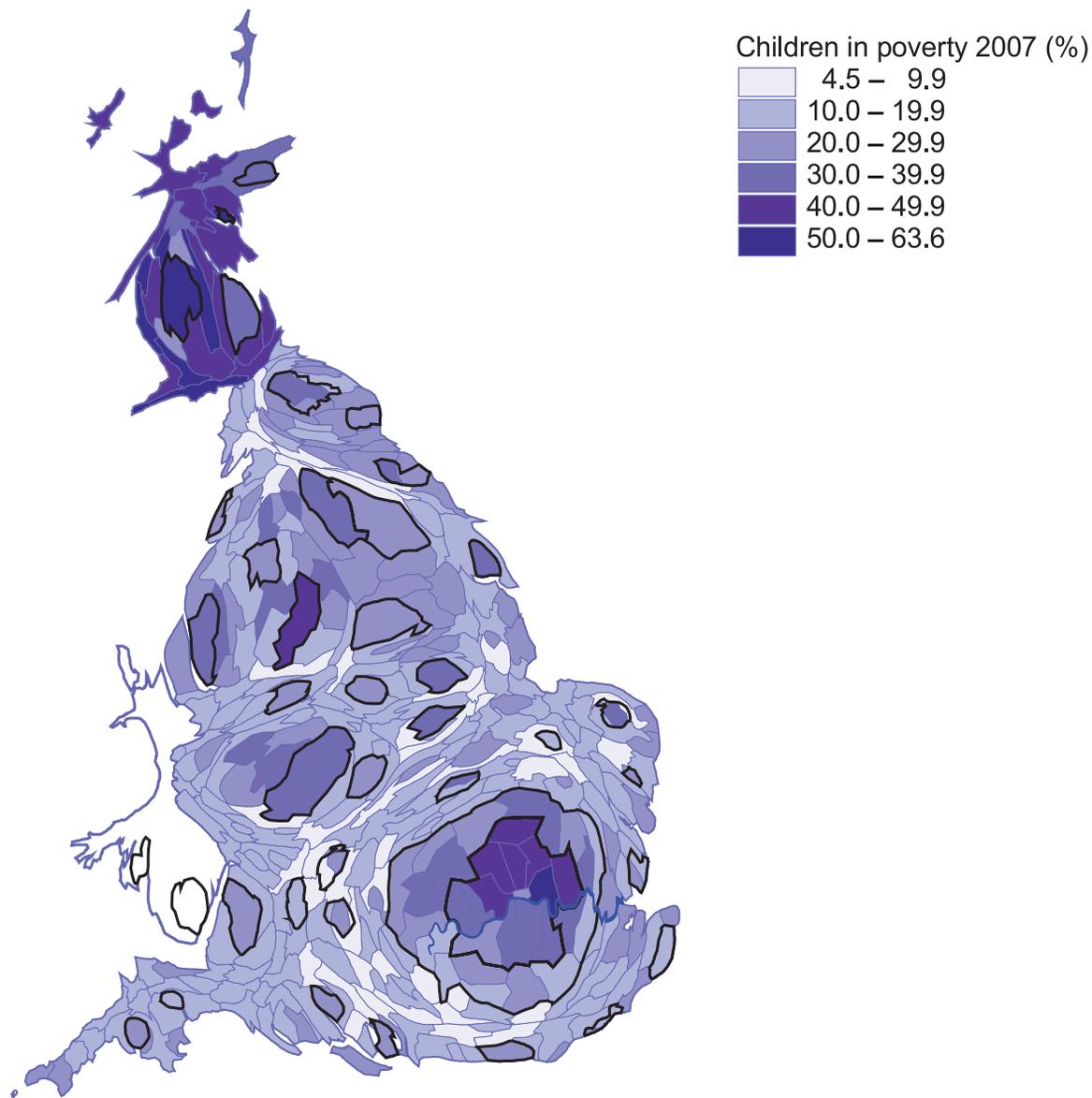


Map 1.2.3: 2007 Children living in poverty (%), local authorities, England & Scotland



LA	Children in poverty rate (%)	LA	Children in poverty 2007 (%)	LA	Children in poverty rate change (%)
Isles of Scilly	4.1	Isles of Scilly	4.5	City of London	-1.4
South Northamptonshire	5.9	Hart	5.9	Oswestry	-0.7
Hart	6.1	South Northamptonshire	6.0	Ryedale	-0.6
Ribble Valley	6.3	Ribble Valley	6.5	Tunbridge Wells	-0.5
Wokingham	6.4	Wokingham	6.6	Rushmoor	-0.4
Harborough	6.6	Harborough	6.7	North Devon	-0.4
Rutland	7.1	Uttlesford	7.3	Halton	-0.3
West Oxfordshire	7.2	Mole Valley	7.6	West Devon	-0.3
Uttlesford	7.3	West Oxfordshire	7.6	Three Rivers	-0.3
Mole Valley	7.4	South Cambridgeshire	7.8	Chiltern	-0.3

A significant minority of pensioners remain very well-off. **Map 1.3.1** shows mean average pension income in each district of Britain, a figure which is heavily skewed by the high incomes in retirement of a very few individuals. By 2007/08 the highest mean individual incomes for all pensioners in any local authority area were found in the City of London, then in Kensington & Chelsea, and then Westminster. These mean averages were £23,500, £23,100 and £20,700, respectively. The lowest mean pensioner incomes were found in Hull, Sandwell and Stoke-on-Trent, at £8,570, £8,500 and £8,420, respectively.

Map 1.3.3 shows how median annual pensioner income, in pounds, in each area, has changed between the most recent years for which data are available. Here are some percentage figures for change in median income to compare those mapped absolute figures. In the three districts with the poorest pensioners, the incomes of pensioners between 2006/07 and 2007/08 fell: by 6.6% in Stoke, 7.6% in Sandwell and 12.7% in Hull. In all these cases these falls will be due to reductions in sources of income outside of the basic state pension affecting people in these areas more badly than elsewhere in the country.

In stark contrast, over exactly the same period, pensioners' incomes in the City of London rose by 13.0%, in Kensington & Chelsea by 3.6% and in Westminster by 8.9%. Incomes in Kensington & Chelsea may have lagged as investment income began to fall during the start of the economic slump. By the median income measure, the highest rise recorded was an extra £5,520 a year in income for the average pensioner living in the City of London between 2006/07 and 2007/08. The biggest fall was an average of £2,150 in South Hams. In Stoke the fall in median incomes per annum was of 'only' £590. It was low because many pensioners there did not have much above the minimal income guarantees that they could lose. And, of course, losing more than £10 a week in income is not a small decrease when you are living hand to mouth, just as gaining many thousands of pounds is not much of a windfall to a pensioner who already has millions.

1.4 Working-age poverty due to unemployment

When the full extent of the economic crash of 2008 became clear, the great fear was a return to widespread mass unemployment. Between July 2008 and July 2009 the proportion of working-age adults claiming unemployment benefit rose in every single parliamentary constituency. This was possibly the first time such a uniform increase in numbers of unemployment benefit claims had occurred across all of Britain. The situation appeared dire. Talk was of a return to the 1930s. The rise was slowest, less than a percentage point, in the most remote areas: Skye, Westmoreland, Dwyfor Meirionnydd and Orkney & Shetland. Claims rose most quickly in areas where particular manufacturing plants were immediately affected, often through loss of financial support as credit dried up. Rates rose by at least three percentage points in Walsall North, West Bromwich West, Rotherham, Wolverhampton South East, Birmingham Erdington, South Swindon, Walsall South, Merthyr Tydfil & Rhymney and West Bromwich East. By July 2009 over one in ten of the working-age population of Birmingham Ladywood, the most affected constituency, were claiming jobseeking benefits.

Government intervened. The largest increase in employment created in the subsequent year was an extra 60,000 jobs in the National Health Service. Unemployment rates actually fell in some months up to the end of the last New Labour parliament. Although Birmingham Ladywood's claimant rate remained unchanged and the highest in the country, with 10.7% of the working-age population still claiming by July 2010, in many places claimant rates fell, while in Scotland, Inner London and the North East claims still rose.

Some areas were especially badly affected despite central (Westminster) government action. The six constituencies, out of 632 mainland seats, which experienced the greatest increases in unemployment between July 2009 and July 2010 were Glasgow South West, Glasgow North West, Glasgow Central, Glasgow South, Glasgow North East and Glasgow East. **Map 1.4.4** shows these percentage point changes in unemployment rates for all areas. **Map 1.4.1** shows how unemployment claimants were distributed in 2005 (when the New Labour