



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Rural Productivity and Rural Life Opportunities

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Defra



Defra's New Ministerial Team

Andrea Leadsom - Secretary of State

- Oversight of EU exit work and post-EU policy programme
- International relations

George Eustice - Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

- Food and farming, including Common Agricultural Policy, Rural Development Programme for England, 25 year food and farming plan

Thérèse Coffey - Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Environment and Rural Life Opportunities

- Natural environment
- Rural life opportunities

Lord Gardiner - Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Rural Affairs and Biosecurity,

- Rural ambassador
- Animal health and welfare
- Landscape, including National Parks

Overview of rural areas

- Nearly a fifth of England's population live in rural areas (almost 10 million people) and one quarter of England's businesses (over 500,000) have a rural area as their base
- Rural areas play an important part in the English economy, contributing to 17 per cent of England's GVA, worth an estimated £229 billion a year.
- As well as being where people live and work, rural areas are valued for the landscape and natural environment, for our food production and much more

What makes rural 'different'?

- **Demography** – in rural areas there are proportionately more older people and fewer younger people, poverty is less geographically concentrated and hence more difficult to identify, and there are proportionately more small businesses
- **Accessibility, quality of services and infrastructure** – there are fewer services within easy reach in rural areas, there can be less choice, it can be more difficult to provide the service
- **Opportunity** – there can be greater challenges in accessing customers in rural areas, engaging with other businesses, pursuing social and leisure activities
- **Expectations and outlook** – people can have different perceptions and behave differently, for example trust in neighbours and sense of community are higher in rural areas; but businesses can find it more difficult to find people with the right skills

Rural inward migration

- Since 2008/09 there has been an increase in the rate of net migration to predominantly rural areas (i.e. movement within the country). In 2014-15 **net internal migration to predominantly rural areas was 65,000 people**
- This was across age bands, except for those of typical university student age (19-21)
- **More work is needed to look at population changes for rural and urban areas**

Rural areas have strengths, but...

- **Rural areas have strengths.** At an aggregate level, for those who live across the wide range of predominantly rural areas, we see more childcare places per child, better school results, higher employment levels and longer life expectancy than in urban areas
- But they face challenges and not all areas see these benefits. Anecdotal evidence suggests **aggregate figures may mask pockets of poverty or poor outcomes** – data which is not readily available
- **Distance and demography** makes connecting to and accessing services harder and more costly to provide. And productivity has lagged behind urban areas

Defra Strategy to 2020

- Defra's strategy to 2020 is designed to enable us all to get behind our shared vision of '**Creating a great place for living**'
- The strategy has seven **strategic objectives**. These include four *impact objectives*, which explain our ambitious long-term aims, and the positive differences we will make to the UK by 2020.
- **Environment** – a cleaner, healthier environment, benefiting people and the economy
- **Food and farming** – a world-leading food and farming industry
- **Rural** – a thriving rural economy, contributing to national prosperity and wellbeing
- **Protection** – a nation better protected against floods, animal and plant diseases and other hazards, with strong response and recovery capabilities

Rural Productivity

- The Rural Productivity Plan was published on the 20th August 2015.
- The Plan aims to unleash the potential of England's rural areas. It will help us create thriving towns and villages where generations of families can open and expand their businesses, buy a home and educate their children at first class schools.
- The plan is grouped around five areas:
 - rural areas fully connected to the wider economy
 - a highly skilled rural workforce
 - strong conditions for rural business growth
 - easier to live and work in rural areas
 - greater local control

The Rural Productivity Plan

- Extensive, fast and reliable broadband services and high quality, widely available mobile communications
- Access to high quality education and training, and expanded apprenticeships in rural areas
- Modern transport connections
- Enterprise Zones in rural areas, better regulation and improved planning
- More housing and increased availability of affordable childcare
- Devolution of power

Overview of Rural Life Opportunities



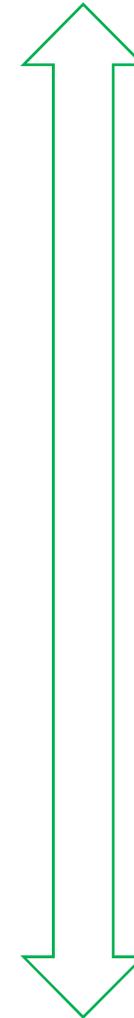
1. Childcare
2. Education and Skills



3. Incomes and Poverty
4. Homes
5. Accessibility and Services



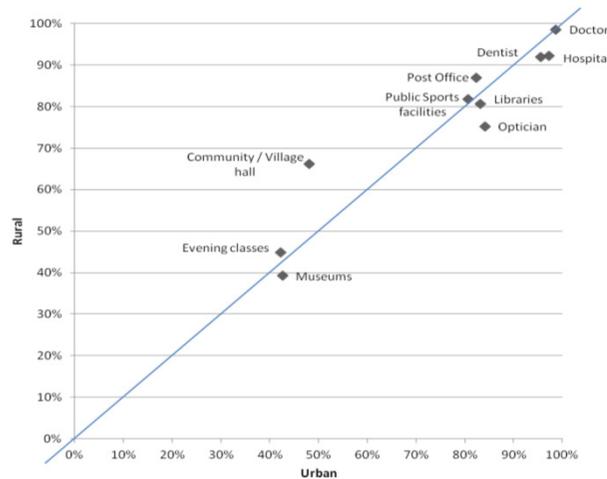
6. Health
7. Ageing



**Opportunities
throughout life**

The British Attitude Survey (2012) shows that rural and urban people think the same services are essential

Rural and Urban populations: views on whether or not these services are 'essential'*



Rural and urban: views of 'essential services' from the British Social Attitudes Survey (2012) demonstrates:

- Health services such as doctors, hospitals and dentists are seen as some of the most essential services for rural and urban residents alike
- Services important for social inclusion (e.g. community/village halls and post offices) are rated more essential by rural residents surveyed, compared to urban residents*

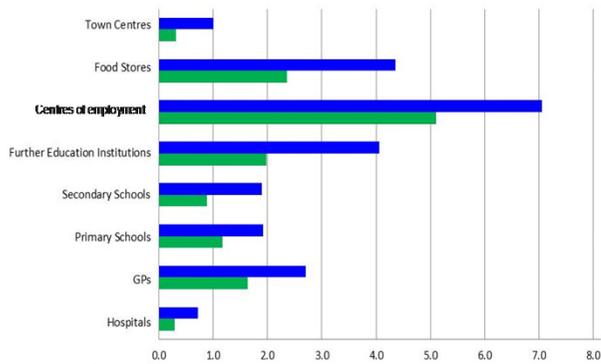
However, those living in rural settlements have lower overall levels of accessibility

Average number of key service locations accessible in a reasonable time in 2013 (using detailed rural urban classification)

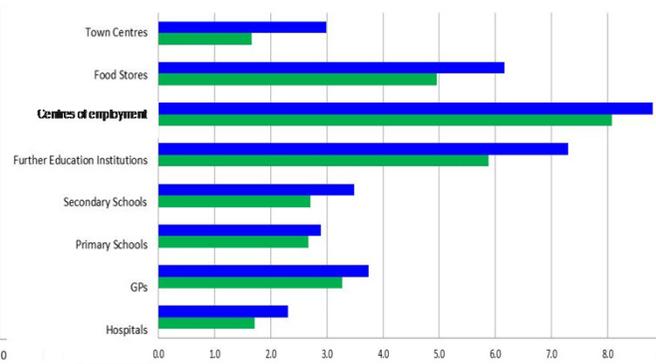
People living in the most rural areas travelled 50 per cent further per year than those in England as a whole and 63 per cent further than those living in urban areas

However, these trips take a similar amount of time to complete due to traffic levels

By public transport or walking



By public transport or walking



Rural Productivity & Rural Life Opportunities

*Source: Analysis funded by ESRC, Local Services Under Siege; attitudes to public services in a time of austerity (2012) <http://www.poverty.ac.uk>

Questions for attendees

- Going forward, what are the local challenges to helping improve the productivity of your rural businesses and to grow the rural economy?
- Which are the most important rural life opportunities for you and your communities in East Sussex and what should we (Government) be focussing on?
- Very interested to hear about your local and innovative case studies and examples of how you make rural East Sussex a great place for living, working and visiting?