

Addressing Women's Poverty in West Sussex: Local Labour Market Initiatives

Karen Escott
Christopher Price
Lisa Buckner

Centre for Social Inclusion



*Sheffield
Hallam University*



Preface

Gender and Employment in Local Labour Markets

West Sussex County Council has worked in close partnership with Sheffield Hallam University, and eleven other local authorities over the last three years to take part in this national research study, the Gender and Employment in Local Labour Markets project (GELLM).

As phase one of the Project, in September 2004 the County Council jointly launched with Sheffield Hallam a 'Gender Profile of West Sussex's Labour Market'. This was a key document that highlighted differences in terms of demography, economic indicators, patterns of employment, pay levels, education and skills attainment within West Sussex. Following this report, the next stage of the Project was to undertake 3 locally important studies in the County:

- Working below potential: Women and part time work in West Sussex
- Addressing women's poverty in West Sussex: local labour market initiatives
- Local challenges in meeting demand for domiciliary care in West Sussex

The findings from these studies are now being presented in 3 separate but related publications.

All the studies have found significant problems with women's participation in local labour markets and have explored the issues stopping the local economy taking advantage of people's potential. The recommendations from this work therefore are crucial to realising better outcomes for individuals in terms of job opportunities and skills, not to mention the benefits to the performance of the West Sussex economy.

Mark Hammond

**Chief Executive
West Sussex County Council**



Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following for their valuable comments and assistance with the research. We are especially grateful to those interviewees who provided detailed insights into the particular labour market challenges facing women living in Bognor Regis, West Sussex:

Mary Bolsh, *Chichester College*
Vicki Brown, *Bognor Regis Citizens Advice Bureau*
Karen Crewes, *UNISON*
Gill Edinburgh, *Sussex Enterprise*
Paul Fuller, *Job Centre Plus*
Caroline Gosford, *Arun District Council*
Sue Holmes, *Blueprint Business Centre*
Richard McMann, *Arun District Council*
Pip Otton, *Laburnum Grove School*
Chris Tuke, *Bognor Action Support and Education (BASE)*
Paula Welland, *Arun District Council*
Staff at the Hub, Bognor Regis

Focus group participants

We would also like to thank the women who participated in the focus groups which took place at The Nursery, Bognor Regis Baptist Church and at Bognor Regis Nursery School. The participants provided detailed qualitative material about their experience and understanding of their community and the barriers and opportunities they face in the local labour market. Together with the local community activists who recruited and organised the groups, they enabled the researchers to enrich the local evidence contained in this report.

Members of the GELLM Team contributed as follows

Statistical Analysis	Lisa Buckner, Gerard Poole
Documentary Analysis	Chris Price
Interviews and Focus Groups	Karen Escott, Chris Price
Analysis	Karen Escott, Chris Price
Report Drafting	Karen Escott, Lisa Buckner, Chris Price

All Crown Copyright material is reproduced with the permission of HMSO.

Contents

Key findings	2
Introduction	3
Women's poverty and economic disadvantage	3
Regeneration initiatives	3
National and regional policy context	4
West Sussex County Council's approach to regeneration	4
Aims and objectives of the study	5
Women's poverty and economic disadvantage: evidence from three wards	5
The neighbourhood	5
Women's position in the local labour market	8
Barriers to labour market engagement	12
Area based public and private regeneration: gender perspectives	15
Local services and support	16
Impact of initiatives on women's disadvantage	16
Conclusions and policy recommendations	18
References	21
Appendix 1 Gender and Employment in Local Labour Markets	22
Appendix 2 Research methods	23
Appendix 3 Additional data for Hotham, Marine and Pevensey in Arun district, West Sussex	24

Key findings

This study has explored the scale and experience of women's economic disadvantage in the West Sussex coastal town of Bognor Regis. It also examined the barriers to paid employment and the extent to which current regeneration and labour market initiatives have supported women's employment opportunities.

Women's poverty and economic disadvantage in the three wards

- The wards are more diverse than Arun district.
- Over a fifth of women living in Hotham and Marine are aged 75 or over.
- Pevensey has a relatively young population.
- Over a quarter of dependent children in the area live in families with no working adult.
- Recent migration into the area involves many households living on low incomes.
- Lone mothers were less likely to be in work than in West Sussex as a whole
- Among women of working age, poor health and limiting long-term illness is relatively high.
- There is a relatively high level of private renting in the area.

Women's position in the local labour market

Compared with women in West Sussex and England as a whole, women in the three wards are:

- As likely as women nationally to be in full-time or part-time employment.
- Less likely than women in the county to be employed part-time, especially in Hotham and Marine
- More likely to work in unskilled and semi-skilled jobs and less likely to be in professional occupations.
- If they have unpaid caring responsibilities, more likely to work full-time in Hotham and Marine wards or to be early retired.
- More likely to be unemployed.
- In Hotham and Marine, more likely to be economically inactive in 2001 than in 1991
- More likely to work close to home (within 2 km).
- More likely to be unemployed or economically inactive if lone parents.

Low qualification levels and limited job opportunities constrain women's employment prospects:

- A quarter of women of working age have no educational qualifications, and only 17% have degree level qualifications.
- Growth in service sector employment has resulted in many low paid and poor quality jobs.
- Local organisations and women living in the area feel local residents are not benefiting from higher skilled and better paid jobs available in the district.

Barriers to labour market engagement

Local women and local organisations identified the following as important barriers to employment:

- Low educational attainment and lack of relevant skills, particularly among women who left school without formal qualifications.
- The tax and benefit system, which was regarded as inflexible and over complicated.
- Limited public transport and long travelling times in the district.
- The cost of childcare.
- Limited childcare provision, particularly for school aged children.

Area based regeneration

Analysis of regeneration policies, delivery plans, economic and employment targets and evaluation reports showed that:

- Women's economic disadvantage in the local labour market had not been addressed as a specific issue in the SRB 6 programme.
- There are few explicit requirements to consider the position of women and men separately in interventions to raise skills levels and reduce economic inactivity.
- Data used in regeneration documents on the locality, including output data, were not disaggregated by gender or ethnicity.
- Evaluation approaches adopted in existing regeneration initiatives took little account of the key differences in women's and men's economic position and experience of living in the locality.

Services to support local women

West Sussex County Council and other service providers could do more to assist women by:

- Developing a comprehensive information and advice service aimed at assisting women at different stages.
- Working more closely with community-based organisations to identify the employment and training needs of women living in the locality.

- Developing support tailored to the needs of unemployed and economically inactive women, including mentoring schemes.
- Extending childcare provision which reflects the differing childcare needs of lone parents and other low income households in the area.

Impact of initiatives on women's economic disadvantage

Labour market policy and regeneration initiatives have had limited impact on women's disadvantage:

- Regeneration schemes have assisted residents seeking employment, but many of the jobs are poorly paid.
- Community education projects have been successful in engaging local women, including lone parents.
- The potential for training and education provision at community level is constrained by limited, short term funding.
- Local education, health services and community projects could offer an effective route to paid work for local residents.
- Further work with local employers to address job flexibility, hours, pay structures and in-house training for women wishing to enter the labour market is needed.

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to identify how effective regeneration strategies and initiatives have been in addressing economic disadvantage among women living in three wards in Bognor Regis. The research was also designed to inform future regeneration strategies undertaken by West Sussex County Council and its partner organisations to ensure that the specific needs of women living on low incomes are directly addressed.

The study, undertaken between January and December 2005, used a variety of methods including: statistical analysis of ward level data; documentary analysis of regeneration strategies and evaluations; key stakeholder interviews; and focus groups with women living in the selected wards.

This report presents research undertaken as part of the GELLM research programme (Appendix 1). Parallel studies were also conducted in five other English local authorities; a synthesis report of the findings from all six areas is also available. The

Gender Profile of West Sussex's Labour Market (Buckner et al 2004) provides the district-wide statistical evidence and context for the study.

Women's poverty and economic disadvantage

In the UK, women are more likely than men to live in poverty. Poverty amongst women remains a persistent feature of some local labour markets, despite recent policy changes. Women's poverty is often hidden, and is exacerbated by widespread assumptions about their financial dependence on men and about their role being primarily as mothers and carers rather than as wage earners. These assumptions contribute to the low pay of many women who enter the labour market and to the low incomes of those who remain outside it. Although there is a relationship between economic inactivity and poverty, employment does not necessarily provide an escape from poverty for women. Women in the labour market face the risk of low wages, insecure work, occupational segregation and lesser access to promotion than men, in jobs that are often fitted around domestic responsibilities.

It is important to recognise the ethnicity dimension of women's poverty, as some ethnic minority women face a particularly high risk of poverty (WRG, 2005). Poor health and low self esteem, often associated with the stress of managing poverty, has also been highlighted in other research (Bradshaw et al 2003; Yeandle et al 2003).

Regeneration initiatives

Over the past 30 years, national, regional and local initiatives, under the broad heading of local economic development or 'urban regeneration', have sought to tackle disadvantage in areas of economic decline. Local authorities and others have invested considerable resources in these initiatives, and private sector urban renewal developments and investment have also been heralded as bringing prosperity to declining economies. This study focuses on area-based economic initiatives and developments, and explores their impact on women and on their participation in the local labour market. It was carried out in the context of a broader understanding of regeneration, including Oxfam's research on community engagement, which concludes that regeneration policies often fail to

take into account differences between men and women in their experience of a range of local services including education, transport, care provision and economic development (Oxfam, 2005).

Existing research does not explain why so many women living in communities where there has been significant public and private investment continue to experience economic disadvantage. This study explores how local economic and employment structures continue to disadvantage women, and considers how women can be assisted by future initiatives.

National and regional regeneration policy

The Government has a number of policy initiatives which are directly relevant to this study.

- The national target to engage more women and men in employment (DWP, 2004).
- A skills strategy which ensures fair access to training and jobs, including barriers between welfare and work (DFES, 2005).
- The Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (Social Exclusion Unit, 2001) to improve the quality of life in the most deprived areas of the country.
- The recognition that deprivation can be highly concentrated in neighbourhoods, requiring tailored approaches to providing services, work incentives and promoting self-employment (SEU, 2004).
- The target to significantly reduce the difference between the employment rates of disadvantaged groups and the overall rate by spring 2008 (NRU 2005).
- The target to increase the employment rates for lone parents, ethnic minorities, and people aged 50 and over, those with the lowest qualifications and those living in local authority wards with the poorest labour market position (NRU 2005).

To help address these policy issues in West Sussex, this study offers a more detailed understanding of the local labour market in which women living on low incomes are located. To date, public policy evaluation and academic research assessing the success or otherwise of regeneration initiatives has only rarely adopted a gender perspective. While targeted regeneration projects are known to have differing impacts on women and men, and some focus on lone parents and ethnic minority groups, most fail to highlight gender issues. In addition, key differences in the experience of particular groups

of women facing economic disadvantage, for example, young women, older women and women with disabilities, are often overlooked in the analysis. Stereotyping and focusing on problems facing some groups of women, for example through initiatives targeting teenage pregnancy, are an added concern.

A further rationale for this study is the contribution it can make to the evidence base for labour market policy at regional level. The policy direction of *Regional Development Agencies* and *Regional Assemblies* and, at sub-regional level, of *Learning and Skills Councils* is increasingly important for economic regeneration, employment and training. Regional Economic Strategies and related sub-regional plans are expected to include 'equalities' as part of their policy framework, but the requirement to improve economic competitiveness and to promote economic development has rarely been enhanced by local analysis which informs the promotion of gender equality.

West Sussex's approach to regeneration

The Hotham, Marine and Pevensey wards, in Bognor Regis, were selected for the study by West Sussex County Council, which identified them as areas suffering from relatively high levels of unemployment and economic inactivity. The county council noted that some local residents who had traditionally worked in manufacturing were still being affected by the results of contracting job levels in this sector. Job growth in the district did not appear to be benefiting local residents; many were living on very low incomes whether or not they were in work. Poverty levels were identified as particularly high among the district's ethnic minority population, among lone parents and older women, who are concentrated in the selected wards.

The wards were included in SRB2 and SRB6¹ funding. SRB2 included establishing a partnership of local agencies and businesses into Bognor Regis Ltd and the establishment of projects including the Triangle initiative, set up to help women back into the labour market. SRB6

¹ SRB2 and SRB6 are Single Regeneration Budget Rounds 2 and 6 programmes which provided funds for regeneration initiatives. SRB 6 has now been subsumed under the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) single programme.

funding commenced in 2000, and involved £7m of investment for the coastal area of the county. An assessment of the first three years of SRB6 funding in the area (CBC, 2003) reviewed the strategic objectives for the Sussex Coastal Partnership - to strengthen local service provision tackling deprivation, better access to teaching and learning, improve social and economic well-being and create an environment supporting community growth. It identified labour market issues including poor employment prospects and high levels of poverty in Bognor Regis, and concerns about the inability of local residents to compete effectively in the labour market. SRB funding ends in 2007 and has now been subsumed under the SEEDA² Single Programme. There have been no recent private sector regeneration initiatives in the selected wards. The Coastal West Sussex Area Investment Framework, involving West Sussex County Council, SEEDA and partner organisations, is a regeneration strategy designed to address housing, business enterprise, employment, and health and transport priorities. The strategy identifies a number of target areas, including Bognor Regis, which is one of the coastal towns covered by the framework. The Arun Economic Strategy, due to be published in spring 2006, will set out key objectives for the area in the context of the Regional Economic Strategy which includes objectives to encourage more women into business, from a relatively low level.

Sure Start has been operating locally since 2001³. Its work is being taken forward by Bognor Regis Children's Centre, which offers a wide range of locally based services to families living in the locality and beyond.

Aims and objectives of the study

This study has assessed how far area-based regeneration initiatives have addressed women's economic disadvantage and poverty. Its specific objectives were:

- To identify and analyse the nature and extent of women's poverty and economic disadvantage in the West Sussex wards of Hotham, Marine and Pevensy.

- To develop an evidence base about the relationship between poverty, gender and local labour markets in the neighbourhood.
- To examine relevant area-based public and private sector initiatives and their impact within the three wards on women's labour market opportunity.
- To assess local service provision and to identify the service needs, including unmet needs, of women living on low incomes in the locality.
- To make policy recommendations of relevance to West Sussex County Council and its local partners, including the Local Strategic Partnership, and to regional and national policy makers.

Women's poverty and economic disadvantage in West Sussex: evidence from three wards

The study uses a multi-method approach (see Appendix 2), combining qualitative and quantitative data:

- Ward/district level data from the 2001 Census.
- Documentary analysis of council reports and policies.
- Interviews with local organisations.
- Evidence from focus group discussions at two community-based meetings.

The neighbourhood⁴

Hotham, Marine and Pevensy are among the most deprived wards in West Sussex. This is evident from population and housing data about the locality, as well as the labour market and economic indicators presented below. Figure 1 shows the three wards within the county, with the Index of Deprivation 2004 scores for the areas within them.

The number of people resident in these three wards is 16,350, which is 12% of the population of Arun district and 2% of the population of West Sussex. The area has a relatively high level of residents who are new to the area⁵. In Hotham a

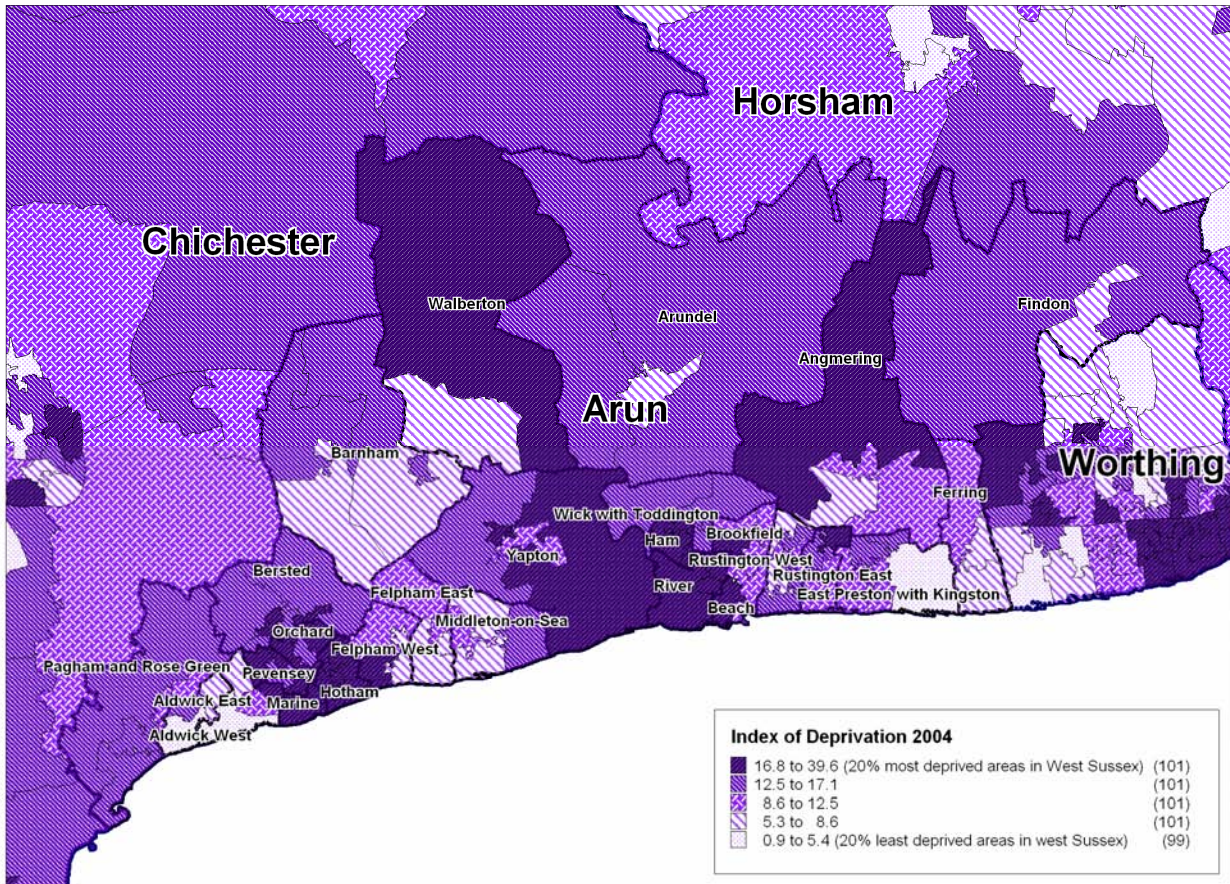
² SEEDA is the South East of England Development Agency

³ Sure Start is a Government programme whose aims include increasing the availability of childcare and supporting parents into employment.

⁴ Data in this section are from the 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2004, except where specified.

⁵ Transience, the speed at which the local population is changing, is recognised as a possible characteristic of areas of high deprivation (Kenway & Palmer, 2004).

Figure 1 Index of Deprivation: Hotham, Marine and Pevensey Wards in West Sussex



Source: ODPM, Crown Copyright 2004, 2001 Census Super Output Areas, Crown Copyright 2004. This work is based on data provided through EDINA UKBORDERS with the support of the ESRC and JISC and uses boundary material which is Copyright of the Crown

Note: This index covers information relating to income, employment, health deprivation and disability, education, skills and training, barriers to housing and services, crime and disorder and living environment.

quarter and in Marine a fifth of the population had moved in the year prior to the Census, mostly from within the UK. 3% had moved into the area from outside the UK. By contrast, Pevensey had lower levels of migration, but, again, of those who had moved into the area a high proportion relocated from other parts of the UK.

The level of private renting is high in Marine, where a third of residents live in such property. Compared with Arun and West Sussex as a whole, fewer residents own their home. 13% of people in Hotham, and 25% in Pevensey, live in rented council or other social accommodation⁴. Housing types are mixed. Almost half of people in all three wards live in a terraced property, and in Marine over a fifth live in multiple occupancy houses. The proportion of those living in detached or semi-detached homes is well below the district and county rate.

Low income households⁶

Pockets of poverty exist within a mile or two of very wealthy areas. Debt is a major problem.^A

There is a lot of unemployment and a lot of parents who are earning very low wages. If they don't have qualifications they are on the minimum wage.^A

There are high levels of poverty and I think women on their own are probably in the worst situation.^A

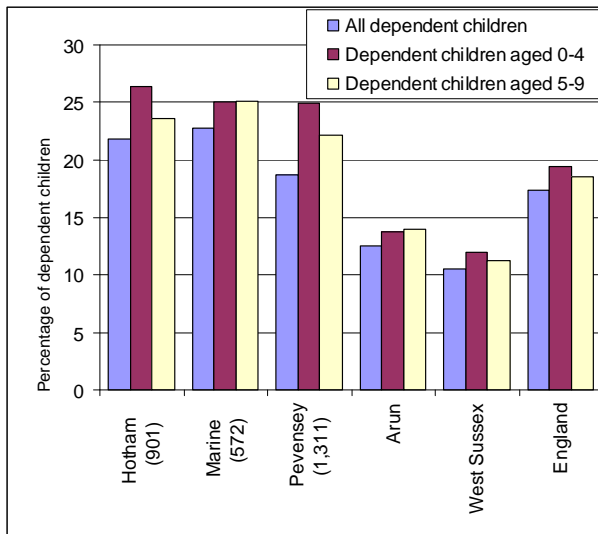
As shown in the more detailed statistics presented in Appendix 3, the locality has an ageing population (26% of Marine's female population and 20% of Hotham's population is aged 75 or over). This is far higher than the county, and more than double the national, rate.

⁶ Quotes in this and following sections are either from interviews with local organisations (marked A) or from focus group participants (marked B).

These wards have fewer children aged 15 or below. By contrast, over a fifth of Pevensey's population is in this younger age group.

A quarter of dependent children in the three wards live in families with no working adult, considerably more than in Arun, West Sussex or in England as a whole (Figure 2). The proportion is particularly high for those families with dependent children in the 0-4 age group.

Figure 2 Dependent children in households with no working adult



Source: 2001 Census Standard Theme Table, Crown Copyright 2003.

517 female lone parents lived in the three wards in 2001, representing 17% of all lone parents in Arun District. Female lone parents in Hotham and Marine wards are more likely to be economically inactive than those in the county as a whole. In Marine, 9% of female lone parents said they were unemployed. In Pevensey, employment rates were similar for lone parents to those at district and county level.

Over 800 people living in the locality (59% of them women) claim Income Support⁷.

Limiting long-term illness among men and women of working age is higher in the wards than in West Sussex or England as a whole. One in ten women of working age in Marine and Hotham reported high levels of poor health⁸.

Among women of working age who provide unpaid care to others, similar proportions are in paid employment as in West Sussex or England as a whole. However, a lower proportion is in part-time employment, particularly in Marine ward, where a quarter of women providing unpaid care are retired.

Ethnicity

As we showed in the *Gender Profile of West Sussex's Labour Market* (Buckner et al, 2004) less than 7% of West Sussex's population is from ethnic minority groups. The ethnic mix of the locality is similar to the county level, but more diverse than Arun district. The largest minority group in the locality is people of 'White Other' origin⁹, representing around 2% of the population across the three wards in 2001.

Our interviews highlighted economic disadvantage among ethnic minority groups living in the area as a concern of local organisations:

There are more people coming in as migrant labour, and they are not always showing up in the statistics. Many are now hoping to improve their standard of life through further education and community learning projects.^A

Increasing numbers of Eastern Europeans, including Latvians, Lithuanians and Polish families were now thought to be living in the area and working in agriculture, retail, and the residential care sector.

You've got lawyers and doctors working in the fields picking tomatoes. That is all they can do, because they can't speak the language.^B

Local employers in these sectors are understood to be actively recruiting Eastern Europeans, often finding accommodation for their workers in the wards under study or in temporary housing close to the sites of agricultural employment.

Some of our focus group participants regretted a lack of integration between new and existing populations.

⁷ Source: DWP, 2003

⁸ Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003

⁹ This group includes Romany Gypsies, people from the former Yugoslavia, and other people of Eastern European origin as well as people from other European countries, the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

Residents' views of the neighbourhood

Our focus group discussions revealed a weak local sense of 'community'. Women in the focus groups felt that voluntary childcare provision was one of the few opportunities to meet people.

Apart from going to the toddler group on a Wednesday morning I don't get out very much.^B

Some members of the community were isolated, particularly those who were new to the area. High house prices were a feature of the area which particularly impacted on households living on a low income.

House prices here have tripled in the last ten years. Across the board, from lowest upwards, they've pretty well tripled, and wages haven't tripled. How can people afford to get on the property ladder?^A

It's difficult if you are on a low income if you want to get into the private rented sector, because landlords tend not to want people on housing benefit, so people find themselves living in limbo and relying on family or friends.^A

Women's position in the local labour market

We reported elsewhere (Buckner et al, 2004) large increases in part-time employment for both sexes across the county between 1991 and 2002. In these years, there was a significant fall in the share of employment in manufacturing, and an increase in employment in distribution, hotels and

restaurants, banking and finance and in public administration, education and health.

Qualifications and skills

A higher proportion of women of all ages in Pevensey, and of women aged 35-59 in Hotham and Marine, have no qualifications than in West Sussex as a whole (Figure 4). Nearly 60% of women aged 50-59 in Hotham and Pevensey have no qualifications. In the younger age groups, considerably more women than men have formal qualifications. However, fewer women without qualifications are employed than men in the same position.

Women with degree level qualifications are less likely to be in employment in the three wards than in the county or nationally (Figure 4), particularly in Hotham. Among women with no qualifications only 47% in Marine and 53% in Pevensey are in employment, compared with 59% for this group in West Sussex as a whole. Thus women in the locality are just as likely to have qualifications as women nationally (78% in Hotham and Marine and 71% in Pevensey compare with 73% in England as a whole), but when qualified have lower rates of employment.

Figure 4 Men and women with no qualifications, by age and economic status

per cent

		Hotham	Marine	Pevensey	Arun	West Sussex	England
No qualifications	Age						
Men	16-24	15	21	23	19	18	19
	25-34	22	20	21	17	13	17
	35-49	35	30	34	28	22	29
	50-64	57	53	63	54	47	56
	All 16-64	31	33	36	33	27	32
Women	16-24	8	11	15	15	14	16
	25-34	16	8	19	13	10	14
	35-49	26	24	28	22	19	26
	50-59	58	47	57	49	44	52
	All 16-59	22	22	29	26	22	27
In employment	Qualifications						
Men (aged 16-64)	None	69	59	70	72	74	65
	Lower level	74	79	79	81	82	76
	Higher level	87	78	85	84	89	85
Women (aged 16-59)	None	56	47	53	56	59	50
	Lower level	61	68	66	70	71	66
	Higher level	67	78	76	80	80	79

Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003

Note: Lower level qualifications are equivalent to 'A' level and below and higher level qualifications are equivalent to first degree and above

Women's employment patterns

Except in Hotham which has a large student population, women in the wards are as likely as women nationally to be in paid work. While female employment rates in West Sussex are relatively high, the level of part-time working among local women is relatively low in Hotham and Marine (Figure 5). Only 10% of women in both Hotham and Marine look after their home and family full-time, considerably lower rates than the county and national averages, both 14%.

As at national, regional and district level, there is a gendered pattern in men's and women's jobs (Buckner at al 2004). The pattern of employment for women in Marine and Pevensey largely reflects the county trends, but women in Hotham ward are much more likely to work in elementary

jobs, and less likely to be in technical, professional or managerial occupations than women at the county or national levels. In all three wards, fewer women work in administrative occupations than at district or county level.

Local women are quite strongly concentrated in certain industrial sectors (Figure 6). A round a third of women work in the wholesale, retail, restaurants and hotels sector, compared with less than a quarter in West Sussex and England as a whole, while fewer local women work in finance and real estate (9% in Hotham), compared with 18% nationally. Health and social work is particularly important in Pevensey, where 28% of women are in this sector.

Figure 5 Economic activity/inactivity: women of working age

	Hotham	Marine	Pevensey	Arun District	West Sussex	England
Economically Active	71	73	72	74	75	71
Employee full-time	40	43	35	36	38	36
Self-employed full-time	1	4	2	3	3	3
Employee part-time	17	17	25	26	26	23
Self-employed part-time	2	2	3	3	3	2
Unemployed	4	3	3	2	2	3
Student	7	4	4	3	2	3
Economically Inactive	29	27	28	26	25	29
Retired	1	1	1	2	2	1
Full-time student	10	4	5	3	3	6
Looking after home or family	10	10	14	14	14	14
Permanently sick or disabled	4	7	6	4	3	5
Other	4	4	2	3	3	4

Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003

Figure 6 Main occupations and industries of women in employment in the locality

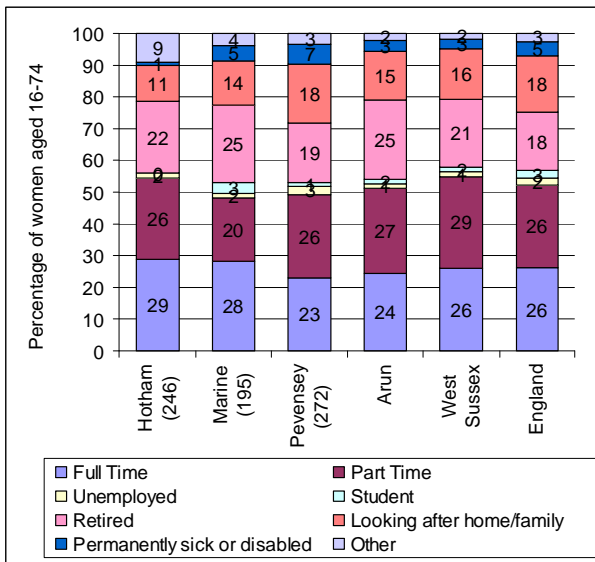
	Hotham	Marine	Pevensey	Arun District	West Sussex	England
Occupation						
Managers, senior officials	8	14	10	12	12	11
Professionals	5	9	7	8	9	10
Associate professionals & technical occupations	12	16	11	12	14	14
Administrative and secretarial occupations	15	20	19	23	24	23
Elementary occupations	19	11	13	11	10	12
Industry						
Manufacturing	8	7	7	7	8	9
Wholesale, retail, restaurants and hotels	35	27	26	22	23	24
Finance and real estate	9	14	13	19	15	18
Health and social work	19	23	28	19	23	19

Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003

Caring responsibilities

In the locality, over 700 women aged 16-74 have unpaid caring responsibilities. These carers are as likely to also have paid work (either full-time or part-time)¹⁰ as carers in West Sussex and nationally. Thus, in Hotham, among women with caring responsibilities, 29% work full-time and 26% work part-time (Figure 7).

Figure 7 Economic activity of women who provide unpaid care



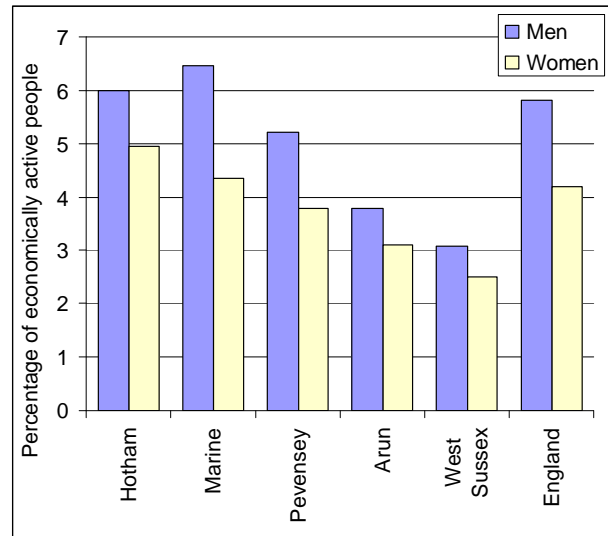
Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003

Unemployment and economic inactivity

Local unemployment rates at the time of the last Census were higher for both men and women than in Arun district, and West Sussex as a whole (Figure 8). Of the three wards, Hotham had the highest rate of female unemployment (5%). Compared with the district and county picture, a high proportion of unemployed women in Hotham and Pevensey had last worked in elementary jobs, or as process, plant or machine operatives. Many economically inactive or unemployed women had last worked in health and social work, or in hotels and restaurants, while the proportion of unemployed women who last worked in manufacturing was at or below the national level in all three wards (Figure A7).

¹⁰ The 2001 Census included a question asking people about help or support which they gave to family members, friends or neighbours with long term physical or mental ill-health or disability which was not part of their paid employment.

Figure 8 Unemployed men and women of working age, as a proportion of those who are economically active



Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003

Economic inactivity across all geographical areas is higher among women than men. It increased for men and women in Hotham and Marine between 1991 and 2001, though this was against the trends at county and national levels for women. By contrast, the rate for women in Pevensey decreased from over 35% in 1991 to 28% in 2001.

Transport and travel to work

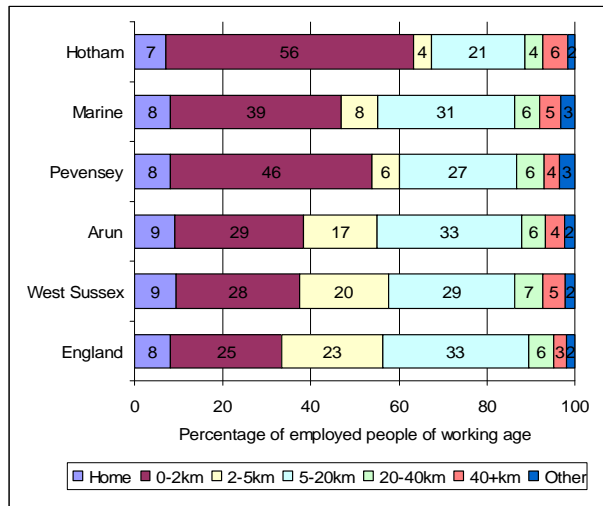
Many residents in the locality live and work in close proximity, and this is particularly true for women. 56% of women in Hotham, 46% in Pevensey and 39% in Marine travel less than 2km to work, well above the national figure of 25% (Figure 9).

This is linked to the high proportion of women in the neighbourhood who walk to work (Figure 10). As elsewhere, most women go to work by car or van. Bus use is similar among women living in the three wards as in West Sussex, but lower than the national rate.

This pattern is also reflected in the area that local women work. In Hotham, 38% of working age women in employment live and work in the ward, compared with 27% of women in Marine and just 11% of women in Pevensey¹¹.

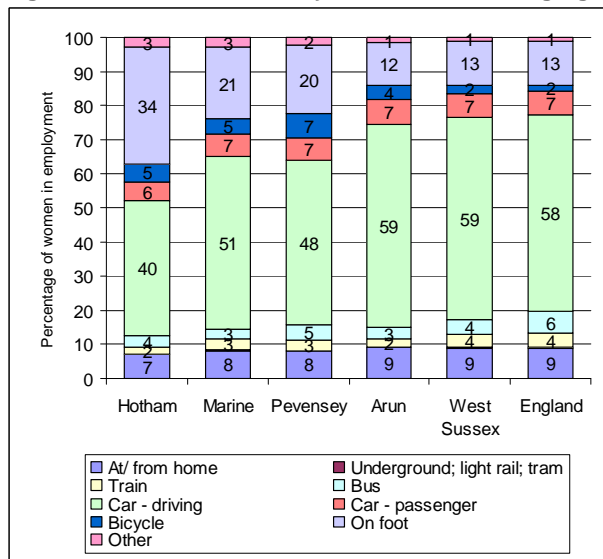
¹¹ Source: 2001 Census Special Workplace Statistics, Crown Copyright 2004

Figure 9 Distance travelled to work by women of working age



Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003

Figure 10 Travel to work by women of working age



Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003

Views of the labour market

Wider economic changes have impacted adversely on many households living in the neighbourhood. Traditional manufacturing jobs have contracted, and the area has an increasingly female, service sector workforce. Interviewees generally felt that there was no lack of employment opportunities, but noted increasing dependence on poor quality employment and a low wage economy centred on tourism, agriculture and related service industries. Increasingly employers were recruiting migrant workers for short periods.

The lack of large employers in the Bognor Regis area was highlighted as a problem for local residents. Larger local employers, including the Body Shop and LEC factories, were both contracting. The availability of work in many sectors was considered unpredictable, and increasingly casual in nature. The large, but fragmented, tourism sector had declined from its height in the 1950s and was thought to be quite fragile. Social services were also identified as a key employer among other public sector providers such as education and health. Small businesses formed an important part of the local economy, but there was concern about a lack of investment in skills and training by these firms.

Bognor Regis is a traditional, seaside town, and it means that there is a significant amount of low paid work.^B

Low pay and job insecurity were highlighted again and again:

The problems of this area are to do with seasonal employment and insecurity. Many people are dependent on tourism.^A

You look in the papers every week and they're £5.00 an hour, and if you are on benefits you've got to think really hard about that. They are all low paid and short term.^B

I think men suffered more from manufacturing decline.¹² The rise of the service industry has given more opportunity to be involved, but they are the ones suffering from the economic culture of low pay.^A

Low wages and high house prices are of serious concern (Buckner et al 2004).

People cannot live on the wages that they get, the South is worse because even if you get minimum wage you still can't afford to live.^B

If you need to rent a place or, you know, you have to pay your rent, you can't say that I'm not going to work five days a week.^B

This had led to high levels of debt among some local residents and increasing pressures on services provided by the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Labour supply was also felt to be a problem, and this related to the low skills base. The perception was that those who did have higher qualifications

¹² In fact, between 1991 and 2002 women but not men, suffered a net loss of jobs in manufacturing industry in West Sussex (Buckner et al 2004:29)

and went to university tended to leave the area. A range of high skilled jobs were considered difficult to access for local residents, and better skilled jobs were expected to go to people from outside the locality.

Focus group participants shared this view of the local economy. Opportunities were limited in Bognor, and much local employment is seasonal, with more opportunities available in the summer.

Many care and retirement homes in the area offer part time employment:

I'm looking for something else to fit in with my children. I'm working in a nursing home at the moment as there is the opportunity for flexible hours.^B

Women felt that there were few permanent jobs and limited opportunities for high quality, part-time jobs. It was felt that local companies did not encourage family-friendly policies, such as job sharing.

Barriers to labour market engagement

Barriers to employment include a number of constraints, including aspects of the tax and benefits system, which can only be resolved at national level. Others relate to the economic, social and physical infrastructure of the locality under study, which can be influenced by regional and local agencies as well as by central government and private investment. The geographic diversity of the district, which included urban and rural differences, along with age and ethnicity, were highlighted as important factors.

Tax Credit and the benefits system

Focus group participants expressed widespread lack of confidence in the benefits system.

There's a huge difference between the haves and the have-nots, and the gap gets bigger. As long as the benefits trap exists and there isn't a clear way out for people, it is very hard, because the wages are so low in the area.^B

Every time she worked it took so long to readjust her benefits and get the money that was owed that it wasn't worth her working. You end up with less money working than not working. It's a trap you get caught in.^B

I wouldn't say that childcare is the big issue, the bigger issue is if you are on benefits and wages are low, then it is difficult to consider working.^B

Some participants felt they cannot work as it is not economically viable to do so. Some participants felt that the tax credit system was essential in making ends meet.

My husband earns just over the minimum wage, there's four of us on his wages, basically. I wouldn't be able to live if it wasn't for the credits.^B

Other participants felt dependent on benefits

I've got three kids all on my own, so I find it hard enough as it is, but if I didn't have the money coming I'd never manage. And if I went into work I'd lose a lot of it, I wouldn't survive from week to week. So I can't work at the moment, which is why I want to get my training behind me.

The 16 hour threshold¹³ to Working Tax Credit gave little incentive to seek employment and was regarded as over-complicated.

Job Centre Plus reported recent success in assisting local residents through the service provided in the Family Centre. This model of integrated services was an important example of service improvement which supported women effectively. Women could visit the centre and get support and advice on benefits, training and employment whilst their children were being cared for in the nursery.

Agencies identified a broader problem of many households in the area not claiming the benefits they were entitled to. In addition, they felt information on the broader benefits of employment was not promoted sufficiently strongly in the area.

Childcare

Childcare responsibilities were considered a key factor preventing women from entering the labour market. Interviewees stated that whilst the area had seen an improvement in childcare for pre-school children there were a number of problems.

The problem is that cheap childcare doesn't cover working hours. In most pre-school nurseries you don't drop the children off until 9. It's the number of places that are available outside of school hours.^B

The lack of breakfast clubs and after-school facilities limits not just children's education, but prevents further work on raising self esteem and expectation for parents.^A

¹³ Entitlement to Working Tax Credit is only available for those working at least 16 hours a week.

I always said after I had my little girl I would work part time, but I couldn't afford to because by the time I've paid someone to look after her, or take her to a nursery, if I looked at what I was left with, it would be absolutely pointless.^B

The focus group participants felt that the emergence of more comprehensive childcare provision was important for the area:

- The cost of childcare was prohibitively expensive for those in low paid occupations.
- Childcare provision was poor for school age children, with a lack of breakfast and after school clubs.
- School holiday periods posed a major problem for women in paid employment.
- Employers in the locality were generally not regarded as flexible employers; the option of taking unpaid leave for school holidays was not commonly offered.

The Children's Information Centre had recently closed, which was of some concern to the participants. A lack of information regarding childcare services was a common problem.

The Bognor Regis Children's Centre, which runs toddler groups and a pre-school nursery, provides IT and literacy courses. The nursery school runs morning and afternoon sessions (for 3 to 4 year olds), but the short hours are not orientated to assisting parents seeking to work. There are also about 50 places for full-time childcare which are fee-paying.

The work of the Children's Centre was regarded as extremely important in developing more choices for women with children, particularly lone parents, who wished to return to the labour market. The Centre allowed services to be more responsive to local needs. The co-location of services provided more targeted work with those who have traditionally been socially excluded. This approach was widely supported and was a relatively new model for the area which could be promoted and expanded.

Education and experience

Many local organisations were concerned about low educational attainment, which went alongside economic and social deprivation for many local residents. The lack of qualifications, low skills levels and limited vocational training opportunities reflected a mismatch between skills and employer requirements in the area. The inflexibility of training and education funding through the LSC

was felt to be a constraint on work with women wishing to enter or re-enter the labour market.

One of the big learning points from our basic skills project is that where training is carried out in the community setting, retention rates are very high and more of these people have progressed to further training.

One participant who had worked on a SRB lone parent employment project was concerned about women in their 30s and 40s.

People haven't got the skills which mean that they can't get well paid jobs. What often happens in this area is that people who become single parents are normally quite young. So, when their children get to 16 they're still relatively young, but they don't get the benefits any more, because the children leave. But because they're still low skilled, they can only get low paid jobs.

There are a lot of opportunities on paper to get a teaching qualification, but in practice I hit brick wall after brick wall.

Advice and support

There was a lack of awareness of support services, including education and training courses available in the locality. Some participants were also unaware of the range of childcare services available. Older women who are entitled to pension credits also faced problems accessing services in the area.

It's information that restricts people, and a lot of people don't seem to have the impetus to go and find information.^B

I have no idea half of the time what's going on, I find out from friends, rather than from any written information. I wouldn't know where to go to be honest. I haven't a clue.^B

Focus group participants felt that some local services were not particularly helpful. They were not generally aware of advisory services and felt that the Job Centre service in the town centre was not sufficiently attuned to their particular needs

I think the biggest issue is that people aren't aware of the advice we provide at the Job Centre.^A

The BASE project¹⁴ was popular as a place to meet with children and engage in courses, but participants were not aware of any employment-related projects. The lack of information available

¹⁴ Bognor Action Support and Education

in the community about college courses was also highlighted.

Increasing interest in self-employment had been expressed by women who have been made redundant from local firms or unemployed for a substantial period.

Transport and travel time

Most new job opportunities were perceived to be outside the town centre. Limited public transport was a particularly important barrier for women.

Public transport is expensive and inconvenient and poor transport links is one of the reasons businesses don't relocate here.^A

A lot of women don't have their own transport. There is low car ownership.^A

Nevertheless most focus group participants said they would be prepared to travel to Chichester, which is within cycling distance. Most walked or travelled by car and rarely used bus services.

Employer approaches

Lack of flexible employment practices was identified by local organisations as a constraint on women. The perception of local organisations is that many local managers, especially in smaller organisations, are resistant to working patterns which would support women wishing to work in the area.

One of the main barriers for women with children is the lack of management accepting flexible working, particularly at higher levels.^A

When I was on the SRB project we did a lot of work with employers, and most employers won't even contemplate job sharing, especially at higher levels.^A

Illegal levels of pay (below the minimum wage) and harassment at work were also noted, particularly for employees of Eastern European origin:

A lot of people don't want to do anything about it, because they are worried that they are going to lose their jobs.^A

Focus group participants expressed frustration with some local employers. Some women with considerable experience had struggled to find paid employment which is flexible enough to enable them to work.

Aspirations and expectations

The aspirations of focus group participants varied according to previous labour market experiences. Many women were motivated, but lacked the support they needed to progress. Low expectations for future education and employment were common among local residents. Poor health, including stress and depression among young women and lone parents, was highlighted as one of the associated features of low self esteem.

A high ratio of people leave school early with few or no qualifications, and their expectations of work are quite low.^A

The biggest problem is that many people in the area struggle with self esteem and low aspirations. Young people and children just think it's not really worth making the effort.^A

If aspirations are poor, no amount of money is going to help. Our project tries to deal with people at the community level to give them support.^A

Focus group participants were also concerned about apathy amongst young people.

I don't think people would see it as a place to stay and have a career. I think you just stay here if you haven't got anything better to do. If you've got something better to do, you go somewhere else.^B

The proximity of Chichester and Portsmouth can widen opportunities, as job growth are mainly in care and retail, with two large out of town stores set to open. Local organisations felt that sustaining enthusiasm for future training and employment plans through longer term labour market projects was important.

Focus group participants identified a series of barriers including:

- Lack of high quality and well paid employment opportunities
- Care responsibilities
- Lack of qualifications and continuous employment
- Insufficient relevant support from statutory agencies
- Lack of information on local services and available courses and employment opportunities.

Area based public and private regeneration: gender perspectives

The equalities dimension of regeneration strategies was examined through interviews with local organisations and documentary analysis¹⁵.

This found that while equalities and gender are mentioned in relation to more recent schemes, few policy developments, delivery plans, economic and employment targets and evaluation techniques specifically addressed women's economic disadvantage in the labour market.

Policy aims and objectives were geared to addressing poverty and neighbourhood problems, but were generally weak on strategies to address the unemployment, economic inactivity, low pay and financial hardship expressed by women (including older women with caring responsibilities, lone parents, women who are in part-time and/or casual employment and ethnic minority women, who may be doubly disadvantaged).

The SRB plan's sensitivity towards gender issues is demonstrated through commitment to childcare provision and to advocacy support. Its lack of specific targeting may reflect a lack of gender disaggregated analysis.

Intended SRB6 beneficiaries include young people and unemployed residents, and basic skills training is targeted at ethnic minorities, but there was no specific focus on young, unemployed or ethnic minority women. Many of the project delivery outputs and outcomes used social criteria, and in the mid-term evaluation, concerns of relevance to this study were highlighted. For example, it was suggested that the SRB6 programme should initiate projects to enable local residents to compete more effectively in the labour market, including vocational skills. Support for economic development and development of business networks was also highlighted. However, wider themes relating to labour market opportunities were not addressed in relation to specific challenges facing women living in the wards.

Apart from the commitment to support parents into work and to provide childcare facilities, there was no identifiable gender focus in the proposed

interventions to reduce economic inactivity. Few targets were disaggregated by gender and ethnicity. In the regeneration field evaluation approaches have taken little account of the key differences in women's and men's economic position or of their experiences of living in the locality.

Local views of regeneration

Our focus group participants generally felt that regeneration activity had not greatly changed the area, but it was recognised that SRB funding had brought improvements through community projects and schools' initiatives and an Early Excellence Centre. An extension at a local Church built with regeneration funds is now a venue for a language school and toddler groups.

Women have been beneficiaries through schemes designed to assist children and education projects, but this had not been part of a planned strategy. Capacity building had been a key focus. The view that schools are a potential centre for supporting local residents was keenly supported. There appear to have been few employment-related projects, and no specific funding was mentioned in relation to women; there was little awareness of any such initiatives. The exception was the Triangle project, identified as an innovative approach aimed at assisting women into employment, particularly lone parents and women returners. This project supported childcare initiatives, and set up a database of local support provision.

There was concern about future funding for labour market initiatives which started from a social orientation.

There isn't going to be a core funder for social regeneration projects.^A

Projects supported through Sussex Enterprise include Business Centre support for training, and local networks to set up local businesses and work linking local employers with local schools.

There was a concern that whilst there were many small businesses in the area, they were predominantly male dominated, although women's entrepreneurial abilities existed and needed to be supported and developed. However, some interviewees felt business development networks would not help women in the poorer wards. Assistance into better-paid employment opportunities was more important, but needed to be combined with supporting

¹⁵ The documents evaluated in West Sussex are listed in the bibliography.

indigenous business and promoting higher quality employment.

Local services and support

In the interviews and focus groups we discussed the types of services available to economically disadvantaged women living in the three wards.

Low educational attainment and low skills, including numeracy and literacy, were highlighted by several organisations working in the area. The need for better access to information was highlighted by both focus groups.

The Job Centre outreach service to women, through events at Bognor Regis Nursery, was mentioned as a recent development appropriate to local needs:

The Job Centre, they come here and if you're a single parent they discuss what options you've got going back to work and things like that.

Chichester College runs IT courses in Bognor Regis though it does not have a specific centre in the town. However, take-up has been low. Access courses which are popular for mature students and a potential first step to university level education were regarded as a potential area of service development for local women which needed to be promoted more widely.

Training needed to be more specific, and needed to be offered along with mentoring to support individual needs. Several interviewees felt this approach was more likely to be successful in the long run for women who had not been in paid work for a long period.

Addressing disadvantages faced by ethnic minority women

Several interviewees highlighted the lack of knowledge in many organisations about the service needs of ethnic minority groups in the area. There has been relatively little outreach work locally.

The facilities for people without English are very poor.^B

We see more and more eastern Europeans coming into the area, and that's something we have really noticed at the CAB. They have problems with benefit entitlements, housing and employment.^B

A plan to conduct ethnicity mapping through the local voluntary organisations was considered an important starting point in understanding their specific needs.

It was also recognised that further work needs to take place with recent arrivals who have high qualification levels but little English.

Employer initiatives

Further work needed to be undertaken with organisations and employers to develop and enhance employment practices more suited to women's needs. Some local employers had introduced schemes to raise skills levels, and this represented a starting point. One local employer with a high tech skills gap had sought to attract more women into employment by changing its shift patterns.

A very enlightened employer who values his workforce and their skills enough to turn his organisation upside down to do the work.

Health and social care employment were felt to be important for the locality, providing a further opportunity to provide a more stable workforce and increase qualification levels. This is confirmed in other GELLM work in West Sussex (Yeandle et al 2006). For local residents to be skilled and job ready for future employment opportunities, a strategic approach was needed which took on board their experience of community-based education. Local residents who wished to raise their educational attainment to access jobs in the longer term also needed financial support.

Impact of initiatives on women's economic disadvantage

Measuring the employment impact of area-based regeneration in a locality is notoriously difficult, particularly when considering the gender dimension. This study has examined qualitative evidence to consider whether women living in the three wards have benefited from improved economic prosperity, employment opportunities and locality based initiatives.

Raising the quality of employment

The local labour market is relatively buoyant. However, pay levels were generally regarded as low in the employment growth sectors. Jobs are often filled through agencies, and are frequently part-time and temporary. Public and private

investment in the area had attracted employers, but many of these jobs were poorly paid. It was suggested that inward investment approaches should be geared to higher quality employment. A model where schools, employers and local women discuss the issues together was suggested as an approach which could result in a shift in support for women with children who wish to enter paid employment.

Local education and employment initiatives

The SRB6 programme operated without a clear baseline around labour market activity from which to measure improvement. There has been relatively little targeted intervention at particular groups, and short term funding has limited the potential impact of local projects. Project sustainability was an issue of concern for many stakeholders and focus group participants.

There was hope that a Vocational Skills Centre (funded by SEEDA, the LSC, DFES and West Sussex County Council) which had recently opened at Bognor Regis Community College would assist in raising skills levels. Chichester College also provides training focused on care, tourism and construction and designed to raise skills levels as well as to address skill shortages in the area.

You can't dismiss the large numbers of jobs in sectors like care and tourism. What we don't have is people working in higher quality jobs in those sectors.

The Children's Centre has been successful in attracting a small group of women to undertake childcare and early year's courses. Other family learning projects have attracted mothers living in the three wards. The BASE project, which has been partly funded through SRB, works with families and young people in the community providing play schemes, parenting classes and supporting young people. Participants are encouraged to share experiences, with the aim of breaking down feelings of isolation and lack of confidence. Women are recruited through schools, health visitors and other local networks.

Several stakeholders argued that this type of provision should be given more support and possibly mainstreamed as a core service to ensure that these projects are adequately funded. Since many community based projects do not result in participants gaining formal qualifications, current funding arrangements are short term and very limited.

New approaches

The opportunity for women to start businesses was identified as an important aspect which was constrained by lack of business development funding, lack of childcare and few skills in marketing and customer services. A self-employment initiative aimed at long term unemployed people in Worthing attracted a high proportion of professional and semi-professional women who wished to return to employment or change careers. This led to the realisation that publicity and awareness raising was a critical part of the approach. *Women in Business* strategies are being promoted through the Regional Economic Strategy, but interviewees urged caution in assuming the most deprived wards would benefit.

The *Learn to Earn* project in Worthing was also cited as an initiative which raised aspirations and was to be trialled in Bognor Regis. Households are given a free computer, and one family member completes the European Computer Driving Licence. 20 families were targeted through their children receiving free school meals. Recipients do the course from home over a period of a year, with the aim of building skills which can be used over the longer term. Job Centre Plus has involvement in the project. Mainstream funding for developing such approaches was thought unlikely.

Outreach services through the CAB and other providers were also highlighted as important methods for supporting women in the community. Community capacity was considered quite low, but a crucial part of wider regeneration initiatives.

Better education, better skilled and better qualified young people at all levels to assist in building stronger communities.^A

Conclusions and policy recommendations

This section provides key policy messages and practical suggestions for West Sussex County Council and other local and regional agencies. These organisations are responsible for public service delivery and regeneration investment in the locality. Some recommendations have a wider remit, in that they are the concerns of central government departments, including those related to the tax and benefit systems.

Women's economic disadvantage

The relative economic position of women living in the wards is considerably worse than in the county as a whole. Strategies encouraging more women to gain paid employment need to recognise and understand the scale of women's non-participation and distance from labour market opportunities in the three wards. Appropriate action is required to address low incomes among many groups of women. These problems are also a key challenge for the district's economy. Local employers need to be able to access the experience and skills of women living in the area, and to retain staff and fill job opportunities in the coming decades. Women in the neighbourhood need specific support to improve their education and skills levels to enable them to access jobs and improve their employment potential.

Understanding local labour market barriers

Employment strategies and project development need to tackle the barriers women face in the locality. These include restricted training and employment opportunities, variable support services, limited childcare provision and high childcare costs, and inflexible recruitment and employment practices amongst employers.

- *Raise awareness and improve information on education, training, childcare support and employment initiatives, using a range of media in local community venues to women living in the three wards.*
- *Create employment projects which bring together training provision, childcare support, and work experience, supported by effective local services.*

Regeneration Initiatives

The question of whether women have benefited from local regeneration investment cannot be answered, since baseline data, and the monitoring and evaluation systems used were not

gender sensitive. Our qualitative research shows that women are the beneficiaries of some community regeneration initiatives.

- *Strengthen working relationships between senior policy makers, community based organisations and regeneration agencies in the locality.*
- *Establish explicit employment targets for public and private sector schemes designed to enhance job opportunities for local residents.*
- *SEEDA and its partners need to link economic development to social priorities, including women's poverty.*
- *SEEDA and West Sussex County Council need to take gender equality into account in commissioning regeneration programmes and working with partner agencies.*
- *Introduce gender impact assessment for all future regeneration and area-based initiatives.*

Delivery of area-based projects

Few labour market projects have been undertaken in the area. The practical delivery of regeneration and labour market initiatives, including those administered through West Sussex County Council and SEEDA, needs to ensure that differences in men's and women's position is reflected in local projects.

- *Integrate gender equality measures in regeneration policy making and delivery programmes.*
- *Use statistical evidence and qualitative information from those who work and live in the area to improve understanding of the neighbourhood.*
- *Identify baseline data and project delivery targets, including outputs and outcomes, in terms of their specific impact on women and men.*
- *Include measures which are directly aimed at addressing women's poverty in the locality in monitoring and evaluation of regeneration schemes.*

Taking advantage of employment potential

In the context of inward investment and employment growth in the county and region, many women living in the wards aspire to be trained and job ready for new investments.

- *Develop explicit support for young women and women who wish to return to paid employment through vocational and skills based courses.*
- *Establish self-employment schemes, including mentoring, to directly assist women who wish to develop businesses.*
- *Maintain employment sites in areas of physical regeneration to prevent the further loss of manufacturing and service employment in the locality.*

Supporting women with care responsibilities

Services are required at the neighbourhood level which address the specific needs of women who provide unpaid care for dependents. Childcare provision is improving, but remains particularly difficult for those mothers whose children are at school. Care for elderly and disabled dependents is also an area which requires consideration.

- *Invest in pre-school, after-school and holiday care services.*
- *Build on good practice found in family projects operating in the locality.*
- *Ensure that the success of the Family Centre and community based services are maintained and developed in targeting disadvantaged women living in the wards.*

Employer responsibilities

Interviewees stated that greater flexibility in working practices amongst local employers would benefit women living in the area. More work to convince employers that job sharing and other flexible modes of employment are mutually beneficial is needed.

- *Engage employers in labour market projects with clear routes to paid work for women in the locality.*
- *Explore the role of public sector service providers (local government, health, education and related agencies) as local employers, and review their employment strategies.*
- *Identify public, private and voluntary sector employers facing skills shortages and problems in recruiting and retaining qualified and skilled staff in the locality and wider district.*
- *Provide resources and long-term project development to support women to engage in non-traditional and higher paying sectors.*

- *Encourage local employers to reconsider new ways of advertising and recruiting local jobs.*
- *Encourage flexible working arrangements to accommodate women in the workplace. This will require greater responsiveness by employers to vary their patterns of work, introduce annualised hours and explore the potential for term time only and other flexible working arrangements.*

Qualifications, skills and advice

Low levels of formal qualifications among women in the locality need to be addressed. Strategic approaches should include:

- *Mainstreaming successful skills and employment initiatives into the work of the statutory services operating in the area.*
- *Closer working between skills partnerships including funding agencies (LSC, Job Centre Plus, Further Education) and voluntary sector training providers with schools and community based organisations.*
- *Support for women who embark on vocational courses developed at the Bognor Regis Skills Centre.*

Initiatives to assist local women should include:

- *Clearer guidance for women returners on training options, work experience opportunities and information on childcare support.*
- *Targeted education, skills initiatives, mentoring and support for young women, who may be constrained by their social and household situations.*

Limited post-19 careers advice is a constraint for women in the locality.

- *Target careers advice at the needs of women of different ages with differing care responsibilities.*
- *Introduce work experience schemes, including placements, which are clearly planned and supported.*
- *Support women returners, building on their previous employment and experience, through access courses and job-related schemes.*

Promote and support schemes which:

- *Encourage women in the locality to consider access courses and degree level qualifications through further and higher education initiatives.*
- *Introduce bursaries and other forms of financial support to access further and higher education for targeted groups of women living in the locality.*

Working at the neighbourhood level

Community based projects have proven success in working with women from a range of backgrounds and ages to raise aspiration and self-esteem.

- *Build community capacity through projects which address the social and economic needs of women living in the area.*
- *The skills and experience of voluntary work should be more clearly acknowledged in employment projects.*
- *Develop accreditation for voluntary work and community based involvement which can be used in job applications and CVs.*

In-work benefits and incentives

Further work on state benefits and greater understanding of the key financial barriers to work were central concerns among local stakeholders. Simplification and greater flexibility in the tax and benefits system were considered crucial. In-work costs include childcare and transport. A particular issue for lone parents and families on low incomes is the increase in childcare costs when moving into work.

- *Introduce better financial incentives for women returning to work and improve in-work incentives through the tax credit system.*
- *Develop greater flexibility in the benefits system for those women moving into work and for those taking a break from employment.*
- *Encourage greater take up of tax credits through support services.*
- *Improve information and advice for women living in the locality.*

The local authority and Job Centre Plus are key agencies in awareness-raising and delivering locally based advice and support.

- *Introduce further community based services, in order to assist those households facing a benefits trap.*
- *Analyse Job Centre monitoring data by gender and ethnicity and use at local and regional level to inform strategies and local project work aimed at assisting claimants.*

References

- Booth, C. et al (2004) *Planning and Diversity: Research into Policies and Procedures*, London, ODPM
- Bradshaw, J., Finch, N, Kemp, P., Mayheew, E., & Williams, J., (2003) *Gender and Poverty in Britain*, Manchester, EOC.
- Buckner, L., Tang, N. & Yeandle, S. (2004) *Gender Profile of West Sussex's Labour Market*, Sheffield: Centre for Social Inclusion, Sheffield Hallam University.
- DWP (2004) *UK National Action Plan for Employment*. London, DWP.
- DfES (2005) *Skills: Getting on in Business: getting on in work*. White Paper, Cm. 6483-1, London, DfES.
- Hamilton, K. Jenkins, L. Hodgson, F. Turner, J. (2005) *Promoting Gender Equality in Transport*, Manchester, Equal Opportunities Commission.
- ODPM (2005) *Smarter Neighbourhoods: Better Neighbourhoods* London, ODPM/NRU.
- Oxfam (2005) *Into the lion's den: a practical guide to including women in regeneration*. Oxford, Oxfam UK Poverty Programme.
- Palmer, G. & Kenway, P. (2004) *Comprehensive Performance Assessment and Deprivation*. Review by the New Policy Institute commissioned by the Audit Commission.
- Social Exclusion Unit (2001) *New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal: A national strategy action plan* London. Cabinet Office.
- Social Exclusion Unit (2004) *Jobs and Enterprise in Deprived Areas* London, ODPM.
- Women's Budget Group (2005) *Women's and children's poverty: making the links*. London. Women's Budget Group.
- Yeandle, S., Escott, K., Grant, L., & Batty, E. (2003) *Women and Men talking about poverty*, Manchester, Equal Opportunities Commission.
- Yeandle, S., Shipton, L. and Buckner, L. (2006) *Challenges in meeting demand for domiciliary care in West Sussex*. Sheffield: Centre for Social Inclusion, Sheffield Hallam University.

Documents made available to the research team by West Sussex County Council

- CSC Regeneration and Research Consultants (2003) *SRB Mid Term Evaluation (Bognor Regis Final Report)* Report to West Sussex County Council
- CSC Regeneration and Research Consultants (2005) *Evaluation of SRB funded basic skills projects*, Report to West Sussex County Council
- West Sussex Strategic Partnership (2000) *SRB Final Bid*

Appendix 1 Gender and Employment in Local Labour Markets

The *Gender and Employment in Local Labour Markets* project was funded, between September 2003 and August 2006, by a core European Social Fund grant to Professor Sue Yeandle and her research team at the *Centre for Social Inclusion*, Sheffield Hallam University. The award was made from within ESF Policy Field 5 Measure 2, 'Gender and Discrimination in Employment'. The grant was supplemented with additional funds and resources provided by a range of partner agencies, notably the Equal Opportunities Commission, the TUC, and 12 English local authorities.

The GELLM project output comprises:

- new statistical analysis of district-level labour market data, led by Dr Lisa Buckner, producing separate **Gender Profiles** of the local labour markets of each of the participating local authorities (Buckner, Tang and Yeandle 2004, 2005, 2006) - available from the local authorities concerned and at www.shu.ac.uk/research/csi
- 6 **Local Research Studies**, each involving between three and six of the project's local authority partners. Locality and Synthesis reports of these studies, published spring-summer 2006 are available at www.shu.ac.uk/research/csi. Details of other publications and presentations relating to the GELLM programme are also posted on this website.
 1. *Working below potential: women and part-time work*, led by Dr Linda Grant and part-funded by the EOC (first published by the EOC in 2005)
 2. *Connecting women with the labour market*, led by Dr Linda Grant
 3. *Ethnic minority women and access to the labour market*, led by Bernadette Stiell
 4. *Women's career development in the local authority sector in England* led by Dr Cinnamon Bennett
 5. *Addressing women's poverty: local labour market initiatives* led by Karen Escott
 6. *Local challenges in meeting demand for domiciliary care* led from autumn 2005 by Professor Sue Yeandle and prior to this by Anu Suokas

The GELLM Team

Led by Professor Sue Yeandle, the members of the GELLM research team at the *Centre for Social Inclusion* are: Dr Cinnamon Bennett, Dr Lisa Buckner, Ian Chesters (administrator), Karen Escott, Dr Linda Grant, Christopher Price, Lucy Shipton, Bernadette Stiell, Anu Suokas (until autumn 2005), and Dr Ning Tang. The team is grateful to Dr Pamela Fisher for her contribution to the project in 2004, and for the continuing advice and support of Dr Chris Gardiner.

The GELLM Partnership

The national partners supporting the GELLM project are the Equal Opportunities Commission and the TUC. The project's 12 local authority partners are: Birmingham City Council, the London Borough of Camden, East Staffordshire Borough Council, Leicester City Council, Newcastle City Council, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Somerset County Council, the London Borough of Southwark, Thurrock Council, Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council, Wakefield Metropolitan District Council and West Sussex County Council. The North East Coalition of Employers has also provided financial resources via Newcastle City Council. The team is grateful for the support of these agencies, without which the project could not have been developed. The GELLM project engaged Professor Damian Grimshaw, Professor Ed Fieldhouse (both of Manchester University) and Professor Irene Hardill (Nottingham Trent University), as external academic advisers to the project team, and thanks them for their valuable advice and support.

Appendix 2 Research methods

The research included a mix of qualitative and quantitative research techniques:

1. Statistical analysis to assess the nature and extent of women's poverty and economic disadvantage in the selected geographical areas using Census 2001 and other relevant sources.

2. Documentary analysis including:

- A review of relevant academic and other policy literature
- Assessment of existing evaluations for the identified local regeneration initiatives in relation to women's economic circumstances
- An equalities and gender proofing template was used to facilitate the desk based exercise. The template identified equalities and gender sensitive approaches

3. Semi-structured interviews lasting an hour or more were held with eleven representatives in seven local neighbourhood initiatives. The interview schedule included a number of questions organised under the themes of:

- Social and economic conditions in the locality
- Women's experiences of living on a low income
- Locality based regeneration and employment projects
- Addressing women's disadvantage in the locality
- Local services
- The local labour market
- Unemployment and economic inactivity

Representatives of the organisations involved included local government and of organisations delivering and responsible for regeneration programmes in the locality, including Sussex Enterprise, Job Centre Plus, and the Citizen Advice Bureaux. Staff working in local community and voluntary organisations were also interviewed.

4. Views of local women through focus groups attended by women living in the area. The group ranged in age from 22-71 and primarily included White British women. The majority had been in paid employment at some point in their lives and about half were currently in paid employment. The remainder of the participants were seeking work or undertaking training. Most of the group had some formal qualifications. The discussions held in local community venues included questions on the following themes:

- Views about the neighbourhood – services, job opportunities, childcare, service improvements and regeneration projects
- Experiences of work and unemployment – types of job available, levels of income, opportunities and barriers, problems
- Aspirations for themselves and families
- Ideas and solutions

Appendix 3 Additional data for Hotham, Marine and Pevensey in Arun, West Sussex

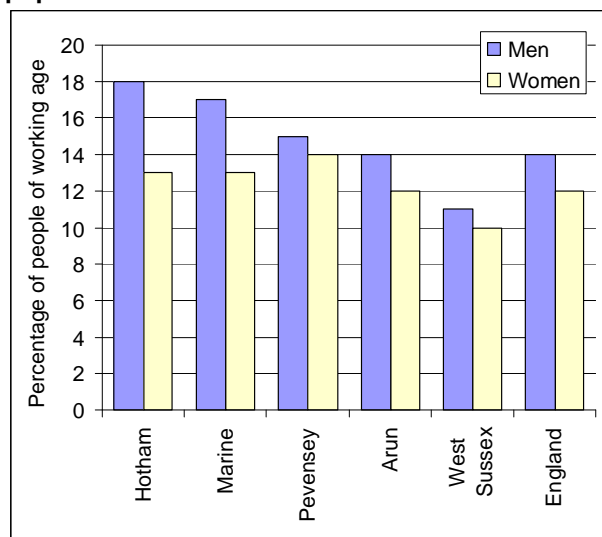
General Information

Figure A1 Population Profile

	Hotham	Marine	Pevensey	Arun District	West Sussex	England
						<i>per cent</i>
All males (numbers)	2,698	2,286	2,540	66,210	360,596	23,922,144
0-15	17	12	24	19	21	19
16-24	17	10	10	9	10	13
25-49	37	39	33	31	34	36
50-64	14	19	15	20	19	18
65-74	7	9	9	12	9	8
75+	10	11	8	11	8	6
All females (numbers)	3,155	2,671	2,997	74,545	392,998	25,216,687
0-15	12	9	20	16	18	18
16-24	19	11	10	8	9	12
25-49	28	28	32	28	32	35
50-64	13	15	14	19	18	17
65-74	9	11	9	12	10	9
75+	20	26	16	17	13	9

Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003

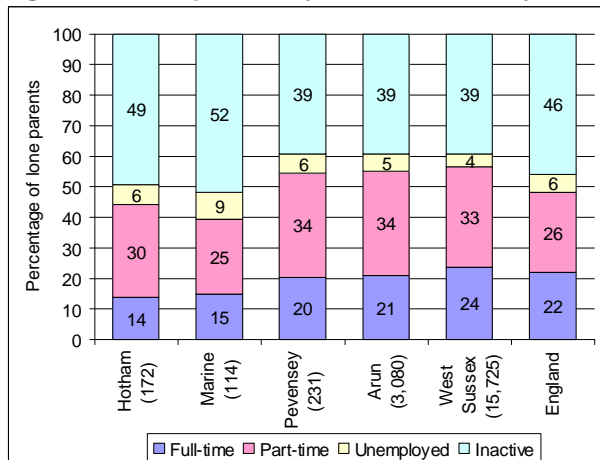
Figure A2 Limiting long-term illness in working age population



Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003

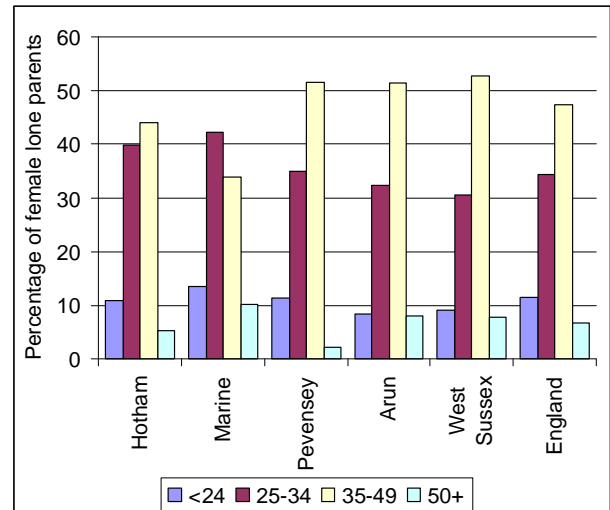
Unemployment and economic inactivity

Figure A3 Lone parents by economic activity



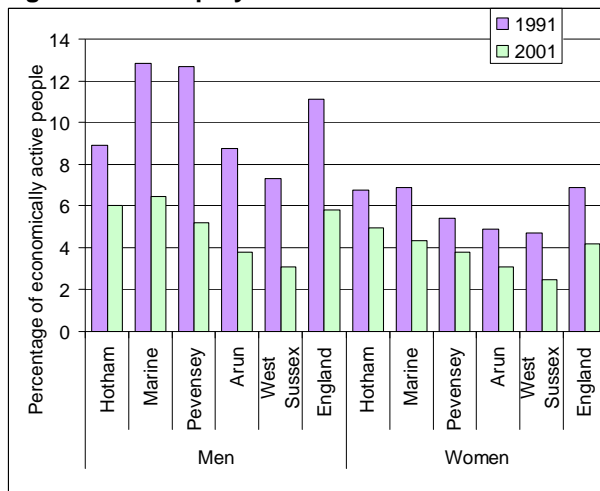
Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003

Figure A4 Female lone parents by age



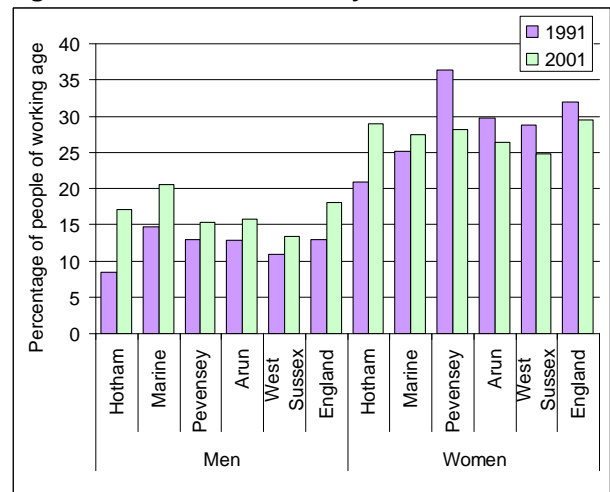
Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003

Figure A5 Unemployment rates 1991 and 2001



Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003. 1991 Census LBS, Crown Copyright 1993.

Figure A6 Economic inactivity rates 1991 and 2001



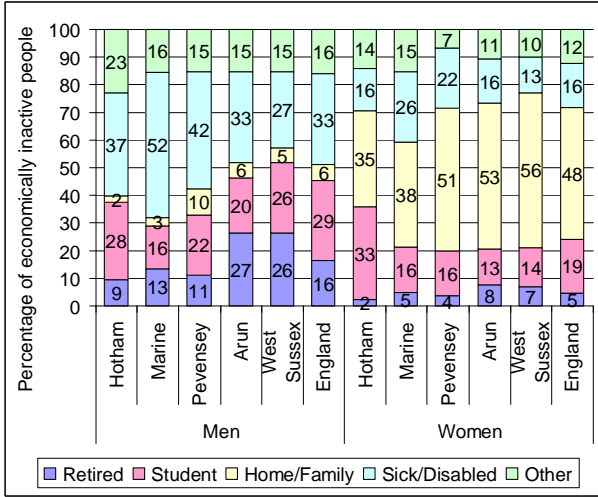
Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003. 1991 Census LBS, Crown Copyright 1993.

Figure A7 Former occupations and industries of unemployed and economically inactive women

	Hotham	Marine	Pevensey	Arun	West Sussex	England
Occupation						
Managers, senior officials	2	5	6	7	8	7
Professionals	2	8	3	5	7	6
Associate professionals & technical	9	9	6	9	10	9
Process, plant and machine operatives	6	2	6	3	3	5
Elementary occupations	23	21	24	18	16	21
Industry						
Manufacturing	8	7	11	8	7	11
Health and social work	22	20	24	23	19	16
Finance and real estate	5	13	11	15	18	15
Wholesale, retail	24	19	22	21	20	22
Hotels and restaurants	16	14	14	9	8	10

Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003

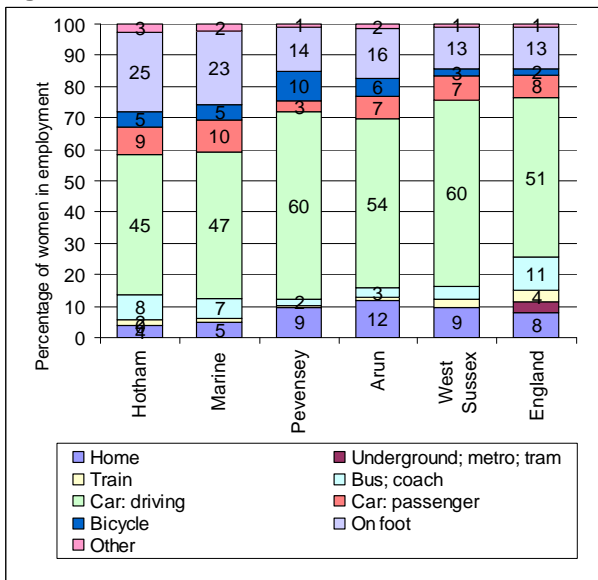
Figure A8 Economic inactivity, by reason: men and women of working age



Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003

Travel to work data - travel to work data for women who work in the area but may live elsewhere

Figure A9 Method of travel to work



Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003

Figure A10 Distance travelled to work



Source: 2001 Census Standard Tables, Crown Copyright 2003