

An Investigation into Population change within rural settlements around Mont Lozere.



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AN INVESTIGATION INTO POPULATION CHANGE IN RURAL SETTLEMENTS AROUND MONT LOZERE

Teachers Notes

- Population change, function, character and social composition in a remote rural French location are investigated in this unit. An evaluation is made of a number of settlements and this data is combined with secondary data to give a greater understanding about change within rural settlements.
- Opportunities exist for examining many rural issues such as rural deprivation, migration, tourism, second homes, role of decision making groups etc.
- The unit offers a number of opportunities to make use of statistical analysis of data collected.
- A number of villages can be investigated, although some included in the survey are not accessible with a large coach. Check with your group leader for which are most suitable for your requirements.
- This study can be used by students to collect data for a Geographical Fieldwork Investigation or as case study material or for comparison with UK examples.
- This unit is designed to use both primary data and secondary census data. French census data is easily accessible from the Institut National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques (I.N.S.E.E.), which has an easy to use Web site. Even students with poor French should (with the help of a dictionary) be able to investigate this site.
- The unit is designed to be flexible so that it can be studied as a whole day unit or combined with another study to make a full day.

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INTRODUCTION

GENERAL INFORMATION

The population of the department of Lozere has gone through considerable change in the past 200 years (see table 1 and figure 1). Periods of growth, stability and decline can be identified through this period.

Table 1 Population of Lozere Department 1801 – 2007

Date	Population	Date	Population	Date	Population
1801	126,503	1872	135,190	1936	98,480
1806	143,247	1876	138,319	1946	90,523
1821	133,934	1881	143,565	1954	82,391
1826	138,778	1886	141,264	1962(A)	80,891
1831	140,347	1891	135,517	1962(B)	81,868
1836	141,733	1896	132,151	1968	77,258
1841	140,788	1901	128,866	1975	74,825
1846	143,331	1906	128,016	1982	74,294
1851	144,705	1911	122,738	1990	72,825
1856	140,819	1921	108,822	1999	73,509
1861	137,367	1926	104,733	2007	74,773
1866	137,263	1931	101,849		

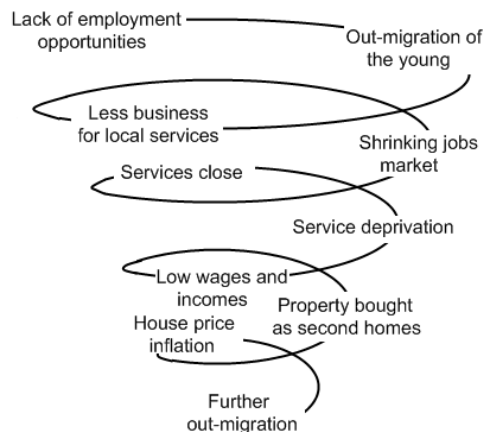
The main reasons for this were that in the 18th and 19th Century, outside of the few urban centre's, the population was dependant upon agriculture and craft industries. With poor access both within and outside of the area, most agriculture was subsistence, supporting only the local family. This was able to support a population of around 140,000 until the late 19th century when two disasters upset this fragile economy.

Overgrazing of the mountainsides by sheep, goats and cattle meant that pasture became scarce. Since people had no alternative sources of food they either moved out or died.

Disease ravaged the silk worms and the silk industry, which supported much of the craft industry collapsed, never to fully recover.

Linked into this was the increased attraction of the cities outside of Lozere. The growth of the rail and road network, rather than revitalising the economy simply seemed to ease the escape of those unwilling to stay. With the younger population most able and willing to move, the population became increasingly aged, reducing further the attraction of the area. A vicious cycle or spiral of decline was in force. This was again reinforced by the decline of European agriculture in the 1930's and 1940's, forcing yet more people from the land.

Spiral of rural decline



Only in the 1950's was this decline slowed and finally reversed in the 1990's.

However the legacy of this decline still leaves Lozere with a number of problems.

- Lozere has an increasingly aged population with some areas having over 30% of the population aged over 60.
- Death rates still exceed birth rates (-0.2%) in the department and in many areas birth rates are falling.
- One third of all properties (33.4%) are second or holiday homes.
- Most migrants end up in Mende rather than the rural areas.
- Out of the 185 communes within the department, 57 continued to have falling populations between 1999 and 2007.
- There are now more 'Lozerians' living in Paris and its surrounds than in the department itself.

This is backed by the image of Lozere within the rest of France. It is considered to be isolated, backward, unsophisticated, boring and slow.

However, Lozere has worked to change this image an so to attract migrants into the area. Current advertising promotes these facts about Lozere:

- The department is considered to have one of the highest qualities of life in France.
- Unemployment stands at 5.6%, nationally it is 9.5% (2005).
- There are around 2000 hours of sunshine, equivalent to Toulouse.
- It is safe place, a recent rise in crime by 200% in Mende was attributed to 3 thefts of magazines from a newsagents.
- Many of the recent migrants to Lozere were young couples with families.

Table 2 Challenges within Lozere

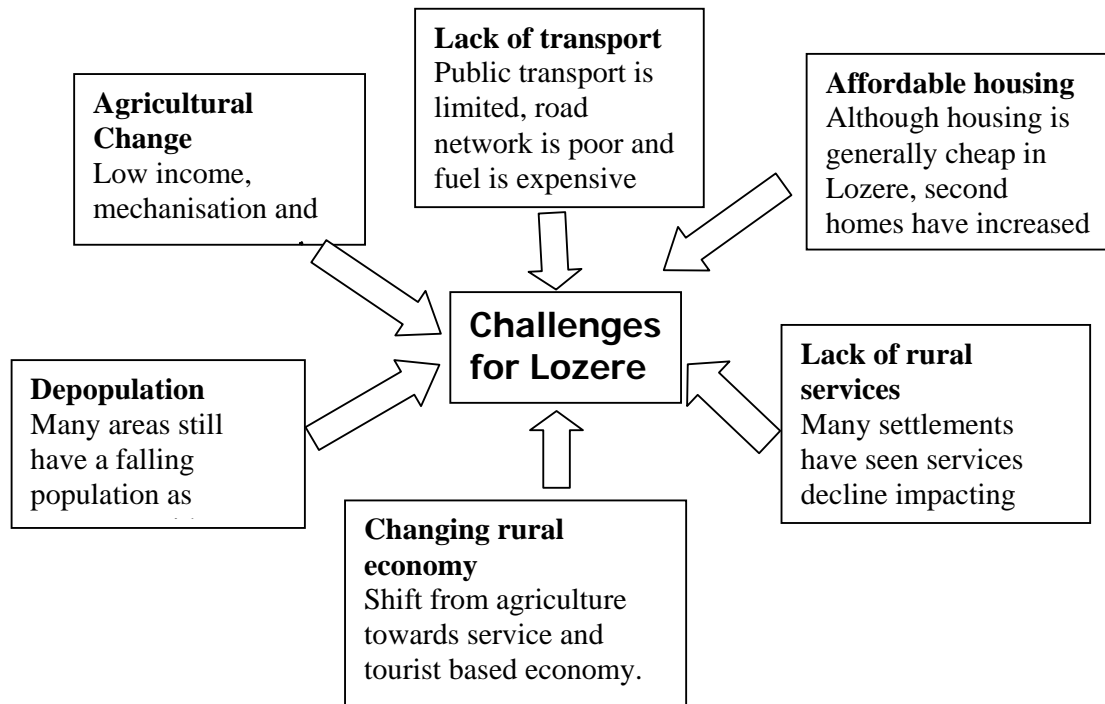
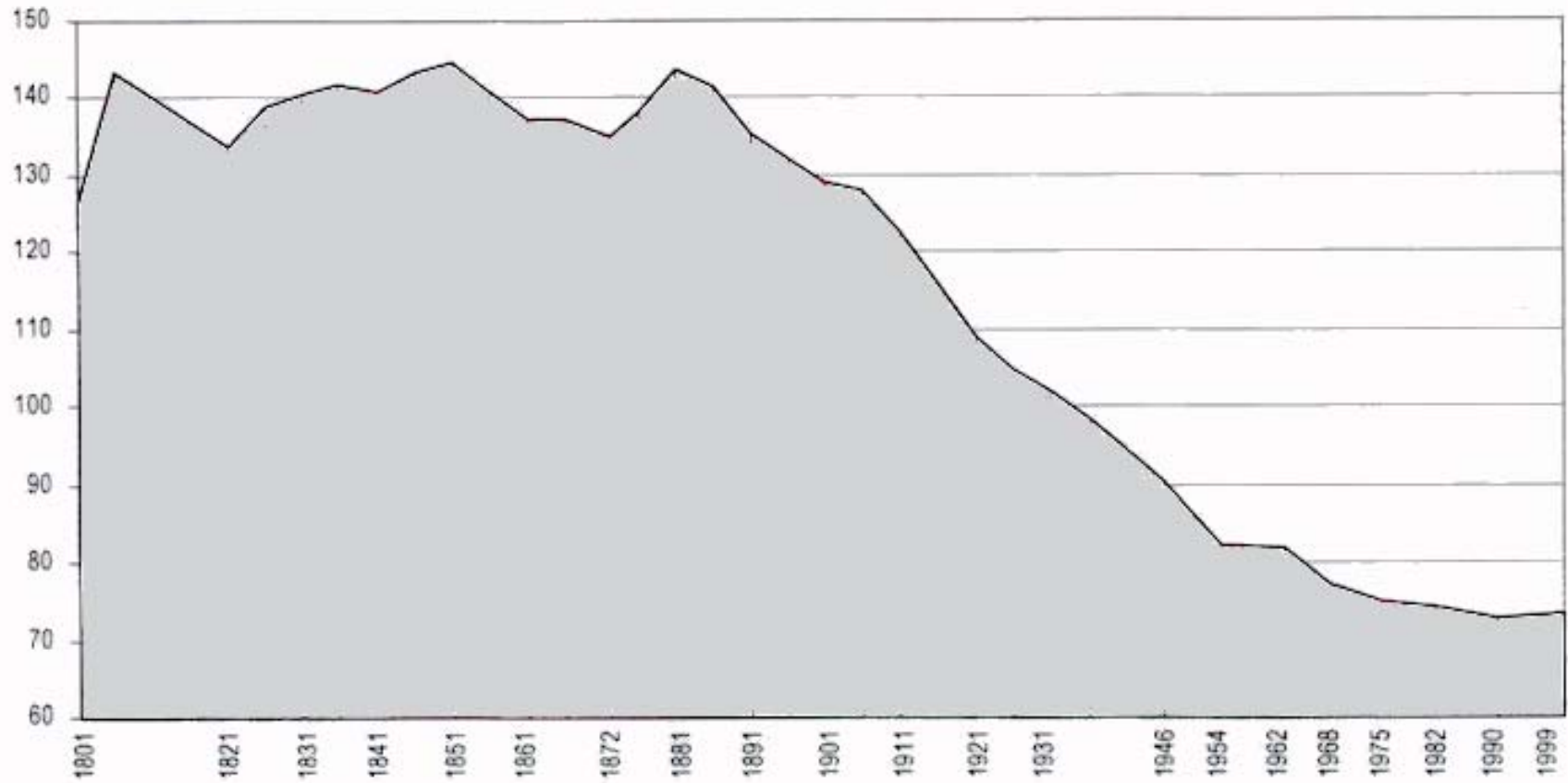


Figure 1 – Population of Lozère between 1801 and 1999



AIMS

1. To investigate the functional role, social composition and character of selected rural settlements around Mont Lozere and to account for any variation.
2. To examine the extent of urbanisation upon settlements in a remote rural location.
3. To produce a hierarchy of settlements and examine any links between this and population change.

OBJECTIVES

1. Survey the number and range of services within rural settlements and examine how this affects the functional role of those settlements.
2. Examine the social composition of settlements using a combination of observation and census data.
3. Investigate historical change within these villages using observation and census data.
4. Survey the character of settlements using a bipolar semantic differential technique.

HYPOTHESES

1. The number of services in a settlement will be directly related to the population of that settlement.
2. Smaller settlements will show more signs of out-migration/decline than larger settlements.
3. Tourist settlements will have a lower character score than non-tourist settlements.
4. Settlements located closer to Mende will show more urban influences.

DATA COLLECTION SITES

Data has been collected from 20 settlements (April 2001) which provides the basis for this study. It is suggested that a range of settlements are visited, the actual number being dependant upon time and motivation. The following are suggested as a useful range that offers variety; ease of access and not too excessive travelling time. These settlements can be compared with each other and from data on villages that have not been visited.

Finiels and Prat Souteyran - Small settlements within easy walking distance of "The Eagles Nest".

St Julian du Tournel, Le Bleymard and Bagnols-les-Bains – Larger villages to the north of Mont Lozere.

Badaroux – Large (for this area) village close to Mende, contrasts well with the other settlements.

Other settlements could be included, particularly if they are to be visited anyway, Pont de Montvert, being an obvious example. Most settlements in Lozere with a population of greater than 200 people will have census data available.

METHOD AND ORGANISATION OF STUDY

Within each settlement the following information should be recorded.

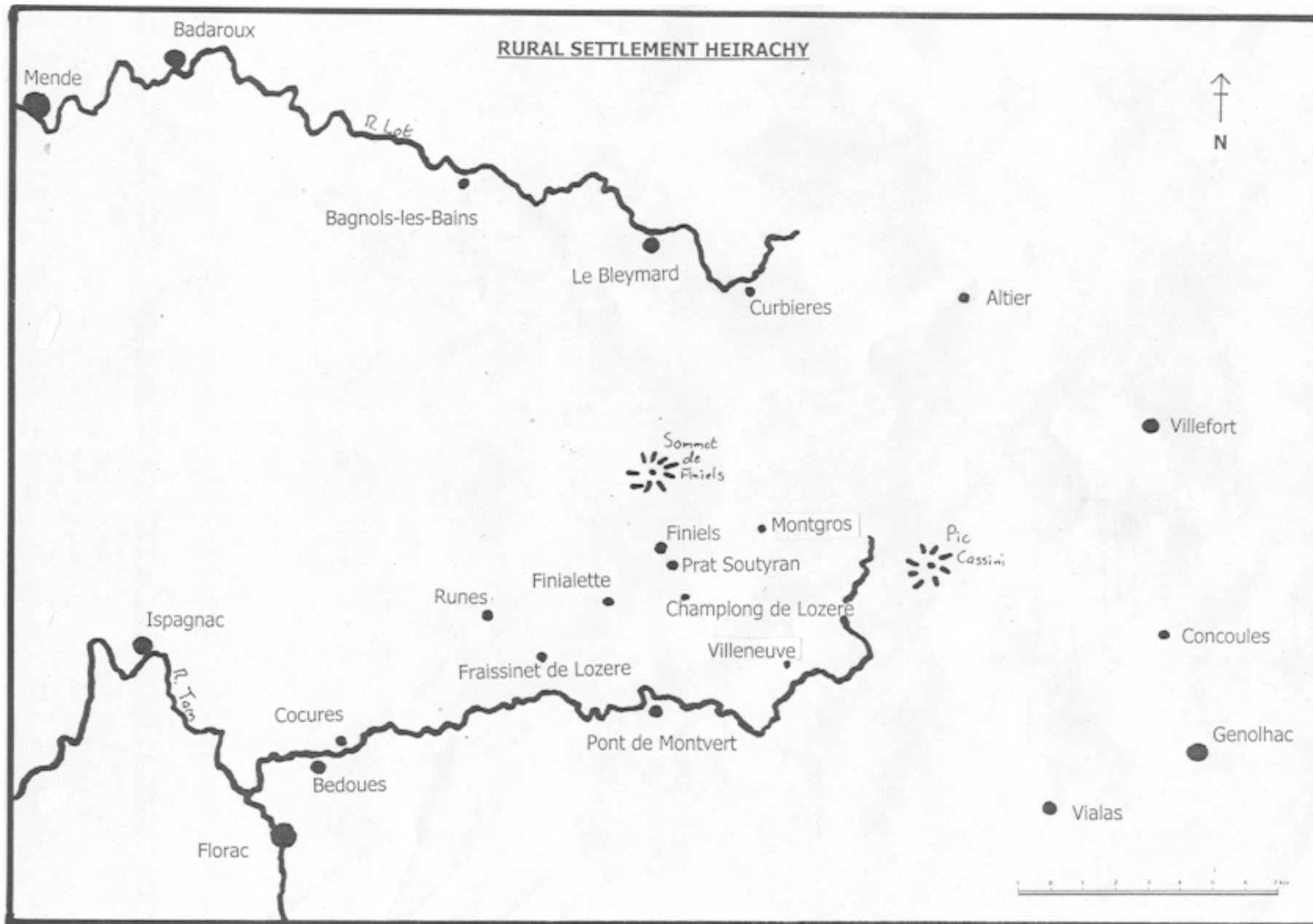
Students will need one of each recording sheet for every village visited.

1. Services recording sheet.
2. Housing Survey
3. Bipolar semantic differential character survey.

It is important to remember that to get a real 'feel' for the settlement students will need to go beyond the recording sheet. The following provides something of a checklist:

- Any evidence of service decline or new services should be highlighted.
- Any indications of EU, government, or PNC investment.
- How the place feels to you, a difficult concept but very useful in analysing settlements, particularly character variation.

- Field sketch of any points of note, e.g. Tourist facilities, service decline, new housing, schools etc.
- If possible talking to any people in the settlement about what they think.
- Information on notice-boards, shops about meetings, services, council matters etc.
- How busy are shops, cafes, restaurants etc?
- How might the time of year affect your survey, will the settlement be different in summer and winter?



The Eagles Nest. RURAL SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

SETTLEMENT	POPULATION (1999)	(2006)	SERVICES
Champlong de Lozere	8	8	0
Villeneuve	8	7	0
Runes	9	11	2
Finialette	13	12	0
Prat Souteyran	13	10	1
Finiels	14	12	4
St Julian du Tournel	109	98	4
Fraissinet de Lozere	190	216	4
Cocures	175	194	10
Curbieres	197	175	15
Altier	207	212	14
Bagnols-les-Bains	243	235	38
Concoules (Gard)	256	261	11
Bedoues	299	314	13
Vialas	425	423	32
Le Bleynard	446	367	31
Villefort	620	639	76
Ispagnac	759	834	42
Genolhac (Gard)	840	886	67
Badaroux	850	884	19
TOTAL			

Housing Survey

Note down what housing is like within the settlement, in particular any differences between area (eg centre and edge).

Evidence of Recent Change

Note down any evidence of expansion, service decline, tourist influence etc

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SETTLEMENT CHARACTER SURVEY

Settlement Name: **Population:**

This character survey should be carried out in the centre and on the outskirts of the settlement. It is a bipolar semantic differential scale, bipolar because it has two extreme ends and semantic differential because of the difference between what the words mean. Simply circle the score that you feel is most appropriate for that particular attribute and calculate a total for that area.

Settlement Centre						
• CLEAN	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	DIRTY
• ATTRACTIVE	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	UGLY
• NO TRAFFIC	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	HEAVY TRAFFIC
• NO LITTER	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	LOTS OF LITTER
• LIGHT	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	DARK
• OPEN SPACE	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	ENCLOSED
• WELL MAINTAINED	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	NEGLECTED
• INTERESTING	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	BORING
• HIGH QUALITY	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	LOW QUALITY
• LIKE	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	DISLIKE
TOTAL SCORE:						

Settlement Outskirts						
• CLEAN	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	DIRTY
• ATTRACTIVE	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	UGLY
• NO TRAFFIC	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	HEAVY TRAFFIC
• NO LITTER	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	LOTS OF LITTER
• LIGHT	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	DARK
• OPEN SPACE	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	ENCLOSED
• WELL MAINTAINED	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	NEGLECTED
• INTERESTING	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	BORING
• HIGH QUALITY	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	LOW QUALITY
• LIKE	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	DISLIKE
TOTAL SCORE:						

Note down any points that you feel have influenced your views on this settlement:

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Students will produce a report on each settlement that they have studied. If desired students could work in small groups on an individual settlement and present their findings to the other groups. From these findings an assessment can be made of rural settlement patterns and issues in the region as a whole. However, in order to assess how settlements relate to each other, it is necessary to analyse the data first.

1. Calculate the number of services for each individual settlement surveyed, these will be the total of all services on the recording sheet.
2. Add this information to the **Rural Settlement Hierarchy sheet** to give a sample of about 20 settlements with population and number of services. The number of services is included for all settlements **but use your own results** for those investigated.
3. Using the hypotheses "*Larger settlements will have a greater number of services*" plot the data in the form of a scattergraph and draw a line of best fit.
Label the settlements that have been investigated, plus any settlements that do not seem to fit the pattern.
4. This can also be investigated using correlation statistics (such as Spearman's Rank), but it is important that a scattergraph is drawn first.
5. Analyse this data.
 - What sort of settlement might have a greater or fewer than normal number of services?
 - Where do the settlements you have investigated lie in relation to the line of best fit?

A service based hierarchy of settlements can now be produced. This can be done by using "**The Centrality Index sheet**" below.

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CENTRALITY INDEX

The centrality index may be used to determine the importance of a settlement in providing services for the surrounding area. From this the Functional Role of a settlement can often be deduced.

FORMULA

$$Ci = si - pi(sr/pr)$$

Ci = Centrality value of Settlement i

si = Number of services in settlement i

pi = Population of settlement i

sr = Number of services in the region (sample)

pr = Total population of region (sample)

The calculation is effectively the **calculated (expected) number of services** subtracted from the **actual number of services**. A negative figure suggests fewer services than expected and a positive figure more than expected.

For example: Altier has a population of 207 and contains 14 services.

First calculate the sr/pr.

Total services = 378, Total population = 5430

$$378/5430 = \mathbf{0.07}$$

Each person in the region is worth 0.07 of a service.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Altier Ci} &= 14 - (207 \times 0.07) \\ &= 14 - 14.5 \\ &= \mathbf{-0.5} \end{aligned}$$

Therefore Altier has slightly fewer than expected services.

However, this figure is so close to 0 that the settlement could be considered to have the right number of services for its population.

The centrality value of all the settlements should now be calculated. Take care to ensure that you subtract the *calculated number of services* from the *actual number of services*. This information can now be plotted in the form of a modified bar chart. For ease of interpretation, plot the centrality values from the highest (+) to lowest (-).

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RURAL SETTLEMENT CHANGE

Settlement	Population (1999)	Population (2006)	Number of services	Population Change (%)
Champlong de Lozère	8	8	0	
Villeneuve	8	7	0	
Runes	9	11	2	
Finialette	13	12	0	
Prat Souteyran	13	10	1	
Finiels	14	12	4	
St Julian du Tournel	109	98	4	
Cocures	175	194	10	
Fraissinet de Lozère	190	216	4	
Curbières	197	175	15	
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Vialas	425	423	32	
Le Bleymard	446	367	31	
Villefort	620	639	76	
Ispagnac	759	834	42	
Genolhac	840	886	67	
Badaroux	850	884	19	
Total				

SETTLEMENT CHARACTER SURVEY

The scores for centre and outskirts of each individual settlement studied should be calculated. These will allow comparison between different settlements and areas within those settlements.

SETTLEMENT REPORT

The following guidelines may be used by when producing the report. It should concentrate on a particular settlement, but may refer to others for comparison.

Data collected in the field and any secondary data should be used to back up any statements.

Population Change

- How and why has the population changed in this settlement?
- What evidence is there of any recent population change?
- How do you think the population will change in the future?

Functional Role

- Does the settlement have a clear functional role? What is its economic base?
- Does the settlement fall into any of these categories?
 1. Dormitory Village (commuter)
 2. Central Place
 3. Tourist Settlement
 4. Retirement role
 5. Agricultural settlement
- What evidence is there for a changing role?
- Where does this settlement lie in the hierarchy? Does this have any influence upon it?
- Is there any indication of service decline or increasing urban influence?
- How might this settlement change in the future? What forces are driving this?

Social Composition

- Who lives in this village? Are there any indicators of age structure? Signs of affluence or poverty?
- Does the community appear 'close knit'? Are there signs of social segregation?
- Has the social composition been altered by a changing functional role?
- What changes will occur in the future? Will these be influenced by the EU, government or PNC policy?
- How many second homes/holiday homes exist? What impact do these have?

Settlement Character

- What is your overall impression of the settlement? How does this compare with other settlements in this or your home area?
- Has the character been changed by any new development? Is this in keeping with the rest of the settlement?
- Is there any indication of gentrification?

Points for Discussion

It is most likely that students will come from areas that are quite different to the study area. Comparisons/contrasts can therefore be drawn with local areas.

Students will be visiting areas other than that studied on this day. These may make some useful contrasts to the Lozere settlements. Suggested comparisons include:

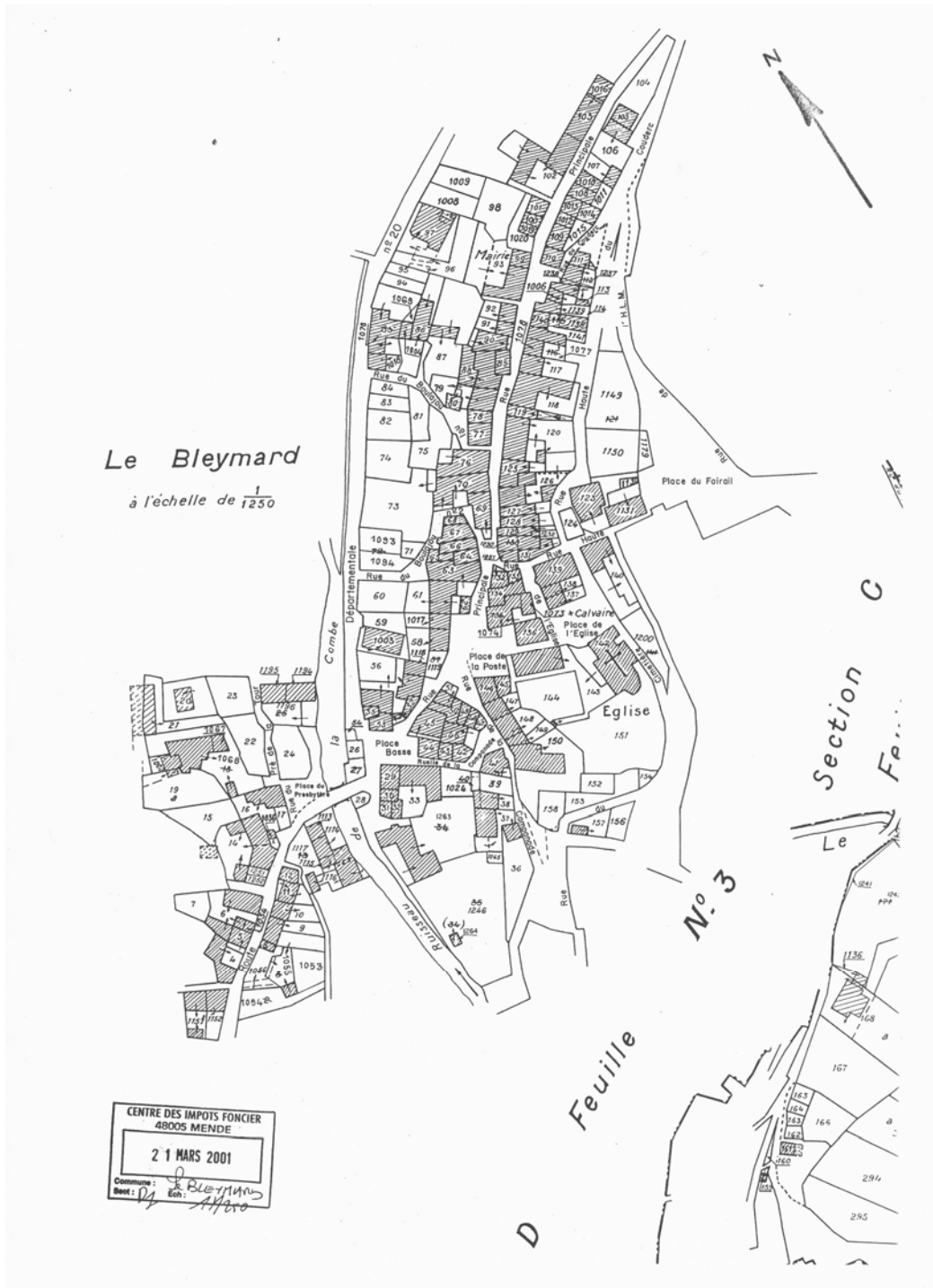
- Mende – larger settlement with major administrative and central place roles.
What influence does Mende have upon smaller settlements in Lozere?
- La Grand Combe – Former coal mining town with issues involving industrial decline.
How does this compare with other settlements?
- Aigues Mortes and La Grand Motte – Tourist settlements on the coast with many issues linked to this.
- Ste. Enimie – Considered as the most ‘tourist’ visited settlement in Lozere. Could be included in the heirachy investigation.

Second home ownership has become a major feature in many Lozere settlements (see table below).

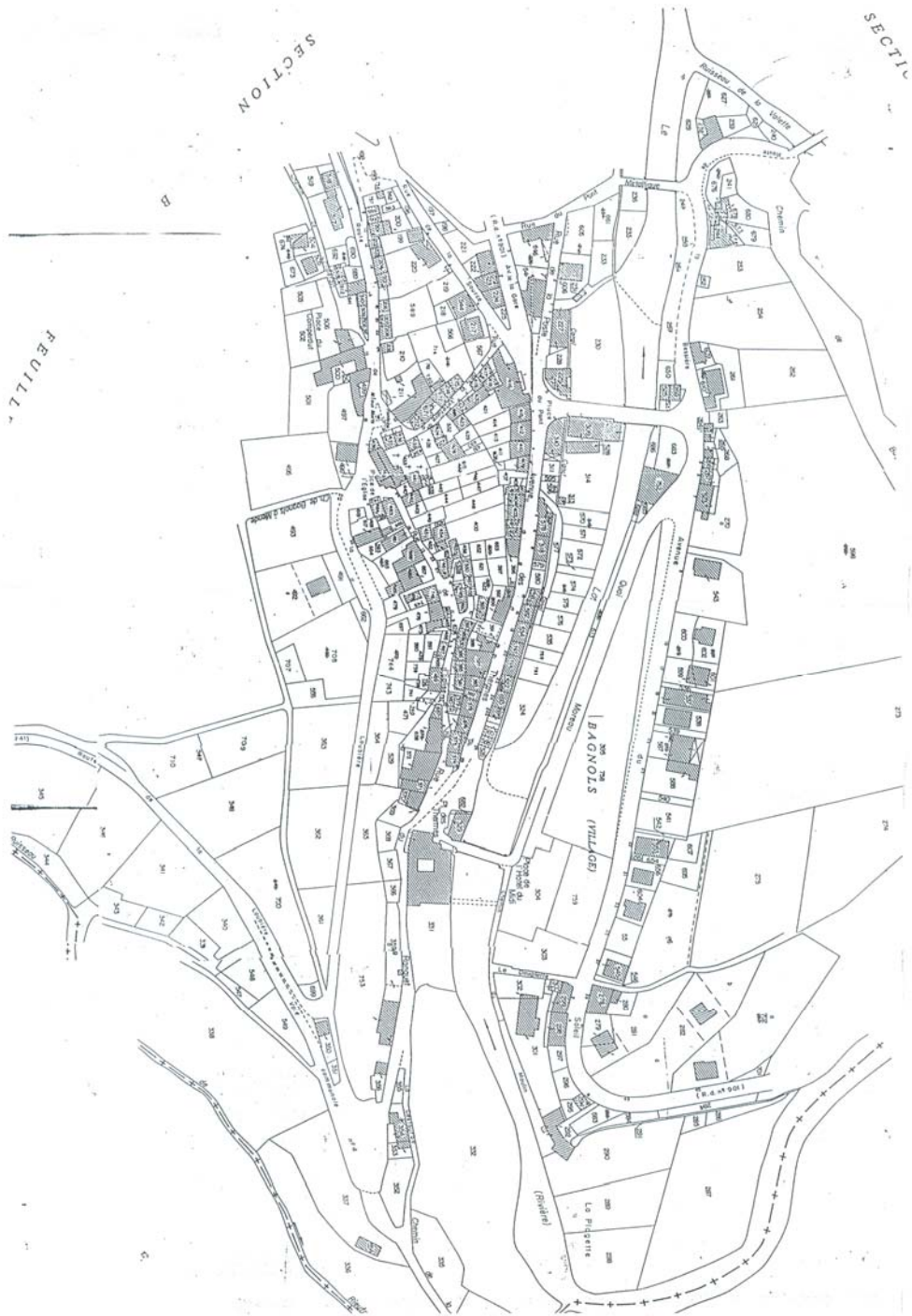
- What issues are associated with this?
- Are there any patterns that emerge?
- Why do people want second homes in Lozere?
- What are the advantages/disadvantages of second home ownership on this scale?
- How do you think this will change in the future?
- Should Local Government and the PNC support second home ownership?

Settlement	Pop 1999	Pop 1990	Total Residence	Primary Residence	Second Homes	Vacant
Cocures	175	153	130	75	46	9
Curbières	197	207	304	97	203	4
Altier	207	243	267	87	178	2
Bagnols les B	243	200	343	108	222	9
Pont de Montvert	272	281	410	115	280	11
Bedoues	299	194	212	121	90	0
Vialas	425	384	656	75	414	54
Le Bleymard	446	440	417	152	265	0
Ste Enimie	509	473	549	232	281	22
Villefort	620	700	591	275	273	34
Ispagnac	759	630	627	339	285	2
Florac	1996	2065	1222	833	292	83
Mende	11804	11286	5868	5104	294	288

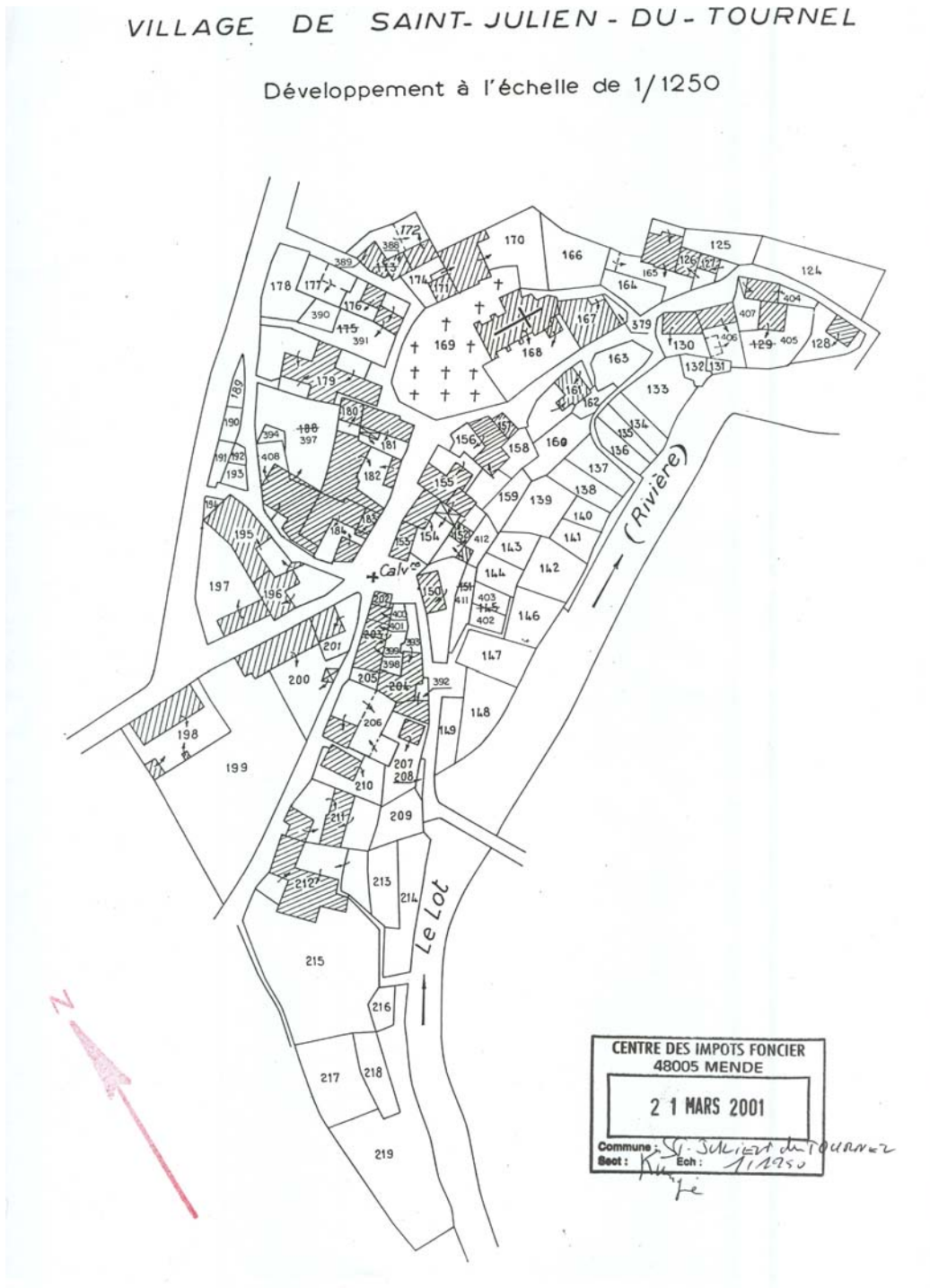
Appendix 1. Cadastral plan: Le Bleyard.

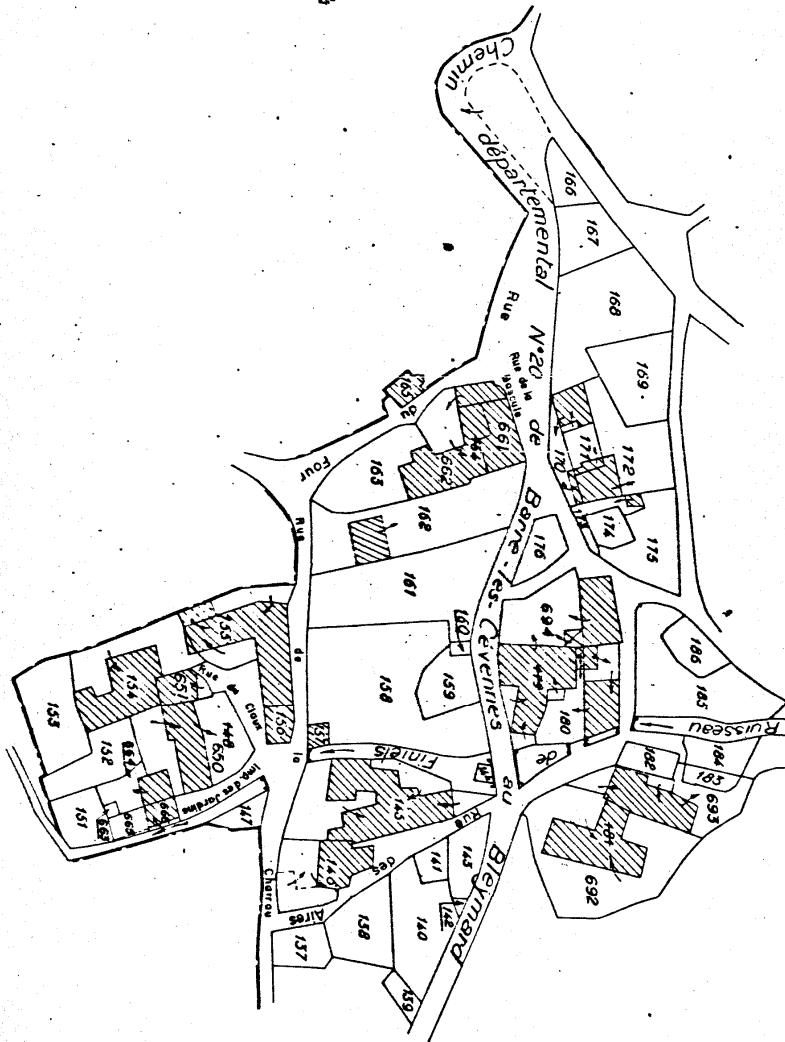


Appendix 2. Cadastral plan: Bagnols-les-Bains



Appendix 3. Cadastral plan: St Julian du tournal





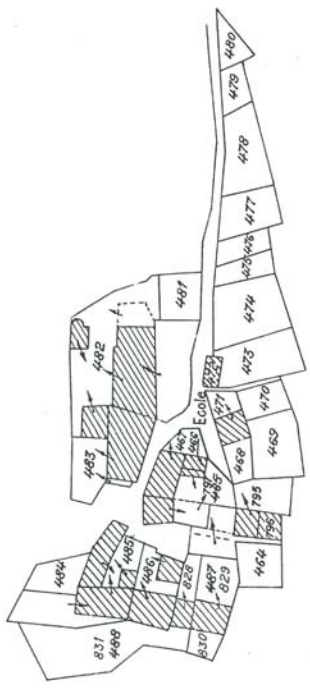
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Section



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