The Seaside Economy: The final report of the seaside towns research project

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THE SEASIDE ECONOMY

The final report of the seaside towns research project

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Contents

Summary

This report provides the first comprehensive examination of economic change in Britain's seaside towns. The focus is on the whole local economy, not just the tourist sector, but in particular the report explores how local labour markets have responded to the challenge posed by the rise of the foreign holiday. The widely held view is that this has resulted in the unemployment that can now be observed in many seaside towns.

The research involved the assembly of data on employment, unemployment, and other aspects of labour market change over the whole of the last thirty years. This analysis covers all Britain's 43 principal seaside towns. These have a total population of about 3.1 million.

The research also involved an interview survey of just over 1,000 non-employed adults of working age in four towns – Blackpool, Great Yarmouth, Southport and Thanet (which covers Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs). This gathered a wide range of information on skills, work experience, benefits and job aspirations.

The research generates seven main findings.

First, and perhaps most surprising of all, ***there has actually been strong employment growth in seaside towns****. Between 1971 and 2001, total employment in seaside towns grew by around 320,000, or more than 20 per cent. A great deal of this growth took place in the sectors most closely linked to tourism as well as in the rest of the local service economy. This employment growth occurred among both men and women, and among both full and part-time workers. It indicates that the assumption that the rise of the foreign holiday has led to severe economic decline in British seaside resorts is well wide of the mark.*

*Second**, in-migration to seaside towns is outstripping local employment growth, and it is this that is leading to continuing imbalance in seaside labour markets.** Between 1971 and 2001, net in-migration to seaside towns increased their working age population by 360,000. Most of this in-migration was among the over 35s, and it is additional to inflows of people over state pension age.*

*Third, a **great deal of the in-migration to seaside towns appears to be driven by residential preference.** Put simply, many people move to seaside towns because they want to live there. Work-related reasons for moving are cited less often – by fewer than one in five non-employed recent migrants, for example. People under pension age who have moved to seaside towns to retire account for relatively small numbers. Most migrate with the expectation of continuing to work, at least initially.*

*Fourth, **there is evidence that some of the in-migration to seaside towns, and some of the resulting unemployment, is housing-driven.** The closure and re-use of some small hotels and boarding houses has created a stock of small privately-rented flats that is often thought to draw in benefit claimants from neighbouring areas and elsewhere. Among the in-comers surveyed, around one in seven said that housing had been a factor in their move. There is also evidence that the private rented sector does indeed act as a point of entry to the local housing market.*

*Fifth, **there is extensive joblessness in seaside towns beyond recorded, claimant unemployment.** Taking all seaside towns together, claimant unemployment is actually only marginally higher than the national average, though in most seaside towns it is well above the level in surrounding areas and in a few towns it is high by national standards. However, the survey findings indicate that there are large numbers of men and women who are claiming sickness benefits (and therefore not recorded as unemployed) who say they would like a job. There are also large numbers of women presently looking after family or home who say*

they would like paid employment. Overall, it is estimated that the 'real' rate of unemployment in seaside towns is nearer 10 per cent than the 4 per cent recorded by claimant unemployment data.

Sixth, ***the jobless in seaside towns are broadly similar to those in other areas.*** *Non-employed men of working age, for example, are a predominantly older group, with around two-thirds coming from manual occupations. They are also more likely to describe themselves as long-term sick than unemployed, and to claim Incapacity Benefit rather than Jobseeker's Allowance. Just under half say they would like a full-time job, but only a quarter also think there is a realistic chance of getting one.*

Seventh, ***the successful adaptation of individual seaside towns has depended more on regional location than on size.*** *The seaside towns in the South West, and to a lesser extent the South East, have fared better in terms of employment and in-migration than those in Wales, the North West and on the East Coast. This seems to owe something to the strength of the holiday trade in the South West and to the prosperity of the wider South East economy, which spills over into seaside towns in the region. The high-fliers include both large and small resorts, as do the weaker performers, but net losses of people and jobs are confined to just a handful of places.*

The report concludes that seaside towns should not be bracketed with Britain's other problem locations, such as older industrial areas. Although some of the outcomes in terms of claimant unemployment are similar, the underlying economic trends are radically different. Unlike many other 'one industry towns', seaside towns do not on the whole suffer from a downward spiral of decline.

Whilst there has clearly been restructuring in the wake of the rise of the foreign holiday, the continuing resilience of employment in and around the parts of the local economy most dependent on tourism suggests that there has often been successful adaptation. The seaside tourist industry remains one to be nurtured, not written off as a lost cause.

Nevertheless, signs of economic distress remain in several seaside towns, and not all have experienced successful adaptation. In the weaker-performing towns in particular, and in seaside towns more generally, there remains a strong case for policies to foster job creation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Background

Seaside towns are the least understood of Britain's 'problem' areas. The inner cities, the coalfields and rural areas have all been the subject of extensive research and the broad parameters of their changes in employment, population and joblessness are all fairly well documented. Seaside towns have not received the same scrutiny. Yet for some years it has been apparent that a string of towns around Britain's coastline are affected by claimant unemployment that is nearly always higher than in surrounding areas and sometimes well above the national average.

Britain's seaside towns potentially share the same economic problems as other 'one industry' towns. The tourist industry was generally the key reason for their original growth in the nineteenth century and it sustained their development well into the twentieth century. But in the last thirty years profound changes kicked in. Instead of taking holidays by the sea in Britain, more and more people opted for foreign holidays and the core business of Britain's seaside towns declined. In this respect there are parallels with towns that were once dependent on coal, steel or shipbuilding, where widespread joblessness has usually been the result of decline in their main employer. Are the same processes of downward-adjustment taking place in seaside towns, or has their experience of economic change been different? The claimant unemployment figures, at least, suggest there may be similarities but other indicators (such as population trends, as we will show) point in a different direction.

This report, and the research project on which it is based, is the first comprehensive attempt to chart economic adjustment in Britain's seaside towns. It begins by setting out competing ideas on the drivers of economic change in these towns. It then moves on to identify the towns that are the focus of the investigation.

The core of the analysis falls into two parts. The first involves 'labour market accounts' for seaside towns for the period 1971-2001. These are the results of a major data assembly exercise and cover all the key labour market flows – changes in employment, unemployment, migration, natural increase, commuting and labour force participation. The other key analysis involves a survey of more than 1000 non-employed adults of working age spread across four seaside towns – Blackpool, Great Yarmouth, Southport and Thanet. The survey covers not only the conventional 'unemployed', but also men and women who are out of the labour market for other reasons, such as sickness or early retirement.

The report concludes with comments on the policy implications of the findings.

Competing perspectives

There are at least four potential explanations for the relatively high claimant unemployment that can be observed in Britain's seaside towns. These are not necessarily mutually exclusive.

The first and most obvious is that joblessness in seaside towns is the result of the **decline of the traditional tourist base**. The erosion of the tourist base has been well documented elsewhere (see for example Williams and Shaw 1997, Cooper 1997). The key change occurred in the early 1970s. Before then the number of foreign holidays was growing but rising affluence fuelled growth in the overall number of holidays that were being taken and this was sufficient to allow growth in

the number of holidays taken in Britain as well. Thereafter, foreign holidays began to reduce the absolute number of visitor nights spent in British seaside towns. Added to this, rising car ownership has meant that visitors are less tied to seaside towns once they get there, so tourist spending has leaked away into neighbouring areas.

The present report is a study of the whole economy of seaside towns so it is inappropriate to dwell on the detailed dynamics of the tourist sector. However, it is worth noting that there are also trends that to a greater or lesser extent may offset the decline in the traditional one or two-week holiday by the sea in Britain. One is the growth in day-tripping, facilitated by rising car ownership. Another is the growth in the number of short breaks. A further off-setting factor is rising disposable income, which means that visitors are able to spend more on each visit. It is also worth bearing in mind that even at its peak (commonly held to be in the 1950s and 60s) the British seaside holiday trade was highly seasonal, concentrated in particular in July and August. Most seaside residents always had to have a means of getting by for the rest of the year.

The second potential explanation for the apparent difficulties is a **weakness in the rest of the local economy**. Just as coalmining towns and villages never relied exclusively on coalmining, most seaside towns never relied exclusively on the tourist trade. In some cases this was because there were pre-existing layers of economic development, for example in fishing, and in others because manufacturing and services unrelated to tourism subsequently grew up alongside the tourist sector. One possibility is that these other sectors of the local economy have lagged behind. This might not be surprising because municipal priorities in seaside towns have so often been driven by the needs of the tourist sector rather than other employers, and by virtue of their coastal location most seaside towns are not well placed in relation to the motorway network and the main centres of population. They do not seem self-evident first-choice locations for high-tech manufacturing, distribution or the sorts of business services that have led economic growth in recent years.

A third possibility is that imbalances in the seaside economy reflect **in-migration outstripping jobs**. An area that is losing jobs will, other things being equal, normally lose population through net out-migration as people move elsewhere for work. In seaside towns there may be countervailing processes. One is the wider urban-rural shift in population that has been underway in Britain since the middle of the last century. The shift has been driven partly by the changing location of jobs and partly by residential preferences. The big cities have been the main losers, smaller towns and rural areas the winners. Seaside towns are mostly smaller towns and they can expect to have gained population through this process. The other factor encouraging in-migration is the residential attractiveness of seaside towns – indeed, the same environmental factors that helped fuel their growth as resorts. It is possible therefore that labour market imbalances owe more to rapid population growth than to a slump in local employment.

The fourth possibility is a variation on the in-migration theme. This is that the apparent imbalances in the seaside labour market are **housing and benefits driven**. The key factor here is the availability for rent of former seaside holiday accommodation arising from the closure of hotels and boarding houses. Much of this takes the form of small flats that are especially well suited to the requirements of some non-employed claimants, such as young single people, whose rent is then paid by Housing Benefit. The availability of accommodation may serve to attract the unemployed from neighbouring areas and from further afield. Administrative processes possibly accentuate this process, for example by relocating homeless people from London to available accommodation in the South Coast resorts. The effect of this housing-and-benefits driven migration would be to boost disproportionately the number of non-employed people in seaside towns.

The point is that with at least four plausible competing explanations for what is happening in Britain's seaside towns, an answer can only be provided through careful empirical investigation.

A working definition of seaside towns

There is no 'off-the-peg' definition of Britain's seaside towns. An empirical investigation therefore needs a working definition to be constructed. Our approach has been pragmatic.

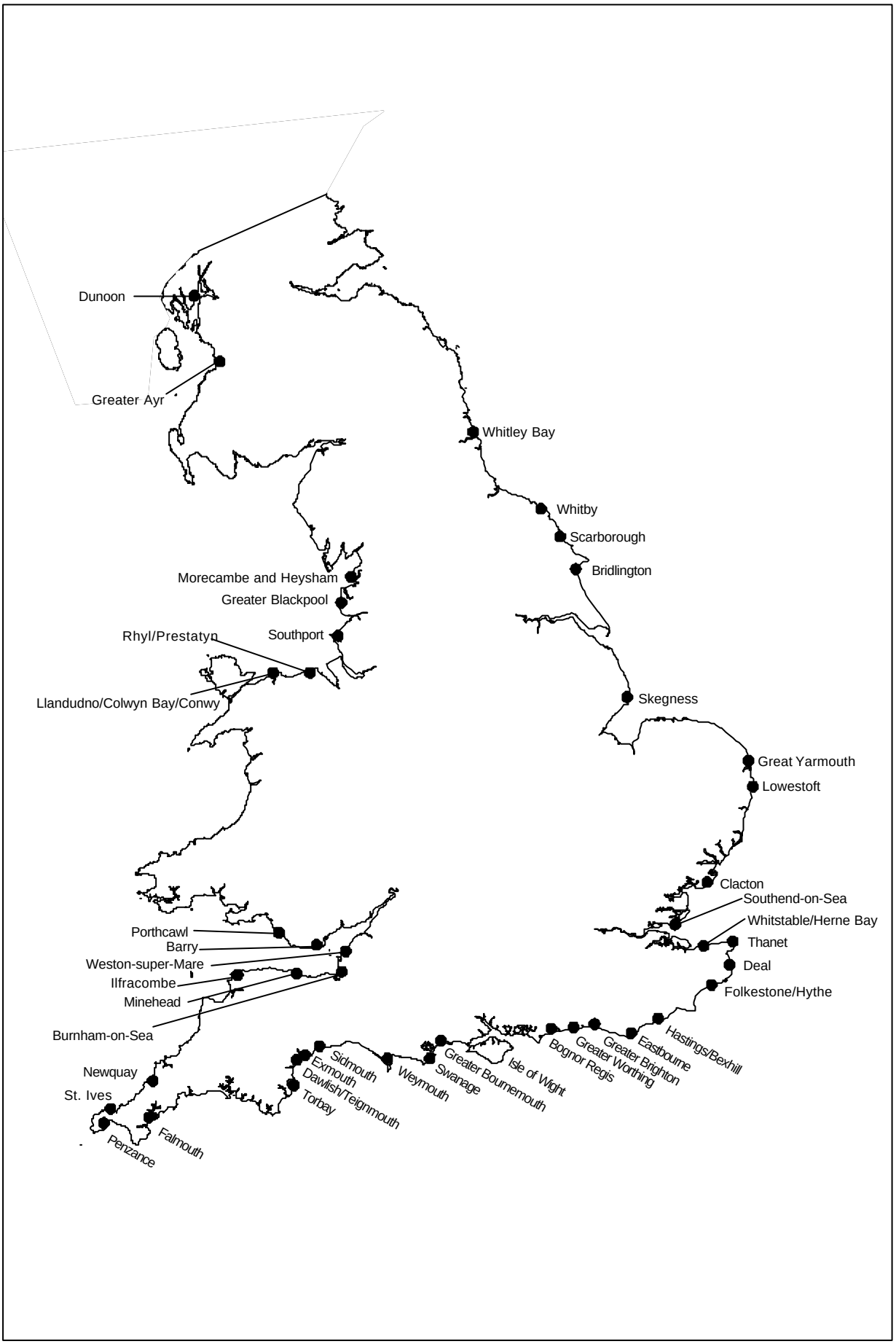
First, the aim has been to examine seaside **resorts**, rather than everywhere that happens to be by the sea. Ports, industrial towns by the sea, and purely residential settlements with little resort function have therefore been excluded.

Second, the aim has been to include seaside towns that are places in their own right, not just suburbs of a bigger town or anywhere that happens to have a few amusement arcades along a seafront.

Third, the aim has been to focus on the towns themselves rather than the districts of which they form part. This is important because some seaside towns are component parts of much wider local authority districts. An example is Southport, part of Sefton metropolitan district in Merseyside, where the other half of the district covers part of Liverpool. To get around this problem we have defined seaside towns using the pre-1974 local authority boundaries, when the number of authorities was far greater and boundaries were drawn more tightly around towns. Typically, a seaside town prior to 1974 was a county borough, a metropolitan borough or an urban district in its own right.

Fourth, seaside towns with a population below 8,000 in 1971 (the starting date for the key analysis) have been excluded. This keeps the data assembly task down to manageable proportions, and it is arguable that the main policy interest is anyway in the largest seaside towns. Extending the list to include absolutely every seaside town with a claim to resort status would extend the list to nearly 120 towns in England and Wales alone (Walton 1997).

Figure 1.1: Location of Britain's 43 principal seaside towns



Excepting the criteria of size, the identification of seaside towns involves an unavoidable element of subjective judgement. We consulted the British Resorts Association, which is the body representing local authorities covering seaside towns, to seek their opinion on all marginal cases, though the final decision was our own.

In all, 43 individual seaside towns were identified as a result of this process and they are the basis of the subsequent analysis in this paper. The location of the towns is shown in Figure 1.1. They are listed in Table 1.1, ranked by their estimated total population in 2001. The list covers what can be regarded as the 'principal seaside towns' of England, Scotland and Wales.

A number of points are worth noting. At the head of the list, Bournemouth, Brighton, Blackpool and Worthing comprise wider areas than just the town at their core. In each case, all the pre-1974 districts that form part of the same continuous built-up area are included. This means that the areas included extend beyond the boundaries of the present-day districts, for example to embrace Christchurch and Poole alongside Bournemouth. Further down the list there are other instances where neighbouring pre-1974 authorities have been added together to produce more meaningful units. The whole of the Isle of Wight is included, partly because seaside tourism is widely spread throughout the island and partly because its separation from the mainland accentuates the extent to which it functions as a discrete labour market.

There are omissions from the list. Redcar, for example, is excluded because it has been judged to be primarily a residential suburb of Teesside, and the same applies to Cleethorpes (part of Grimsby) and Southsea (part of Portsmouth). The population threshold means that places such as Hunstanton, Wells, Sheringham and Cromer along the North Norfolk coast are excluded, along with a number of towns in Devon and Cornwall such as Salcombe, Fowey, Padstow and Bude.

Table 1.1: Britain's 43 principal seaside towns

	Population 2001
Greater Bournemouth	342,600
Greater Brighton	279,900
Greater Blackpool	260,700
Greater Worthing	186,700
Southend-on-Sea	160,300
Isle of Wight	132,700
Torbay	129,700
Hastings/Bexhill	126,300
Thanet	121,300
Southport	91,500
Eastbourne	89,700
Greater Ayr	87,300
Weston-super-Mare	71,100
Whitstable/Herne Bay	70,500
Llandudno/Colwyn Bay/Conwy	64,000
Folkstone/Hythe	61,300
Lowestoft	60,100
Clacton	55,600
Great Yarmouth	53,800
Scarborough	52,600
Weymouth	50,900
Morecambe and Heysham	49,600
Rhyl/Prestatyn	43,500
Bognor Regis	43,100
Whitley Bay	37,500
Exmouth	35,600
Bridlington	35,400
Dawlish/Teignmouth	30,000
Deal	28,900
Barry	23,600
Newquay	21,800
Penzance	20,900
Falmouth	19,700
Burnham-on-Sea	19,100
Skegness	18,900
Porthcawl	16,000
Dunoon	14,800
Sidmouth	13,800
Whitby	12,900
Minehead	11,600
St. Ives	11,300
Ilfracombe	11,300
Swanage	10,200

Source: Census of Population

In order to monitor key variables through time, the pre-1974 boundaries of each of the seaside towns have been matched to ward boundaries in 1981, 1991 and 2001, allowing the area included in each town to be held constant. In most cases this is straightforward because post-1974 ward boundaries often follow the boundaries of the pre-1974 authority. In a few cases boundary changes create greater discontinuities, distorting analyses of changes through time. However, the serious discontinuities mostly affect a handful of smaller towns, so the impact on figures for seaside towns as a whole is marginal.

Table 1.2 presents basic descriptive data on the 43 towns for 2001. It shows that the towns have a combined population of just under 3.1 million. To put this figure into perspective, it is slightly more than the total population of Wales (2.9 million) and more than North East England (2.6 million) but less than the population of Scotland for example (5.1 million). The population of these seaside towns is about exactly the same as England's poorer rural areas ('Rural Development Areas') but it is less than the population of Britain's present and former coalfields (just under 5 million on fairly tight boundaries). The total population of Britain's main cities is a great deal larger – the six metropolitan counties in England plus London total around 18.5 million.

The 43 seaside towns have a working-age population of nearly 1.8 million. As a proportion of the total population this is below the national average – 57 per cent compared to 61 per cent – as a result of the towns' large population over retirement age. Among the working age population the overall employment rate (ie the share with jobs) was just under 72 per cent in 2001, or about three percentage points below the national average. Claimant unemployment in the towns in April 2001 was actually modest – just 55,000, or a rate of 4.0 per cent. The figures in Table 1.2 show that on balance seaside towns export workers to surrounding areas and further afield, with an estimated net commuting flow outwards of 86,000.

Table 1.2: Key descriptive statistics on Britain's 43 principal seaside towns, 2001

Total population		3,078,000
Working age population		1,766,000
- as % total population		57.4
Employment rate (% of working age)	- men	76.7
	- women	66.3
	- total	71.7
Total no. of jobs in towns		1,306,000
Claimant unemployment (April)	- number	55,000
	- rate (%)	4.0
Net commuting (working age only)		-86,000

Source: Census of Population, Annual Business Inquiry, Labour Force Survey, ONS

2. LABOUR MARKET TRENDS

This section of the report looks at the overall trends in the labour market in Britain's 43 principal seaside towns. It begins by examining levels of unemployment, and then moves on to consider the wider picture including local trends in employment, migration and labour force participation. This section also explores some of the key differences between towns.

Unemployment

Figure 2.1 shows claimant unemployment in seaside towns from 1986 (the earliest year for which ward-based data is available for the whole of Great Britain) through to 2001. The number of unemployed residents in seaside towns is taken straight from official data but the unemployment rates shown in the graphs are calculated slightly differently to the figures published monthly in *Labour Market Trends*. Here the number of economically active residents in 1991 is used as the denominator. This is a more accurate measure than the official figures, which combine residence and workplace data in the denominator.

Claimant unemployment rates in seaside towns as a whole follow the national pattern. They fell during the second half of the 1980s, rose sharply during the recession between 1990 and 1993, and have subsequently fallen steadily to 2001.

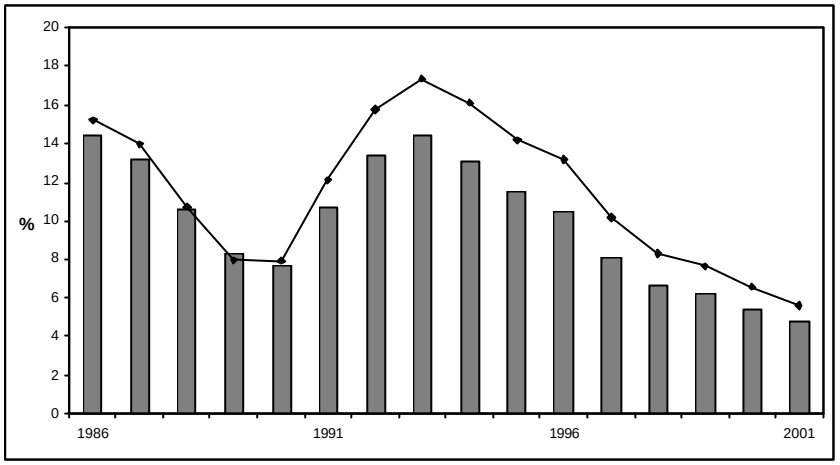
Throughout most of this period the claimant unemployment rate for seaside towns was a little above the national average, for both men and women. The gap was greatest in the mid-1990s and has subsequently narrowed so that by 2001 there was very little difference.

It has long been known that there is a problem of seasonal unemployment in seaside towns. Whereas Figure 2.1 showed annual average rates, Figure 2.2 shows quarterly rates for 1996-2001. An annual cycle to claimant unemployment is still evident. For men in seaside towns the rate is one to one-and-a-half percentage points higher in January than in July. For women the fluctuation is rather less – about half a percentage point. The fluctuations are undoubtedly attributable to the seasonal nature of the holiday trade. Skegness, Great Yarmouth, Whitby and several of the smaller towns in the South West are among those showing markedly sharper seasonal fluctuations. These are towns where the dependence on the holiday trade is greatest. Larger towns such as Brighton and Bournemouth, with a more diverse economy, show greater stability.

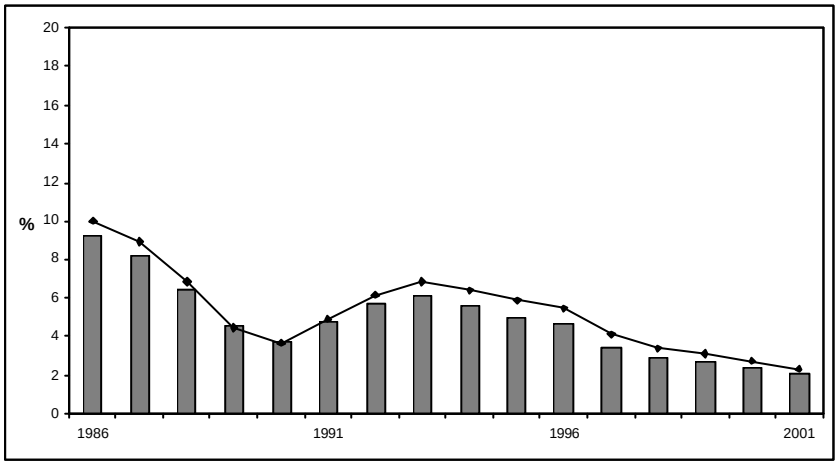
The extent of the unemployment problems of seaside towns become more apparent in Table 2.1, which compares claimant unemployment rates with surrounding areas (counties in England, unitary authorities in Scotland and Wales). The claimant unemployment rates for the surrounding areas are compiled on the same basis as for the seaside towns – ie they are wholly residence-based. In this table the towns are ranked according to their claimant unemployment rate in January 2002, admittedly a time of year when seaside unemployment is high. In every one of the first 27 towns on the list down as far as Brighton, the claimant unemployment rate is higher than in the surrounding area. In all, claimant unemployment is higher than in the surrounding area in 35 of the 43 towns, the main exceptions being a handful of small towns in the South, plus Whitley Bay and Southport which are adjacent to conurbations with unemployment problems.

Figure 2.1: Claimant unemployment in seaside towns, 1986-2001

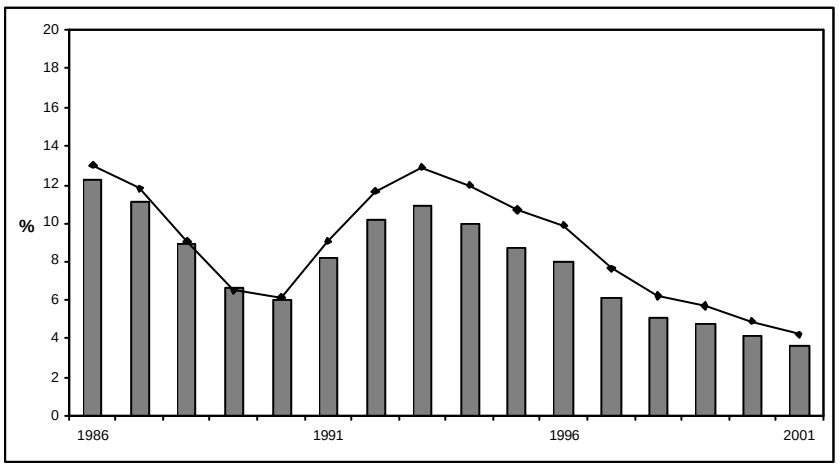
MEN



WOMEN



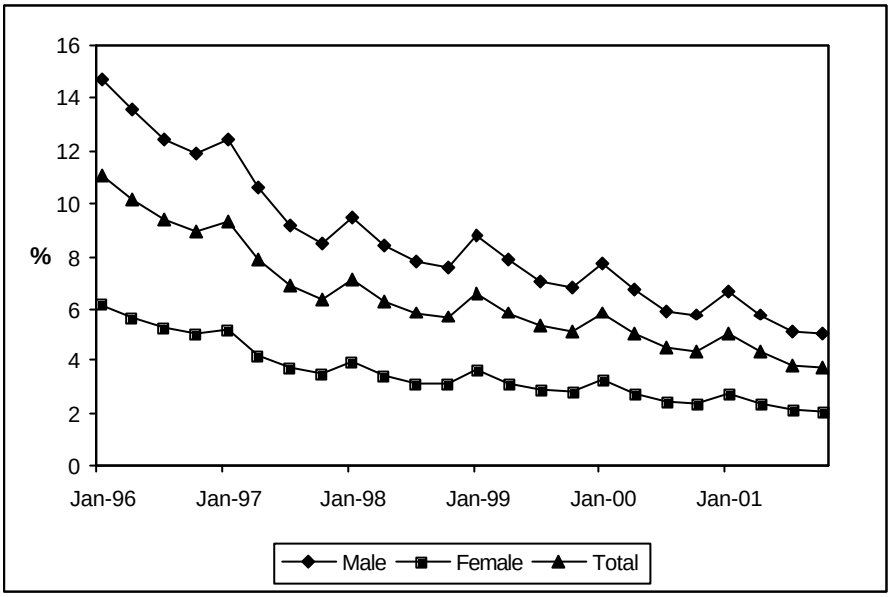
TOTAL



GB — Seaside towns

Source: ONS

Figure 2.2: Seasonal fluctuations in claimant unemployment in seaside towns, 1996-2001



Source: ONS

The problem of claimant unemployment in seaside towns is therefore not so much that it is on average high by national standards, but that it is high by comparison with neighbouring areas.

Claimant unemployment represents only part of the problem however. The claimant figures refer only to those people who are out-of-work and claiming unemployment-related benefits. In practice, many people who are unemployed have been diverted onto other benefits or out of the benefits system altogether. The shortcomings of claimant unemployment data are the subject of an extensive literature. The criticisms have been numerous – from academic sources (eg Gregg 1994, MacKay 1999 and Webster 2002) from independent watchdogs such as the Unemployment Unit (eg Convery 1996) and from no less a source than the Royal Statistical Society (1995). We have made two important contributions to this debate (Beatty et. al. 1997, Beatty et. al. 2002).

Table 2.1: Claimant unemployment, January 2002

Seaside town	%	%	Surrounding area
Great Yarmouth	10.3	2.9	Norfolk
Bridlington	7.8	5.4	Humberside
Whitby	7.0	2.3	North Yorkshire
Newquay	6.8	3.9	Cornwall
Skegness	6.7	2.9	Lincolnshire
Scarborough	6.6	2.3	North Yorkshire
Penzance	6.6	3.9	Cornwall
St. Ives	6.5	3.9	Cornwall
Ilfracombe	6.2	3.0	Devon
Barry	6.1	3.9	Vale of Glamorgan
Lowestoft	6.0	2.5	Suffolk
Minehead	5.6	1.9	Somerset
Morecambe and Heysham	5.5	3.3	Lancashire
Dunoon	5.5	4.9	Argyll and Bute
Thanet	5.4	2.4	Kent
Torbay	5.4	3.0	Devon
Greater Ayr	5.3	4.6	South Ayrshire
Rhyl/Prestatyn	5.3	4.0	Denbighshire
Isle of Wight	5.2	1.7	(Hampshire)
Clacton	4.9	2.3	Essex
Falmouth	4.8	3.9	Cornwall
Greater Blackpool	4.7	3.3	Lancashire
Southend-on-Sea	4.4	2.3	Essex
Llandudno/Colwyn Bay/Conwy	4.4	4.0	Conwy
Hastings/Bexhill	4.3	3.0	East Sussex
Folkstone/Hythe	4.1	2.4	Kent
Greater Brighton	4.1	3.0	East Sussex
Southport	3.8	6.5	Merseyside
Porthcawl	3.4	3.3	Bridgend
Eastbourne	3.4	3.0	East Sussex
Whitley Bay	3.3	6.1	Tyne and Wear
Deal	3.0	2.4	Kent
Weston-super-Mare	2.8	2.1	Avon
Weymouth	2.8	1.8	Dorset
Dawlish/Teignmouth	2.7	3.0	Devon
Bognor Regis	2.7	1.4	West Sussex
Burnham-on-Sea	2.7	1.9	Somerset
Exmouth	2.6	3.0	Devon
Whitstable/Herne Bay	2.3	2.4	Kent
Greater Bournemouth	2.2	1.8	Dorset
Swanage	1.6	1.8	Dorset
Sidmouth	1.5	3.0	Devon
Greater Worthing	1.4	1.4	West Sussex
All seaside towns	4.2	3.5	Great Britain

Sources: ONS and authors' estimates of economically active residents in 2000/01

This is not the place to set out the arguments in full. The key point is that the numbers recorded by the 'claimant count' are heavily dependent on social security rules. In general, the tighter the rules governing eligibility for unemployment-related benefits the fewer people are included in the claimant count, and since the early 1980s successive changes have had the overall effect of reducing the scope for claiming unemployment benefits. Added to this, there are diversions between different parts of the benefits system, in particular between unemployment-related and sickness-related benefits.

Table 2.2 provides estimates of 'hidden' and 'real' unemployment in seaside towns in January 2002. The figures for Great Britain are taken from our most recent national report (Beatty et. al. 2002) which explains the methods and data sources. The figures for seaside towns are derived from the district data in that report. In this instance, hidden unemployment at the district level has been allocated to each town on the basis of the town's share of its district's claimant unemployment – a rough-and-ready procedure but one that may not be too wide of the mark given that hidden unemployment tends to be concentrated in the same areas as claimant unemployment.

The first group of hidden unemployed are the additional people recorded as unemployed using the International Labour Organisation (ILO) definition of unemployment. This counts anyone who is out-of-work and wants work, is available to start in two weeks and has looked for work in the last four weeks. They are counted regardless of whether they are claimants of unemployment-related benefits. In seaside towns the ILO measure of unemployment is estimated to exceed the claimant count by 24,000. The government accepts that the ILO measure is superior to the claimant count. The inclusion of this group of hidden unemployed is therefore entirely uncontroversial.

The second group are the hidden unemployed on government schemes. Here we count only those without a contract of employment, who are a minority of those on schemes. There are an estimated 4,000 in this group in seaside towns.

Table 2.2: Estimated real level of unemployment, January 2002

	Great Britain		Seaside towns	
	no.	%	no.	%
CLAIMANT COUNT	983,000	35	58,000	38
Extra ILO unemployed	470,000	17	24,000	16
Government schemes	80,000	3	4,000	3
Excess sickness claimants	1,150,000	41	58,000	38
Excess early retired	120,000	4	8,000	5
HIDDEN UNEMPLOYMENT	1,830,000	65	93,000	62
REAL UNEMPLOYMENT (ie. claimant plus hidden)	2,810,000	100	151,000	100
(%)	(9.5)		(10.4)	

Sources: see Beatty, Fothergill, Gore and Green (2002)

The third group is the largest. These are the unemployed men and women who have been diverted onto sickness-related benefits, mainly Incapacity Benefit. The numbers here need to be seen in the context of the exceptionally large total of non-employed men and women of working age who are in receipt of sickness-related benefits – nearly 2.7 million in all. The hidden unemployed among this group are those who could reasonably be expected to have been in work in a fully-employed economy. To estimate hidden unemployment, local sickness claimant rates are compared with the low rates in the fully-employed parts of the South East, and a further adjustment is made for underlying differences between areas in the extent of incapacitating ill-health. Our figures point to 58,000 hidden unemployed in this group in seaside towns. National data shows that sickness claimants are disproportionately male, over 50 and have relatively few formal qualifications.

The fourth group of hidden unemployed are the excess early retired. These are the early retired who would have been in work if a job had been available for them, and they should not be confused with the headline total of early retired which in seaside towns will be far higher. The estimation procedure is again based on comparisons with levels in fully-employed parts of the South East and an adjustment is made for underlying differences between areas, for example because of retirement migration. In seaside towns there are an estimated 8,000 in this group of hidden unemployed.

Adding all the hidden unemployed together points to a figure of 93,000 for seaside towns, which combined with claimant unemployment suggests a real level of unemployment of over 150,000, equivalent to a rate of just over 10 per cent. This is about one per cent more than the national average. Compared to the national figures, slightly more of the total estimated unemployment in seaside towns is visible in the claimant figures, and slightly less is accounted for by the diversion onto sickness benefits.

Table 2.3 shows real unemployment in each seaside town, again for January 2002. Once more it must be emphasised that these are rough-and-ready estimates, based on district data that is itself subject to a margin of error. Great Yarmouth heads the list with an estimated real rate of unemployment of 20 per cent, with Skegness close behind. 28 seaside towns are estimated to have a real rate of unemployment in excess of 10 per cent. At the other end of the scale, the real rate of unemployment is estimated to be modest in several south coast towns, including Bournemouth (6.3 per cent) and Worthing (4.4 per cent).

Table 2.3: Estimated real level of unemployment in seaside towns, January 2002

	no.	%
Great Yarmouth	5,200	20.0
Skegness	1,800	19.9
Newquay	2,000	17.4
Bridlington	2,800	17.0
Barry	3,400	15.7
Whitby	900	15.1
Ilfracombe	800	14.7
Penzance	1,300	14.7
St. Ives	700	14.5
Morecambe and Heysham	3,500	14.4
Scarborough	3,600	14.3
Minehead	700	14.1
Clacton	3,100	14.1
Porthcawl	1,100	13.8
Greater Blackpool	16,600	13.6
Lowestoft	3,700	13.3
Greater Ayr	5,900	13.2
Llandudno/Colwyn Bay/Conwy	3,800	12.8
Folkstone/Hythe	3,900	12.6
Falmouth	1,000	12.4
Rhyl/Prestatyn	2,300	12.3
Dunoon	900	12.1
Torbay	7,200	12.0
Thanet	6,500	11.7
Southport	4,800	11.4
Isle of Wight	6,600	11.1
Weston-super-Mare	3,600	10.4
Hastings/Bexhill	5,800	10.1
Weymouth	2,400	9.1
Whitley Bay	1,600	9.0
Greater Brighton	12,600	8.9
Southend-on-Sea	6,200	8.6
Dawlish/Teignmouth	1,000	8.2
Eastbourne	3,300	8.2
Deal	1,000	7.8
Burnham-on-Sea	600	7.6
Bognor Regis	1,500	7.5
Exmouth	1,200	7.5
Greater Bournemouth	10,300	6.3
Swanage	200	5.5
Whitstable/Herne Bay	1,500	4.9
Greater Worthing	3,900	4.4
Sidmouth	200	4.3
All seaside towns	151,000	10.4

Source: adapted from Beatty, Fothergill, Gore and Green (2002)

Labour market accounts

The method we have used to explore the changes in the economy of seaside towns involves the assembly of comprehensive 'labour market accounts'. This approach was pioneered in the regional context in the UK by the Cambridge Economic Policy Group (1980, 1982). It was subsequently applied to the UK's inner cities (Begg, Moore and Rhodes 1986) and we have previously deployed this method in the context of the coalfields (Beatty and Fothergill 1996) and rural areas (Beatty and Fothergill 1997). Britain's main cities have been re-analysed, using later data, in a further study (Turok and Edge 1999).

Labour market accounts show in an arithmetic way how changes in labour supply, employment and recorded unemployment are all related. Their merit is that they disaggregate what may be a small net change, for example in unemployment, into the much larger gross flows, often in conflicting directions, that make up labour market change in an area. There are a number of ways in which the components of the accounts can be organised. The one we follow here is:

	NATURAL INCREASE IN WORKFORCE
plus	NET IN-MIGRATION
plus	INCREASE IN NET IN-COMMUTING
plus	INCREASE IN LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION
minus	INCREASE IN EMPLOYMENT
equals	INCREASE IN RECORDED UNEMPLOYMENT

In effect, the first four lines of the accounts sum to the total change in labour supply (which may in practice be positive or negative). The fifth line is the change in labour demand (which again may be positive or negative). The sixth line – increase in recorded unemployment – is the difference. Changes in hidden unemployment will be mainly encapsulated in the fourth line, dealing with labour force participation.

The decline of the traditional tourist base of Britain's seaside towns goes back to at least the 1970s. We have therefore taken a long view of economic change and assembled labour market accounts for the whole of the 1971-2001 period, including for each constituent ten-year period (1971-81, 1981-91 and 1991-2001). This exercise is dependent in particular on Census of Population data for 1971, 1981 and 1991 but at the time of writing all but the most basic data from the 2001 Census has yet to become available. The 2001 data in the accounts is therefore compiled from a variety of sources including the Labour Force Survey, the Annual Business Inquiry and the 2001 Census itself. This means that the figures for 1991-2001 are less reliable than those for the earlier periods, but the resulting distortion to figures for the overall 1971-2001 period is likely to be modest.

The assembly of labour market accounts is a complex procedure involving the manipulation of exceptional quantities of data, especially when the areas are defined at ward-level as in the case of seaside towns. As far as possible, the precise areas included in each town have been held constant (as defined in terms of pre-1974 local authorities) and adjustments have been made to allow for differences of definition and coverage between the Census years. Details of the methods and data sources are set out in an Appendix.

Labour market accounts for the total working age population of seaside towns, for the thirty years from 1971 to 2001, are shown in Table 2.4. This is the key table in understanding economic change in the towns.

The first line shows that the natural increase in the population of working age (ie 16-64 for men, 16-59 for women) has been negative in seaside towns. In other words, the number reaching state pension age plus the number of deaths of people of working age exceeds the number entering the working age population at 16. What this means is that in the absence of migration the population of working age in seaside towns would have declined. Over the 1971-2001 period this decline would have been 90,000 or about 6 per cent.

Table 2.4: Labour market accounts for total working age population, seaside towns 1971-2001

		no.	as % 1971 working age population
	Natural increase in workforce	-90,000	-6.2
PLUS	Net in-migration	360,000	24.9
PLUS	Increase in net in-commuting	-21,000	-1.5
PLUS	Increase in labour force participation	88,000	6.1
MINUS	Increase in employment	317,000	22.0
EQUALS	Increase in recorded unemployment	19,000	1.3

Sources: see Appendix

That in the absence of migration the population of working age in seaside towns is in decline is not difficult to explain. Compared to the national average, seaside towns have a relatively old age structure, even among those below pension age. In 1991, for instance, men aged 45-64 made up 40 per cent of the male working age population in seaside towns compared to 34 per cent nationally. Women aged 45-59 made up 31 per cent of the female working age population in the towns, compared to 29 per cent nationally. The number of under 16s – the next generation about to enter the workforce – was also less in seaside towns, in relation to the working age population, than the national average.

The second line of the labour market accounts shows that among men and women of working age, net in-migration to seaside towns has been very substantial – 360,000 people over the full period, equivalent to an increase of nearly a quarter in the 1971 working age population. This in-migration has far more than offset the negative natural increase in the local workforce.

The third line shows the increase in net in-commuting. This figure reflects the change in the balance of flows in either direction. Over the period as a whole net in-commuting is estimated to have declined by 21,000 (ie net out-commuting from seaside towns increased). Too much weight should not be attached to this small figure however, because several intermediate steps are necessary to estimate commuting, as the Appendix explains, and the data is therefore less reliable than the other components of the accounts.

The fourth line shows the increase in labour force participation – that is, the impact of the changing share of men and women of working age who are either in employment or recorded as unemployed. Over the thirty year period, rising labour force participation contributed an extra 88,000 to the workforce in seaside towns.

The fifth line in the accounts shows the increase in the number of jobs located in the towns – 317,000 over the full 1971-2001 period. This is arguably the most surprising and important figure of all. A reasonable assumption might have been that in line with the erosion of the traditional tourist base there would have been a fall in employment, or at best only modest growth. The substantial growth in employment over this long period shows emphatically that this has not been the case.

The sixth and final line in the accounts shows a modest increase – just 19,000 – in recorded unemployment over the period as a whole.

Table 2.5 disaggregates the labour market accounts by sex. There are similarities and differences. The negative natural increase in the workforce and the substantial net in-migration are shared by men and women. Trends in labour force participation have moved in opposite directions. A withdrawal of men from the labour market reduced the seaside workforce by 66,000, whereas an increase among women added 154,000 to the total. Trends in employment also differ, with the number of jobs rising roughly three times faster for women than men.

Table 2.5: Labour market accounts for men and women of working age, seaside towns 1971-2001

		Men		Women	
		no.	as % 1971 w. age pop	no.	as % 1971 w. age pop
	Natural increase in workforce	-31,000	-4.2	-59,000	-8.3
PLUS	Net in-migration	180,000	24.5	180,000	25.3
PLUS	Increase in net in-commuting	7,000	0.9	-28,000	-3.7
PLUS	Increase in labour force participation	-66,000	-8.9	154,000	21.6
MINUS	Increase in employment	80,000	10.9	237,000	33.4
EQUALS	Increase in recorded unemployment	10,000	1.3	10,000	1.3

Sources: see Appendix

Previous research allows comparisons to be made between labour market accounts for seaside towns and other types of area. However, until the figures for the other areas are up-dated this is possible only for 1981-91. Table 2.6 brings together figures for four very different types of area. The figures for cities, which cover the 20 largest urban areas across Britain, are taken from Turok and Edge (1999). The figures for coalfields are from our earlier work (Beatty and Fothergill 1996, Beatty 2000) and refer to just England and Wales. The figures for rural areas are also from our earlier work (Beatty and Fothergill 1997) and refer to the former Rural Development Areas in England, broadly the more disadvantaged parts of rural England. The new figures for seaside towns for 1981-91 are set alongside. The data sources and methods used to compile the labour market accounts for the four types of area differ in only minor ways. Also to facilitate comparisons the accounts are all expressed as a percentage of the male or female working age population in each area in 1981.

Table 2.6: Labour market accounts for different types of area, 1981-1991

		as % male/female working age pop in 1981			
		Cities	**Coalfields**	**Rural areas**	**Seaside towns**
MEN					
	Natural increase in workforce	2.0	4.4	2.3	-0.1
PLUS	Net in-migration	-6.7	-4.3	4.5	7.6
PLUS	Increase in net in-commuting	-1.1	-0.3	0.2	3.1
PLUS	Increase in labour force participation	-4.9	-6.1	-4.4	-2.7
MINUS	Increase in employment	-9.7	-6.2	2.7	7.0
EQUALS	Increase in recorded unemployment	-1.1	0.0	0.0	0.9
WOMEN					
	Natural increase in workforce	0.9	3.3	2.0	-1.9
PLUS	Net in-migration	-2.6	-1.8	5.5	8.4
PLUS	Increase in net in-commuting	1.0	-1.3	-2.8	-0.2
PLUS	Increase in labour force participation	2.4	6.0	10.3	7.6
MINUS	Increase in employment	1.6	6.6	14.9	13.8
EQUALS	Increase in recorded unemployment	0.1	-0.3	0.0	0.2

Sources: Turok and Edge (1999), Beatty and Fothergill (1996), Beatty (2000), Beatty and Fothergill (1997) and new estimates for seaside towns

The accounts for the other types of area place trends in seaside towns in context. Six observations are worth making:

- The negative natural increase in the working age population in seaside towns is unusual – the other areas all show a small increase.

- Seaside towns record the highest rates of net in-migration, higher even than rural areas which are known to be net gainers from the wider urban-rural shift in population.

- The growth in net in-commuting to seaside towns among men may to some extent be the flip-side of the decline in in-commuting to cities. The changing patterns of commuting among women are more complex.

- All types of area share declining labour force participation among men and an increase among women. Seaside towns show the smallest decline among men and the increase among women is second only to rural areas.

- Seaside towns record the largest increase in male employment, and the increase in female employment is only marginally behind the rapid growth in rural areas.

- In apparent contradiction to the favourable trends in employment, seaside towns show the largest increases in recorded unemployment over this ten-year period, though the changes in all four types of area are small.

More generally, the accounts for the four types of area emphasise that small changes in recorded unemployment can hide much bigger labour market flows. Indeed, it is clear that changes in recorded unemployment are an unreliable guide to the relative economic strength of areas. The accounts also show a strong tendency for employment change and migration to work together and in the same direction. Where there is job loss among men and only a small increase among

women, as in the cities, there has been substantial net-out migration. Conversely in seaside towns, where there has been strong growth in employment, there has been substantial net in-migration. To some extent the changes in labour force participation also mirror the changes in employment, though the differences are less marked than for migration.

A closer look

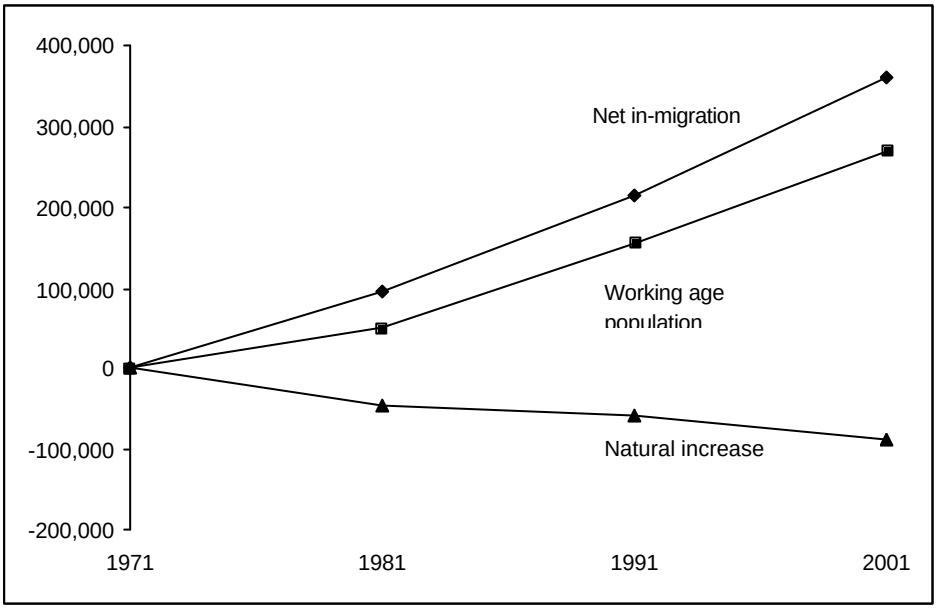
(i) Migration

Net in-migration is the single largest flow in the labour market accounts for seaside towns. The figures indicate that between 1971 and 2001, 360,000 more adults of working age moved into seaside towns than moved out. This boosted the working age population of the towns by a full quarter.

Figure 2.3 shows that trends in the working age population of seaside towns were sustained across the three decades. A negative natural increase consistently depressed growth but this was more than offset by net in-migration, producing strong overall growth in the working age population. If anything, the net in-migration to seaside towns tended to accelerate as the period progressed. Between 1971 and 2001 the overall increase in the working age population of seaside towns was 270,000 or 19 per cent, compared to 14 per cent in Great Britain as a whole. The total population of seaside towns rose by 340,000 over this period or 12 per cent, compared to 6 per cent nationally.

Migration into seaside towns is not spread evenly across age bands. Table 2.7 illustrates this point for the period 1971-91. Ward-level statistics from the Census of Population are not yet available to extend this analysis to 2001 but there is little reason to believe that the picture will be radically different for 1991-2001 to the preceding twenty years, bearing in mind the stability of overall trends. The table shows the differences, by age-band within the working age population, between

Figure 2.3: Cumulative growth of working age population of seaside towns, 1971-2001



Sources: see Appendix

Table 2.7: Net in-migration of working age to seaside towns, by age band, 1971-91

	Men	Women
16-24	8,000	22,000
25-34	0	2,000
35-44	36,000	38,000
45-54	30,000	29,000
55-64 (m) 55-59 (f)	37,000	18,000
Total	110,000	109,000

Sources: see Appendix

the population projected by a cohort survival model and the actual population recorded by the Census. Among 16-24 year olds there is modest net in-migration to seaside towns, notably more among women than men. Among 25-34 year olds there is practically no net in-migration at all. Among each of the following age groups, up to state pension age, seaside towns record substantial net in-migration among both men and women.

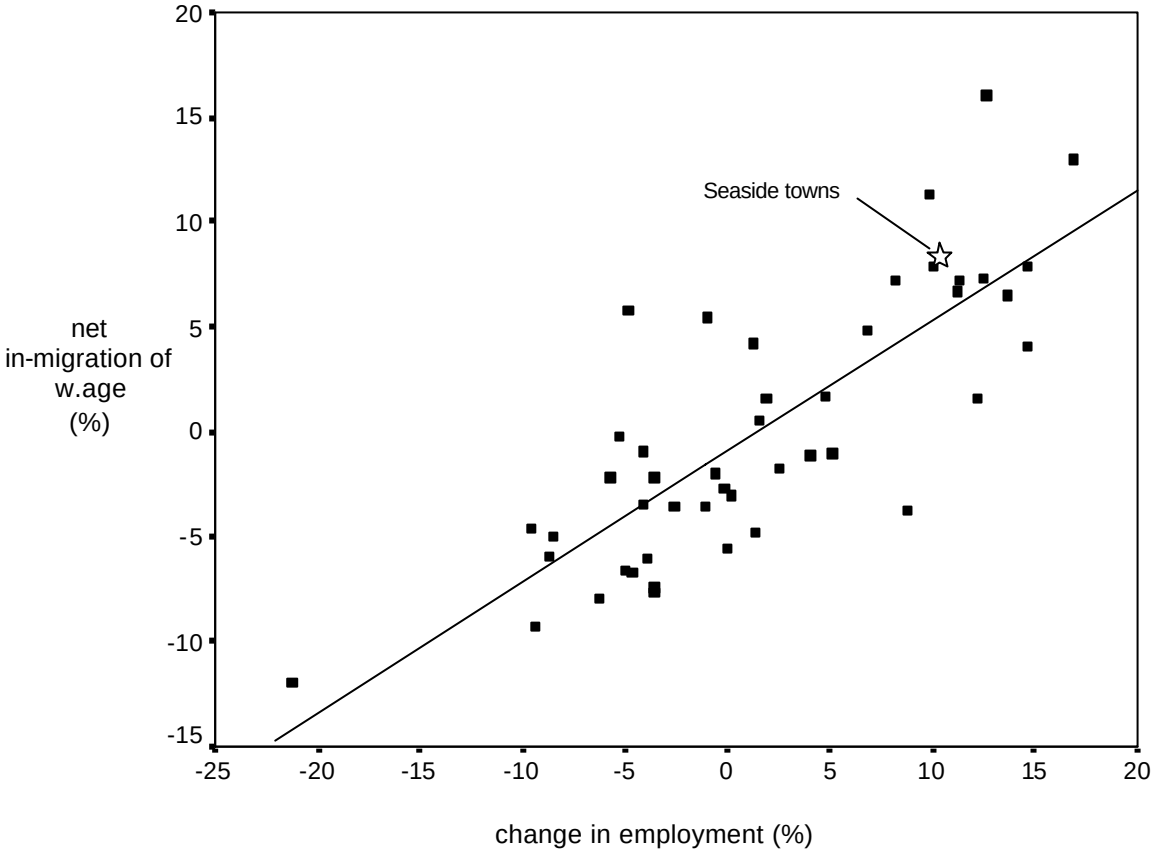
But just how much of the in-migration to seaside towns is unusual? To provide an answer we need to draw further on comparisons between seaside towns and other types of area.

Figure 2.4 shows the relationship between employment change and net migration of working age for the period 1981-91, for which comparable data is available for a range of areas. This diagram pools observations for Britain's 18 main cities (from Turok and Edge 1999), for 10 English and Welsh coalfields (from Beatty and Fothergill 1996 and Beatty 2000) and for 18 English Rural Development Areas with a population of more than 50,000 (from Beatty and Fothergill 1997). These 46 observations cover a 1981 working age population of 15.1 million, or nearly half the UK total. A number of overlapping areas have been removed (eg Stoke on Trent in included once as a city but not as a coalfield, and the Nottinghamshire RDA as a coalfield not as a rural area) so as to avoid double counting.

The diagram shows the regression line between employment change and migration, both expressed as a percentage of the 1981 working age population in each area. This is a regression line generated solely by data for cities, coalfields and rural areas. Seaside town data is excluded. It can therefore be used as a guide to the 'expected' level of in-migration to seaside towns during this particular ten-year period.

A single observation for Britain's 43 principal seaside towns, taken together, is also plotted on Figure 2.4, again for 1981-91 to be precisely comparable. The important point is that seaside towns are above the regression line. In other words, the level

Figure 2.4: Relationship between employment change and migration 1981-1991



N.B. Both variables are expressed as a % of 1981 working age population
Observations are cities, coalfields and rural areas

Regression Model:

$$y = 0.624x - 0.956$$

where y = net in-migration
and x = change in employment

variables in equation

	B	Beta	t	Sig t
change in employment	0.624	0.808	9.1	0.000
(constant)	-0.956		-1.7	0.098

N=46, R^2=0.654

Sources: Turok and Edge 1999, Beatty and Fothergill (1996), Beatty (2000), Beatty and Fothergill (1997), Beatty and Fothergill (2002a)

of in-migration exceeds that which could have been expected on the basis of their employment growth and experience in other parts of Britain.

To put absolute numbers on these trends, between 1981 and 1991 the stock of jobs in seaside towns grew by 154,000, equivalent to 10.3 per cent of the 1981 working age population. The regression line suggests that this percentage increase would normally have been associated with working age net in-migration of 5.5 per cent, or 82,000. In fact, net in-migration of working age to seaside towns totalled 120,000 over this period. The difference – 38,000 – is the excess migration that cannot be explained by local employment growth.

Can this important conclusion from data for 1981-91 be generalised to other periods, especially more recent years? In the absence at this stage of comparable later data for other areas we cannot be sure. However, it is worth noting that the migration trends for seaside towns for 1971-81 and 1991-2001 were broadly similar to those between 1981 and 1991.

If the evidence from 1981-91 can indeed be generalised, it seems that up to a portion of the net in-migration into seaside towns cannot be explained by employment change. This is certainly consistent with the survey finding (see Section 3) that a high proportion of moves into seaside towns are motivated by residential preference rather than employment. Furthermore, excess in-migration like this would over a number of years be sufficient to generate imbalances in the local labour market, and in particular to lead to unemployment in seaside towns exceeding that in surrounding areas.

Our conclusion, therefore, is that there does seem to be a modest 'seaside effect'. Over and above the impact of rising job opportunities, seaside towns appear to attract additional migrants from other areas. A part of this additional migration may owe something to a stock of suitable housing and the availability of benefits to pay for it, but more generally people move to seaside towns because they want to live there. Local job creation has been impressive by comparison with other types of

area, but it hasn't been quite fast enough to keep up with the flow of newcomers to the towns and the result has been a persistent problem of joblessness.

(ii) Economic inactivity

Economic activity rates among working age residents – that is, the share of 16-59/64 year olds who are employed or recorded as unemployed – show divergent trends between men and women. Between 1971 and 2001 the rate among men in seaside towns declined from 91 per cent to 84 per cent, whilst among women it rose from 54 per cent to 73 per cent. These levels and trends are close to the national averages, which went from 93 to 84 per cent for men and 55 to 73 per cent for women. The declining labour force participation by men and the rising trend among women occurred during each of the three decades making up the 1971-2001 period.

Table 2.8 looks at the component parts of the economically inactive population between 1981 and 2001. Comparable figures for 1971 are not available, and in the absence at present of data from the Census of Population the figures for 2001 are derived from the Labour Force Survey and DWP data on sickness claimants. It is also not possible to split the economically inactive into all four component groups in every year.

For men, the table shows that the rise in economic inactivity has been dominated by an increase in recorded 'permanent sickness'. The other groups of inactive men of working age together account for the same proportion of the working age population in 2001 as in 1981 and a little less than in 1991. Between 1981 and 1991 there was growth in the number of male early retirees but the figures suggest that this growth cannot have been sustained unless the number of economically inactive students has at the same time been squeezed.

Table 2.8: Economic inactivity among working age residents of seaside towns, 1981-2001

	as % of working age population		
	1981	**1991**	**2001**
MEN			
Permanently sick	3.7	5.5	9.0
Students	5.7	4.5	
Retired	0.9	3.2	7.5
Other inactive	0.8	0.9	
All inactive of working age	11.1	14.1	16.5
WOMEN			
Permanently sick	3.0	3.4	5.9
Students	5.6	4.7	
Retired	31.9	1.3	21.0
Other inactive		22.7	
All inactive of working age	40.5	32.2	26.9

Source: Census of Population, Labour Force Survey, DWP

For women, the table similarly shows an increase in recorded 'permanent sickness', though not on the same scale as for men and the increase has been concentrated in the 1990s. For women, however, the dominant trend has been the decline in the 'other inactive'. This is the group outside paid employment that includes women who look after family or home on a full-time basis. In seaside towns their numbers have shrunk considerably, providing a major addition to labour supply.

Compared to the national average, none of these trends in seaside towns is exceptional. The growth in recorded permanent sickness is a national trend, though in seaside towns the levels are a little higher than in Great Britain as a whole – 9.0 per cent compared to 7.6 per cent for men in 2001, and 5.9 per cent compared to 5.6 per cent for women. That the rising numbers in post-16 education have not led to a sharp increase in economic inactivity in seaside towns is also mirrored across the country as a whole.

Interpretation of the trends is more contentious. We have argued elsewhere that for men in particular the distinction between unemployment and economic inactivity has become blurred (Alcock, Beatty et. al. 2003). The dividing line between what is recorded as unemployment and what is recorded as sickness is dependent upon benefit rules, and in the UK there are incentives in the benefits system and administrative procedures as well that boost the numbers on sickness benefits at the expense of the numbers on unemployment benefits. These ideas provide part of the basis of the estimates of 'hidden' unemployment presented earlier.

The point is that the big increase in the proportion of the male working age population that is recorded as 'sick', and the smaller increase among women, cannot be explained simply in terms of changes in the health of the working age population. If anything health standards have improved, albeit with the smallest improvement among the most disadvantaged groups. Furthermore, the in-migration of older workers to seaside towns does not offer an explanation for local trends because it has merely perpetuated a skewed age distribution that dates back many years. Our view is that the high levels of recorded permanent sickness among the working age population of seaside towns (and indeed across the country as a whole) need to be interpreted as a measure of labour market distress.

(iii) Employment change

Table 2.9 shows the distribution of employment by sector in seaside towns. The data source is the same as for the employment figures in the labour market accounts but the figures here are slightly more all-encompassing. They have been adjusted to include the self-employed, as in the accounts, and they include jobs held by people above and below normal working age (ie below 16 or above 59/64) and second jobs as well. The table therefore provides a total count of all the jobs located in seaside towns. To maintain consistency with the way they are used in labour market accounts, the employment figures are presented as being for 2001, though in fact they derive from a December 2000 survey.

Table 2.9: Employment in seaside towns, 2001

	Seaside towns		GB
	no.	%	%
Agriculture and fishing	5,000	0.3	2
Energy and water	9,000	0.7	0.6
Manufacturing	131,000	10	14
Construction	92,000	7	6
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	413,000	32	25
Transport and communications	56,000	4	6
Banking, finance, insurance etc	196,000	15	20
Public admin, education, health	341,000	26	22
Other services	64,000	5	5
Total employment	1,306,000	100	100

Source: Annual Business Inquiry (with adjustment to include self-employed)

The figures show that two sectors dominate employment in seaside towns. The largest is 'distribution, hotels and restaurants', with nearly a third of all jobs. This is the sector that includes most of the tourist-related jobs but it is also quite a lot wider, including all retailing for instance, much of which will not depend directly on the tourist trade. The other dominant employer in seaside towns is 'public administration, education and health', with a quarter of all jobs. Manufacturing accounts for only one-in-ten of all jobs in seaside towns.

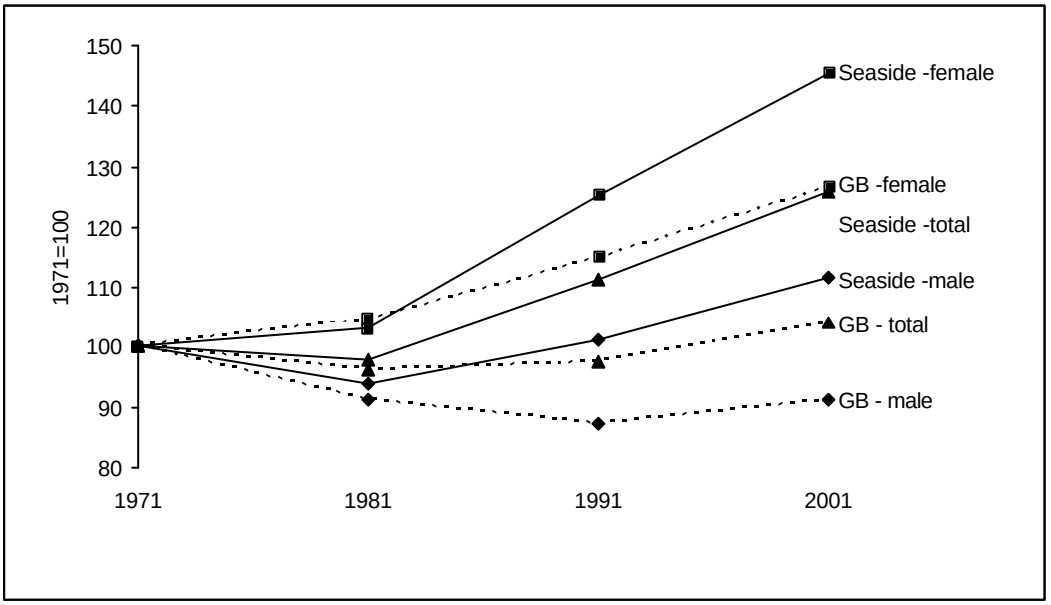
There are important differences in employment structure between seaside towns and the national average. In seaside towns, distribution, hotels and restaurants are relatively more important and manufacturing less so. Employment in banking, finance and insurance is below the national average. The share of seaside town employment in public administration, education and health is above average. Employment in these public services is mainly population-driven, and the high proportion of jobs in these activities will partly reflect the large retired population and partly seaside towns' role as a residential base for commuters.

The contemporary structure of employment in seaside towns provides at least a pointer towards the extent to which they remain dependent on the tourist trade. At a minimum, the excess proportion of total employment in distribution, hotels and restaurants over the national figure – 7 per cent of seaside town employment – can probably be assumed to be tourist-related. The national figure itself will also include a tourist-related element, perhaps between a tenth and a fifth of the total. On this basis, and looking no further than the distribution/hotels/restaurants sector, some 10-12 per cent of all employment in seaside towns (or about 130-160,000 jobs) might be attributed directly to the tourist trade. In terms of jobs, that would mean that tourism continues to be at least as important in the economic base of seaside towns as the whole of the manufacturing sector.

Figure 2.5 shows the growth in employment between 1971 and 2001. This diagram provides a snapshot at ten-yearly intervals, and because employment levels are sensitive to the trade cycle it is worth bearing in mind that 1981 (in

particular) and 1991 (to a lesser extent) were years of recession, whereas the six or seven years up to 2001 were ones of sustained economic growth. What is apparent is that although in terms of total employment seaside towns out-performed the national economy for the whole of the period, the strong absolute and relative growth in their employment is mainly a phenomenon of 1980s and 1990s. This growth was impressive : by 2001, male, female and total employment in seaside towns were all twenty per cent higher than they would have been if employment had merely grown at the national rate.

Figure 2.5: Cumulative growth in employment in seaside towns, 1971-2001



Sources: Census of Population, Labour Force Survey, Annual Business Inquiry

Table 2.10 shows the change in employment by sector in seaside towns between 1981 and 2001. Again data problems make it difficult to extend this analysis back to 1971, and to facilitate comparisons through time these particular figures have been adjusted to exclude second jobs. The single largest source of job growth as been distribution, hotels and restaurants, providing an additional 125,000 jobs in

Table 2.10: Employment change in seaside towns, 1981-2001

	Male no.	Female no.	Total no.	%
Agriculture and fishing	-5,000	-1,000	-6,000	-68
Energy and water	-8,000	0	-8,000	-49
Manufacturing	-17,000	-18,000	-34,000	-21
Construction	+23,000	+2,000	+24,000	+37
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	+58,000	+67,000	+125,000	+45
Transport and communications	-9,000	+2,000	-7,000	-11
Banking, finance, insurance etc	+44,000	+31,000	+75,000	+65
Public admin etc and other services	+14,000	+97,000	+111,000	+42
Total employment	+101,000	+179,000	+280,000	+29

Sources: Census of Population, Annual Business Inquiry

total. Public services too have provided large numbers of additional jobs, especially for women. The banking, finance and insurance sector has also been an important source of job growth. In contrast, the manufacturing sector has been a source of job loss among both men and women.

iv) Part-time working

Seaside tourism has traditionally relied heavily on part-time workers. This is to a large extent a reflection of the nature of tourist-related businesses - cafes, hotels and bars for example - that require staff at particular times of day. It is possible that the resilience of overall employment in seaside towns could therefore disguise a dependence on part-time jobs.

Table 2.11: Full and part-time employees in seaside towns, 2001

	Seaside towns		GB
	no.	%	%
Men - full-time	404,000	36	44
Men - part-time	94,000	8	7
Women - full-time	282,000	25	26
Women - part-time	334,000	30	23
All employees	1,113,000	100	100

N.B Figures exclude self-employed

Source: Annual Business Inquiry

Table 2.11 shows the breakdown between full and part-time employment in seaside towns and compares these towns with Great Britain as a whole. The data covers all employees, including those above and below normal working age, and it also includes second jobs. The data excludes the self-employed, who account for almost a further 200,000 workers in seaside towns but for whom no full-time/part-time breakdown is available. To be consistent with the way the same figures are used in the labour market accounts they are again presented as being for 2001 though in fact they are from a December 2000 survey.

The breakdown confirms that seaside towns have a high concentration of part-time jobs. Overall, 38 per cent of the jobs in seaside towns are part-time, compared to 30 per cent across Britain as a whole. In fact, the share of part-time jobs exceeds the national average in everyone of the 43 principal towns included in the study. Compared to the national average, the deficit in full-time jobs is almost all among men whereas the surplus of part-time jobs is nearly all among women.

These figures on part-time working refer to the jobs located in the towns. This is not the same as the share of residents who work part-time. There is commuting in both directions, and seaside towns are on balance net exporters of commuters as we showed earlier. It is likely that many of those who travel to work in neighbouring areas or further afield will hold full-time jobs. A classic pattern in some married or cohabiting households, for example, will be for the man to commute to full-time work elsewhere while the woman takes advantage of local part-time job opportunities. The dependence of seaside residents on part-time employment will therefore be less than the composition of local employment would suggest. In 1991 - more recent data is not yet available - 23 per cent of seaside residents in employment worked part-time, compared to a national average of 21 per cent.

Table 2.12: Part-time employees by sector, 2001

	Seaside towns		GB
	no.	% of jobs in sector	% of jobs in sector
Agriculture and fishing	300	12	19
Energy and water	400	4	4
Manufacturing	11,000	9	8
Construction	5,000	11	9
Distribution, hotels and restaurants	181,000	54	46
Transport and communications	6,000	13	11
Banking, finance, insurance etc	49,000	29	24
Public admin, education, health	150,000	46	42
Other services	26,000	43	39
All sectors	428,000	38	30

N.B. Figures exclude self-employed

Source: Annual Business Inquiry

Table 2.12 shows the distribution of part-time working by sector. Seaside towns have a particularly large proportion of jobs in distribution, hotels and restaurants and in public services, the sectors that across Britain as a whole have the highest proportion of part-timers. Some of the concentration of part-time employment in seaside towns therefore reflects the mix of activities in their economies. Nevertheless, across most sectors seaside towns still show an above average proportion of part-timers. In distribution, hotels and restaurants for example, the main sector for tourist jobs, 54 per cent of employees in seaside towns are part-time compared to 46 per cent nationally.

Table 2.13 looks at the extent to which dependence on part-time working has increased through time. Until the full results of the 2001 Census of Population are available it is impossible to obtain reliable figure for the most recent decade so this table only covers 1981-91. Also, the figures refer to residents in employment rather than jobs located in the towns. They do nevertheless offer a guide, particularly in view of the similarity of overall trends in seaside employment between the 1980s and the 1990s.

Table 2.13: Changes in full and part-time employment among residents of seaside towns, 1981-1991

	Seaside towns		GB
	no.	as % of 1981 emp.	as % of 1981 emp.
Men - full-time	-14,000	-1.4	-5.3
Men - part-time	+15,000	+1.4	+1.2
Women - full-time	+39,000	+3.8	+1.7
Women - part-time	+47,000	+4.6	+2.7
All employees	+87,000	+8.5	+0.3

Source: Census of Population

The table shows that over this period the largest contribution to growth came from part-time employment among women. The most important observation, however, is that with the exception of part-time working among men (which accounts for relatively few jobs) employment in all categories grew noticeably faster, or fell noticeable more slowly, in seaside towns than in Britain as a whole. Male full-time employment in seaside towns fell markedly less than the national average; female employment, both full and part-time, rose faster than the national average. In this period at least the superior performance of employment in seaside towns cannot therefore be attributed solely to part-time jobs.

Differences between towns

Table 2.14 shows two key indicators – growth in employment and net in-migration – for individual seaside towns for 1971-2001. Three of the 43 towns (Newquay, Ayr and Dunoon) are omitted from this table and from the rest of the analysis in this section because boundary changes introduce important discontinuities to the local data. The table inevitably shows variability between individual seaside towns, though in the smaller towns modest absolute changes in population or employment can result in large percentage changes. There is also a margin of error in all the figures arising from the ways in which they have been compiled.

The most important point to note is that growth is actually widespread among seaside towns. Over the 1971 to 2001 period, only two of the towns showed a net loss of jobs, and only three experienced net out-migration of people of working age. Also, these losses of people and jobs were very small. The vast majority of seaside towns experienced healthy growth of employment and saw their population boosted by substantial in-migration of people of working age.

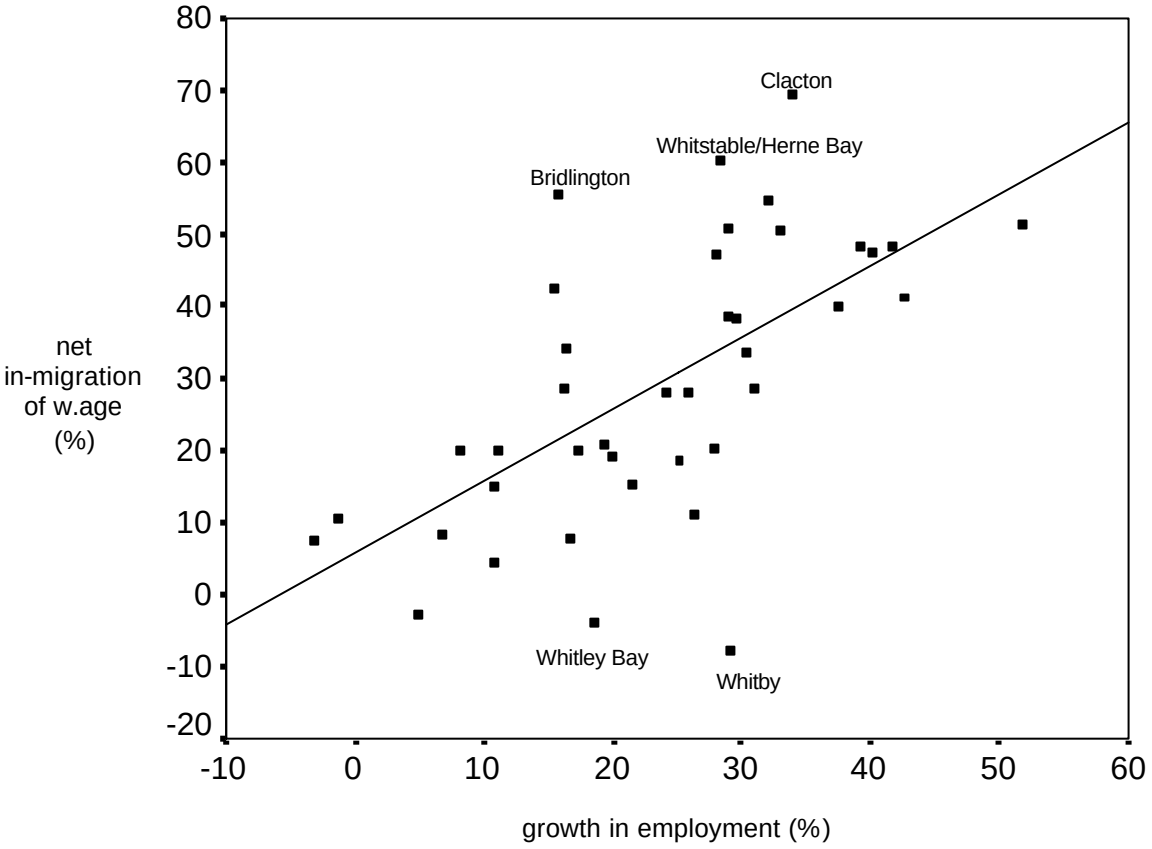
Employment growth and in-migration tend to go hand-in-hand. Broadly, across seaside towns the faster the growth of total employment the greater the rate of net

Table 2.14: Economic change in individual seaside towns, 1971-2001

	Growth in employment (as % of 1971 w. age pop)		Net in-migration (w. age) (as % of 1971 w. age pop)
Burnham-on-Sea	52	Clacton	70
Greater Worthing	43	Whitstable/Herne Bay	60
Weston-super-Mare	42	Bridlington	56
Eastbourne	40	Skegness	55
Dawlish/Teignmouth	39	Burnham-on-Sea	51
Torbay	38	Sidmouth	51
Clacton	34	Minehead	51
Minehead	33	Weston-super-Mare	49
Skegness	32	Dawlish/Teignmouth	48
St. Ives	31	Eastbourne	48
Greater Bournemouth	30	Exmouth	47
Bognor Regis	30	Morecambe and Heysham	42
Whitby	29	Greater Worthing	41
Hastings/Bexhill	29	Torbay	40
Sidmouth	29	Hastings/Bexhill	38
Whitstable/Herne Bay	28	Bognor Regis	38
Exmouth	28	Ilfracombe	34
Weymouth	28	Greater Bournemouth	34
Falmouth	26	Rhyl/Prestatyn	29
Isle of Wight	26	St. Ives	29
Folkstone/Hythe	25	Isle of Wight	28
Llandudno/Colwyn Bay/Conwy	24	Llandudno/Colwyn Bay/Conwy	28
Southport	21	Swanage	21
Penzance	20	Weymouth	20
Swanage	19	Thanet	20
Whitley Bay	19	Porthcawl	20
Greater Brighton	17	Greater Brighton	20
Scarborough	17	Penzance	19
Ilfracombe	16	Folkstone/Hythe	19
Rhyl/Prestatyn	16	Southport	15
Bridlington	16	Greater Blackpool	15
Morecambe and Heysham	15	Falmouth	11
Porthcawl	11	Deal	10
Southend-on-Sea	11	Great Yarmouth	8
Greater Blackpool	11	Scarborough	8
Thanet	8	Lowestoft	7
Great Yarmouth	7	Southend-on-Sea	5
Barry	5	Barry	-3
Deal	-1	Whitley Bay	-4
Lowestoft	-3	Whitby	-8

Sources: see Appendix

Figure 2.6: Relationship between employment and migration in individual seaside towns 1971-2001



Data is expressed as percentage of 1971 working age population

Sources: see Appendix

in-migration of people of working age. This relationship is illustrated in Figure 2.6. The five named outliers that do not fit the general pattern are all relatively small towns where specific local factors (eg a rise in out-commuting) are clearly at work. That employment and migration are usually linked is hardly surprising. In-migration will tend to generate extra local employment as migrants bring extra spending with them to support jobs in local consumer services. In-migration also generates a

requirement for extra jobs in public services such as health and education which is met by population-driven public expenditure formulas. On the whole, however, the causation is likely to run from employment to migration : the creation of extra job opportunities attracts migrants from elsewhere, and in-migration will then provide a further boost to job creation.

The cases in which migration alone is driving a spiral of growth will be restricted to circumstances in which migrants do not rely on earning a living in the local economy. Towns where in-migration is matched by rising out-commuting are an example – in these circumstances the growth of the town is driven by economic activity elsewhere. Towns where there is substantial in-migration of retirees are another example – the retirees' spending power does not derive from the economy of the town where they live. Some smaller seaside towns, especially along the south coast, may fit these migration-driven models of growth.

But what about the differences between towns? It is not our intention to try to offer a comprehensive explanation but a number of observations can be made.

The first is that size seems not to be the key factor. This is perhaps surprising because across the urban hierarchy in Britain it is the smallest towns that on average have been experiencing the fastest growth (see for example Champion et. al. 1998, Turok and Edge 1999). Among seaside towns however, the larger resorts figure near both the top and the bottom of the growth league. Bournemouth, Brighton and Blackpool for example, the three largest seaside towns each with a population in excess of 250,000, saw employment growth between 1971 and 2001 (expressed as a percentage of working age population) of 30, 17 and 11 per cent respectively, against an average for all seaside towns of 22 per cent. Bournemouth, the largest seaside town of all, has also experienced above average in-migration. So too has Worthing, the fourth largest in terms of population. Small seaside towns figure at both ends of the growth league.

Table 2.15: Regional differences in the growth of seaside towns, 1971-2001

	Growth in employment		Net in-migration (w. age)	
	no.	as % 1971 w.age pop	no.	as % 1971 w.age pop
South West	61,000	34	66,000	37
Greater South East	189,000	24	222,000	29
Wales	12,000	15	14,000	18
North West	28,000	14	37,000	18
East Coast	16,000	12	17,000	12

Sources: see Appendix

A more systematic influence appears to be location. Table 2.15 combines the towns into five groups based on their position around the coast. The 'Greater South East' in this table includes Clacton, Southend and Bournemouth as well as the towns in the South East region itself on the basis that all these towns are within commuting distance of London. The table highlights important differences between towns in the South West and South East, on the one hand, and the rest of the country on the other.

Seaside towns in the South West have on average been the best performers. Much of the explanation may lie in the changing structure of the tourist trade itself. One of the consequences of rising car ownership and growing affluence is that holidaymakers find it easier to visit further-flung places within Britain, rather than be tied to local resorts accessible by rail. The South West of England, with arguably the best climate in the country, is well-placed to benefit from this extended choice. The mainly smaller resort towns of the South West also fit better with what is usually regarded to be changing consumer preferences.

The relatively strong growth in the Greater South East probably requires a different explanation. The in-migration to these towns, taken as a whole, seems not to be linked to an increase in commuting to London. In fact, net commuting out of the South East seaside towns is estimated to have grown only slightly over the 1971-2001 period. The number of jobs in the South East towns themselves has grown strongly. The most likely explanation is that the seaside towns in the South East have been carried along by the strong growth of the wider regional economy over the last twenty years. This regional growth has its roots in many factors which it is not appropriate to explore here but seaside towns in the Greater South East have been well-placed to benefit, especially because they are mostly not so squeezed by the Green Belt controls that restrict development in areas closer to London.

Away from the South East and South West the performance of seaside towns has been less impressive. However, even these seaside towns have on average experienced faster growth in employment than the country as a whole.

The data for individual towns points to finer-grain differentiation. In several smaller and medium-sized towns a growth in net out-commuting reflects a strengthening role as a residential settlement servicing neighbouring areas or further afield. The towns in this group include Whitstable/Herne Bay, Bognor Regis, Exmouth and Weston-super-Mare. Retirement and pre-retirement migration flows look likely to explain some of the growth in Clacton, Sidmouth, Minehead and Burnham-on-Sea. In other towns, an above average initial dependence on the tourist trade may have dampened subsequent employment growth. Thanet and Great Yarmouth are possible examples here. Significantly, among the three very largest seaside towns it is tourism-dependent Blackpool, rather than the more diversified towns of Bournemouth and Brighton, that has experienced the slowest employment growth.

3. A SURVEY OF NON-EMPLOYED RESIDENTS

Whereas the previous section of this report looked at aggregate statistics covering all Britain's 43 principal seaside towns, this section presents new survey evidence from four towns – Blackpool, Great Yarmouth, Southport and Thanet (which covers Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs).

The survey covers non-employed residents of working age. This is a wider group than just the conventional unemployed, but it is particularly important to take this wider view because the evidence shows that in seaside towns as in other parts of the country there is extensive hidden unemployment as well. It is important to understand who these people are, and what they perceive as the obstacles preventing them finding work. The survey gathered information on individuals' motivation, as well as on items such as skills, experience and welfare benefits. In the context of seaside towns, the reasons for moving to the area are especially relevant because the figures show such a high rate of in-migration.

The new survey

We wrote initially to the district councils covering all 43 principal seaside towns asking whether they would be willing to co-finance the survey and act as a case

study area. About ten replied expressing some interest. Our aim was to focus on four representative towns and following further correspondence and discussion, which involved some dropping out of contention, the final four were selected.

Blackpool, in the North West of England, regards itself as the premier resort in the UK. This is probably true in terms of number of visitor beds though in population terms Greater Blackpool (at 250,000) comes some way behind Greater Bournemouth (at 340,000). Blackpool is unequivocally a seaside resort in terms of its historic development and its current function. Its position has traditionally been at the mass-market end of the tourist trade, initially serving the industrial towns of northern England. While the composition of its core clientele has meant that Blackpool has been exposed to the rise of the foreign holiday, the sheer scale of its tourist development means that it remains a magnet for day-trippers and longer-term visitors. Greater Blackpool comprises a continuous built-up area including Lytham St. Annes and Fleetwood as well as Blackpool. The survey, described below, was carried out in Blackpool itself.

Great Yarmouth, in Norfolk on the East Coast, is smaller than Blackpool but with no less a dependence on the seaside holiday trade. This is true despite its older origins as a port and since the 1960s its role as a base for the gas industry in the southern North Sea. Great Yarmouth was also a mass-market resort for most of the twentieth century, with particularly large peripheral caravan parks and holiday camps. With a smaller critical mass of attractions, however, Great Yarmouth has been less able to weather the contraction of its core market. On key labour market indicators, Great Yarmouth is among the most distressed of all seaside towns.

Thanet, in East Kent, is in reality three towns – Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs – which form a more or less continuous built-up area along the Isle of Thanet peninsular. Margate was traditionally the mass market resort, serving London in particular. Ramsgate was socially more mixed, with a port as well as tourist function. Broadstairs was a more genteel destination. The holiday trade has long been in decline in all three towns, as the large number of former hotels

and boarding houses demonstrates. However, Thanet has also traditionally had a strong residential and retirement function within the wider South East region.

Southport is in the North West of England, like Blackpool, but is a different kind of resort. It has specialised less in amusement arcades and boarding houses, pitching its appeal instead to a more affluent and older clientele. Its proximity to Liverpool also means that it has always played the role of a residential suburb to the neighbouring conurbation, including for retirees. Indeed, Southport is these days part of Sefton metropolitan borough, which also includes extensive parts of North Liverpool. Of the four survey areas, Southport has possibly been the least exposed to the structural changes that have occurred in the British holiday trade.

Key labour market statistics on the four survey towns are shown in Table 3.1. In terms of claimant unemployment, the four towns rank 1st (Great Yarmouth), 15th, 22nd and 28th among the 43 principal seaside towns. In terms of estimated real unemployment they rank 1st (again Great Yarmouth) 15th, 24th and 25th. All four towns have experienced growth in employment and net in-migration over the last three decades, but in relation to their size the growth was greater in Southport for example than in Great Yarmouth. Thanet's role as a residential base for commuters is particularly marked. Great Yarmouth experiences substantial net in-commuting, though in this case the figures are inflated because the boundary of the town used here (the pre-1974 boundary) excludes outlying residential areas.

All four survey areas are substantial seaside towns. They cover a range of locations around the coast, of resort functions, and of labour market circumstances, albeit with the exception of towns where joblessness in particularly low.

Our survey covered men aged 21-64, and women aged 21-59, who were not in full or part-time paid employment. The survey therefore covered not only the

Table 3.1: Key labour market indicators for survey towns

	Population 2001	Claimant unemp. (%) Jan 2002	Real unemp. (%) Jan 2002	Employment rate (%) 2001	Increase in employment* 1971 - 2001	Net in-migration* 1971-2001	Net commuting* 2001
Great Yarmouth	54,000	10.3	20.0	68.8	1,900	2,100	+5,900
Thanet	121,000	5.4	11.7	69.2	4,500	11,000	-11,500
Greater Blackpool	261,000	4.7	13.6	69.2	15,300	21,200	+3,100
Southport	92,000	3.8	11.4	73.1	9,600	6,800	-1,900

N.B. Areas defined on basis of pre-1974 local authorities

*Figures refer to working age population only

Sources: see Appendix

conventionally unemployed but also the economically inactive in this age group. The logic here is that the dividing line between 'unemployment' and 'economic inactivity' has become blurred. Among men, in particular, there has been a large-scale diversion from unemployment-related benefits to sickness-related benefits, as we noted. Among women, full-time domestic roles have often been the alternative to conventional unemployment. We have therefore taken a wide view of joblessness, covering some who do not want work at present as well as those who would like a job. The under-21s were excluded to avoid the complication of extended stays in education, though it is worth noting that none of the four towns includes a university.

The aim was to carry out 250 interviews in each of the four towns. In each town, the interviews were carried out in three wards, selected to be representative of the highest, lowest and middle third of wards on a composite indicator of unemployment and economic inactivity (comprising claimant unemployment, sickness claimants, early retirees and other inactive, from the 1991 Census and up-to-date benefit sources). Where parts of wards were targeted because the whole ward was too large, efforts were made to focus on those parts likely to be representative of the whole. The quota of completed interviews for each town was divided equally between men and women (ie 125 of each) and an indicative quota was also set for each ward, with a larger target in the wards where the unemployed and economically inactive are most numerous.

The survey method was the same as one we had previously applied with success for very similar surveys in eight other areas (see Alcock et. al. 2003 and also Beatty and Fothergill 1999, 2002). In each town, all the households in the target wards (or part-wards) were sent a letter explaining that an interviewer would call in the next few days. Each house or flat in these areas was then visited once. Some of the visits were during the daytime, others on an evening. Visits were also made on weekends as well as working days. On this occasion, to simplify procedures, we did not keep records of the properties where there was no reply but our previous experience has been that contact is made in roughly half of all cases and

the range of times at which properties were visited gives confidence that a wide range of people were contacted. In total more than 20,000 addresses were initially targeted, though in all areas the interviewing was curtailed once the relevant quota had been met.

Again to simplify procedures we did not keep records of refusals but our previous experience is that only a very small proportion of households refuse outright to participate, though there may be some additional cases in which the interviewer is falsely told that there is no-one in scope in the household. However, in all areas only a minority of households contain non-employed men or women in the relevant age range. The majority of households, in contrast, contain individuals in work or over the state pension age, or sometimes just under 21s. The interviews themselves were carried out by professional interviewers using a tightly-structured questionnaire and generally lasted 15-30 minutes. The questionnaire itself was a modified version of the one we had deployed in the previous surveys, with changes reflecting the need to gather additional information on housing, migration history and childcare.

The survey was carried out between Easter and Whitsun 2002 (ie between April and early June). This is a time of year when seasonal employment in seaside town has begun to pick up but it is before the peak season. In all, 1033 interviews were successfully completed. These were made up of 257 in Blackpool, 252 in Great Yarmouth, 264 in Thanet and 260 in Southport.

Given the resources available and the need to focus on selected towns, and on selected areas within these towns, it would be wrong to assume that the resulting sample is wholly representative of Britain's seaside towns as a whole. However, the relatively large sample, spread across twelve wards in four towns, suggests that the data can be used as a reasonable guide. Furthermore, the data extends well beyond that collected by the Labour Force Survey, the principal official source of labour market information, to include not only current employment and benefits

status but also details of work history, aspirations and obstacles to employment, housing and migration, and motivation.

Who are the unemployed and inactive?

Table 3.2 shows the age of the non-employed adults covered by the survey. There are differences between the men and women. Whereas more than half the non-employed men are age 50+ and relatively few are under 35, non-employed women are distributed more evenly across the age range. This is the rather predictable result of large numbers of younger women being out of the labour market to look after children.

Table 3.2: Age of non-employed

	Men (%)	Women (%)
21-24	3	8
25-29	6	12
30-34	7	11
35-39	8	13
40-44	11	13
45-49	9	11
50-54	14	10
55-59	19	23
60-64	24	-
	100	100

Source: Seaside towns survey data

Table 3.3 shows the usual occupation of these men and women when they were in work. There are again some predictable differences. For example men are more likely to have a skilled manual background, and women a background in white-collar office occupations. Relatively few non-employed men or women come from professional occupations. Manual workers account for about two-thirds of the men and more than half the women. Relatively few have never had a job at all.

Table 3.3: Usual occupation of non-employed

	Men (%)	Women (%)
Professional	5	1
Managerial and technical	19	13
Skilled non-manual	7	25
Skilled manual	35	13
Semi-skilled manual	24	37
Unskilled	6	7
Armed forces	1	0
Never had a job	2	4
	100	100

Sources: see Beatty, Fothergill, Gore and Green (2002)

Table 3.4 shows the qualification of the non-employed. What is usefully kept in mind in interpreting this table is the diversity of qualifications and the fact that some individuals have several different qualifications. Fewer than ten per cent have a degree but school qualifications such as 'O' levels/CSEs/GCSEs are quite widespread. One in five non-employed men have served a trade apprenticeship. Women are more likely to hold clerical and commercial qualifications. However,

Table 3.4: Qualifications of non-employed

	Men (%)	Women (%)
Degree	8	6
'A' level	14	15
'O' level/CSE/GCSE	34	51
NVQ/ONC/OND/HNC/HND	19	16
Clerical and commercial	7	16
Trade apprenticeship	21	2
Youth training certificate	3	5
Other qualifications	27	18
No qualifications	33	32

N.B. Columns do not add to 100 because some respondents have more than one qualification

Source: Seaside towns survey data

around a third of all non-employed men, and a similar proportion of non-employed women, have no formal qualifications at all.

Table 3.5 looks at the type of household in which the non-employed live. Once more there are differences between men and women that reflect differences in age and women's role as a carer for children. In all, 60 per cent of non-employed women live in households with children under 18, and four out of ten of these women are single parents. In contrast, only 29 per cent of non-employed men live in households with under 18s. Non-employed men are more likely to live alone. They are also more likely to live in households with other adults such as parents, other relatives or friends.

Table 3.5: Household composition

	Men (%)	Women (%)
Partner, no dependent children	42	25
Partner, at least 1 dependent child	24	35
No partner, at least 1 dependent child	5	25
No partner, other adults	12	6
Live alone	17	10
	100	100

N.B. 'Dependent children' are defined here as all children aged less than 18. 'Other adults' includes some children aged 18 or more

Source: Seaside towns survey data

Why are they out of work?

Table 3.6 is important and revealing, and will surprise those unfamiliar with the forms that non-employment takes in contemporary Britain. It shows the current self-declared status of non-employed 21-59/64 year olds living in seaside towns. Self-declared status is how the non-employed actually describe themselves and is not the same as benefits status, though there is a considerable overlap.

The largest group are those describing themselves as ‘long-term sick or disabled’. They account for nearly half of all non-employed 21-64 year old men and a quarter of non-employed 21-59 year old women. Those describing themselves as ‘unemployed’ are a smaller group, accounting for only about half as many men or women. Retirees – in this instance early retirees because they are all below state pension age – account for about one in six non-employed men and about one in fourteen non-employed women. The other large group are women who are looking

Table 3.6: Self-described current status of non-employed

	Men (%)	Women (%)
Long-term sick or disabled	47	25
Unemployed	25	12
Retired from paid work altogether	17	7
Full-time carer	5	3
Looking after family or home	4	50
Full-time student	2	2
Other	1	1
	100	100

Source: Seaside towns survey data

after family or home on a full-time basis, who account for half of all the 21-59 year old women outside paid employment. Stripping this large group out of the total, the balance among women between the long-term sick, the unemployed and the early retired is much closer to that among men. Also bearing in mind that across Britain as a whole the number of 16-59/64 year olds claiming sickness-related benefits outstrips the number claiming unemployment-related benefits (almost 2.7 million compared to around 1 million in 2002), the self-described status of the people we interviewed confirms that they are probably broadly representative of the underlying population.

The self-described status of the non-employed varies with age, as Table 3.7 shows. The unemployed are spread across the age-bands with some bias towards the over 50s. The long-term sick are an older group, with more than half over 50 and few among the under 30s. Those looking after family or home full-time (who

Table 3.7: Age of non-employed by current status

	Unemployed (%)	Long-term sick or disabled (%)	Looking after family/home (%)	Early retired (%)
21-29	18	5	28	0
30-39	20	13	36	1
40-49	27	25	26	2
50-59/64	34	58	12	97
	100	100	100	100

Source: Seaside towns survey data

Table 3.8: Qualifications of non-employed by current status

	Unemployed (%)	Long-term sick or disabled (%)	Looking after family/home (%)	Early retired (%)
Degree	9	4	6	13
'A' level	13	10	15	21
'O' level/CSE/GCSE	38	30	58	43
NVQ/ONC/OND/HNC/HND	23	14	15	15
Clerical and commercial	14	11	12	13
Trade apprenticeship	13	16	3	13
Youth training certificate	8	2	5	2
Other qualifications	27	21	19	28
No qualifications	29	40	28	35

N.B. Columns do not add to 100 because some respondents have more than one qualification

Source: Seaside towns survey data

are mainly women as we noted) are biased towards the younger age groups. The retired are, predictably, overwhelmingly over 50.

The qualifications of the different groups of non-employed, shown in Table 3.8, partly reflect age differences and the predominance of women among those looking after family or home, many of whom are relatively well-qualified but have chosen not to seek work at present. The early retired are the most likely to have higher academic qualifications such as degrees – a pointer to the extent to which early retirement occurs predominantly from white-collar occupations. The long-term sick are the most likely to have no formal qualifications at all and the least likely to have a degree, but they are also the most likely to have served a trade apprenticeship.

Table 3.9 shows the length of time since these men and women were last in regular paid employment. The striking feature here is the considerable duration of non-employment. More than four out of ten non-employed men and slightly more than half the non-employed women have not had a regular paid job for at least five

Table 3.9: Length of time since last regular paid job

	Men (%)	Women (%)
Less than 6 months	14	8
6 months to a year	10	8
1 to 2 years	12	9
2 to 5 years	20	25
5 to 10 years	25	21
10 years or more	17	26
Never had a job	2	4
	100	100

Source: Seaside towns survey data

years. Short durations of non-employment are relatively rare. Only one in seven men, and one in twelve women, have been out of regular paid employment for less than six months.

Duration of non-employment varies with current status, as might be expected. This is illustrated by Table 3.10. The unemployed are the most likely to have recent work experience but even among this group more than two-thirds say they have not had regular paid employment for at least six months and just over half for at least a year. The detachment from regular employment is even more pronounced among the other groups. Over sixty per cent of the long-term sick, half of those looking after family or home, and nearly half the early retired have not had a regular job for at least five years.

Table 3.11 shows the reasons why their last job came to an end. Information on this issue needs to be interpreted with care. Sometimes there is a single clear-cut reason why a job comes to an end. On other occasions a range of factors of varying important come into play, especially when a job is left voluntarily. The survey sought to identify the principal reason, and Table 3.11 groups the responses into broad categories. There is at least one major difference between men and women – over a third of women left their last job because of pregnancy or to look after children, whereas childcare figures barely at all as a reason among men. Putting childcare aside, ill-health or injury was the single most important cause of job loss for both men and women. Redundancy affected a quarter of men and one in eight women. Voluntary retirement was relevant to only 10 per cent of men and 2 per cent of women.

Often, these last jobs had been held for a long time, as Table 3.12 shows. This is especially so among men. A quarter of non-employed men had been in their last job for twenty years or more, and a further fifth for between ten and twenty years. Women are less likely to have had a long continuous spell in their last job, presumably because many take time out to look after children. 94 per cent of non-employed men in seaside towns, and 66 per cent of non-employed women, worked full-time in their last job.

Table 3.10: Length of time since last regular paid job, by current status

	Unemployed (%)	Long-term sick or disabled (%)	Looking after family/home (%)	Early retired (%)
Less than 6 months	31	4	7	8
6 months to a year	15	7	6	11
1 to 2 years	13	7	10	13
2 to 5 years	18	22	28	22
5 to 10 years	12	28	21	31
10 years or more	8	30	23	15
Never had a job	4	3	5	0
	100	100	100	100

Source: Seaside towns survey data

Table 3.11: Principal reason for last job ending

	Men (%)	Women (%)
Ill health or injury	40	23
Redundancy/end of contract	25	12
Left for own reasons	14	18
Voluntary retirement	10	2
To look after other family/dependants	3	5
Dismissal	3	1
Pregnancy/to look after children	2	36
Other	3	4
	100	100

Source: Seaside towns survey data

Table 3.12: Length of time in last job

	Men (%)	Women (%)
Less than 1 year	15	13
1 to 5 years	24	48
5 to 10 years	17	20
10 to 20 years	20	15
20 years or more	24	4
	100	100

Source: Seaside towns survey data

Do they want a job?

Table 3.13 is important because it deals with job aspirations. The first line shows the proportion of the non-employed who say they would like a job. Among both men and women the share saying 'yes' is around 60 per cent. The proportion who would like a job and think there's a realistic chance of getting one is lower, pointing to a pessimistic assessment by many people of their chances in the labour market. Four out of ten of the men who say they would like a job want full-time work, and a further third would take full or part-time work. Women have a stronger preference for part-time work – half of those who would like a job only want part-time employment.

Wanting a job and actually looking for work are of course two different things. The third line of Table 3.13 shows the proportion who looked for work after their last job ended. Two-fifths of men and one-fifth of women fall into this group. The fourth line shows the proportion looking for work at the time of the survey. This points to

Table 3.13: Job aspirations of non-employed

	Men (%)	Women (%)
Would like a job	61	60
....and think there is a realistic chance of one	30	36
Looked after last job ended	42	21
Looking now	27	18

Source: Seaside towns survey data

declining job search activity among men – only just over a quarter are still looking for work. Half of the men who are looking for work say they want a full-time job and a third are willing to consider either full or part time work. Half the women jobseekers only want part-time work. Among the men who are looking for work, only a quarter restrict their job search to the town where they live though only one in five looks further afield than the surrounding area. Women look for work closer to home – two-thirds only look in the town itself.

Table 3.14 shows that job aspirations vary with current status. The unemployed demonstrate the strongest attachment to the labour market with most wanting a job, looking for a job and thinking there's a realistic chance of getting one. This connection is not surprising because in order to claim Jobseeker's Allowance the unemployed have to demonstrate that they are looking for work. The aspiration to have a job is also quite widely held among the long-term sick and those looking after family or home but active jobseeking is much less widespread. Among the long-term sick and the early retired the proportion looking for work has also declined since their last job ended.

Table 3.15 lists the reasons for not looking for work. A handful of reasons dominate this table. Among men, two-thirds cite ill health or injury. The decision to retire is the other factor mentioned by quite a number of men.

Table 3.14: Job aspirations by current status

	Unemployed (%)	Long-term sick or disabled (%)	Looking after family/home (%)	Early retired (%)
Would like a job	89	59	61	20
... and think there's a realistic chance of one	72	13	44	6
Looked after last job ended	71	27	18	16
Looking now	72	7	16	4

Source: Seaside towns survey data

Table 3.15: Reasons for not looking for work

	Men (%)	Women (%)
Ill health or injury	67	39
Decided to retire	17	6
Don't need to work	10	9
Full-time carer	9	7
Little chance due to age	7	6
Childcare arrangements/responsibilities	6	47
Not enough suitable jobs	5	5
Would be no better off	5	11
In full-time education	2	2
No/few jobs available	2	2
Pay too low	1	6
Difficult to get work	1	1
Other	7	9

N.B. Columns do not add to 100 because respondents could cite more than one reason

Source: Seaside towns survey data

Nearly half of the women cite childcare arrangements or responsibilities but ill health or injury is again mentioned by four out of ten. Ten per cent of women say they don't look because they would be no better off in employment and six per cent mention low pay.

For those who do look for work, Table 3.16 shows the perceived obstacles to finding employment. At the top of the list are two factors related to the demand for labour – 'not enough suitable jobs' and 'no/few jobs available'. These are mentioned most frequently by men but they are also mention by more than a quarter of the women. It is of course easy for a person who has difficulty in finding work to blame their predicament on the labour market, but that does not necessarily make their assessment any less valid. The remaining obstacles to finding work that are cited are nearly all personal attributes or constraints. These include age (or more accurately age discrimination), lack of qualifications, health problems and difficulties getting to work. More than a third of the women who are looking for work mention childcare arrangements or responsibilities. A shortage of relevant experience, or a lack of confidence, is also mentioned by quite a number of women. Complications around wages and benefits are cited by a smaller number, possibly because Working Families Tax Credits were fully operational by the time of the survey.

Some of the obstacles to employment that are amenable to policy intervention are worth pursuing a little further. One of these is childcare. Table 3.17 shows the nature of the childcare difficulties that are perceived as obstacles either to looking for work or to finding work. What the table identifies is a wide range issues. Some parents simply prefer not to leave their children, and this is a major reason for not looking for work. For those who do look for work, other issues are more prominent. These are the cost of childcare, the difficulty of fitting work around school holidays and school hours, and to a lesser extent the availability of childcare.

Table 3.16: Perceived obstacles to finding work

	Men (%)	Women (%)
Not enough suitable jobs	44	28
No/few jobs available	42	26
Age against me	29	23
Not enough qualifications	27	25
Ill health or injury	23	13
Difficult to get work from here	18	13
Not enough relevant experience	14	24
Wage/benefit complications	7	3
Childcare arrangements/responsibilities	4	38
Lack of confidence	4	18
Other obstacles	16	9
No obstacles	2	3

N.B. Respondents could cite more than one obstacle

Source: Seaside towns survey data

Table 3.17: Childcare as an obstacle to employment

	as an obstacle to looking for work (%)	as an obstacle to finding work (%)
Prefer not to leave children	63	25
Childcare too expensive	44	55
Work doesn't fit round school holidays	35	45
Work doesn't fit round school hours	31	50
No suitable childcare	15	25
Not easy to drop/collect children	15	15
Other childcare issues	10	8

N.B. Figures refer only to respondents mentioning childcare issues. Respondents could cite more than one childcare issue.

Source: Seaside towns survey data

A second obstacle to employment that is potentially amenable to intervention concerns qualifications. Table 3.18 shows the obstacles cited to gaining extra qualifications. The cost of courses is mentioned most often. The local availability of courses is next on the list. The other obstacles are diverse, including a disinclination to return to studying and concerns about deficiencies in basic skills.

Table 3.18: Perceived obstacles to extra qualifications

	% of job seekers who cite lack of qualifications
Cost of courses	39
Right courses not available locally	20
Can't afford the time	14
Childcare arrangements/responsibilities	14
Don't want to go back to studying	14
Difficult to get to college from here	12
Deficiencies in basic skills	9
Too old to return to studying	5
Studying at the moment	5
Competition for places	3
Don't know about courses	3
Waiting to start course	3
Lack of income while studying	2
Time/availability does not suit	2
Nothing	3

N.B. Respondents could cite more than one obstacle

Source: Seaside towns survey data

A third obstacle to employment that might be amenable to intervention is the difficulty getting to work, which is sometimes solvable through improved public transport. In our seaside towns survey, 44 per cent of those who were looking for work lived in households without a car or van, and a further 10 per cent of these jobseekers said that although there was a car in their household it would not be available for them to travel to work. In all therefore, more than half the jobseekers in seaside towns do not have access to a car to get to work.

Health constraints on the ability to work are examined in Table 3.19. This table refers to all 16-59/64 year olds without jobs, not just the jobseekers. We have previously noted that a high proportion of the non-employed describe themselves as long-term sick or disabled (Table 3.6), that ill health or injury is frequently cited as a reason for job loss (Table 3.11) and for not looking for work (Table 3.15), and ill health is also mentioned by some as an obstacle to finding work (Table 3.16). Table 3.19 shows that only a small minority of the non-employed say they can't do any work at all – 10 per cent of men and 5 per cent of women. A degree of health limitation on the ability to work is widespread however. For those with health constraints, the problem is most often about exactly what types of work they are able to do, or how much.

Table 3.19: Self-assessment of impact of health on ability to work

	Men (%)	Women (%)
Can't do any work	10	5
Some or a lot of limitations	53	39
No limitations	37	56
Don't know	0.4	0
	100	100

Source: Seaside towns survey data

Are seaside towns different?

We are now beginning to assemble a detailed picture of who makes up the non-employed in seaside towns. Broadly the evidence shows that they tend to be older (at least among men, less so women), that they have often worked in manual occupations, that health problems figure prominently, and that although a great many say they would like a job, active jobseeking is less widespread.

But are the non-employed in seaside towns different to those elsewhere? Here we are able to draw on the results of the similar surveys we carried out in 1997-8 in seven other areas around the country (see for example Beatty and Fothergill 1999 and Alcock et. al. 2003). The earlier surveys covered non-employed men aged 25-64, but the results and those from the seaside towns survey can be placed on exactly the same basis.

Table 3.20 provides a range of comparisons. Two features are noteworthy. The first is that the non-employed men in seaside towns are broadly similar on a range of indicators to those in other areas. The second is that the modest differences between seaside towns and the other areas are fairly easily explained by the passage of time between the surveys. In particular, between 1997-8 and 2002 claimant unemployment fell in most areas, including seaside towns. This alters not only the number of unemployed but also the share of the non-employed accounted for by other groups such as the long-term sick. The declining number of claimant unemployed also tilts the balance towards the older groups and lowers the shares who say they would like a job and who are looking for a job. Also, between the time of the surveys a cohort of older workers with few formal qualifications finally reached state pension age, so the proportion with no formal qualifications at all will tend to be lower in the seaside town survey. Taking these points into consideration, the comparisons suggest there is little if any difference between the characteristics, status and aspirations of non-employed men in seaside towns and elsewhere.

Table 3.20: Non-employed 25-64 year old men: a comparison between seaside towns and other areas

	Seaside towns 2002 (%)	Other survey areas* 1997-8 (%)
PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS		
Age 50-64	61	58
Manual occupation	67	66
No formal qualifications	34	42
5yrs + since last regular job	50	45
CURRENT SELF-DECLARED STATUS		
Unemployed	18	26
Long-term sick	52	42
Retired	19	21
JOB ASPIRATIONS		
Would like a full-time job	43	49
... and think there's a realistic chance	25	18
Looked after last job ended	39	41
Looking now	20	24

*Barnsley, Chesterfield, Northampton, Rural North Yorkshire, North Norfolk, South Shropshire, West Cumbria

Source: Seaside towns survey and survey data for other areas

This is an important observation. If it can also be generalised to women – and there is no obvious reason why not – it suggests that the relatively high numbers of jobless in seaside towns cannot be attributed to any unusual characteristics of the jobless themselves, who seem to be little different from those elsewhere. It is therefore necessary to look more closely at why so many of these people came to be living in seaside towns in the first place.

Where did they come from?

Table 3.21 shows how long non-employed men and women have been living in their present town. Only a minority have lived there all their life though nearly three-quarters of the men and two-thirds of the women have lived in the same town for ten years or more. The newcomers are a relatively small group – just under a quarter have lived in the same town for less than five years.

Table 3.21: Length of time living in town

	Men (%)	Women (%)
Less than a year	6	8
1 to 5 years	17	16
5 to 10 years	6	12
10 years or more	46	35
All life	25	30
	100	100

Source: Seaside towns survey data

Table 3.22: Length of time living in town, by current status

	Unemployed (%)	Long-term sick or disabled (%)	Looking after family/home (%)	Early retired (%)
Less than a year	11	5	9	3
1 to 5 years	22	15	19	9
5 to 10 years	5	9	12	8
10 years or more	34	43	30	65
All life	27	28	31	15
	100	100	100	100

Source: Seaside towns survey data

Table 3.23: Previous place of residence of non-employed

	(%)
Elsewhere in same county	26
Different county in same region	20
Other parts of UK	49
Non-UK	5
Armed forces	0.4
	100

N.B. Figures refer only to those who have not lived in the town all their life.

Source: Seaside towns survey data

There are marginal differences associated with status, as Table 3.22 shows. The unemployed are a little less likely to have long roots in the town where they live – a third have been there for less than five years. Early retirees are the most deeply rooted – 80 per cent have lived in the same town for ten years or more. However, among all the main groups of non-employed a long period living locally is the norm. For the people who have at some stage moved from elsewhere, Table 3.23 shows that around a quarter previously lived elsewhere in the same county, and in total nearly half in the same region.

The role of seaside towns in housing asylum seekers is worth mentioning here because there is a view that seaside towns, with their surplus of former holiday accommodation, have often been used to provide housing for these newcomers to the UK. Of the 1033 men and women interviewed in our survey, only nine said they were asylum seekers and a further six came from countries often associated with asylum seekers – a possible total of fifteen. However, the guidance to the fieldwork team had been to avoid trying to carry out interviews with anyone who was not reasonably fluent in English. Also, an asylum seeker who had secured employment would have automatically been excluded from the survey. Therefore regarding asylum seekers the exact numbers generated by the survey are unreliable. The important point, however, that in relation to the substantial flow of migrants into seaside towns from other parts of the UK the flow of asylum seekers is probably rather small.

Table 3.24 shows the 'long list' of reasons given for moving. There is a lot of diversity in the list, illustrating variety in individual motivation, so we have also grouped the reasons into broad categories. Table 3.25 shows these categories for each of the main groups among the non-employed. No single category dominates the picture. A strong preference to live in the town – measured by 'wanted to live here' – figures strongly as a motivation. By comparison, 'work-related' reasons for moving were somewhat less important. 10-15 per cent of moves were housing-related.

Table 3.24: Reasons for moving to the town

	Men (%)	Women (%)
Wanted to live here	25	26
Moved with parents	14	19
Got a job here	14	4
To be near family	12	16
Able to get house/flat here	9	7
Moved in with/to be near partner	6	4
To retire here	5	4
To find work	5	2
Partner got job here	4	12
Return to home town	3	3
Moved here by firm	3	2
Healthier place to live	3	1
To start business	3	1
Affordability of housing	3	3
Could travel to work from here	1	3
Divorce/separation	1	2

N.B. Only reasons given by 2% or more of migrants are listed. Respondents could give more than one reason.

Source: Seaside towns survey data

Table 3.25: Reasons for moving to the town, by current status

	Unemployed (%)	Long-term sick or disabled (%)	Looking after family/home (%)	Early retired (%)
Wanted to live here	36	37	35	51
Family-related	27	37	40	16
Work-related	31	20	25	42
Housing-related	14	11	13	14
Other reasons	6	0	2	0

N.B. Respondents could give more than one reason

Wanted to live here = wanted to live here, return to home town, lived here in past, to be near friends, healthier place to live, holidayed here, cheaper to live here, better area, better facilities, change of lifestyle, to get away from place before.

Family-related = moved here with parents, to be near family, married/moved in with partner, for family member's health, divorce/separation, to escape domestic violence.

Work-related = got a job here, moved here by firm, partner got a job here, could travel to work from here, thought might find work here, to start a business.

Housing-related = able to get house/flat here, placed here by another LA, holiday home here, affordability of housing, homeless, wanted a bungalow/quiet area.

Source: Seaside towns survey data

Table 3.26 divides the in-movers into two groups on the basis of how long they have lived in the present town. This reveals subtle differences. Recent in-movers – those that have lived fewer than five years in the town – are more likely than longer-term residents to have moved because they wanted to live in the town and more likely to have moved for housing-related reasons.

Table 3.26: Reasons for moving to the town, by length of time in area

	Recent in-movers (less than 5 years ago) (%)	Older in-movers (more than 5 years ago) (%)
Wanted to live here	47	32
Family-related	26	38
Work-related	17	30
Housing-related	19	9
Other reasons	4	1

N.B. Respondents could give more than one reason

Source: Seaside towns survey data

Looking more closely at the recent in-movers, Table 3.27 shows that wanting to live in the town was a strong motive for the unemployed, for the long-term sick and for those looking after family or home. (The numbers of recent in-moving early retirees are too small to include in this table). Work-related reasons for moving were markedly less important than residential preference among all three of these groups of recent in-movers, especially the long-term sick.

Underlining the extent to which employment was only occasionally the reason that brought in-migrants to live in seaside towns, Table 3.28 shows the location of the last regular job held by the non-employed men and women in our survey. Only half the men and two-thirds of the women last worked in the town where they now live. A sizeable proportion of the non-employed – 28 per cent of men and 30 per cent of women – not only worked elsewhere in their last job but also lived elsewhere as well.

Table 3.27: Reasons for moving to the town, by current status - recent in-movers* only

	Unemployed (%)	Long-term sick or disabled (%)	Looking after family/home (%)
Wanted to live here	45	54	40
Family-related	17	31	27
Work-related	23	7	24
Housing-related	17	18	23
Other reasons	11	0	3

* up to five years ago

N.B. Respondents could give more than one reason

Source: Seaside towns survey data

Table 3.28: Location of last regular paid job

		Men (%)	Women (%)
In present town		50	64
Elsewhere	Lived in present town	22	7
	Lived elsewhere	28	30

Source: Seaside towns survey data

What about housing?

Table 3.29 shows the housing tenure of non-employed 21-59/64 year olds. Owner-occupiers account for just over half the men and just over half the women as well. Non-employed men are more likely to own their home outright without a mortgage - a reflection of the greater average age of this group.

The share living in privately rented accommodation is particularly interesting because this type of housing often acts as an entry point to local housing markets for men and women from elsewhere, especially those who are benefit claimants. In all, the survey data shows that in seaside towns around one in five non-employed 21-59/64 year old men and women live in this type of accommodation.

Table 3.29: Housing tenure of non-employed

	Men (%)	Women (%)
Owner occupier - no mortgage	29	19
Owner occupier - with mortgage	25	34
Rented from council/HA	21	23
Privately rented	19	20
Live with parents	4	2
Other	3	1
	100	100

Source: Seaside towns survey data

Table 3.30 disaggregates housing tenure by current status. This reveals important differences. In particular, the early retired are overwhelmingly owner-occupiers, with nearly two-thirds owning their own home outright. A majority of the long-term

sick are also owner occupiers, but renting is more widespread among the two other main groups. Around a third of the unemployed live in privately rented accommodation - which is possibly indicative of the mobility among this group and the availability of this type of housing in seaside towns. However, it is also worth noting that even among the unemployed, owner-occupiers outnumber those in privately rented housing.

Table 3.30: Housing by current status

	Unemployed (%)	Long-term sick or disabled (%)	Looking after family/home (%)	Early retired (%)
Owner occupier - no mortgage	16	24	12	64
Owner occupier - with mortgage	21	29	36	28
Rented from council/HA	25	23	30	3
Privately rented	32	18	21	3
Live with parents	5	4	0.4	0
Other	3	2	1	3
	100	100	100	100

Source: Seaside towns survey data

How do they get by?

Finally let us turn to the financial circumstances of non-employed 21-59/64 year olds. Table 3.31 combines the answers to several questions. The first half deals with income and assets, and the second with financial commitments.

The table shows that temporary, casual or seasonal paid work was not especially

Table 3.31: Financial circumstances of non-employed

	Men (%)	Women (%)
INCOME/ASSETS		
Temporary/casual/seasonal paid work	10	7
Pension income	29	9
Lump-sum redundancy money	12	3
Partner in work	22	38
Welfare benefits*	79	69
FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS		
Partner not in work	45	22
Dependent children in household**	29	60
Mortgage or rent	64	77

*excludes Child Benefit
**defined here to include children under 18

N.B. An individual may have more than one source of financial support or multiple financial commitments, so columns do not add to 100

Source: Seaside towns survey data

widespread among those we spoke to – and it is worth mentioning here that we have no reason to doubt the reliability of the answers we received on this point. Among those who undertake this occasional work about a quarter say they work in hotels, catering, pubs or the tourist trade, and a further ten per cent in the retail trade. Others indicate that they take anything that comes along, which will sometimes include jobs related tourism.

Just under a third of non-employed men have income from a pension. Bearing in mind that only 17 per cent of non-employed men describe themselves as 'retired from paid work altogether', pension income is clearly spread beyond just early retirees. In fact, 25 per cent of long-term sick men and 9 per cent of unemployed men have pension income. Non-employed women are much less likely to have income from a pension. Partly this reflects their younger average age – far more women in their 20s and 30s are out of the labour market to look after children – but the lower figure may also reflect poorer pension provision. Lump-sum redundancy money is less widespread than pension income, and again available to fewer women. Dependence on welfare benefits is high – 79 per cent of non-employed men and 69 per cent of non-employed women draw to some extent on the benefits system.

Turning to financial commitments, two-thirds of the men and three-quarters of the women have a mortgage or rent to pay. Women are more likely to have dependent children living with them, whereas men are more likely to have a partner who, like themselves, does not have a job.

Table 3.32 takes a closer look at exactly which benefits are claimed. Two of the most widely-claimed benefits on this list – Council Tax Benefit and Housing Benefit – are related to housing costs. What is particularly striking, however, is the importance of Incapacity Benefit, especially among men. Incapacity Benefit is paid to individuals who are not required to look for work because of ill-health or disability, and given that earlier tables have highlighted the large numbers describing themselves as 'long-term sick or disabled' the importance of Incapacity Benefit is unsurprising. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that among men the number claiming Incapacity Benefit is two and a half times greater than the number claiming Jobseeker's Allowance, the main benefit for the claimant unemployed, and nearly half as large again as the number claiming Income Support. Among women, Incapacity Benefit claimants outnumber Jobseeker's Allowance claimants by nearly four-to-one. A number of other disability benefits also figure prominently in the list of benefits claimed.

Table 3.32: Benefits claimed by non-employed

	Men (%)	Women (%)
Council Tax Benefit	44	43
Incapacity Benefit	40	15
Housing Benefit	35	36
Income Support	28	34
Disability Living Allowance	24	20
Jobseeker's Allowance	15	4
Invalid Care Allowance	7	6
Industrial Injuries Benefit	4	1
Severe Disablement Allowance	2	3
Working Families Tax Credit	1	9
Other benefits	2	3
No benefits claimed	21	31

N.B. Some individuals claim more than one benefit

Source: Seaside towns survey data

Table 3.33 looks specifically at the benefits claimed by the non-employed who live in private rented accommodation. This is of particular interest because privately rented flats and houses may often provide the first point of entry to local housing markets. Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit are especially prominent among these tenants. So too is Income Support, which is claimed by most non-employed single parents for instance and as a means-tested top-up to other benefits. Incapacity Benefit is again more widely claimed than Jobseeker's Allowance by those living in privately rented accommodation.

Table 3.33: Benefits claimed by non-employed living in private rented accommodation

	% receiving
Housing Benefit	82
Council Tax Benefit	79
Income Support	53
Incapacity Benefit	23
Jobseeker's Allowance	18
Disability Living Allowance	17
Invalid Care Allowance	5
Severe Disablement Allowance	4
Other benefits	11
No benefits	4

N.B. Some individuals claim more than one benefit

Source: Seaside towns survey data

An assessment

We can now ask what the survey data, taken as a whole, tells us about the nature and causes of joblessness in seaside towns.

As we noted, the data shows that on a range of indicators the non-employed men in seaside towns are actually not very different from those in other parts of the country. If this is the case for men it is hard to see that it will not also be the case for women. What this means is that concentrations of joblessness in seaside towns cannot be blamed on any distinctive characteristics of the local jobless

themselves. The issue is therefore why quite so many apparently typical jobless people are found in seaside towns.

Straightaway it is necessary to qualify any statement on this point. The survey only covered men and women who were without jobs. This group includes substantial numbers of in-migrants to seaside towns but they are not necessarily representative of in-migrants as a whole, many of whom will be in work. Nevertheless, one point does shine through very strongly. This is the role of seaside towns as places where people choose to live. Only a modest proportion of the in-migrants we surveyed – just a quarter – had moved to their present town for work-related reasons. Simply wanting to live in the town was a more frequent motivation for moving. Furthermore, the survey data shows that a high proportion of the non-employed have at some time or other moved in from elsewhere. It would of course then be a large leap to conclude that the continuing joblessness in seaside towns is the result of too many people choosing to live there, but the survey evidence is at least consistent with this possibility.

The variant on the migration-driven view of seaside unemployment is that there are interactions between the type of housing in seaside towns and the operation of the benefits system. In particular, the plentiful availability of privately-rented former holiday accommodation may attract non-employed claimants from a wider area. Some of the evidence from the survey points in this direction:

- Around a quarter of all the non-employed have moved from elsewhere within the last five years

- And a third of the unemployed, in particular, have moved from elsewhere within the last five years

- A third of the unemployed live in privately rented accommodation

- More than four out of five of the non-employed living in privately rented accommodation claim Housing Benefit.

Against these points there is nevertheless powerful evidence that most of the joblessness in seaside towns is not driven by in-migration caused by the interaction of housing and benefits.:

- Two-thirds of the non-employed 21-59/64 year olds in seaside towns have actually lived in the same town for ten years or more

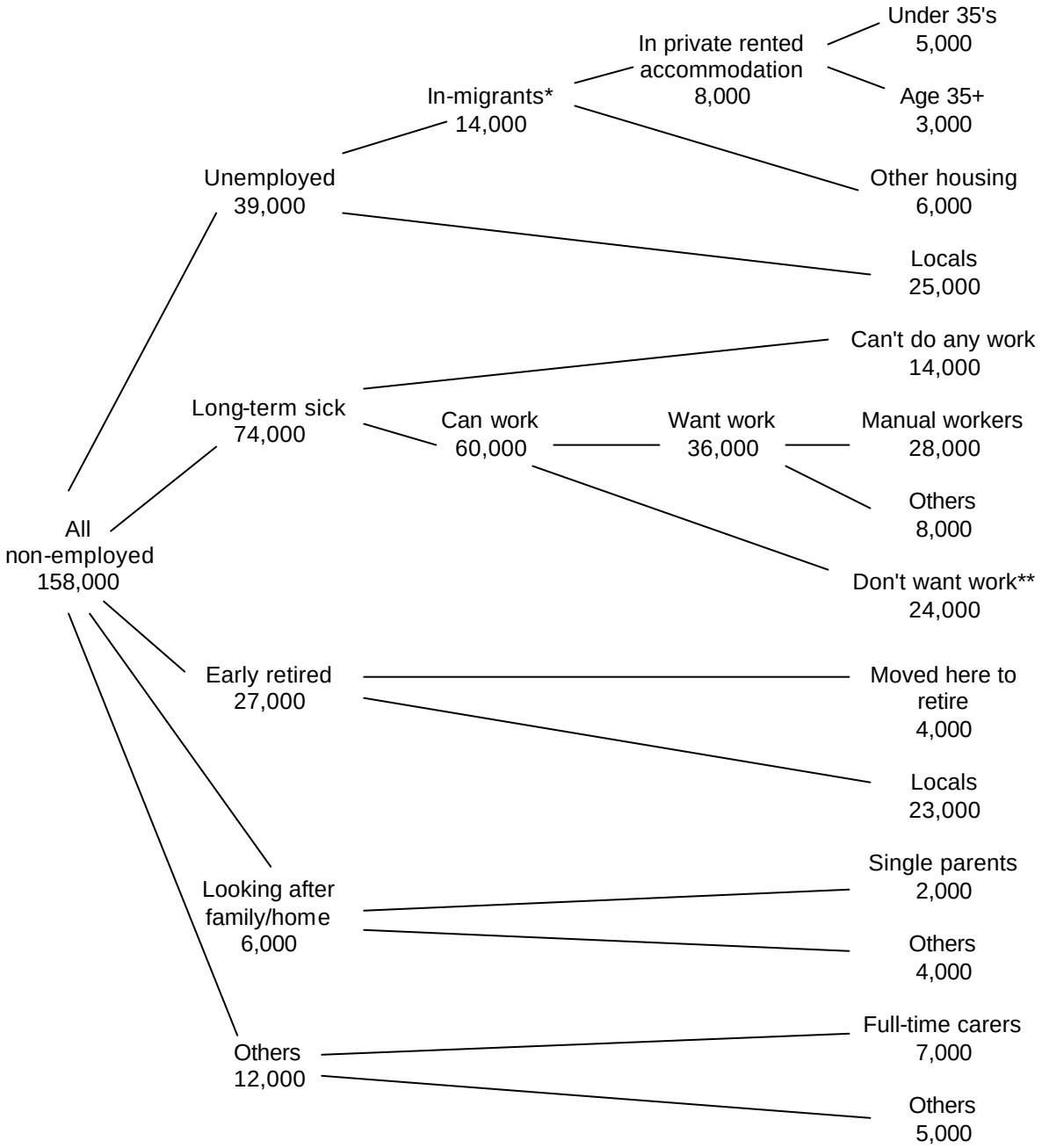
- Four out of five of the non-employed live in other than privately rented housing

- Among those who are presently non-employed, housing-related moves into seaside towns account for only 10-15 per cent of the total.

What this evidence tells us is that a small proportion of the moves into seaside towns may be related to the availability of certain types of housing (and of benefits to pay the rent) but this seems not to be the dominant factor in explaining the overall level of joblessness. Nevertheless, a modest process of this kind would still be sufficient to generate some differential in rates of claimant unemployment, in particular, between seaside towns and surrounding areas.

To illustrate the numbers potentially involved in this group of in-migrants and in other groups among the non-employed, Figures 3.1 and 3.2 disaggregate the non-employed in seaside towns into a series of distinct groups. The groupings are intended to reflect the main differences that emerge from the survey. Thus the unemployed are disaggregated into 'locals' and those who have moved from elsewhere, and the unemployed from elsewhere are further disaggregated on the basis of their housing and age. Among the long-term sick the disaggregation is according to ability to work and wanting a job. Among the early retirees we differentiate between incomers and the rest. For women, the disaggregation of

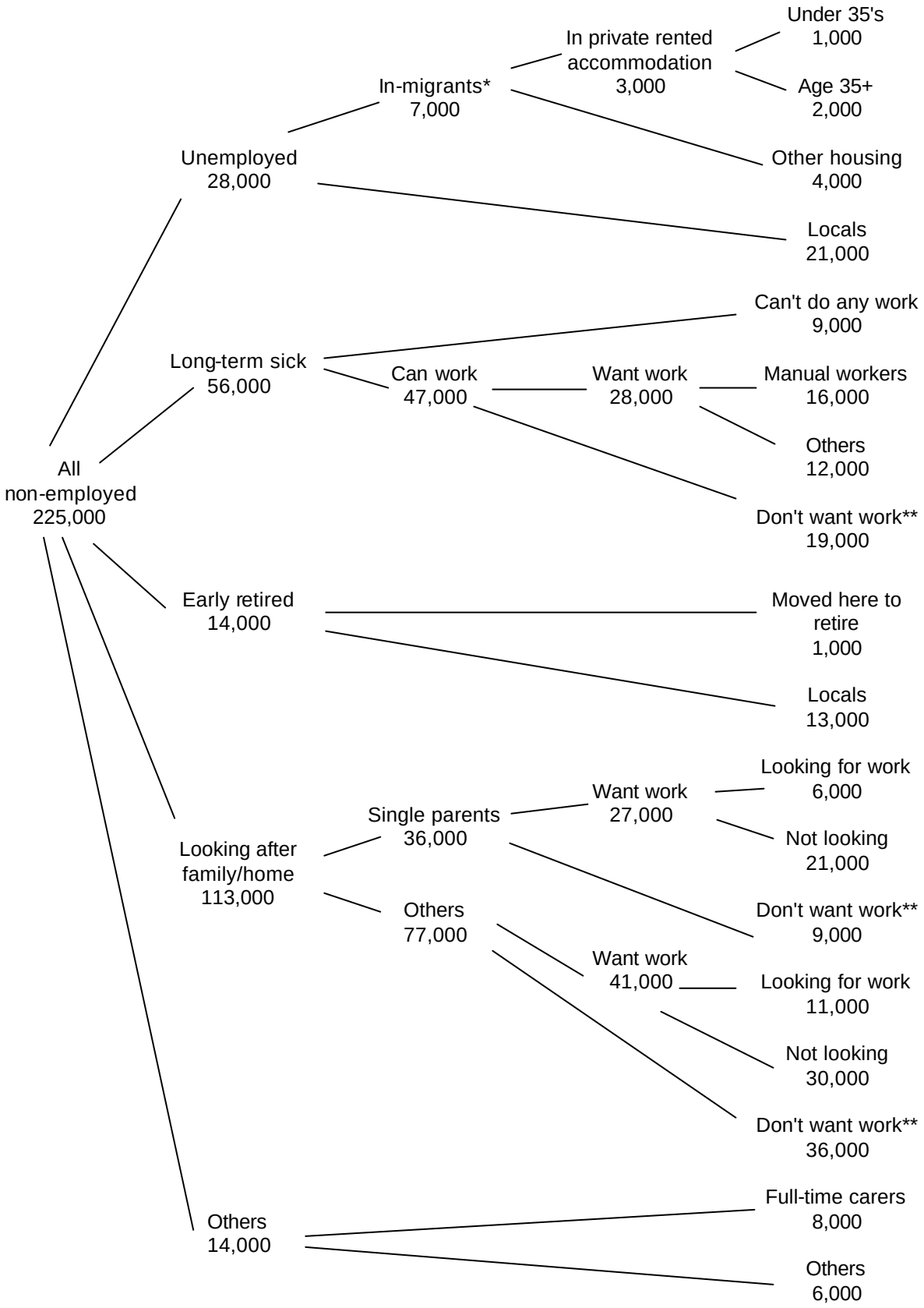
Figure 3.1: Disaggregation of non-employed 21-64 year old men living in Britain's 43 principal seaside towns, spring 2002



*lived in area for less than five years
**includes 'don't knows'

Sources: Seaside towns survey, Census of Population and Labour Force Survey.

Figure 3.2: Disaggregation of non-employed 21-59 year old women living in Britain's 43 principal seaside towns, spring 2002



*lived in area for less than five years
**includes 'don't knows'

Sources: Seaside towns survey, Census of Population and Labour Force Survey.

those looking after family or home is more detailed, reflecting the large numbers in this position.

We estimate that in total 158,000 non-employed men aged 21-64 and 225,000 non-employed women aged 21-59 live in Britain's 43 principal seaside towns. These figures are based on Census of Population and Labour Force Survey data (see Beatty and Fothergill 2002a for detailed sources). What we have done, in Figures 3.1 and 3.2, is divide these headline totals on the basis of the proportions in the survey. This involves the bold assumption that the survey sample is reasonably representative of seaside towns as a whole. However, the point is to indicate the broad order of magnitude of each group and too much reliance should therefore not be placed on any individual figure. The disaggregation clarifies a number of points:

- The young (under 35) in-migrant unemployed, living in privately rented accommodation – the people perhaps most likely to have moved to take advantage of the available housing in seaside towns – are a relatively small group. Our figures suggest that taking men and women together this group is no larger than 6,000. Adding in the over 35s only brings the total up to 11,000.

- In-migrant early retirees are also a small group – we estimate only 5,000. This compares with 36,000 early retired men and women from the seaside towns themselves.

- Much greater numbers of non-employed are found among the long-term sick or disabled. An estimated 36,000 men and 28,000 women who describe themselves as long-term sick say they can do some work and would like a job. These numbers are as large as the numbers of conventional unemployed, underlining the extent to which 'long-term sickness' hides widespread unemployment.

- The number of single mothers without jobs is also large – an estimated 36,000 in seaside towns. As many as 27,000 of these would like a job, and 6,000 are looking for work.

- As many as 41,000 other women who are presently looking after family or home would like a job, and 11,000 of these are looking for work. Most of these women will not appear in the claimant unemployment figures, pointing to another major source of hidden unemployment.

These numbers offer further confirmation that joblessness within seaside towns is not confined to just one or two groups. Instead, the figures point to a more general imbalance between labour demand and labour supply which impacts on many groups in the local population.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The main findings

Eight key observations emerge from the analysis of labour market trends in Britain's 43 principal seaside towns, presented in Section 2:

- Claimant unemployment in seaside towns is in most cases higher than in surrounding areas, though taking seaside towns as a whole the claimant unemployment rate is only a little above the national average.

- Beyond claimant unemployment there is substantial hidden unemployment in seaside towns, as there is across much of Britain.

- Despite the apparent problem of joblessness, the growth in employment in seaside towns has actually been substantial, and much faster than the national average.

- Even the sectors of the local economy that are most dependent on the tourist trade have shown strong employment growth.

- An above-average proportion of the jobs in seaside towns are however part-time

- Seaside towns are also experiencing very substantial net in-migration of people of working age, mostly amongst older age groups.

- The labour markets for men and women in seaside towns show somewhat disparate trends. Labour force participation among women has been growing strongly but among men it has been falling, with recorded sickness accounting for most of the growth in inactivity.

- In terms of employment and in-migration, seaside towns in the South West in particular, and the South East to a lesser extent, have on average performed better than those in the rest of the country.

To these key points, four further observations can be added from the survey of non-employed residents in four towns, presented in Section 3:

- The jobless in seaside towns are broadly similar to those in other areas. Non-employed men of working age, for example, are a predominantly older group, with around two-thirds coming from manual occupations. They are also more likely to be claiming Incapacity Benefit than Jobseeker's Allowance.

- The survey data confirms that there is extensive hidden unemployment. Large numbers of men and women who are claiming sickness benefits say they would like a job and could do some types of work. There are also large numbers of women presently looking after family or home who say they would like paid employment.

- A lot of the in-migration to seaside towns – at least among the non-employed who were surveyed – is driven by residential preference. Put simply, many people move to seaside towns because they want to live there.

- A portion of the in-migration to seaside towns is housing-related, and the private rented sector acts as a point of entry to the local housing market for some of the incomers.

The trends in employment and migration suggest that Britain's seaside towns actually have quite a robust economy. This is perhaps not what might have been expected given the structural changes that have occurred in the tourist trade over the last thirty years, especially the declining popularity of the traditional British seaside holiday. The changes in tourism are certainly real enough and they have undoubtedly been the source of economic dislocation. However, the evidence suggests that seaside towns have adapted surprisingly well. A broad swathe of the seaside economy, including the parts most closely linked to tourism, has continued to show growth in employment. This has encouraged in-migration, which in turn has fuelled further employment growth. The death of the seaside town seems to have been exaggerated.

These general observations do not negate the existence of continuing problems. The persistence of unemployment (especially on wider measures of joblessness) is a key facet of these continuing difficulties. Nor have all seaside towns shared equally in the wider process of growth. The service activities in which seaside towns specialise, including those related to the tourist trade, are likely to be relatively low-skill, low-productivity and low-wage. Some of the jobs may also be insecure and unstable. In particular, the high proportion of local employment that is part-time takes some of the gloss off the overall employment figures, though there is no evidence that above-average growth has been concentrated exclusively in part-time work.

The evidence points to a distinctive role for seaside towns in the British urban system. Despite all the changes in holiday patterns over the last thirty years, the towns do remain centres of the tourist industry and this continues to support a major part of their economy. But seaside towns are more than just resorts. In particular they have become important destinations for older migrants of working

age – men and women in their late 30s, 40s and 50s. This is in addition to their established role as a destination for retirees. Younger workers, it would seem, head elsewhere to make a living; older workers (or at least quite a number of them) seem to prefer the attractions of the seaside. Mostly they are not moving there to retire, at least initially, but to work locally or to commute to jobs elsewhere.

We are not the first to identify this role for seaside towns. A study of the Thanet economy in the late 1980s highlighted how selective in-migration had been sustained into Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs despite the severe erosion of the traditional tourist base (Buck et. al. 1989). The study argued that the migration into Thanet often took place for reasons unconnected with the health of the local economy – for example the movement of previously homeless people into former seaside flats and hotels, the in-migration of relatively affluent retirees, and the in-movement of older workers motivated primarily by quality of life considerations. What our evidence shows is that Thanet may not be unusual, in that in-migration to seaside towns is a widespread phenomenon. Partly this may need to be understood as a reflection of their attractiveness as places to live – indeed as a reflection of the features that made them resorts in the first place – as much as a reflection of the strength of the local economy. Partly too it undoubtedly reflects the wider process of dispersal of population away from the cities that has been taking place in Britain for several decades.

The differences between seaside towns underline the extent to which the strength of the local economy often cannot be divorced from the regional context. This is clearest perhaps in South East England, where relatively strong growth in employment and population owes much to the prosperity of the South East economy. Places such as Southend, Eastbourne, Brighton, Worthing and Bournemouth are substantial towns in their own right and have not relied exclusively on the tourist trade for many years. What they do depend on to underpin incomes and job opportunities is the health of the surrounding economy. They are evolving into parts of the Greater South East economy that happen to be by the sea.

That still leaves the riddle of the relatively high unemployment in many seaside towns. How can this be squared with the strong growth in employment in the towns? Normally, an area with rapid employment growth might be expected to have below average unemployment, just as joblessness would normally be a feature of an area experiencing job loss. In the introduction to the report we put forward four competing perspectives to explain the relatively high unemployment in so many seaside towns. In the light of our evidence, two of these competing explanations can be dismissed.

The first is the notion that the decline of the traditional tourist base has generated unemployment. Putting aside any indirect linkage through the housing market, which we discuss below, this simply does not appear to have happened. Overall employment in seaside towns has grown strongly, including employment in the sectors most dependent on the tourist trade.

The second notion to be dismissed is that a weakness in the rest of the local economy is at the root of the problem. In terms of numbers of jobs, again, this simply does not appear to be the case. Within the service sector the growth of employment in seaside towns has been broad-based. Local manufacturing has shed jobs but this is part of a wider national trend and the manufacturing job losses have been more than offset, in terms of numbers, by the growth in the rest of the local economy.

The third potential explanation seems closer to the truth. This is that in-migration is outstripping job growth. In terms of raw numbers this is true. The labour market accounts show that between 1971 and 2001 employment in seaside towns grew by 317,000 but working age net in-migration boosted the population by 360,000. In the absence of in-migration the size of the working age population in seaside towns would actually have fallen, leaving fewer people to fill more jobs. Of course, shifts in labour force participation – the rise among women and the fall among men – complicate the crude comparison of migration and employment figures. However,

the point remains that if there had been less in-migration to seaside towns then, other things being equal, there would now be less joblessness there.

The interesting questions is why seaside towns have attracted quite so much in-migration. The comparison we made between employment change and migration in a range of other areas across the country (in Figure 2.4 earlier) suggested that about two-thirds of the net in-migration of working age to seaside towns might be explained by employment growth. The additional jobs in seaside towns are, it seems, attracting extra people. But that still leaves the remaining one-third requiring explanation. Our evidence shows that the attractiveness of seaside towns as a place to live certainly exerts a pull on many people. This may go a long way towards explaining above-average levels of in-migration.

The fourth potential explanation for high seaside unemployment – that it is in part driven by the availability of housing and benefits – nevertheless still seems to have something to offer. It fits with the observation that most seaside towns have higher unemployment than their surrounding areas, because in seaside towns some benefit claimants are often likely to find suitable former holiday accommodation to rent. A housing and benefits driven explanation also fits with the persistence of local unemployment in the face of job growth because a proportion of the private-rented housing in question may always be filled by claimants coming in from elsewhere.

Our conclusions regarding seaside unemployment is therefore that it is primarily the result of high levels of in-migration, but the nature of the housing stock probably adds another layer to local joblessness.

Pointers for policy

Four broad policy implications emerge from this study.

First, **economic trends in seaside towns place their problems in a different category to those of older industrial areas.** In the coalfields and other former industrial areas, including many Northern cities, the erosion of the traditional base of the local economy has initiated a spiral of decline embracing job loss, unemployment and out-migration. The decline of the traditional British summer holiday by the sea might have been expected to spark the same sort of downward spiral in seaside towns. These were in many respects 'one-industry towns' just like many industrial areas. In fact, despite the unemployment in seaside towns the same spiral of decline has not taken hold.

This is a generalisation that hides relative decline in a number of seaside towns. However, taking seaside towns as a whole it holds true. They have continued to gain people and jobs, and on both indicators have out-performed the national economy as a whole. Economic adaptation has taken place more smoothly in seaside towns than in Britain's older industrial areas. The summer core holiday trade is not what it was in the 1950s or 60s, but the tourist trade has moved into new markets and the towns have avoided the worst consequences of economic specialisation.

None of these observations is intended to deny the existence of continuing difficulties. The point is simply that the on-going problems of seaside towns are in many respects different from those of Britain's other problem areas.

The second policy implication relates to the seaside tourist industry itself. **The common assumption that the British seaside tourist business is in terminal decline is profoundly wrong.** The key statistic here is the growth in employment – more than 40 per cent over the last two decades – in the sectors of the seaside

economy most closely linked to tourism. Many of these jobs are undoubtedly part-time and low-wage, but there has been substantial growth nonetheless.

What this growth shows is that there remains a large and viable seaside tourist industry. It is hard to put a precise figure on the scale of the industry because the jobs are dispersed across many small businesses in several sectors of the local economy. We suggested that within the 'distribution, hotels and restaurants' sector alone, about 130-160,000 jobs in the 43 principal seaside towns might be attributable directly to the tourist trade. This is a starting figure, to which jobs in other sectors and jobs in the smaller towns we did not cover need to be added. It should also be noted that these figures are derived from a December survey, and in the peak summer season the numbers will clearly be higher.

What seems to have happened is that although the rising popularity of foreign holidays has eaten into what was once the core business of the towns, they have proved successful at tapping into other sources of income – day trippers, short breaks, second holidays, conferences and so on. The local business sector has adapted largely without direct public support, though in some towns adaptation has been underpinned by public investment in flagship facilities and attractions.

Looking to the future, there is no reason why further adaptation and growth should not possible. In economists' jargon, spending on leisure and travel is 'income elastic' - in other words, as people become more affluent they spend a higher proportion of their income on things such as leisure and less on basics such as food. Potentially, there is enough room in the market for both rising foreign travel and rising domestic tourism.

In policy terms, this means that the seaside tourist industry is one that should be nurtured, not written-off as a lost cause. As in the past, direct financial support to the myriad of small companies making up the industry is probably not the way forward, but practical assistance and advice through business support services

have important roles. So does public sector investment in key assets to sustain the resorts' attractiveness to visitors.

The third policy implication relates to continuing labour market imbalance. **There need to be continuing efforts to promote job creation in most seaside towns.** In spite of the employment growth in the towns over the last two or three decades, most do have a continuing problem of unemployment. Some of this is visible in the claimant unemployment numbers but as our evidence shows, there is also extensive unemployment hidden from the official figures. The notion that seaside towns are close to full employment is well wide of the mark.

What is needed is action across a broad front to generate and sustain employment. In the most prosperous parts of southern England the employment rate among working-age adults rises to 85 per cent, and in those areas full-employment can indeed be said to exist. In seaside towns the employment rate averages around 72 per cent. This is far from the lowest rate in the country (in some areas the figure falls below 60 per cent) but the comparison with the best parts of the South shows that there is still some way to go.

Promotion of the local tourist industry is part of the job creation jigsaw, but only part. Several sectors, such as manufacturing, finance and business services, have traditionally been under-represented in seaside towns and remain so. They can be promoted using the traditional tools of economic development – the provision of land and premises for example. The development of a wider economic base need not detract from the fundamental character and appeal of the towns, especially as developments of this kind would usually take place well away from the seafront. The advantage of job creation across a range of sectors is that it would offer opportunities to the large number of seaside residents who continue to be marginalised from paid employment and often dependent on benefits.

The fourth policy implication is **the need to differentiate between towns.** On many indicators they are a varied bunch. Our analysis has stressed that overall,

as a group, seaside towns are doing rather well in terms of employment and migration but this hides a considerable range of performance. Among the four survey towns, Great Yarmouth stands out as facing particularly acute difficulties. It has the highest rate of claimant unemployment among the 43 principal seaside towns, and the highest estimated rate of real unemployment as well. Thanet, another one of the survey towns, has experienced only very modest employment growth over the last thirty years and local residents rely increasingly on jobs outside the area. Blackpool, a third survey town, has especially large numbers of men out of the labour market on sickness-related benefits.

The policies that need to be applied in these three towns will differ from those that are appropriate in towns like Bournemouth, for example, where employment and in-migration have forged ahead and where there is little evidence of extensive joblessness, however it is measured. More generally our findings point to systematic differences between different parts of the country. The seaside towns in the South West and Greater South East are, on average, doing rather better in terms of jobs and migration than seaside towns in the rest of the country, especially those along the East Coast.

So although our findings underline the importance of nurturing the seaside tourist industry and of promoting new jobs they do not justify a 'one size fits all' approach. Some of the towns deserve greater priority, and more intensive assistance from central government, than do others. Local policy also needs to be attuned to local circumstances.

APPENDIX : Labour market accounts: data sources and methods

The labour market accounts are assembled using data from the 1971, 1981 and 1991 Censuses of Population, and for 2001 from a range of sources including the early results of the 2001 Census but mainly from other sources in the absence at the time of writing of all the Census data required.

The labour market accounts have been compiled separately for each sub-period, ie 1971-81, 1981-91 and 1991-2001. The figures presented for 1971-2001 are the summation of the accounts for the three sub-periods rather than the results of a separate calculation.

NATURAL INCREASE IN THE WORKFORCE is the excess number of persons reaching working age (ie 16) over the number leaving the workforce through death or attainment of state pension age (65 for men, 60 for women). It is calculated as the difference between the actual resident population of working age at the start of each sub-period (ie 1971, 1981 or 1991) and the projected resident population of working age at the end of the sub-period (ie 1981, 1991 or 2001) using a cohort survival model. Ten-year, district-level survival rates have been calculated separately for males and females using ONS Vital Statistics for post-1974 local authority districts and the base-year resident population for each district. The appropriate district survival rates are then applied separately for males and females to the base-year age structure (from the Census) of each seaside town. Death rates for 1971-74 are assumed to be the same as for 1974-81, for which district data is available.

NET IN-MIGRATION is the difference between the actual population of working age at the end of each sub-period and the projected population of working age derived from the cohort survival model. For 1981 and 1991 the actual population of working age in each town is the sum of ward-level data from the Census of Population. For 1991 the resident population is adjusted to the 1981 definition. In the absence at present of ward-level data from the 2001 Census, the 2001 actual working age population in each town is an estimate based on the 1991 figure and the percentage change in the working age population in the relevant district between 1991 and 2001, plus or minus the percentage point growth or decline of the town's share of the district working age population between 1981 and 1991. The calculations are conducted separately for men and women. The same basic procedure is also used to estimate total population in 2001 in each town.

INCREASE IN NET IN-COMMUTING is the difference between net in-commuting at the beginning and end of each sub-period. Net in-commuting is calculated by subtracting the number of residents of working age in employment from the number of working age employed in the area (see below). For 1971, 1981 and 1991 the calculation is based on ward or pre-1974 district Census of Population data. For 2001 it combines Labour Force Survey and Annual Business Inquiry data (again see below).

INCREASE IN ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE is the addition or reduction to labour supply resulting from change in the economic activity rate among persons of working age. The change in the economic activity rate is multiplied by the population of working age at the end of each sub-period to provide an absolute number and the exercise is carried out separately for men and women. 'Economic activity' includes the employed, self-employed, recorded unemployed and temporarily sick. For 1971, 1981 and 1991 the economic activity rate is taken from ward or pre-1974 district Census of Population data. For 2001 the economic activity rate for each town is the relevant district rate for 2001 from the Labour Force Survey adjusted up or down by the percentage point difference between the town and the district in 1991.

INCREASE IN EMPLOYMENT is the difference between the number of jobs (including self-employed) located in the area at the beginning and end of each sub-period. The data source for 1971, 1981 and 1991 is the Census of Population. To enable comparability with the 1991 data, the 1971 and 1981 figures are grossed up to allow for the different treatment of the categories 'no fixed workplace' and 'workplace inadequately described', based on national ratios in 1991. A further adjustment has been made to exclude jobs held by persons above or below normal working age (ie 16-59/64) based on overall ratios by sex in each town and using the 1991 figures as a guide to 2001. In 1991 the numbers on government schemes were recorded separately but similar figures were not produced for earlier years. For 1991, persons on government schemes are therefore added to the number of jobs in their areas of residence. The 2001 data is taken from the 2000 Annual Business Inquiry (ABI), carried out in December of that year. This provides ward-level data but requires adjustment to be comparable with 1991 Census data. To take account of the self-employed, who are excluded from the ABI data, the figures are grossed up by the ratio of self-employed to employees in each seaside town in 1991, separately for men and women. A downward adjustment is made for second jobs, based on national Labour Force Survey data by sex for 2001. A further downward adjustment is made to exclude non-working age employees, based on national Labour Force Survey data by sex for 2001.

INCREASE IN RECORDED UNEMPLOYMENT is the difference between the number of unemployed persons of working age recorded at the beginning and end of each sub-period. For 1971, 1981 and 1991 the figures are from ward or pre-1974 district Census of Population data. The 2001 figures are the number of resident claimant unemployed in the wards making up the seaside towns, grossed up by the national ratio between ILO and claimant unemployment by sex. The adjustment reflects the broad similarity of Census and ILO unemployment levels in 1991.

A number of large seaside towns straddle two or more post-1974 districts. In these instances the relevant figures for the towns have been derived either on the basis of separate calculations for the component parts or weighted averages.

In a very few cases, where the figures derived by the methods described above lacked credibility, final adjustments have been made to the 2001 data. The adjustments reflected the need to overcome, in particular, sampling errors associated with the Labour Force Survey and shortcomings in some ABI figures, which are also affected by sampling errors. Minor adjustments also arose from the need to allow for the impact on district figures of student populations, which are treated differently in the 2001 Census figures to in earlier years. The final adjustments were mostly small and affect a handful of mainly small seaside towns. The adjustment were made on the basis of comparisons with historic data and with neighbouring towns, or on the basis of Labour Force Survey data averaged over three years.

Calculating each component of the accounts separately generates a residual in the accounts. The residual is very small in most cases, the exception being the accounts for women for 1991-2001. In the figures for seaside towns the residual is normally incorporated into the net commuting figure. In the comparisons between labour market accounts for different types of area, the residual is incorporated into the change in labour force participation to be comparable with the figures for cities, coalfields and rural areas.

In the comparisons with other types of area for 1981-91, persons on government schemes in the cities, coalfields and rural areas are added to the stock of jobs in these areas in 1991 to provide comparability with the seaside town data.

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Papers from the Seaside Towns Research Project

1. Economic change in Britain's seaside towns
   (December 2002)

2. Unemployment and economic inactivity in Britain's seaside towns
   (January 2003)

3. A case study of Blackpool
   (February 2003)

4. A case study of Great Yarmouth
   (February 2003)

5. A case study of Southport
   (March 2003)

6. A case study of Thanet
   (March 2003)

7. Labour market flows and the demand for social housing: a case study of seaside towns and comparisons with other areas
   (April 2003)

These research papers are available on request from CRESR, Sheffield Hallam University.

The present final report is closely based on papers 1 and 2.