) or
  - could be demonstrated to suffer from rural deprivation.<sup>64</sup>
- As can be seen from this table, none of the rural wards of the West of England fall within the former category but those which are highlighted can be shown to demonstrate **specific aspects of deprivation**. It is particularly in the Accessibility Domain that these wards exhibit aspects of deprivation and social exclusion.<sup>65</sup>
- A report for the South West Observatory<sup>66</sup> used classifications developed by DTZ Pidea and others to illustrate a **broad urban/rural analysis of accessibility**. From this it can be seen that the rural areas of the West of England are all classified as 'accessible'.

<sup>64</sup> At the time the Countryside Agency had yet to take a view on the clearest means to demonstrate rural deprivation.

<sup>65</sup> The Rural Services chapter provides more detailed information on accessibility to specific services in West of England.

<sup>66</sup> South West Rural Economy: Taking Stock; January 2003

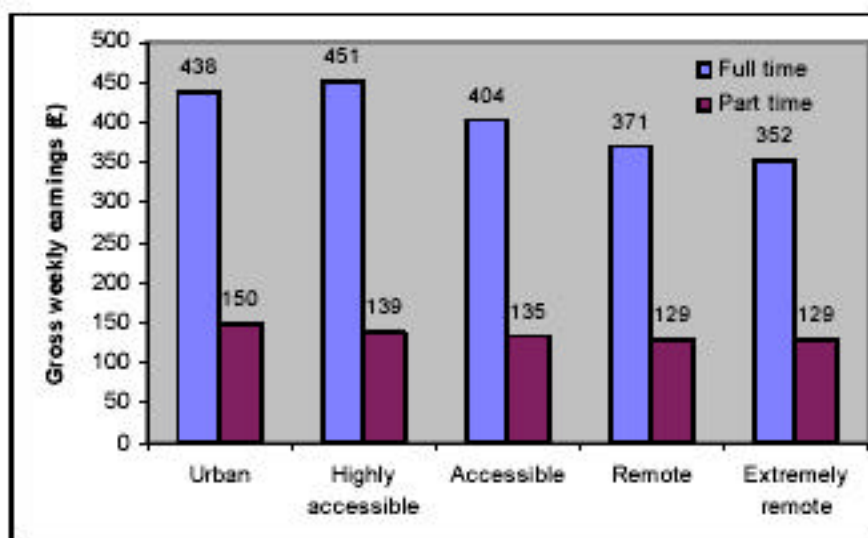


Source: The South West Economic State of the Region Report, 2002 (DTZ Pleda);  
© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved South West Observatory 0100039038 2003.

**Figure 1 The Economic Geography of the South West**

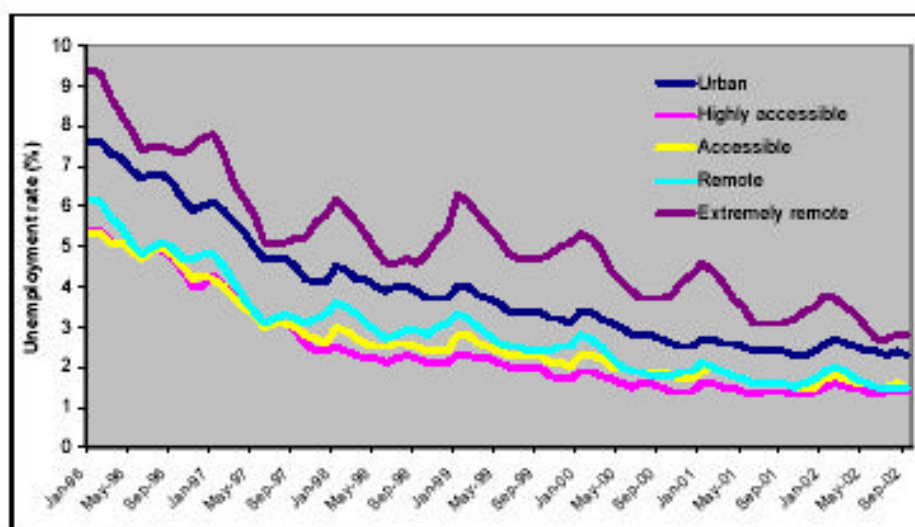


- Using these classifications the South West Observatory analyse the economy of the South West against a range of criteria, including that of **gross average weekly earnings and unemployment**:



Source: New Earnings Survey (ONS, 2002)

**Figure 27** Gross average weekly earnings in the South West; full- and part-time; 2002

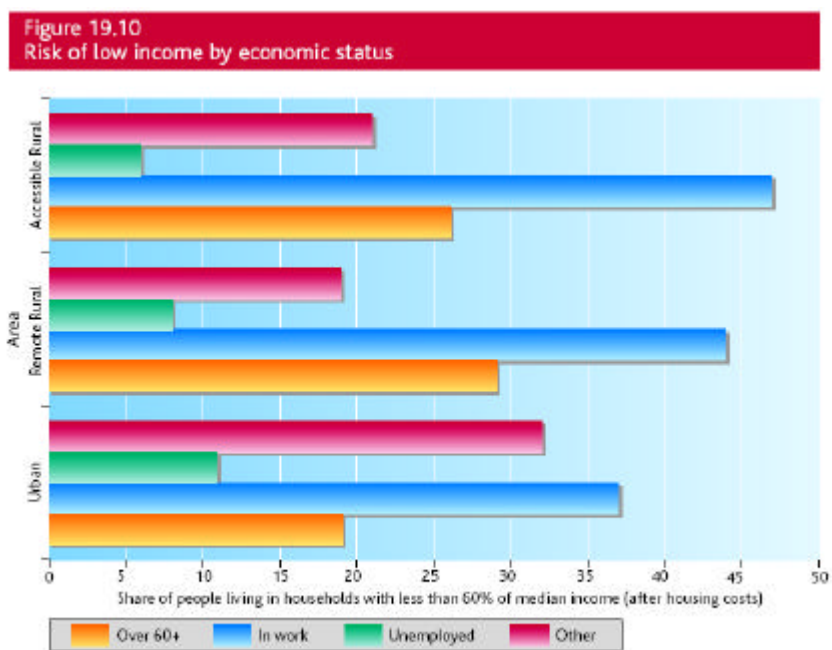


Source: NOMIS

**Figure 29** Claimant count rate of unemployment by accessibility category in the South West; 1996 to 2002



- The Countryside Agency have shown that those in work in the accessible rural areas are at **greater risk of low income** than in other areas of the UK<sup>67</sup>:



Source: NPI, 2002, using data from Family Resources Survey 2000/01, DWP 2002

<sup>67</sup> State of the Countryside, 2003



As can be seen from data drawn from the Census 2001 figures, the rural areas of the West of England **do not significantly differ** from the mean for their local authority:

	Employed	Un-employed	Economic-ally active f/t students	Retired	Economic-ally inactive students	Looking after home/family	Permanently sick or disabled	Other economic-ally inactive
England & Wales	60.6	3.4	2.6	13.6	4.7	6.5	5.5	3.1
B&NES	62.0	2.0	3.5	14.4	7.3	5.4	3.3	2.1
Rural wards	64.6	1.6	2.8	15.8	4.5	6.1	2.7	1.9
North S'set	63.9	2.1	2.4	16.1	2.8	6.0	4.6	2.1
Rural wards	64.3	1.6	2.3	17.0	3.5	6.2	3.2	1.9
South Glos.	68.9	1.8	2.6	13.3	2.6	5.4	3.2	2.1
Rural wards	67.2	1.6	2.4	15.1	2.6	5.8	2.8	2.5

- It is interesting to note that **employment is higher in the rural wards of two of the three authorities** involved and that in each of the authorities:
  - the numbers of retired people exceeds the norm for the authority as does the number of carers but that
  - fewer people are recorded as permanently sick or disabled.
- These averages/mean figures, however, conceal some of the realities in these wards. For example:
  - In one ward of **Bath & North East Somerset** (B&NES) (Bathavon West) employment is over 10% below the mean for the authority and in Easton-in-Gordano (North Somerset) it is nearly 6% below the norm.
  - One ward of B&NES (High Littleton) exceeds the authority's average population of permanently sick or disabled people (4.9% to 3.3%) as is also true for four wards of South Gloucestershire.
  - The majority of rural wards in North Somerset record higher than average numbers of economically inactive students.
  - Almost all wards of B&NES and North Somerset record numbers looking after their home/family in excess of the norm.
- The reality for many of these wards, which, as we have seen, are considered relatively deprived in terms of accessibility to services, is that there may be significant numbers of people at **risk of marginalisation** from services that urban dwellers may take for granted.



## Tourism

- Current data for **tourism** to rural areas is not yet available<sup>68</sup>. Visitors to the South West, including the unitary authorities of the West of England generate considerable income for the area<sup>69</sup>.

	UK residents			Overseas residents		
	Trips (million)	Nights (million)	Spending (£million)	Trips (million)	Nights (million)	Spending (£ million)
UAs	2.4	6.4	347	0.32	2.7	109
South West	19.8	75.9	3,291	1.37	11.7	434

- While much of this tourism will be to the urban and coastal areas, the figures for employment in tourism-related industries in **South Gloucestershire** (which is likely to be in largely rural areas) are indicative of its importance to the economy and to the environment. 5% of the total employment of South Gloucestershire (6,468 actual jobs / 4,734 FTE jobs) is calculated to be in the tourism-related industries.<sup>70</sup>
- An indication of the size and value of the **tourism economy** to these areas is provided in data gathered by South West Tourism<sup>71</sup> for day visits<sup>72</sup> to what is classified as 'the countryside' in the three authorities.

Tourism Day Visits		
	Trips	Spend
B&NES	536,000	£8,733,000
North Somerset	732,000	£11,912,000
South Gloucestershire	609,000	£9,917,000

- In **B&NES and North Somerset** this represented **c.40% of the total visits/spend**. Significantly in **South Gloucestershire** rural tourism seems to be at a much lower level, with the trip/spend data above representing **only 18.5%** of the total.

<sup>68</sup> The as yet unpublished report, 'The Value of Tourism in the South West, 2003' by South West Tourism, will set out accurate up-to-date data on tourism employment figures and revenue etc to be found in the local area.

<sup>69</sup> South West Tourism, 2001

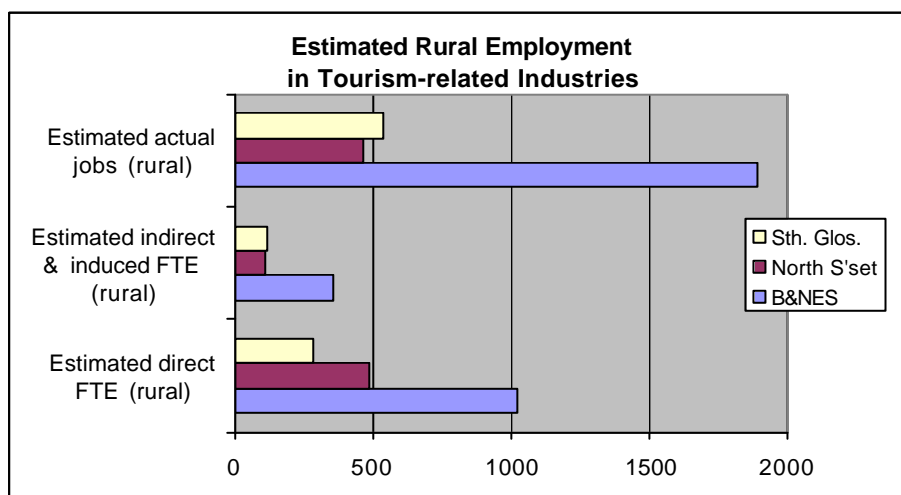
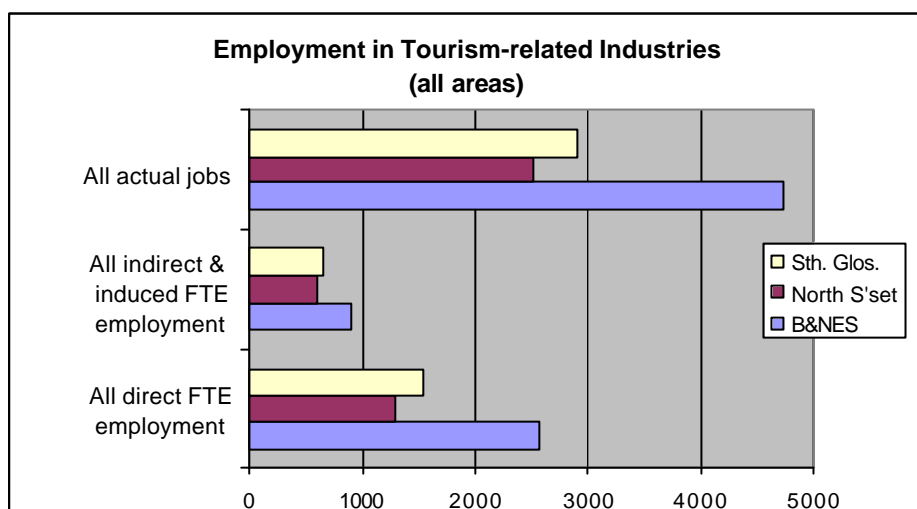
<sup>70</sup> Tourism Task Force, Regional Survey, 2002

<sup>71</sup> Notes: Based on UKDVS survey 1998 updated to reflect 1996-1998 trends in trips and inflation to 2001 values.

<sup>72</sup> Tourism Day visits are defined as those leisure trips from home which have a duration of 3 hours or more and taken on an irregular basis.



- Employment figures** are imprecise but again some measure of the scale of the engagement of the economically active population in tourism-related jobs can be taken from contrasting the figures above with preliminary data<sup>73</sup> for all tourism-related jobs in the unitary authorities *assuming that the relationship of jobs to visits in rural areas equates to that in urban/coastal areas.*<sup>74</sup>



**N.B. the data and assumptions utilised in drawing up these charts are preliminary and unconfirmed. The charts are provided only for indicative purposes.**

<sup>73</sup> South West Tourism 2003

<sup>74</sup> Note that this assumption is not confirmed by any available data.



- A **Tourism Task Force** ([www.tourismskillsnetwork.org.uk](http://www.tourismskillsnetwork.org.uk)) was set up in 1999, by Bristol Tourism and Conference Bureau and WESTEC (now the West of England Learning and Skills Council) along with local employers, in order to deliver practical responses to tackle the shortage of skilled personnel in the tourism industry in the West of England area.



## **Appendix: Wards defined as rural for the Economic Profile**

### **Bath & North East Somerset Rural**

Peasedown St John  
Bathavon South  
Bathavon West  
Bathavon North  
Saltford  
Farmborough  
Publow and Whitchurch  
Clutton  
Chew Valley North  
Chew Valley South  
Mendip  
High Littleton  
Timsbury  
Paulton

### **South Gloucestershire Rural**

Severn  
Thornbury North  
Charfield  
Thornbury South  
Alveston  
Ladden Brook  
Pilning and Severn Beach  
Almondsbury  
Cotswold Edge  
Westerleigh  
Boyd Valley  
Siston  
Bitton

### **North Somerset Rural**

Easton in Gordano  
Pill  
Gordano  
Wraxall and Long Ashton  
Backwell  
Winford  
Wrington  
Yatton  
Congresbury  
Kewstoke  
Banwell and Winscombe  
Hutton and Locking  
Blagdon and Churchill