CHAPTER THREE

POVERTY AND DEPRIVATION WITHIN WEST CORNWALL

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, we discussed the available evidence relating to poverty and deprivation in Cornwall as a whole. In this chapter, we turn to a breakdown of the County at ward level in order to explore the ways in which the experience of poverty and deprivation are distributed within the County. Earlier work (Gordon and Henson 1994; Bruce *et al* 1995, see Appendix 1) has shown that the three West Cornwall Districts have a different experience of poverty in comparison with other Districts.

Since the pioneering work of Booth (1880) and Rowntree (1901), over 100 years of research has shown that some groups in British society are more likely to suffer from poverty and deprivation than others. Amongst these are the unemployed, the sick and disabled, lone parents, large families, the homeless and the low waged[1]. To a lesser extent, the young, the old, people from ethnic minorities groups and manual workers are also at risk of poverty. This chapter looks at the distribution within Cornwall of some of these groups with a high risk of poverty.

It must be stressed that, in none of these groups, do the majority of people suffer from deep, continuous and unrelenting poverty. However, large numbers experience at least brief episodes of poverty (and often repeated episodes) and a significant minority suffer from the effects of continuous, long-term poverty. Indeed the 'poverty' of homeless people sleeping on the streets is shocking; an analysis of the coroner's court records in Inner London[2] indicated that the average age at death of people with 'no fixed abode' was only 47 (Keyes and Kennedy 1992). This is lower than the average estimated life expectancy of people in any country in the world (not at war) with the exception of Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger and Sierra Leone (UN 1991, UNDP 1992). Similarly, a Department of Environment survey of 1,346 single homeless people in 1991 found that 21% of people sleeping rough said they had received no income at all in the previous week (Anderson, Kemp and Quilgars 1993).

THE GROWTH OF POVERTY

One of the most significant social changes over the 1980's and 1990's was that, while the majority of people/households became significantly better off, a sizeable minority became

[1] These groups are not mutually exclusive i.e. It is possible to be an unemployed, lone parent with a disability and there is a high probability that households of this type are more likely to be 'poor' than just lone parent households or unemployed households.

[2] Keyes and Kennedy (1992) examined all records of death between 1/9/1991 and 31/8/1992 notified to the coroners courts for Inner South London, Poplar, Westminster, St Pancras and Hammersmith. Additional information was obtained from the River Police.

poorer. The growth of social polarisation in Britain has been well documented by academic studies (for example, Townsend and Gordon 1992; Goodman and Webb 1994, 1995; Boddy *et al* 1995; Green 1995; Hills 1995). The fact that the 'rich got richer and the poor got poorer' has also been confirmed by government studies (for example, DSS 1994). However, the growth in poverty and wealth was not evenly divided, some types of household have fared better than others. Table 3.1 shows the changes in real incomes (at 1994 prices) for different types of household at either end of the income scale (Townsend 1995).

Table 3.1: Change in Annual Income (fall or rise in £s) 1979-1991/92 (at April 1994 prices)

Household Type	***Poorest tenth (£)***	***Richest tenth (£)***
Single Adult	-364	+5,616
Couple No Children	-676	+10,616
Couple with a child aged 3	-780	+12,012
Couple with a child aged 16	-884	+14,040
Couple with children:		
aged 3 and 8	-996	+14,300
aged 3,8 and 11	-1,092	+16,592
aged 11,16 and 17	-1,300	+20,488

Source: Written answers to Parliamentary Questions, 8 November 1994. Quoted by Townsend (1995)

Incomes of families with children became more polarised over the 1980's than those of single adults or childless couples. Between 1979 and 1991/92, the poorest tenth of couples with three teenage children lost on average £1,300 per year, whereas the richest tenth of couples with three teenage children saw their income rise by £20,488 per year on average.

The rest of this chapter examines the effects that these socio-demographic changes have had on the distribution of poverty within Cornwall.

POOR HOUSEHOLDS IN CORNWALL

The 1991 Census provides the only reliable data available at electoral ward level for the whole of Britain. One of the most important uses of Census statistics is the construction of Census based deprivation indices, since they form a key element in the allocation of both local government and health resources. However, none of the questions in the 1991 Census was specifically designed to measure either poverty or deprivation. Therefore, any Census based index must be comprised of variables that are, at best, proxy indicators of deprivation rather than direct measures. It is, therefore, unsurprising that a bewildering array of indices has been proposed, using different combinations of variables and different statistical methods.

The current 'official' deprivation index is the Index of Local Conditions (see Chapter 2), which was originally conceived as an urban index and therefor, does not accurately measure deprivation in Devon or Cornwall (Gordon and Henson 1994; Payne 1995) or any other rural

area (Lee *et al* 1995). A recent study for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation examined the 10 most commonly used Census based deprivation indices to determine which was the 'best' (Lee *et al* 1995). They concluded that "*Breadline was the most representative of deprivation nationally*" However, none of the 10 deprivation indices were good at identifying poverty in rural areas.

The Breadline Britain index estimates the numbers of households in an area that are likely to be poor, by weighing six groups recorded in the 1991 Census that have been shown to contain some households living in poverty (Gordon and Forrest 1995, Gordon 1995). It is calculated as follows:

Number of Poor Households =

21.7% of the number of households with no access to a car
+ 20.3% of the number of households not in owner-occupied accommodation
+ 16% of the number of lone parent households
+ 15.9% of the number of workers in Social Classes IV and V
+ 10.8% of the number of households containing a person with a limiting long- term illness
+ 9.4% of unemployed workers.

These proportions are based on the Breadline Britain in the 1990's survey (see Chapter 1) which was a nationally representative sample of 1,831 households in Britain, that was specifically designed to measure poverty and deprivation (Frayman *et al* 1991, Gordon and Pantazis 1996). However, because it was nationally representative the results are affected by the fact that the majority of the British population live in urban and suburban areas.

Figure 3.1 shows the proportion of poor households in Cornwall mapped at electoral ward level using the Breadline Britain index. The map shows the 133 electoral wards of Cornwall divided into approximate quartiles (ie the poorest 25%, the next poorest 25%, and so forth). The urban bias of the index is clear, the poorest wards (those with the darkest shading) are the most 'urban' wards in Cornwall. They are mostly in the more built up areas in towns like Cambourne, Redruth, Helston, St Ives, Penzance, Newquay, and Liskeard. The exceptions are some of the more 'rural' wards around St Just, Fowey, Looe and west of Camelford.

The map shown in Figure 3. 1 also highlights that the poorest wards are not confined to any one of the six District Councils, although more of the very poor wards are to be found in the three West Cornwall wards.

Table 3.2 below shows the proportion of poor households for the ten poorest wards in Cornwall. All these wards have higher poverty rates than are found in Britain as a whole. Of the poorest wards, five are in Penwith, three in Kerrier, one in North Cornwall and one - the poorest of all - in Carrick. At the other end of the scale, Penwith also has one of the least poor wards, Kerrier has two, Carrick has two, whilst three are in North Cornwall and two are in Caradon.

Figure 3.1: Poor Households in Cornwall

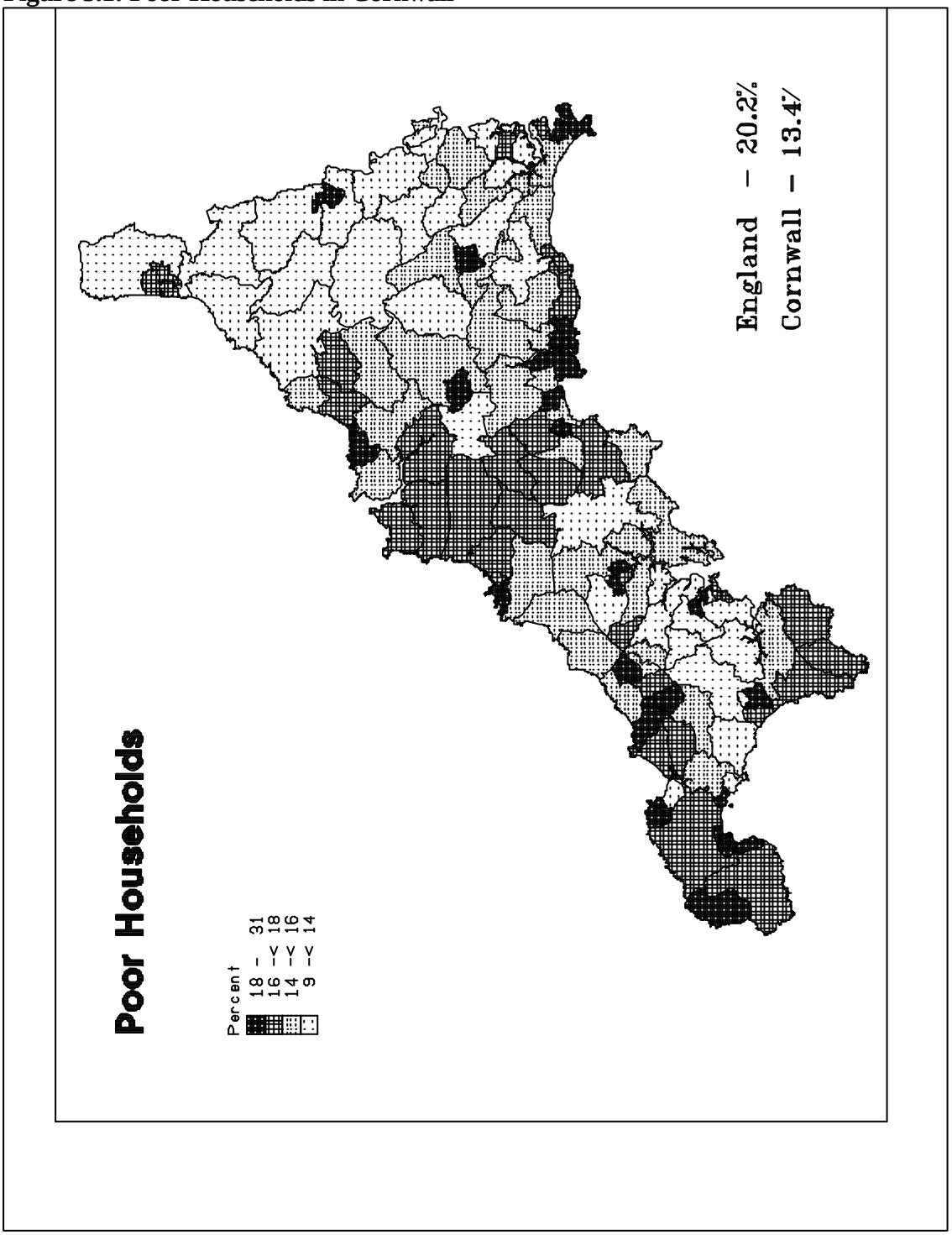


Table 3.2: The ten wards in Cornwall with the highest proportion of poor households according to the Breadline Britain Index

Rank	*District*	*Ward*	*% Poor households*
1	Carrick	Penwerris	30.8
2	Penwith	Penzance West	27.8
3	Penwith.	Penzance East	27.1
4	Penwith.	St Ives North	25.5
5	Kerrier	Helston South	24.2
6	North Cornwall	Bodmin St Marys	23.5
7	Kerrier	Redruth North	23.3
8	Penwith	Penzance Central	22.6
9	Penwith	Marazion	22.5
10	Kerrier	Camborne West	22.3

Nevertheless Figure 3.1 and Table 3.2 clearly demonstrate the limitations of nationally representative deprivation indices for measuring poverty in rural areas (which by definition are not nationally representative). Possible ways of developing Census based deprivation indices that are more sensitive to poverty in rural areas will be discussed later in this chapter.

POVERTY AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Unemployment

There are a variety of measures of poverty which relate to the strength and characteristics of the local economy. One of those most frequently used is that of unemployment. Figure 3.2 shows the distribution of adult unemployment in the County, again using quartiles to highlight the differences between wards. This map is based on the self-reported unemployment rates from the 1991 Census and not from the official claimant count figures, which are released each month by the government.

The map shows that overall adult rates of unemployment were 9.5%, slightly above the national average of 9. 1 %. However, for some wards, unemployment was higher still, with the ward showing the highest unemployment rate (St Ives North) having an adult unemployment rate of just over 16% (Table 3.3 overleaf). The wards with the highest unemployment rates are clustered together in a band stretching along the North West of the County, taking in Cambourne, Redruth and St Ives, together with the areas immediately surrounding these towns. The map also portrays the difference between the West of the County - with higher rates in a number of wards - and the less affected East which has a few wards with high unemployment, above the national average, but also has a number of wards with lower than average rates of unemployment.

Table 3.3: The ten wards in Cornwall with the highest rates of adult unemployment recorded in the 1991 Census

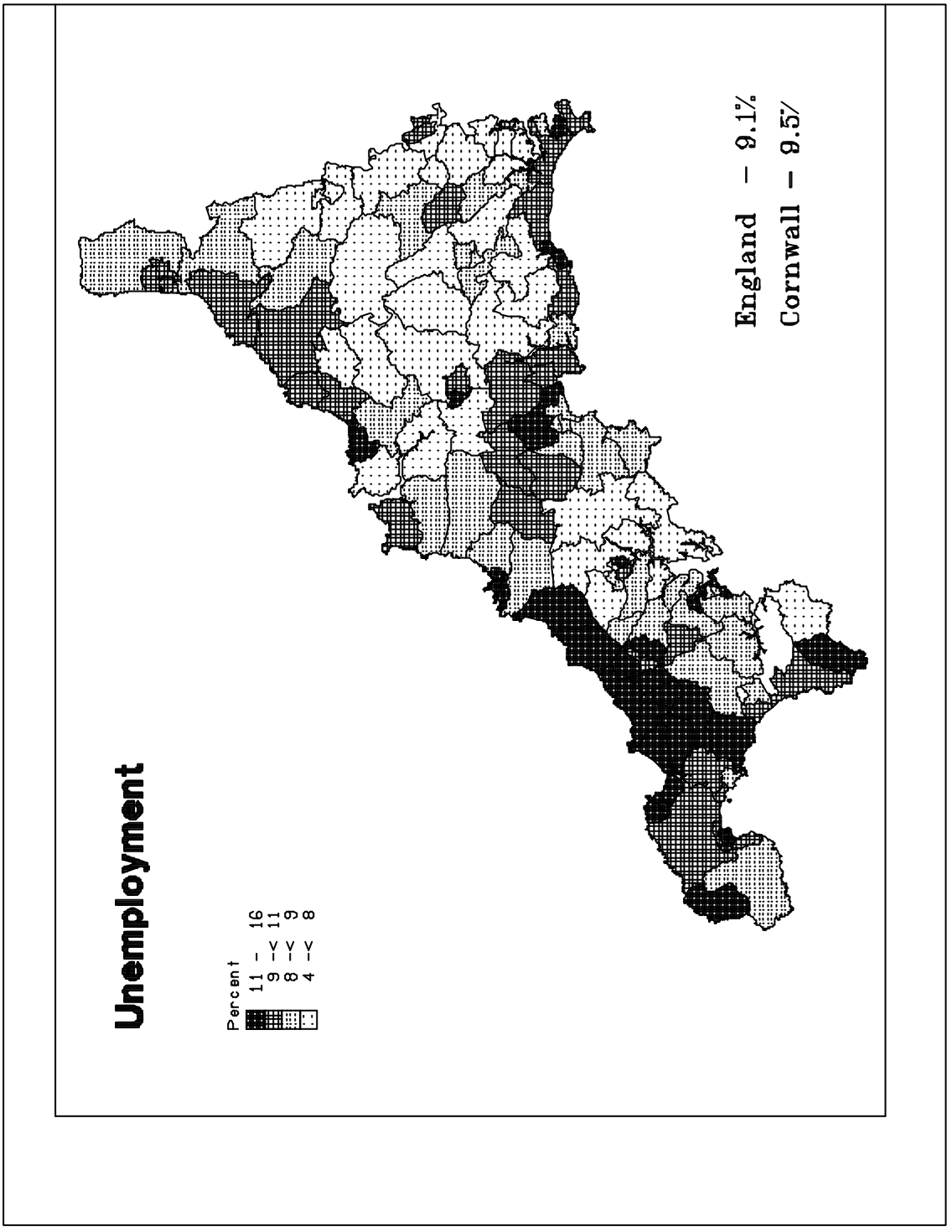
Rank	*District*	*Ward*	*% Unemployed*
1	Penwith	St.Ives North	16.1
2	Kerrier	Redruth North	15.5
3	Penwith.	Penzance East	15.4
4	Carrick	Penwerris	15.3
5	Kerrier	Camborne North	14.5
6=	Kerrier	Camborne South	14.3
6=	Penwith.	Hayle-Gwithian	14.3
8	Restormel	Gannel	14.1
9=	Kerrier	Grade Ruan and Landewednack	13.7
9=	Kerrier	Illogan South	13.7

These results are perhaps unsurprising to those who know the County - the area around Cambourne, Redruth and St Ives has suffered more than other areas from the recent economic recession on top of earlier industry losses. Youth unemployment recorded in the 1991 Census was also high in Cornwall. with around a quarter, or more, of young people without paid employment in the worst affected wards (GradeRuan & Landewednack; Gannel. and Crowan).

However, these figures should again be treated with some caution, since they are based on just one point in time (ie 21/22 April 1991 - the night of the Census). The measurement of unemployment, based on self-reported rates, is also problematic. The accuracy of the official monthly unemployment figures are likewise open to question. The Government has changed the way that unemployment statistics are calculated more than 30 times since 1979. The official figures have been heavily criticised as unreliable by the Royal Statistical Society and more recently by the House of Commons Employment Committee.

The Royal Statistical Society concluded that *"the general public, many politicians, the media and various pressure groups, do not trust the unemployment figures or find them convincing."* (RSS 1995); and the House of Commons Employment Select Committee stated that *"a monthly headline figure of unemployment is important for Government, commentators and the public but the claimant count is completely inadequate to fulfill this need."* (Employment Committee 1996). The committee argued that more attention should be paid to the quarterly Labour Force Survey. However, even this was thought to need supplementing to track down those who have been discouraged from seeking work (a particular problem in rural areas).

Figure 3.2: Unemployment in Cornwall



Despite the problems with the Labour Force Survey it does provide data on unemployment and employment rates that are internationally comparable, even if the unemployment rates can only be considered to be minimum figures. Since the winter of 1993/94 data on unemployment and economic activity rates have been available for Cornwall as a whole. Figures 3.3 shows the quarterly unemployment rates in Cornwall, South West England and Britain between winter 1993 and autumn 1995, using the International Labour Organisations (ILO) definition of unemployment. The pattern of unemployment in Cornwall is clearly cyclical, being higher in winter and autumn than in spring and summer. This reflects the seasonal pattern of employment related to the tourist industry and emphasises the caution needed when interpreting the unemployment data shown in Figure 3.2 and Table 3.3. If the 1991 Census had taken place in winter it probably would have recorded much higher unemployment rates in many Cornish wards.

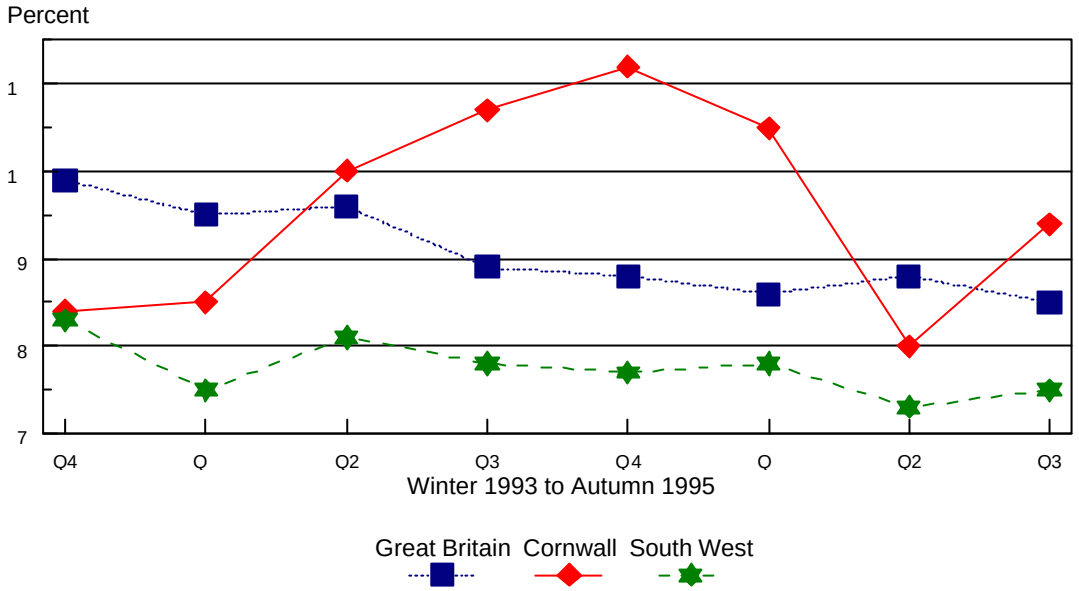
Despite the seasonal pattern, even at the height of summer unemployment is higher in Cornwall than it is in the rest of the South West region. There were also a higher proportion of unemployed people in Cornwall during most of 1994 than there were in Britain as a whole.

Economic Activity

Unemployment rates are only part of the picture, economic activity rates are also of key importance. They show what percentage of the population is available for work and therefore, able to support the economically inactive section of the population (the old, the young, the sick and unpaid carers). Figure 3.3, shows the economic activity rates from the Labour Force Survey for Cornwall, South West England and Britain between winter 1993 and autumn 1995.

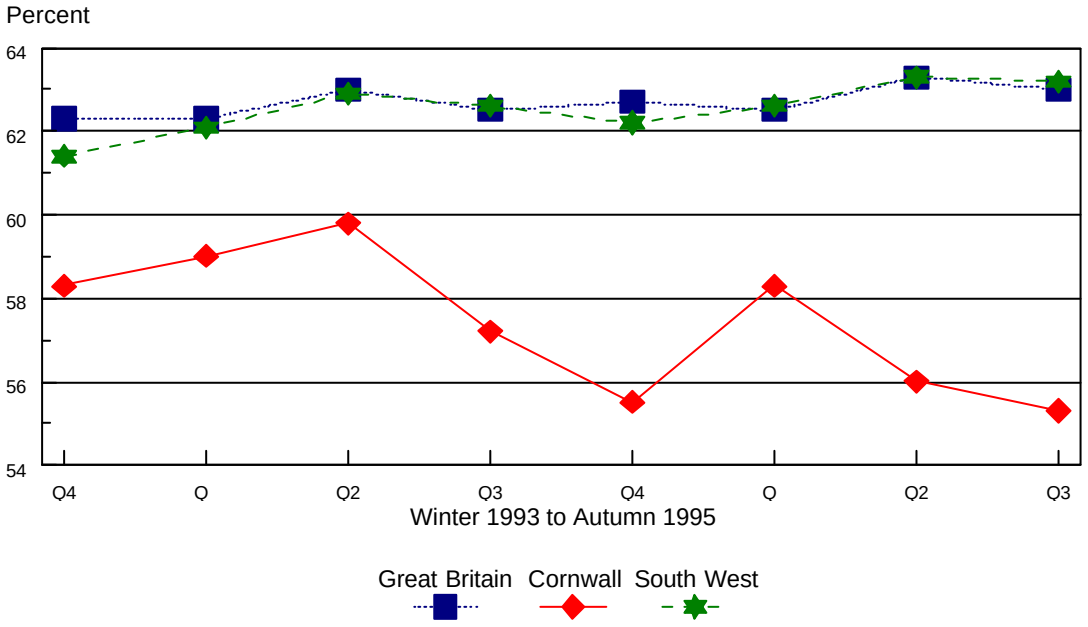
Throughout this period, economic activity rates were much lower in Cornwall than in the South West or in Britain, on average only 58% of the Cornish population was available for work compared with 62% of the population in the rest of the country. This reflects the large number of dependants living in Cornwall (both retired people and children - see discussion on the free economy later in this Chapter) and has implications for both the prospects for economic growth and the needs for service provision within the County.

Figure 3.3: Unemployment Rate in Cornwall, South West England and Great Britain, Using the Internationally Agreed ILO Definition of Unemployment.



Source: Quarterly Labour Force Survey

Figure 3.4: Economic Activity Rates in Cornwall, South West England and Great Britain.



Source: Quarterly Labour Force Survey

Income and Earnings

Not only are jobs insecure and unemployment high in parts of Cornwall, but average earnings are also low (see Chapter 1). The 1991 Census did not ask any questions about income (despite United Nations pressure to include such questions). However, it did record details about people's employment and occupation. It is possible to estimate the average weekly earnings of the economically active population in an area by multiplying the number of men and women in each occupational group by the average weekly full-time earnings of that occupation as recorded in the 1991 New Earnings Survey (NES). Adjustments can be made for the numbers in part-time work, the unemployed and those on government schemes (see Gordon and Forrest 1995, for details).

This estimate shows that the average weekly earnings in Cornwall in 1991 were £213 per week, which is significantly less than the estimated national figure of £225 per week. In only 35 of the 133 wards of Cornwall were estimated weekly earnings higher than the national average of £225 per week. There are currently only three reliable sources of information on income/earnings available at local authority level.

- The New Earnings Survey, which is an annual survey of employers PAYE records (see p40)
- The Regional Accounts, which are part of the annual national accounts and are based on a range of economic statistics.
- Estimates based on the socio-economic characteristics of the population as measured by the decennial national Censuses. (see Table 3.4 and Figure 3.5 below).

All the available information shows that Cornwall is one of the lowest waged counties in England.

The geography of low wages in Cornwall is shown in Figure 3.5. The wards with the paler shading are those with lowest average earnings. There is considerable correspondence between the wards with high rates of poverty (Figure 3.1) and those with low earnings (Figure 3.5). However, the urban bias of the Breadline Britain index is not so apparent in the low earnings figures. There are a number of very 'rural' wards in Cornwall where low wages are prevalent. In particular, there is a band of wards characterised by low earnings that runs through the centre of the County, from St. Columb, through Lostwithiel towards Liskeard. Similarly, low wages may be problematic in 'rural' wards around St. Just, St. Ives, Perranporth and Bude.

Figure 3.5: Average Weekly Earnings in Cornwall

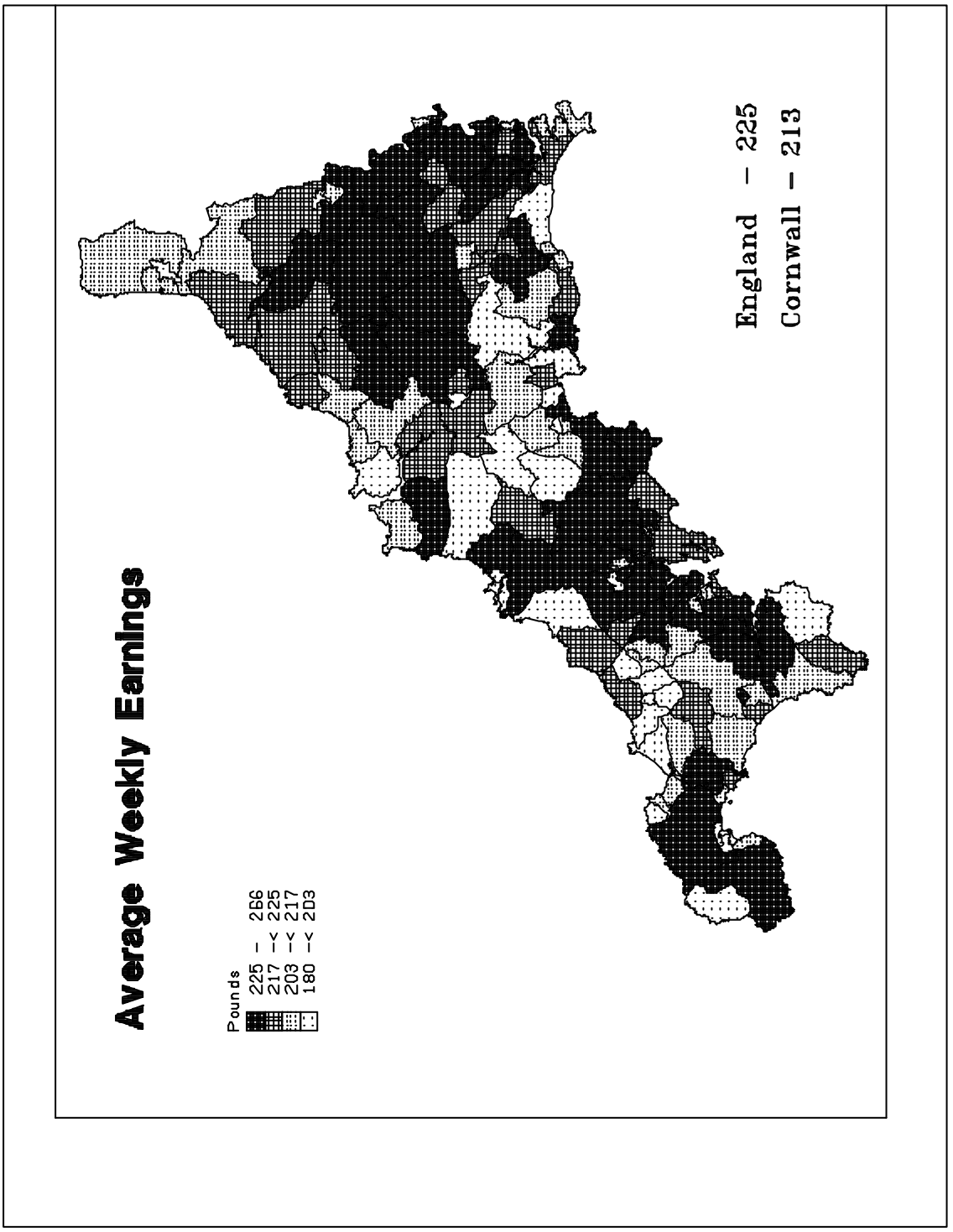


Table 3.4: The ten wards in Cornwall with the lowest estimated weekly earnings of the economically active population, recorded in the 1991 Census

Rank	*District*	*Ward*	*£*
1	Kerrier	Camborne North	180
2	Penwith	St Ives North	182
3=	Kerrier	Camborne South	183
3=	Penwith	Penzance East	183
5	Kerrier	Redruth North	184
6	Carrick	Penwerris	186
7=	North Cornwall	Stratton	187
7=	Caradon	St Veep	187
9	North Cornwall	St Minver	188
10=	Kerrier	St Keverne	191
10=	Kerrier	Illogan South	191

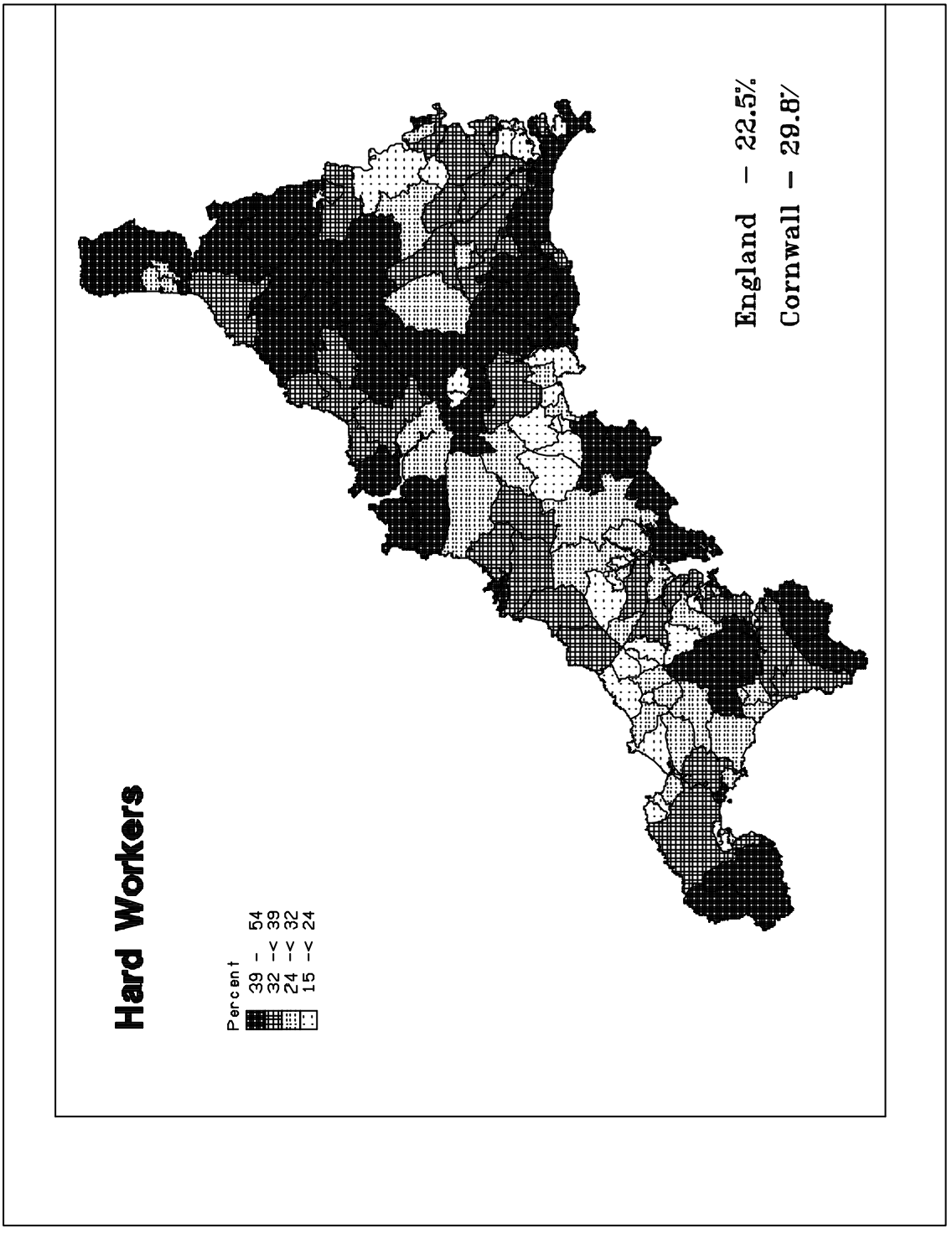
Table 3.4 shows that the ten poorest wards in terms of estimated earnings are concentrated in the three West Cornwall districts, with two exceptions: Stratton and St. Minver in North Cornwall. The poorest wards in Restormel are Poltair and Rock with estimated weekly average earnings of £197 and £199 per week.

Working Hours

There has been a general trend in many parts of the world towards increased leisure time and shorter working week. However, the trend in Britain during the 1980's and 1990's has been towards increased working hours and less leisure time. A number of surveys by EUROSTAT (the European Statistical Office), based on the Labour Force Surveys, have shown that by the 1990's workers in Britain worked for longer hours than workers in any other country in the European Union.

A dominant image of the 1980's is one of power breakfasts, working lunches and career stress in the financial and business sector of London and the South East. Indeed, Gordon and Forrest (1995) have shown that in the City of London 45% of resident full-time workers worked more than 40 hours a week. However, long working hours are overwhelmingly associated with rural rather than urban areas and, in particular, with remoter rural and mixed urban/rural local authority districts. Two factors are probably responsible for these long working hours. Firstly, long hours are associated with low-paid jobs in the tourist, catering and service sectors and, secondly, many highly paid managers and professionals who work long hours tend to live in attractive rural enclaves within commuting distance of the cities. The growth of self-employment and the necessity of taking a second job in many low paid occupations have also contributed to the increase in working hours.

Figure 3.6: 'Hard Workers' in Cornwall (>40hrs/wk)



The geography of long working hours is shown in Cornwall is shown in Figure 3.6. The predominantly rural nature of this phenomena can be clearly seen with the greatest proportion of full-time workers working more than 40 hours per week being concentrated in the rural wards around St Just, Gweek, the Lizard and Black Head, and in a band along the coast from Falmouth to St Austell Bay. In the east of the County there is a broad band of 'rural' wards where people are working long hours that stretches from Whitsand Bay in the far south east along the coast to Fowey and through the centre of the County via St Veep, Bodmin Moor and Ottery to Kilkhampton in the far north east. On average 29.8% of full-time workers in Cornwall work for more than 40 hours a week compared with only 22.5% of full-time workers in England as a whole. In 113 out of the 133 Cornish wards the proportion of full-time workers working long hours is greater than the English average of 22.5%.

Table 3.5: The ten wards in Cornwall with the highest percentage of full-time workers working over 40 hours per week, recorded in the 1991 Census

Rank	***District***	***Ward***	***%***
1	Kerrier	Grade Ruan and Landewednack	54.0
2	Caradon	Lanteglos	53.6
3	North Cornwall	Week St.Mary	52.1
4=	Caradon	Maker	50.0
4=	Carrick	Arwenack	50.0
6	Penwith	St.Buryan	48.8
7	Caradon	St.Veep	48.5
8	Kerrier	Constantine and Gweek	48.4
9	North Cornwall	Rumford	47.9
10	Restormel	Mevagissey	47.8

Table 3.5 shows the worst 10 Cornish wards where long working hours predominate. In Grade Ruan and Landewednack, Lanteglos and Week St.Mary more than half of full-time workers suffer from long working weeks. In all of the worst 10 wards there are a greater proportion of full-time workers working lengthy hours than there are on average in the City of London, Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster. It seems unlikely that the hard working population of Grade Ruan and Landewednack is paid anything like as well as their counterparts in the City of London.

The picture that these combined maps present is one of an economy with too few jobs where those who do have paid employment are paid low wages and work long hours.

The Free Economy

Conventional economic statistics are based upon the United Nations System of National Accounts (UNSNA) which defines such concepts as national income, balance of payments, Gross National Product (GNP) and Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Many economists would consider that the development of national accounts was one of the greatest

achievements of modern economics and in 1984 the Nobel Prize for economics was awarded to Sir Richard Stone, the British representative and chairperson on the United Nations committee that formalised the UNSNA. However, the UNSNA provides an incomplete measure of the economy since it does not include work (productive labour) that is 'unpaid'. This 'free' or 'hidden' part of the economy (often referred to as the unpaid work of women) is difficult to measure, but it is important to acknowledge the considerable amount of labour which occurs outside the formal labour market. Not least because the formal economy is dependant upon this unpaid work. Although the 'free' economy is not recognised in official statistics it has been estimated to account for over half of working time and about a third of GDP in a national economy (see Waring, 1988, p 301).

Time budget studies in the UK in 1985 estimated that approximately half (49%) of total work time was not recorded by the System of National Accounts. In 1985 63% of the hours worked by women and 32% of the hours worked by men went unrecorded and unpaid (UNDP 1995).

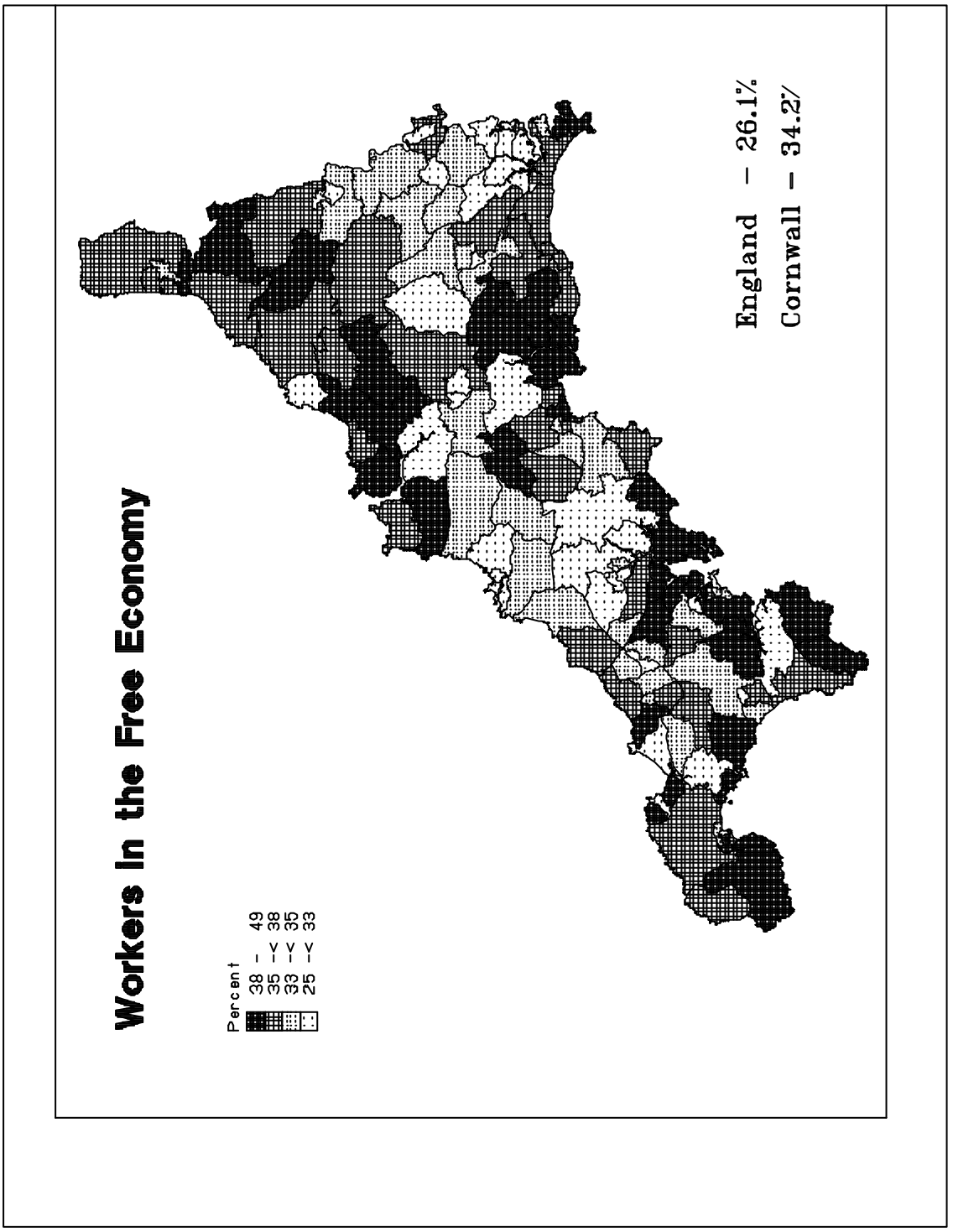
The free economy is the unpaid servicing work of people carrying out caring in the home, primarily the unpaid work carried out by women - work which is invisible, but is nonetheless significant both in terms of its contribution to the national economy (some countries count unpaid caring work in their calculation of national wealth) and in terms of the impact it is likely to have on the well being of both the household - who benefit from the servicing and caring work - and the carer herself - who may do this work at a cost to own well being.

Workers in the Free Economy may be there, doing this caring work, for a number of reasons - for pleasure, out of duty, or because paid work is not a viable option, where alternative childcare is too expensive for example. It would be wrong to simply count the number or proportion of workers in the free economy as a measure of the depth of poverty in that area. However, as an indicator of the vulnerability of one sector of the population to the risk of poverty it is a very good measure. Carers - largely women - are dependent on others for their source of income - on husband's, partners, or on the state. This leaves women at risk of deprivation on a day to day basis - for example, where the husband withholds his earnings - and also at risk of poverty in the long-term, where pensions in particular are linked with participation in the labour market (Glendinning and Millar 1992; Payne 1991).

In addition, measures of the free economy are a valuable calculation of the importance of women's unpaid domestic work in maintaining the local economy, as the work carried out under this title is work that is necessary, not optional. Furthermore, workers in the free economy represent lost earnings to the household as well as to the women herself - several studies have suggested that the number of families living in poverty would increase by one third if women were not in paid employment (Payne 199 1).

In Cornwall as a whole, a sizeable proportion of the adult population work primarily in the free economy - over a third compared with around a quarter in England as a whole (see Figure 3.7).

Figure 3.7: Workers in the 'Free Economy' in Cornwall



Within Cornwall the greater proportion of workers who could be classified in this way are again clustered - in North Cornwall, and in wards in West Cornwall in particular, but also around the central area. There is a considerable overlap in West Cornwall between the areas with a high proportion of workers in the 'free' economy and a high proportion of full-time workers working more than 40 hours per week (see Figure 3.6 above). Some of these findings are caused by the difficulties women would have in finding full-time paid work in such areas, either because of transport difficulties combined with childcare responsibilities and school hours, or because such work is not available.

Table 3.6: The ten wards in Cornwall with the highest percentage of people primarily working in the 'free' economy, recorded in the 1991 Census

Rank	***District***	***Ward***	***%***
1	Kerrier	St Keverne	49.4
2	Caradon	Lanteglos	48.4
3	North Cornwall	St.Minver	47.2
4	Caradon	Maker	44.3
5	Kerrier	Mawnan and Budock	44.1
6	Caradon	Millbrook	43.5
7	Penwith	Perranuthnoe	43.3
8	Carrick	Feock	42.9
9	Kerrier	Breage and Germoe	42.5
10	North Cornwall	St Teath	42.4

Table 3.6 shows the ten Cornish wards with the highest percentage of people primarily working in the 'free' economy as recorded in the 1991 Census. These figures have been estimated by aggregating all those over 16 who are classified as 'other inactive', lone parents not in full-time work, and all women in couples with children in part-time work, self employed, unemployed, on a government scheme or an economically active student. The free economy is calculated as a percentage of the (so-called) economically active population. This is a minimum estimate since it will omit people who spend much of their time caring for an elderly relative (a situation which is found in many parts of Cornwall). The most recent estimates available for 1994/95 show that 9% of British adults provided informal (unpaid) care for someone in or outside their household who was sick, disabled or elderly (Semmence *et al* 1996). Most of this work is not recorded in Table 3.6 and Figure 3.7 above. However, it is evident from the table that a remarkably high proportion of the population in many areas of Cornwall spend much of their time as carers. Indeed in 131 out of the 133 wards of Cornwall a greater proportion of the population works in the 'free' economy than the average proportion for England as a whole (e.g.. 26.1%).

SOCIAL GROUPS

Lone Parents

One of the most rapidly expanding 'poor' social groups are lone parent households. This group has increased from 8% of households in 1971 to 17% of households by 1989. The proportion of lone parent households in Britain is now one of the highest in Europe. However, lone parenthood is most commonly temporary, being followed by remarriage or cohabiting. The proportion of lone parents is generally higher in inner city areas compared with elsewhere' and births to lone parents accounted for over 19% of all births in inner city areas compared with 10% of births elsewhere (Boddy *et al* 1995). However, there is a growing body of evidence that suggests that lone parents living in rural areas are likely to be poorer than their urban counterparts. Particularly, when they are excluded from the labour market by the absence of affordable child care and transport (see Chapter 1).

The numbers of lone parent households are projected to expand in all parts of the country. Table 3.7 shows latest Department of Environment estimates of the numbers of lone parent households by region in 1993 and the projected numbers in 2006. In the South West the numbers are expected to grow from 83,000 households in 1993 to 97,000 households in 2006, a 17% increase.

Table 3.7 Projected numbers of lone parent households by region, 1993 and 2006

Region	***Number of Lone Parent Households in 1993 (000's)***	***Number of Lone Parent Households in 2006 (000's)***	***Projected Change in Number of Households (000's)***
South West	83	97	14
South East	181	210	29
London	206	263	57
West Midlands	111	134	23
East Midlands	78	94	16
East Anglia	35	44	9
North West	169	198	29
Yorks/Humbs	109	122	13
North	74	81	7
ENGLAND	1,046	1,243	197

Source: DOE 1995

However, it is not just the numbers of lone parent households that have increased over the past 20 years. The poverty rates amongst lone parents have risen even more dramatically. Table 3.8 shows the increase in the proportion of lone parent households reliant on supplementary benefit/income support between 1971 and 1991. These, results should be treated with some caution since they are compiled from a number of different sources and the rules governing the receipt of benefit have also changed many times. However, it appears that the proportion of lone parent households dependant on benefit for survival approximately doubled over the 1970's and 1980's.

Table 3.8 Proportion of Lone Parent Households in Receipt of Supplementary Benefit/Income Support, 1971 to 1991

Year	*Lone parents in receipt of benefit*
1971	36%
1976	41%
1986	59%
1989	72%
1991 (excludes widows)	68%

Source: Bradshaw & Millar (1991), McKay & Marsh (1994)

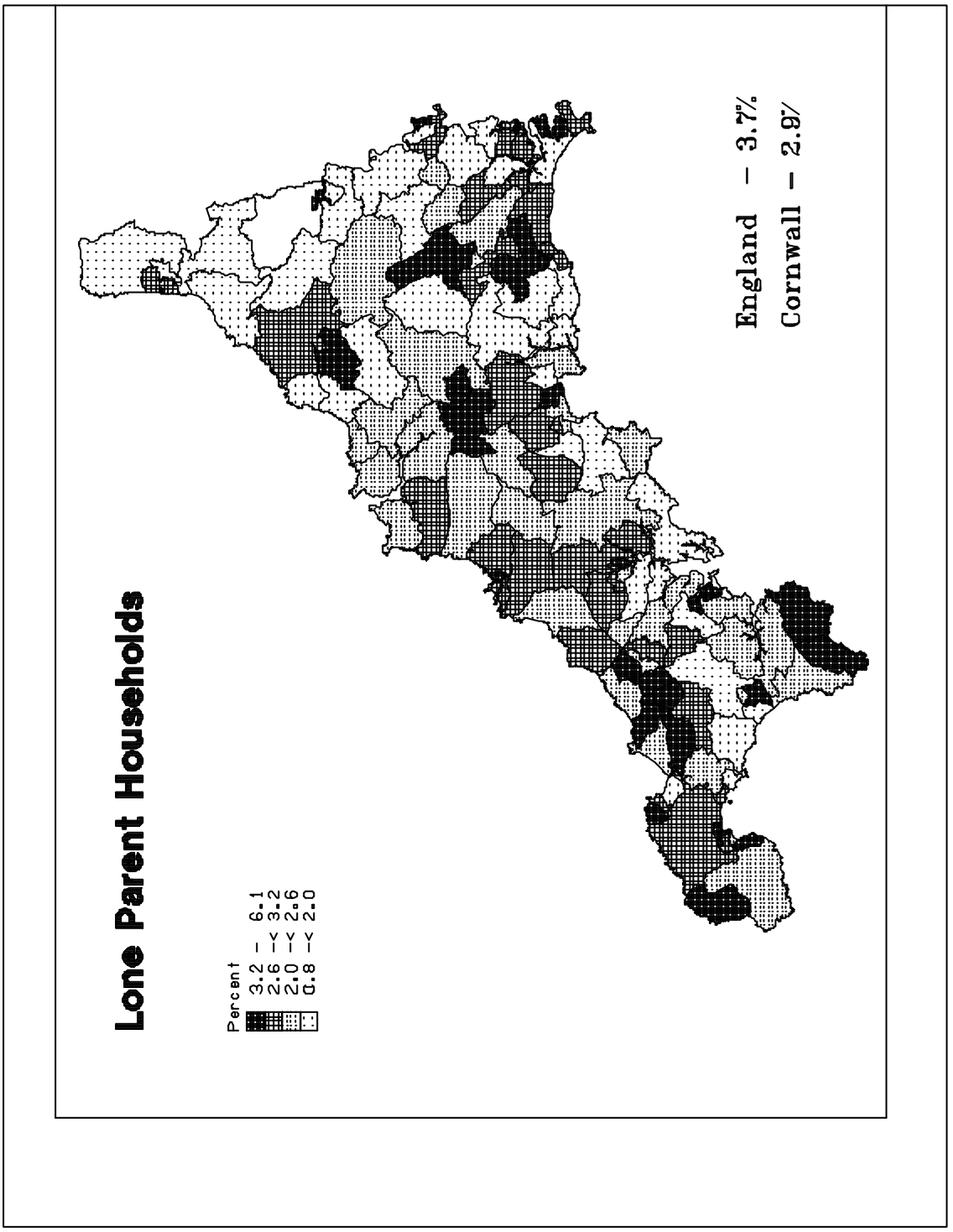
The geography of lone parent households in Cornwall in 1991 is shown in Figure 3.8. As would be expected there are a smaller proportion of lone parent households in Cornwall (2.9%) than in England (3.7%) as a whole, and Cornish lone parents are mainly concentrated in the more urban wards. In West Cornwall the highest proportions are found in Penzance, St Ives, Penwerris, Tregolls, Helston and around Camborne. In the East of the County concentrations of lone parents are found around Bodmin, Launceston, Camelford, Liskeard, Torpoint, Looe and Newquay. The national pattern of lone parents living in more urban areas is therefore also clearly evident in Cornwall. Indeed the map of lone parent households (Figure 3.8) is very similar to the population density map (Figure 2.1) and the Breadline Britain poverty map (Figure 3.1).

Table 3.9: The ten wards in Cornwall with the highest percentage of Lone Parent Households, recorded in the 1991 Census

Rank	*District*	*Ward*	*%*
1	North Cornwall	Bodmin St.Mary's	6.1
2	Carrick	Penwerris	5.7
3	Penwith	Penzance East	5.5
4	Penwith	St.Ives North	5.5
5	Caradon	Liskeard North	5.4
6	North Cornwall	Launceston North	5.0
7	Carrick	Tregolls	4.7
8	Penwith	Penzance North	4.5
9=	Kerrier	Camborne South	4.4
9=	Caradon	Torpoint	4.4

Table 3.9 shows the ten wards in Cornwall with the highest proportion of Lone Parent households and confirms the Urban pattern visible in the map. Bodmin St. Marys in North Cornwall has the greatest concentration of lone parent households (6.1%), followed by Penwerris ward in Carrick (5.7%). There are 22 wards in Cornwall with a higher than national average proportion of lone parent households.

Figure 3.8: Lone Parent Households in Cornwall



Children in Need

The phrase 'children in need' is use extensively in the Children Act, 1989. This is a recent terminology and is synonymous with the concept of 'children at risk' which is now used by many OECD countries as a replacement for 'disadvantaged children'. In 17 OECD countries (including Australia, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Portugal, UK and the USA) the proportion of 'children at risk' has recently been estimated at between 15 and 30% of school age children (OECD 1995).

The Children Act, 1989 effectively made it a statutory requirement for local authorities to assess the numbers of poor children in their area. Schedule 2 of the Act, which came into force in October 1991, required local authorities to;

"Identify the extent to which there are children in need living in their area".

Children in need are defined as:

- Children who are unlikely to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision of local authority services.

- Children whose health or development is likely to be significantly or further impaired without the provision of local authority services.

- Children with disabilities.

(Children Act, 1989, Section 17, (10))

Local authorities were asked to provide statistics on the following categories of children to the Department of Health, which were based on the categories in the guidance (DOH 1991) for senior child care managers on part III of the Children Act (our emphasis);

- Children with disabilities
- Children at risk of abuse or neglect
- Children who are delinquent or at risk of becoming so
- Children separated from their parents
- Children with serious family problems
- Children whose home conditions are unsatisfactory
- *Children living in poverty*
- Children leaving care

Unfortunately, few authorities were able to provide statistics on any of these categories, except children at risk of neglect or abuse (Colton *et al* 1994). Research in Wales has found that child care managers in social service departments are currently having to concentrate their efforts on children at risk of physical or sexual abuse or neglect. However, as Table 3.10 demonstrates, most managers would like to give a higher priority to problems of child poverty (Colton *et al* 1994).

Table 3.10 Priority given to categories of children in need by Welsh child care managers

Need Category	*Actual Priority*	*Ideal Priority*
Sexual abuse	1.50	2.75
Other abuse/neglect	1.88	3.00
Delinquency	4.31	5.94
Leaving Care	4.38	4.56
Disabilities	5.88	5.75
Separated from parents	6.13	6.81
Severe family problems	6.38	4.63
Unsatisfactory home conditions	6.94	6.00
Poverty	7.81	5.56

The 1991 Census provided some data on the two largest categories of children in need; children living in poverty and children with disabilities. However, it must be stressed that there is a large degree of overlap between these two categories.

Children with Disabilities and Poverty

There is a widely held belief that disability in childhood is an 'act of God'; a 'misfortune' that is just as likely to befall the rich as the poor. Indeed, this view is often strengthened by the fact that many of the voluntary organizations that care for and campaign on behalf of children with disabilities are run by people from the middle classes or with reasonably wealthy backgrounds. The prevalence of childhood disability is not perceived to have a social class or poverty gradient in the same manner as diseases like childhood tuberculosis.

This perception is hard to understand given the crucial effects that maternal health and nutrition are known to have on the prevalence of congenital abnormalities. Numerous studies have shown that women of child-bearing age are much more likely to have poor health if they are in Social Classes IV or V than if they are in Social Classes I or II (Townsend and Davidson 1988; Whitehead 1988). The same social class gradient in women's' health is observed if they are classified by their partner's social class. Given this known social class gradient in women's' health, it would be expected that childhood disability would have a similar gradient.

The 1985 Office of Population, Censuses and Surveys (OPCS) Disability Surveys asked a sub-set of questions that had been used by Mack and Lansley (1985) in the 1983 Breadline Britain study to measure poverty (see Chapter 1). It is therefore possible to compare the level of deprivation experienced by families with disabled members (adults and/or children) compared with the general population. The items shown in Table 3.11 are those common to both sets of surveys. Table 3.11 shows clearly that both families with disabled children and families with children and disabled adults are much more likely than disabled adult households to lack the necessities of life because they cannot afford them. In turn, households with disabled adults lack more necessities due to financial constraints than the average British household. The much higher levels of deprivation suffered by families with children, where either the adults or children are disabled, is very marked.

Table 3.11 Households unable to afford a selection of consumer durables and certain items considered to be necessaries by the majority of the British public in the 1983 Breadline Britain Survey by Household Type

Survey	*Breadline Britain Survey 1983*	*OPCS Disability Survey 1985*	*OPCS Disability Survey 1985*	*OPCS Disability Survey 1985*	*Breadline Britain Survey 1990*
Target Group	*All British Households*	*All Disabled Adults*	*Disabled Adults with Children*	*Adults with Disabled Children*	*All British Households*
	n=1,174	*n=8,945*	*n=954*	*n=1,200*	*n=1,831*
Percentage of households lacking item because they can't afford it					
	%	%	%	%	%
Warm winter coat	7	8	21	19	4
Two pairs of all weather shoes	9	15	32	35	4
Presents for friends & family once a year	5	13	15	14	5
Celebrations on special occasions e.g.. Christmas	4	13	13	9	4
New not second hand clothes	6	17	30	33	4
Meat or fish every other day	8	7	13	10	3
Roast joint once a week	7	12	15	14	1
Cooked meal every day	3	3	5	4	1
Toys for children	2	-	12	8	1
Money for school trips	9	-	17	10	4
Telephone*	11	14	13	23	7
Washing machine	6	9	9	6	4
Fridge	2	2	2	2	2
Video**	-	21	37	33	11

Note to the Table: * the telephone was not considered to be a necessity by the majority of people in 1983 but it was by a small majority in 1990.
** a video was only thought to be a necessity by 13% of respondents in 1990.

It is possible to map the results from the limited sub-set of deprivation questions, asked in the OPCS Disability surveys, onto the results from the 1983 *Poor Britain* survey to yield an estimate of the percentage of households with disabled children that are 'poor', using the same definition of poverty as used in the 1983 *Poor Britain* survey. This shows that 55% of households with children with disabilities were likely to have been living in poverty or on the margins of poverty in 1985, using a definition that would be commonly accepted by a large majority of people (Gordon, Parker and Loughran 1996).

This is an extraordinarily high level of poverty in comparison with the average British household. It seems that families with disabled children were four times more likely to be living in poverty than the average British household. This is a higher rate of poverty than any other social group. Families with children with disabilities are more likely to be 'poor' than lone parent households, unemployed households, households with heads in Social Class V, ethnic

minority households, households with large families, etc. Families with disabled children are, arguably, 'the poorest of the poor'.

Supporting evidence for the extraordinarily high levels of poverty experienced by disabled people is provided by the work of Berthoud, Lakey and McKay (1993) who, using a completely different methodology, estimated that 45% of all disabled adults were living in poverty.

Children with Disabilities in Cornwall

The 1991 Census was the first to ask if any household member had "any long-term illness, health problem or handicap" which limited work or daily activities. Although, full details of the accuracy of the answers to this question have not yet been released, the national prevalence rates are very similar to those 'objectively' measured by the OPCS Disability Surveys, for all age groups except the very elderly (Forrest and Gordon 1993).

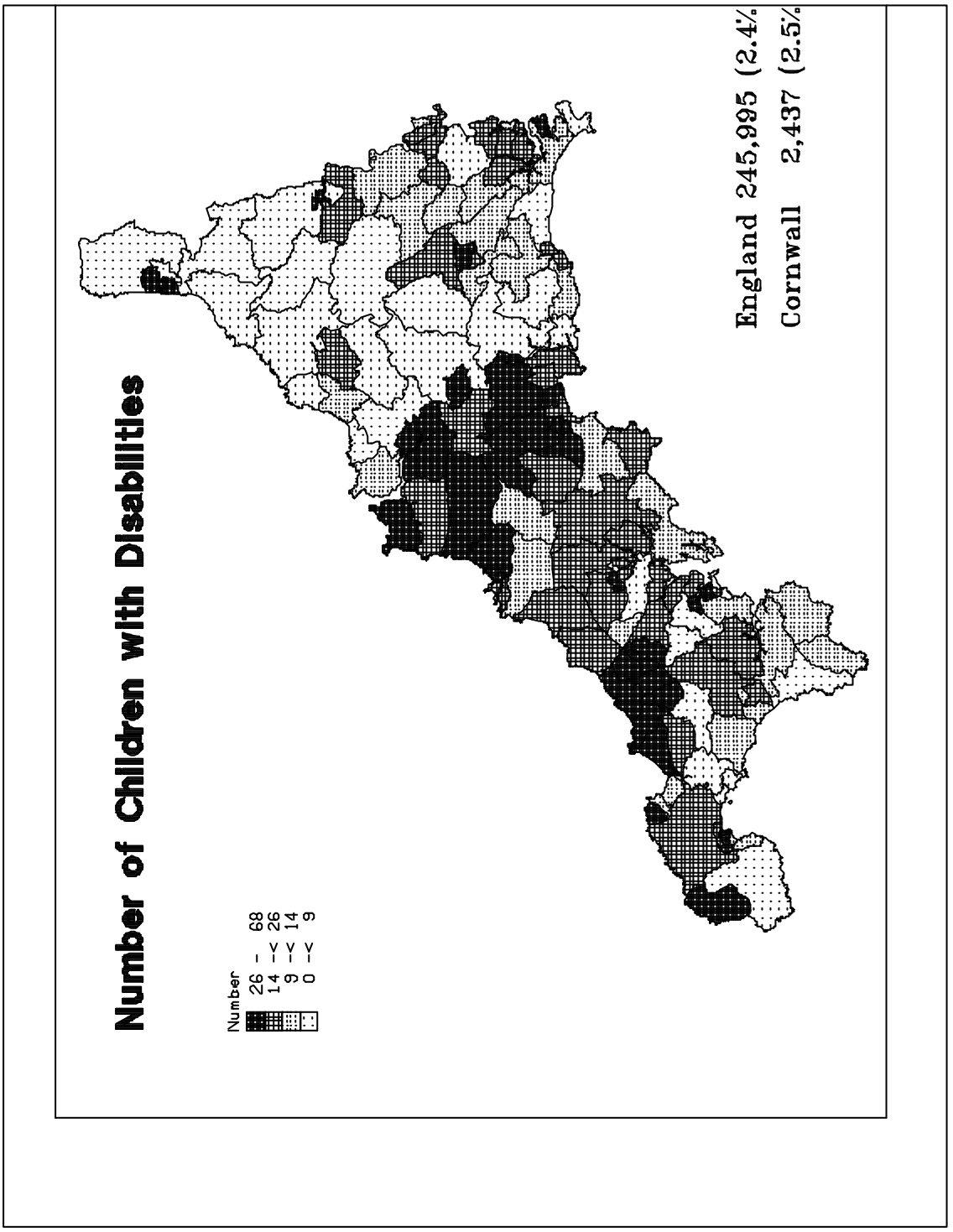
The 1991 Census results showed that there were 2,437 children with a limiting long-term illness/disability in Cornwall, which represents 2.5% of the population under the age of 18. This is a similar rate to that found in England as a whole. Figure 3.9 shows that there is a distinctive pattern to the distribution of children with disabilities within Cornwall. There are a cluster of wards centered around Cambourne with large numbers of disabled children, another band of wards (mainly in Restormel) stretching from Newquay to St. Austell and relatively high numbers are also found in a band of wards through the centre of Carrick. It is clear that special needs services are required in some areas more than others and hopefully the planning of children's services will reflect this disparity in needs.

Poverty and Children in Cornwall

The release of the 1991 Census data saw a plethora of new deprivation indices produced. An evaluation of the 10 most widely used indices was recently undertaken on behalf of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (Lee *et al* 1995), however none of 1991 Census based deprivation indices are designed to measure either children's deprivation or deprivation in rural areas. The only index of children's deprivation so far produced is based on 1981 Census results (Bebbington and Miles 1987) and is a children's version of the 1981 DOE Z-Scores. It was constructed from 6 1981 Census variables:

- Population density
- Children in non self contained accommodation
- Children in households lacking basic amenities
- Children in overcrowded households
- Single parent households
- Children in households where the head was born in the New Commonwealth/Pakistan

Figure 3.9: Number of Children with Disabilities in Cornwall



However, the Z-Score methodology has now been superseded by the Index of Local Conditions and the DOE no longer recommends it as an adequate measure of deprivation (DOE 1995). Therefore, it would not be appropriate to use this index for measuring the present level of child deprivation.

A number of Local Authorities have used the Young Persons Support Index as a planning tool for children's services. This used 1991 Census results and is based on research by Bebbington and Miles (1988, 1989) into the differences between the family circumstances of children entering care and children in the general population. Unfortunately, Bebbington and Miles did not analyse their results with a view to producing a Census based index and the attempts to produce such an index have resulted in a number of statistical errors, that mean that it is of only very limited value. It would be very unwise to use the Young Person Support index for resource allocation purposes.

Therefore, there is currently no agreed method of measuring children's poverty at local area level in a relatively rural county like Cornwall. Table 3.12 shows the ten worst wards in Cornwall on a number of indicators that have been used to measure Children's Poverty/Deprivation in studies in the past.

Column 1 shows the proportion of children living in households with no adults in employment, the highest ranked ward is Penwerris where over a third (33.8%) of children are growing up in these households, which are likely to be dependent on state benefit.

Column 2 shows the proportion of children aged 0-15 living in Lone Parent Households and again in Penwerris more than a fifth of children are in this circumstance. There is also obviously an overlap between the children in lone parent households and those in households with no earners shown in column 1.

Column 3 shows the proportion of dependent children in large families (4+ children). A number of studies have show that large families are often at risk of poverty, however it must be noted that large families are also sometimes also associated with wealth. The highest ranked wards are Ottery and Rock, where approximately 1 in 6 children live in large families. This illustrates the difficulties of measuring child poverty in an area like Cornwall since these are two wards that are unlikely to be highlighted as having many additional needs using conventional techniques.

Column 4 shows the proportion of children aged under 18 with a limiting long term illness. In Redruth North and Penwerris 1 in 20 children have such a disabling condition (see previous section and Figure 3.9 for details).

Table 3.12 The ten wards in Cornwall with the highest percentage of Children living in Households where they may have additional needs, recorded in the 1991 Census

Column 1		*Column 2*		*Column 3*		*Column 4*	
Children in households with no adult in employment		***Children aged 0-15 living with lone parents***		***Dependent children in large families (4+ children)***		***Children aged 0-18 with limiting long term illness or disability***	
Electoral Ward	***%***	***Electoral Ward***	***%***	***Electoral Ward***	***%***	***Electoral Ward***	***%***
Penwerris	33.8	Penwerris	21.0	Ottery	16.6	Redruth North	4.7
St Ives North	28.7	Penzance East	19.4	Rock	16.5	Penzance West	4.7
Redruth North	28.6	Bodmin St Mary's	18.3	Grenville	15.1	Chilsworthy & Delaware	4.5
Camborne South	27.7	St Ives North	17.3	Roseland	15.0	Camborne West	3.8
Penzance East	26.5	Marazion	16.4	Constantine and Gweek	14.5	Maker	3.8
Illogan South	25.6	Penzance North	16.0	St Breward	14.2	Camborne North	3.8
Camborne West	24.0	Trevethan	15.2	Week St Mary	13.9	Fowey	3.8
Penzance West	23.0	Camborne West	15.0	Penwerris	13.6	Lansallos	3.8
Tregolls	22.8	St Ives South	15.0	Redruth North	13.3	St Ewe	3.8
Bodmin St Mary's	22.8	Penryn	14.6	North Petherwin	13.3	Bodmin St Mary's	3.7

The need for a rural deprivation index

It is clear from the previous discussions that poverty exists in Cornwall. It is also clear that none of the currently available deprivation indices adequately measure either the extent or location of poverty in a rural area like Cornwall. This is problematic because it means that the needs of Cornwall are not sufficiently recognized by either central government or the European Union. It also makes planning the distribution of services within Cornwall difficult.

It is beyond the scope of this present study to undertake the primary research necessary to produce a rural deprivation index. There are however no theoretical reasons why this should not be possible and an indication of the likely content of such an index can be given. There are currently few nationally representative data sets that identify rural areas (although this situation will change in the near future). However, the annual Family Expenditure Survey (FES) does contain a crude indicator of rurality, since it identifies households that live in local authority districts with population densities less than 220 people per square kilometer. This includes both rural and semi-rural populations using the OECD's definitions.

The FES also provides a great deal of detail on the expenditure and income of households and people. It has been used extensively to study the characteristics of people in the lowest income groups (usually the bottom 20% of disposable income). However, the actual disposable income of a household is not always the best measure of standard of living. It is self-evident that the larger the household the more income will be needed to maintain the same standard of living. It is also clear that economies of scale exist within a household i.e. it does not cost a family of 4 twice as much as a family of 2 to maintain the same standard of living. It is not self-evident, though, how much extra is needed by larger households in order to have the same standard of living as smaller households. When comparing households of different sizes and structures the government equivalises their incomes using the McClements scale (McClements 1977).

However, the McClements' Equivalisation Scale has been heavily criticised, both on methodological grounds and because it makes a lower allowance for the additional costs of children than any of the other widely used equivalisation scales (Muellbauer 1979, 1980). It is also unfair to rural areas like Cornwall because it makes no allowance for the additional costs of going to work (transport, clothes, etc) which is important in a low waged economy like Cornwall. In addition, it makes no allowance for the extra costs of disability, which again is important in an area with a high proportion of elderly people, many of whom are disabled. Townsend (1979) has produced an equivalence scale that allows for both these additional costs, but it is based on a survey carried out in 1968/69 so it is now rather old.

Table 3.13 shows the odds that different types of households have of being in the bottom 20% of disposable income group in 1991. The household types have been selected from those that are commonly used in many Census deprivation indices. The first two columns show that lone parent households have a 6.3 to 1 chance of being in the lowest income group if they live in a rural or semi-rural area, compared with only a 4.7 to 1 chance for lone parents in the UK as a whole ie lone parents are more likely to be living on low incomes in rural areas than in the rest of the country.

Table 3.13 Univariate Analysis: Odds that different types of household are likely to be in the bottom 20% disposable household income group in the 1991 Family Expenditure Survey

	UK Population (Actual Income) N=7,056	*Rural & Semi-Rural Population (Actual Income) N=1,700*	*UK Population (Income per person) N=7,056*	*Rural & Semi-Rural Population (Income per person) N=1,700*
Lone Parent	4.7	6.3	10.0	15.0
Rented Tenure	10.8	8.3	12.4	9.9
Head of Household Unemployed	3.0	2.8	6.6	3.5
No Access to a Car	18.3	17.7	5.9	5.8
Single Pensioners	13.8	14.9	1.4	1.7
Low Social Class	1.4	1.7	2.5	2.1
No Central Heating	2.4	1.9	2.3	1.7

The next two columns show that lone parents in rural and semi-rural areas have a 15 to 1 chance of being in the lowest income group, when income is measured as income per person in the household (i.e. income divided by the number of people in the household). This compares with only a 10 to 1 chance for lone parents in the UK as a whole. It is clear that however income is equivalised to allow for different household sizes and structures lone parents are more likely to be living on low incomes in rural and semi-rural areas than in the rest of the UK. This is probably due to the greater exclusion of lone parents from the labour market in rural areas, due to the problems of finding childcare and the costs of transport (see Chapter 2).

Conversely, Table 3.13 shows that both council and private tenants and households with an unemployed head are less likely to be in the lowest income group in rural and semi-rural areas than they are in the rest of the UK. This is probably because council estates have not suffered from the same degree of residualisation (the concentration of the poorest in council accommodation) in rural areas that has occurred in the cities. It is also likely that although there is a lot of unemployment in many rural areas, it is often of short duration, because of the availability of seasonal jobs. Therefore households with unemployed heads in rural areas may sometimes avoid sinking as deeply into poverty as similar households in the cities.

Surprisingly Table 3.13 shows that there are little differences in the chances of being in the bottom income group between rural and non-rural households with no access to a car, no central heating, with a head in Social Class IV or V or single pensioner households.

Table 3.14 Multivariate Analysis: Odds that different types of household are likely to be in the bottom 20% disposable household income group in the 1991 Family Expenditure Survey

	UK Population (Actual Income) N=7,056	*Rural & Semi-Rural Population (Actual Income) N=1,700*	*UK Population (Income per person) N=7,056*	*Rural & Semi-Rural Population (Income per person) N=1,700*
Lone Parent	4.2	4.3	6.1	7.5
Rented Tenure	8.0	6.2	7.6	6.3
Head of Household Unemployed	4.0	2.0	5.6	2.0
No Access to a Car	4.7	4.0	2.7	2.7
Single Pensioners	15.0	13.9	0.8	0.9
Low Social Class	1.0	1.7	1.2	1.1
No Central Heating	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.1
% of Cases Classified Correctly	88.4%	89.1%	84.0%	84.0%

Note: Odds are from Logistic Regression modeling (e.g. (exp) ß co-efficients). Rural & Semi-Rural Population are defined as people living in local authority districts with less than 0.9 persons per acre (2.2 persons per hectare).

In order to construct a rural deprivation index which adequately reflected the chances that different types of household had of being in a low income group, it is necessary to allow for the fact that there are overlaps between these household types e.g. it is possible (indeed likely) to be both a lone parent household and a household with an unemployed head. Table 3.14 shows the odds that different types of households have of being in the bottom 20% of disposable income after allowing for these overlaps between the household types ie it is the same as Table 3.13 above but allows for overlapping household types.

The same patterns are evident in Table 3.14 as were found in Table 3.13. Lone parents are more likely to be on low incomes in rural and semi-rural areas than in the rest of the country, while renters and the unemployed are likely to be better off in rural areas than in the cities. However, it is clear that the chances that different types of households have of being on a low income are different in rural areas than in urban areas. A rural deprivation index would have to reflect these differences.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has looked at the distribution of poverty and need within Cornwall. It is apparent that although poverty exists in many parts of the County there are a number of areas with high concentrations of poverty in West Cornwall.

A clear picture has emerged of the situation in West Cornwall. There are a significant number of people mainly outside the economically active population who are working long hours either unpaid or with low pay in bringing up children and caring. In the economically active population, there are another group of people in full time employment but working very long hours, often for low pay. There are relatively large groups of people of all ages who are unemployed or in disguised forms of unemployment, such as self-employment, but with low earnings and on Government schemes. There are also, of course, a group of professionals who are extremely well paid.