



Challenging the myth of the rural idyll

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Commission for Rural Communities

- Established April 2005 (as operating division of Countryside Agency)
- Independent organisation since October 2006
- We have three main roles:
 - Rural Advocate
 - Expert Adviser
 - Independent Watchdog



Types of disadvantage

- Financial →
- Employment →
- Educational →
- Housing →
- Health →
- Local retail →
- Safety →
- Social →
- Civic →
- Local environmental →

- Transport →
- ICT →

Disadvantage

Transport and ICT are means to participation rather than being a form of participation.



Background to the survey

- Part of the CRC's Disadvantage Study
- Need for some hard facts about rural attitudes to disadvantage
- BMRB commissioned to undertake cluster analysis
- 20 minute face-to-face interviews with 1,010 people living in 89 rural areas

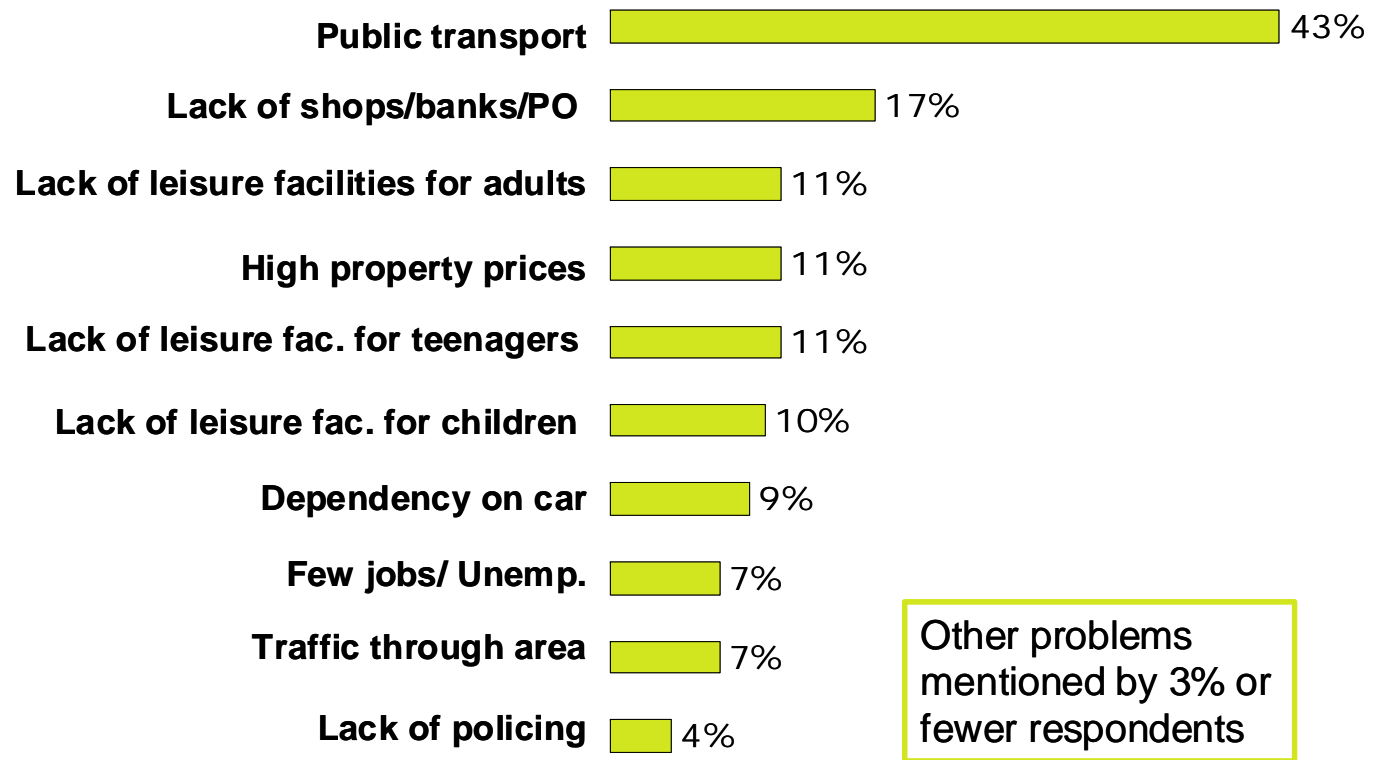


The questionnaire

- Designed by BMRB in consultation with CRC, Defra and an advisory group
- Open questions to gauge recognition and awareness of disadvantage
- Attitude statements with common responses
- Issues covered included community spirit, social capital, self sufficiency, rural idyll

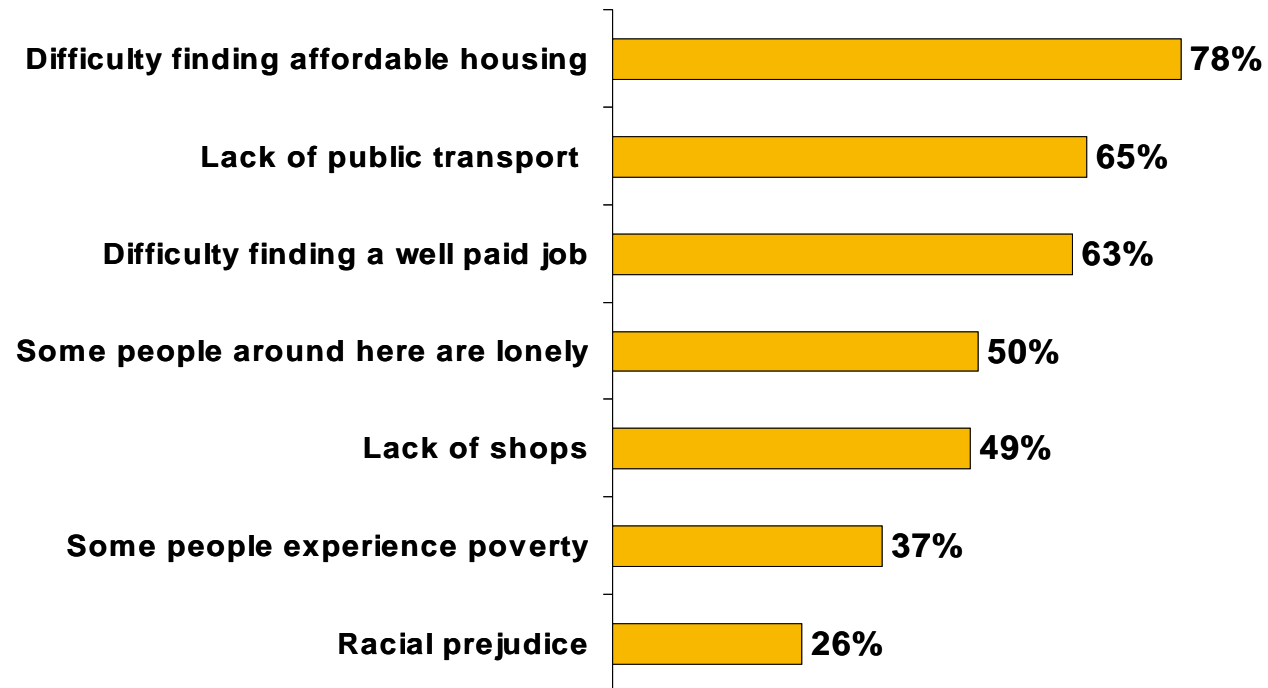


Main problems in local area



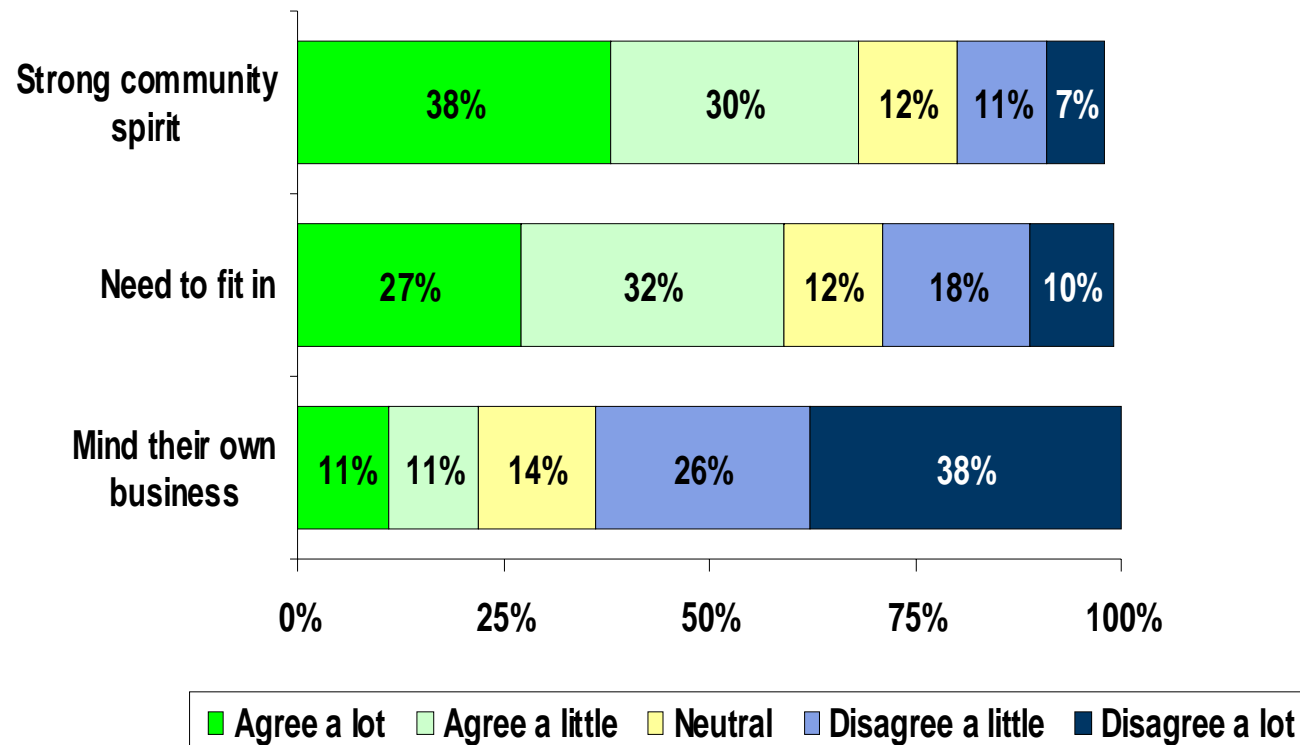


Agreement that there are specific types of disadvantage



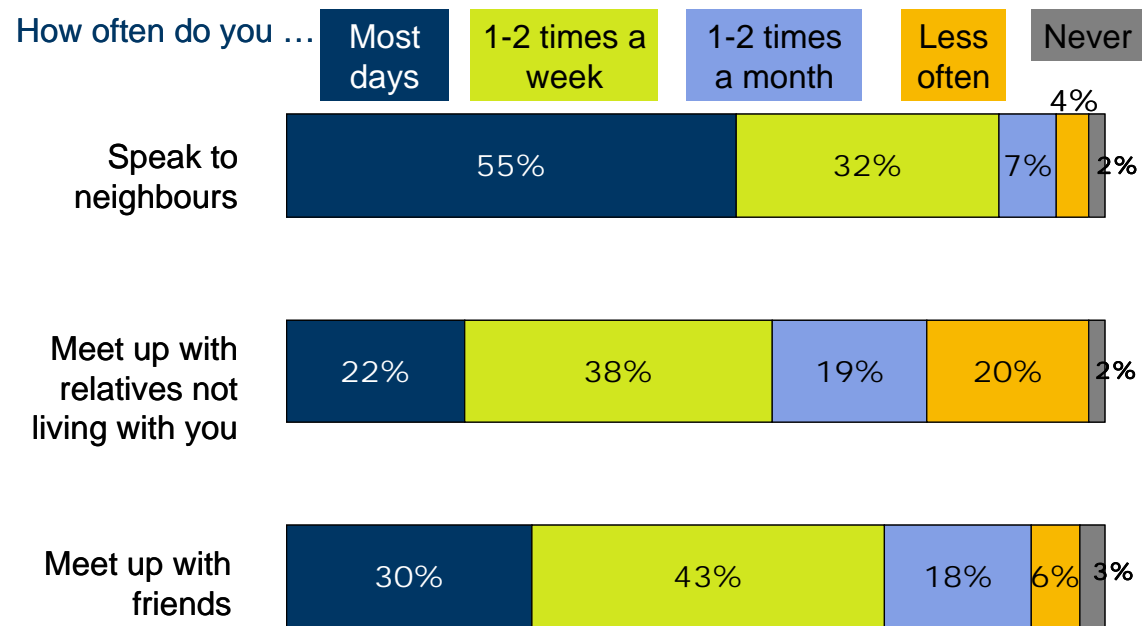


Community spirit statements





Social contact with people outside the household





Characteristics of cluster 1

- Less likely to feel part of the community
- Most likely to agree that it would be embarrassing to ask for help (64% vs. 30%)
- Less likely to be working full-time (28% vs. 35% overall)
- More likely to be on a low income (37% earning less than £25,000)
- More likely to be in social housing (17% vs. 14%)
- Less likely to vote or get involved in local activities



Characteristics of cluster 2

- Most likely to recognise the existence of social problems
- Disagree that everyone has the same opportunity (73% vs. 29% overall)
- Disagree that there is no disadvantage (73% vs. 40%)
- 18% have moved to area within the last 3 years (compared to 14% on average)
- Large proportion of women (60%) and families



Characteristics of cluster 3

- Most likely to agree 'there is no disadvantage around here' – 64% vs. 42% overall
- 68% 'feel part of the local community' vs. 49% overall
- 71% agree welfare state stops people helping each other vs. 43% overall
- Strongly believe everyone has the same opportunities – 77% vs. 56%
- 34% aged over 65 vs. 20% overall
- 58% living comfortably on present income vs. 46% overall

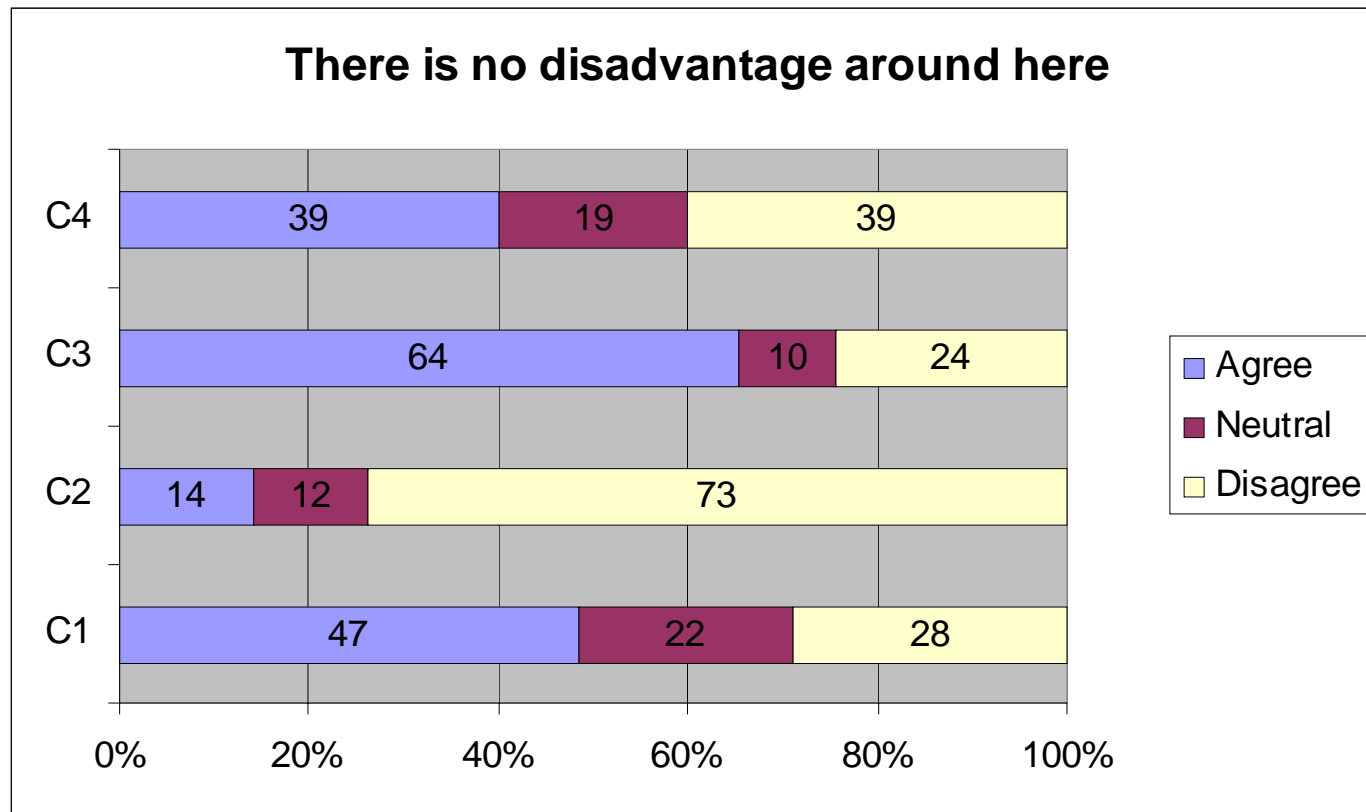


Characteristics of cluster 4

- Same views on rural idyll as cluster 3
- BUT a more sympathetic attitude to the welfare state
- Strongly disagree that people need to fit in – 80% vs. 28% overall
- Disagree that welfare state stops people helping each other – 55% vs. 36% overall
- Least likely to agree that some people cannot find money for basics – 29% vs. 37% overall
- 23% under 29 and 44% earn £25,000+



The difference between the clusters





Overview of the clusters

- C1 – isolated and lack of social contact (27%)
- C2 – recognise disadvantage (24%)
- C3 – hold traditional views and believe in the rural idyll (29%)
- C4 – believe in the rural idyll but hold softer views on welfare (19%)



4 levels of priorities for action

People:

action to help individuals overcome their disadvantage

Places:

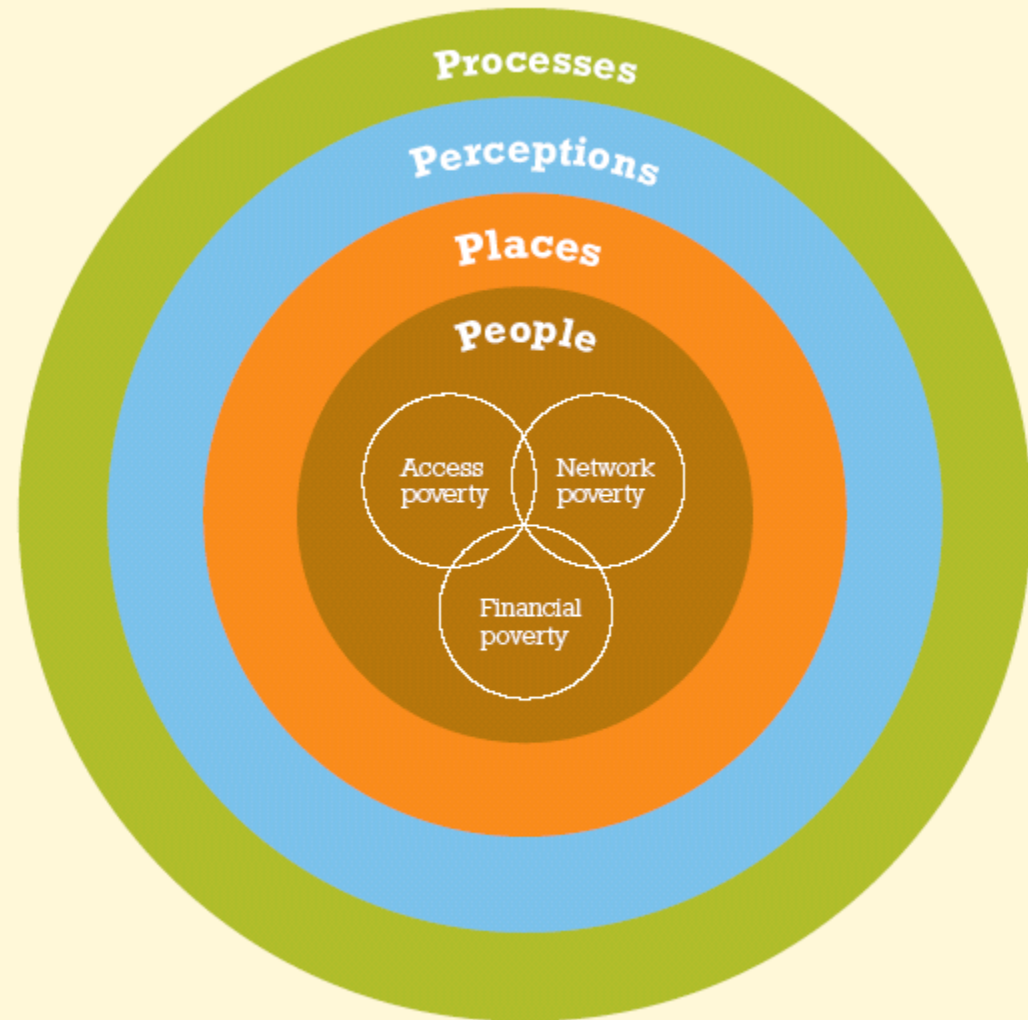
actions to help improve local opportunities more generally

Perceptions:

actions to change attitudes and culture that lead to rural disadvantage being hidden or ignored

Processes:

actions to ensure policy is designed and implemented in a way that meets rural needs





Further information

For the full survey report and all the other Disadvantage Study outputs:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444444/Disadvantage-Study-Report-2017-2018.pdf
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444444/Disadvantage-Study-Outputs-2017-2018.pdf

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