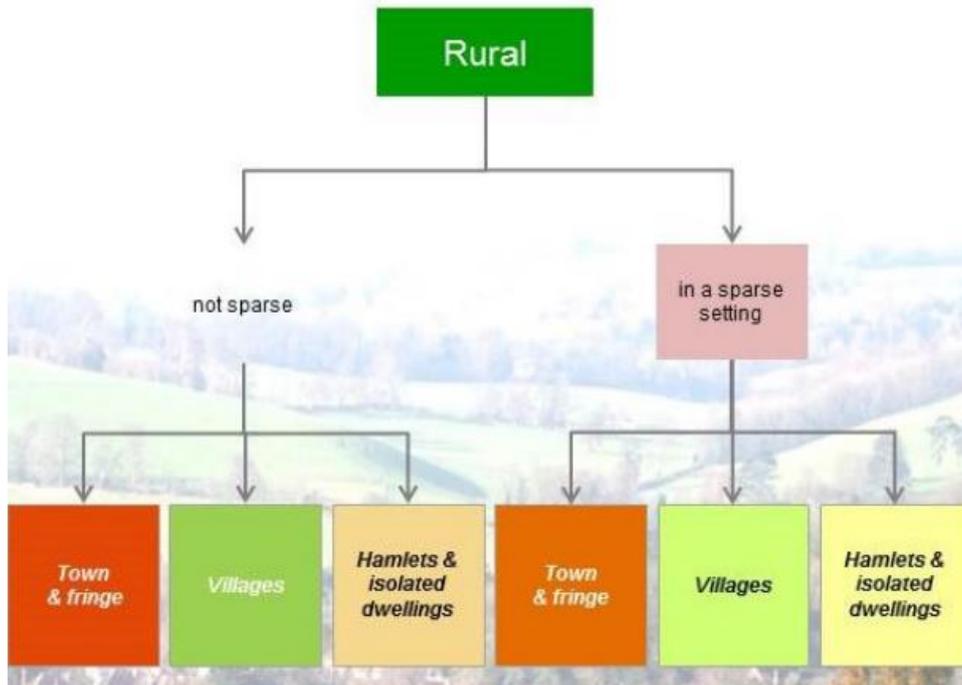


The recomposition of rural spaces in the UK

Introduction: Nineteen per cent of the population of England lives in rural areas which make up 85 per cent of the land. These areas are very diverse, ranging from open countryside with a scattering of small towns and villages to coastal communities dependent on fishing or tourism, former mining areas and commuter villages...

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Doc 1 : What does "rural" mean ?



Wherever possible, the Rural-Urban Classification is used to distinguish rural and urban areas. The classification defines areas as rural if they fall outside of settlements with more than 10,000 resident population.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/597751/Defining_rural_areas_Mar_2017.pdf

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Doc 2 : Photographs of the English countryside

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Doc 3 : Rural communities being ignored and underrated, say peers

27 April 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-48065625>



Rural communities have been "ignored" and had "inappropriate" policies forced upon them, a report says.

A group of peers said a new agenda for the countryside was needed. Priorities included improving mobile and broadband connections, replacing lost bank and bus services and tackling social isolation. Ministers plan to spend £3.5bn on supporting economic development in the countryside by the end of 2020 through the Rural Development Program. The cross-party committee of peers said policies suitable for urban and suburban

areas had too often been foisted upon the countryside.

As well as improving communications, it is calling for action to address the supply and cost of housing and a lack of training for people working in rural industries. *"Successive governments have underrated the contribution rural economies can make to the nation's prosperity and wellbeing,"* it said. *"They have applied policies which are often inappropriate for rural England. This must change. With rural England at a point of major transition, a different approach is needed."* An MP said the "clear inequalities" between urban and rural areas could not be allowed to continue.



Access to high-speed broadband is a major issue for rural communities

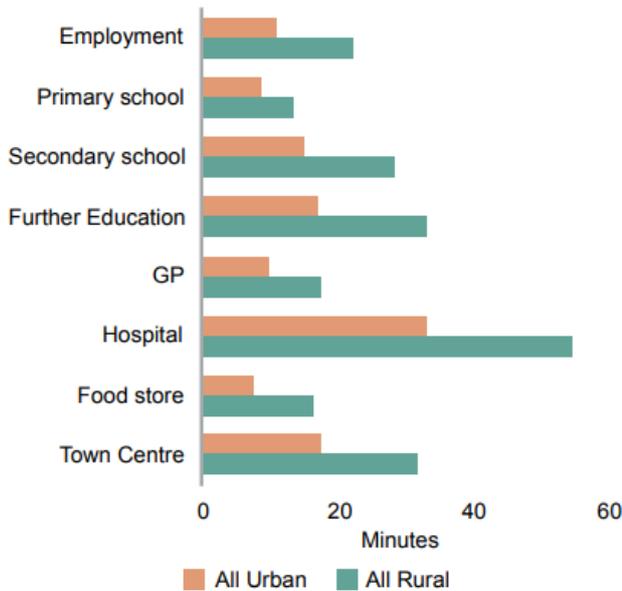
The Campaign to Protect Rural England said too few politicians had a real understanding of the needs of the countryside, despite the fact one in five of the population lived there. It said investment was needed in housing and other infrastructure to make market towns and villages attractive places to live and work. *"A failure to address the unique and specific needs of these communities has put them at risk of being left behind,"* said its chief executive Crispin Truman. The government has set aside £200m to fund full fibre broadband connections in rural and hard-to-reach areas across the UK by 2033. *"We will continue to champion the countryside, driving forward high-speed broadband in hard-to-reach places, increasing housing availability in rural areas and supporting the creation of more than 6,000 jobs through our dedicated fund for rural businesses,"* it said.

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Doc 4 : In the countryside, certain social and economic factors have a disproportionate impact on people's lives.

- **poverty** – 15 per cent of households in rural areas live in relative poverty after housing costs are taken into account, as compared with 22 per cent in urban areas
- **housing** – house prices tend to be higher in rural areas and more households experience deeper fuel poverty
- **employment** – in 2015 77 per cent of working age people in rural areas were in employment, as compared with 73 per cent in urban areas: household incomes in rural areas can be lower due to part-time or seasonal working
- **access to transport** – rural residents travel longer distances than their urban counterparts and spend longer travelling.
- **Changing population patterns**
Changing population patterns, including outward migration of young people and inward migration of older people, are leading to a rural population that is increasingly older than the urban population, with accompanying health and care needs.
- **Infrastructure**
Sparsity and the increasing scarcity of public transport links have a significant impact both on daily living costs of rural households and on access to services.
- **Digital access and exclusion**
A combination of the older demographic and the unavailability of high speed broadband and mobile phone networks are leading to an increasing digital gap between urban and rural areas. This is made more serious by the growing number of important services, such as job search opportunities, banking and increasingly, health-related services, that are available online.
- **Access to health and related services**
Rural areas have worse access in terms of distance to health, public health and care services. Longer distances to GPs, dentists, hospitals and other health facilities mean that rural residents can experience 'distance decay' where service use decreases with increasing distance. Different models of service delivery may be needed for rural areas, including new models of workforce development. These also include the development of rural hubs providing a range of services, and more services provided on and through the internet.
 - **Community support, isolation and social exclusion**
Rural social networks are breaking down with a consequent increase in social isolation and loneliness, especially among older people. The fact that social isolation influences health outcomes in its own right suggests that this and the emotional and mental wellbeing of people in rural areas is an important and hitherto neglected area in the promotion of public health.
 - **Housing and fuel poverty**
Affordability, poor quality housing and significant fuel poverty in the most rural areas are threatening the wellbeing and sustainability of communities. House prices are 26 per cent higher in rural areas and there is much less housing association and council housing. There is a much higher proportion of 'non-decent' homes and of houses which are energy inefficient and many areas are not on the gas grid which leads to higher prices.
 - **Employment and under-employment**
Unemployment and under-employment are taking younger people away from their families and work is low paid and intermittent.

https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/1.39_Health%20in%20rural%20areas_WEB.pdf



Doc 5 : Average travel time by public transport/walking to reach nearest key services, urban and rural areas, England, 2014. Ibid.

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Doc 6 : Tourism in the English countryside



Both genteel and wild, there's nothing quite like the English countryside for rural escapes with its patchwork hills, dramatic dales, ancient woodlands and winding country roads. All well and good, but what is there to do in England's countryside exactly? Quite a lot, actually. Admire the grand interiors of a stately home before catching a play in the surrounding gardens, travel back in time with visits to ancient stone circles and crumbling castles, or step into a chocolate box of quaint villages and market towns and live like a local, trying farmhouse cheeses, cream teas and real ales along the way.

<https://www.visitengland.com/things-to-do/countryside>

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Doc 7 : A tale of two teenagers : urban VS rural

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2009/apr/15/teenagers-lives-urban-rural>

Amie Hibbert, who lives in Yeovil in Somerset, thinks there should be more for young people to do in small towns.

What do you like about your area?

I like the fact that there is a lot of greenery and grass everywhere. I also like the fact that there are a lot of different social groups, but most of the time we all get along.

What do you dislike?

There isn't much to do around the area. There are a few venues where music gigs and events are held, but these aren't very often. I think that there should be more entertaining things to do.



Clément KAMOULY-LE CRANN, 1^{ère} euro-anglais

How do you get around town?

I use the bus. If I didn't have my bus pass I would be paying a fortune to get to and from college. I only live six miles away, but that means I would have to pay £6.50 for a return.

What do you do at weekends and in the evenings?

Usually, I work, but if I have days off I go shopping or head to the beach.

Are binge drinking and drugs a problem in your area?

Binge drinking can be a problem as there are many underage drinkers around here. I think this is because the alcohol is fairly accessible. There is a drug problem, but we have good rehabilitation places to help with that.

Are you worried about knife crime?

Not really, as there isn't much around here.

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Doc 8 : 1 in 2 young people want to swap city for countryside



22 October 2020 | by **FarmingUK Team** | [News](#), [Property News](#), [Rural Life](#)

A growing number of young people are considering leaving the capital in favour of rural life

Over half of young people want to swap city life for the rural idyll, according to a survey of more than 1,000 young Londoners.

The survey, by the Country Land and Business Association (CLA), found that 55% of 18-34 year olds want to move to a rural area because of the pandemic. With 25% of the rural population aged 65 or above, compared with 17% of the urban population, rural areas are ageing faster than anywhere else in

the UK. But the movement of young people to the countryside would be a welcome reversal of the 'brain drain', the CLA said.

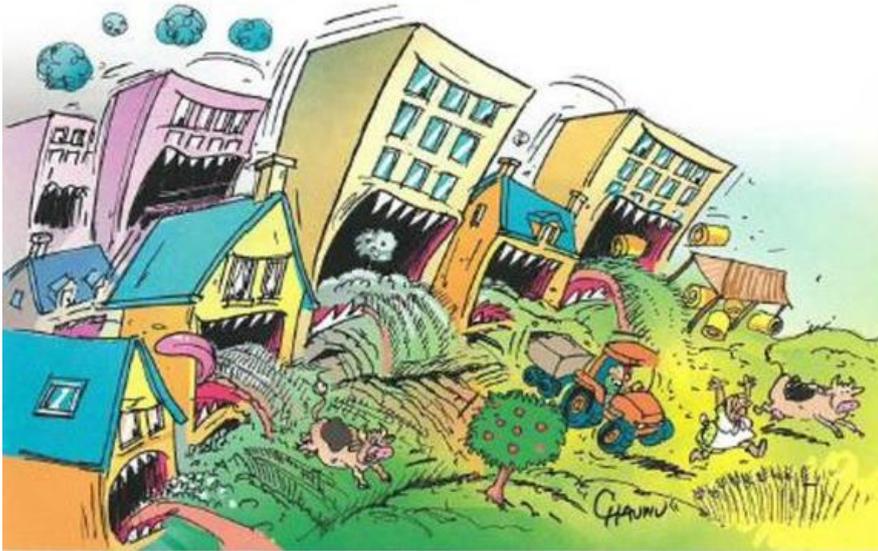
It added that many rural areas had suffered as young people switched from rural areas to cities for employment. Cheaper housing stock was the number one 'pull' factor for survey respondents, with 78% ranking it the most important factor in deciding to move.

Digital connectivity (56%) and the ability to do an existing job from a new location (55%) were also rated as important.

The survey found that, of all those polled across all demographics, the pandemic made 44% of people more likely to consider moving to the countryside versus just 9% saying the contrary. Over a quarter – 27 percent – said they envisaged working entirely from home in the future. From cheaper housing to better air quality, a combination of factors is attracting talent to rural areas. However, the CLA highlighted concern that rural communities would not be able to seize this opportunity if landowners were unable to meet demand for houses or high-quality office space with fast internet connections.

Government resources must be allocated across multiple departments to create an attractive environment for potential movers, the group said. CLA President Mark Bridgeman said that for the rural economy to flourish on the growing popularity of the countryside, government needed to provide modern infrastructure. "Planning reforms to allow landowners to deliver affordable housing and convert old farm buildings into modern offices, and investment in mobile and broadband infrastructure are desperately needed to turn people's dreams into a reality."

Mr Bridgeman said reform was needed before the Covid-19 crisis hit the UK: "The government must understand that the countryside is not a museum there to be preserved in aspic. "With government support, we hope to welcome those seeking a better quality of life into the countryside, allowing them to fulfil their career ambitions without needing to live in a city."



Doc 9 : Cartoon by Chaunu (Ouest France, 2014).

Questions

Introduction, doc 1 : What is a rural area ? What definition could you give?

Doc 2, 6, 9 : Which resource is exploited in these rural areas ?

Doc 6, 7 and 8 : What are the assets of the rural areas ?

Doc 3, 4, 5 : What are the disadvantages of the rural areas ?

Doc 3, 7, 8 : What kind of migratory flows can we observe to and from the rural areas ?

Doc 9 : What is happening to the rural areas ? What is this phenomenon called ? What are the advantages and the disadvantages of this phenomenon ?

Doc 9 : What is a “users conflict” ? How can you explain it with the help of doc 9 ?

Doc 1 to 9 : How are the British rural areas changing ? What were the changes brought by the digital revolution and by the COVID crisis ?

Doc 3 and 4 : What kind of solutions are identified (or can you imagine) to solve the problems of the rural communities ?

How and why are the British rural areas changing? What are the conflicts that originate from this change?