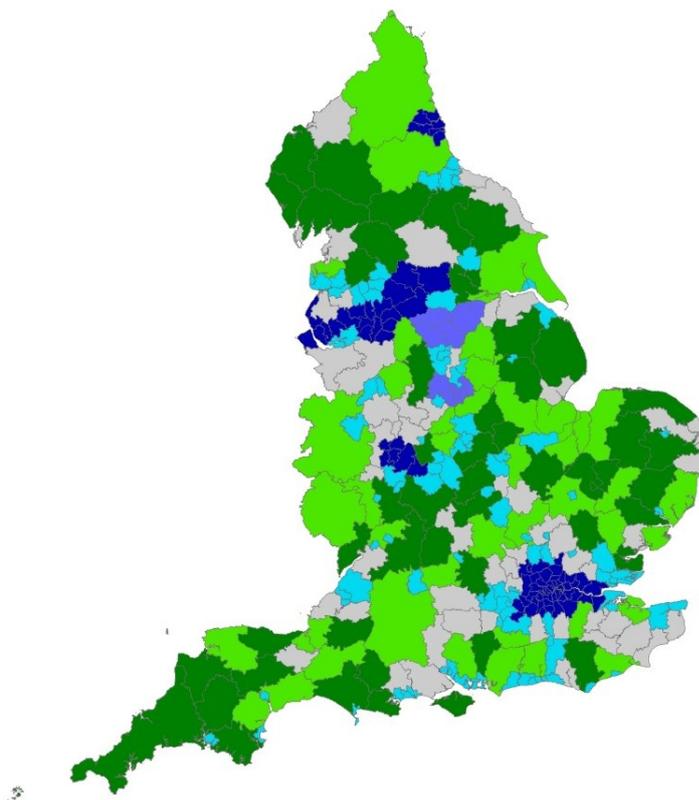




Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs



# 2011 Rural-Urban Classification of Local Authority Districts and Similar Geographic Units in England: A User Guide



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## 2011 Rural-Urban Classification of Local Authority Districts and Similar Geographic Units in England: A User Guide

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Rural-Urban Classification categorises a range of statistical and administrative units on the basis of physical settlement and related characteristics. This document is concerned with that part of the classification which categorises lower tier Local Authority Districts, Unitary Authorities, Metropolitan Districts and London Boroughs (referred to as LADs below) in accordance with the scale of their 'rural' and 'rural-related' population components, and their context - whether they lie within conurbations. This part of the Rural Urban Classification is referred to as 'the Rural Urban Classification for Local Authorities' or RUCLAD for short. RUCLAD is available only for England. Whilst this User Guide has been written to describe RUCLAD the same methodology can be applied to similar geographic units such as for example Parliamentary Constituencies, Counties etc.
- 1.2 RUCLAD complements another part of the classification concerned to classify small areas (Output Areas (OAs); Super Output Areas (SOAs) and wards) in both England and Wales. This small area classification is not discussed here, but details may be found in Bibby and Brindley (2013a). It is important to appreciate that to a substantial degree RUCLAD in both its new and earlier forms rests on this corresponding lower level classification. This lower level small-area classification was originally developed for a consortium of government agencies for use with the 2001 Census and revised following the 2011 Census for a similar consortium which included the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the Welsh Government (WG).
- 1.3 Following principles set out in a review of urban and rural definitions (see DCLG 2006), for the purposes of the Rural-Urban classification, the 'urban' domain comprises all physical settlements with a population of 10,000 or more. The classification of small areas focuses on the OA level - the smallest units for which data are made available from the decennial Population Census. If the majority of the population of a particular small area live in such a settlement, that area is deemed 'urban'; all other OAs are deemed 'rural'. This principle is extended to classify SOAs and wards, and indeed any set of geographic units that can be represented as sets of OAs can be classified into 'rural' or 'urban' divisions on the basis of the majority of OAs so assigned.
- 1.4 For the purpose of classifying LADs it has been deemed desirable to go beyond this approach. RUC for small areas is concerned with the proportions of residents living in different types of physical settlements. The geographic *design* of local authority areas over much of England deliberately combines urban and rural locales in such a manner that there is a strong tendency to find a preponderance of urban residents in the overwhelming majority of LADs. The 2001-based Rural-Urban Classification of local authorities therefore moved beyond the directly physical approach effectively by capturing facets of 'rural'-'urban' interdependence. It identified Larger Market Towns - service agglomerations - with between 10,000 and 30,000 residents, and thus distinguished not only rural and urban population components, but identified in addition a 'rural-related' component of the urban population. This approach is carried

forward more explicitly in RUCLAD2011 which likewise identifies urban service centres which are potentially of particular significance to rural residents.

- 1.5 Within RUCLAD2001, the technical approach to identifying these service centres is slightly different to that used earlier, and the centres are referred to as Hub Towns to avoid any confusion with the Larger Market Towns identified previously. The principle throughout, however, is that patterns of rural-urban interdependence are such that some urban settlements can play a particular role in the lives of rural residents and that recognition of this interdependence should be embedded in the classification of LADs.
- 1.6 In its original form, RUCLAD was developed for Defra in 2005 (RERC, 2005 para 2.8). The three versions of the classification (distinguished as RUCLAD2001, RUCLAD2009 and RUCLAD2011 where necessary) employ related underlying methodologies and hence are broadly comparable. RUCLAD2001 and RUCLAD2009 are in principle identical. There are some distinctions of principle between these classifications and RUCLAD2011, and other differences in detail underlie changed assignments in some areas. The extent and implications of these differences are discussed in Section 4 of this document.
- 1.7 The remainder of this document outlines
  - the content of RUCLAD and its spatial and temporal scope (Section 2)
  - guidance on assessing its appropriateness for different purposes (Section 3), and
  - guidance on issues arising in using RUCLAD to examine change over time (Section 4).

## **2. RUCLAD 2011: Scope and Content**

- 2.1 RUC in itself includes minimal statistical data as its key purpose is to provide categorical attributes for the statistical units. A large range of official statistical data items is available at local authority district level through the ONS Neighbourhood Statistics website. (<http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination>). Further DCLG statistics are available at this scale, relating for example to housing, and planning (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics>), which may be supplemented by financial and performance statistics (see <http://www.cipfastats.net>). Further measures of performance of authorities with Children's Services responsibilities are reported through Ofsted (<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/statistics>) for example.
- 2.2 The structure of each RUCLAD2011 record is very simple. For each LAD (ie lower tier ('shire') district, London Borough, metropolitan district, unitary authority and special jurisdiction (Isles of Scilly; City of London)) it provides for 2011
  - an ONS identifier to facilitate data linkage
  - the name of the authority
  - the number of persons resident in rural OAs (referred to as the 'rural population')

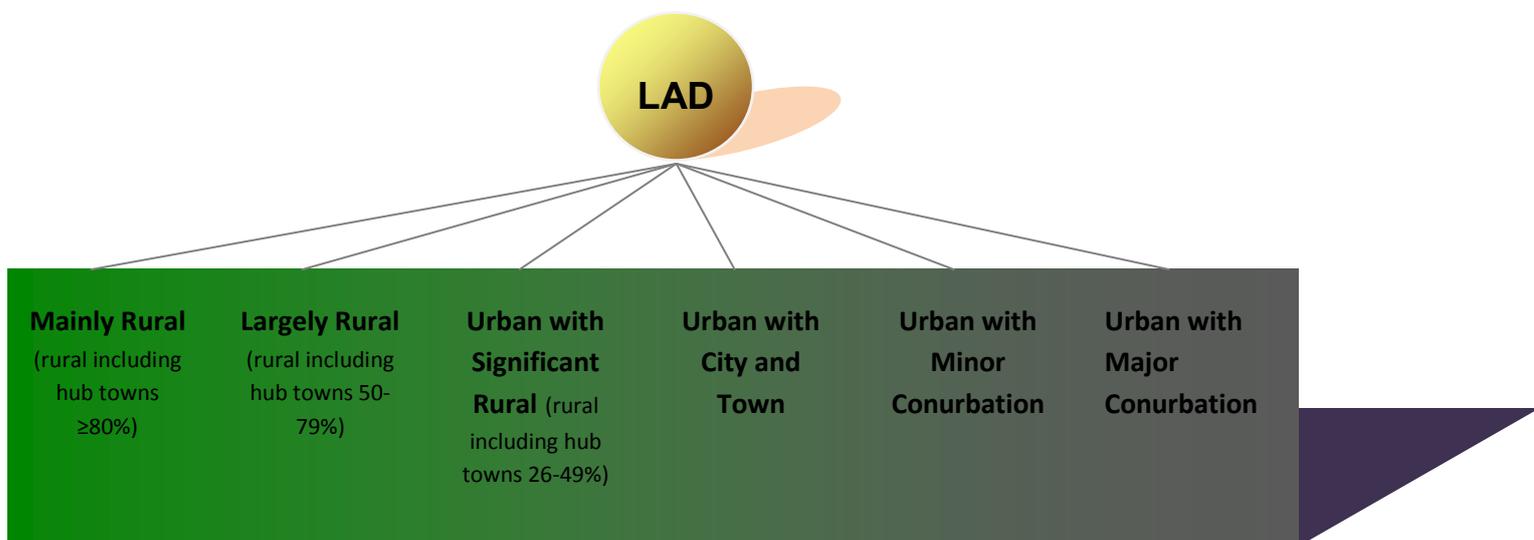
- the number of persons resident in OAs which formed part of a Hub Town (referred to as the 'rural-related' population)
- the sum of the rural and rural related population components
- the total population usually resident in the district
- the combined rural and rural related population components as a percentage of the total population usually resident in the district
- the descriptor of the class to which the district is assigned

2.3 Under RUCLAD2011, each LAD is assigned to one of six categories on the basis of the percentage of the total resident population accounted for by the combined 'rural' and 'rural-related' components of its population and its 'conurbation context'. The categories are:

- Mainly Rural (rural including hub towns  $\geq 80\%$ )
- Largely Rural (rural including hub towns 50-79%)
- Urban with Significant Rural (rural including hub towns 26-49%)
- Urban with City and Town
- Urban with Minor Conurbation
- Urban with Major Conurbation

2.4 It is very important to note that these categories are not describing the physical character or landscape of a LAD, but the extent to which the resident population live proportionally in urban or rural and rural-related settlements. The classification is not based on land area. Thus LADs categorised as “Urban” could have in terms of landscape vast areas of open countryside - their status as “Urban” is based on the majority of the resident population living in urban settlements, not on their landscape. Indeed “Urban” authorities may have sizeable rural populations, but the categorisation is on the proportion not on the absolute number.

**Figure 1: Classification groups for RUCLAD assignment**

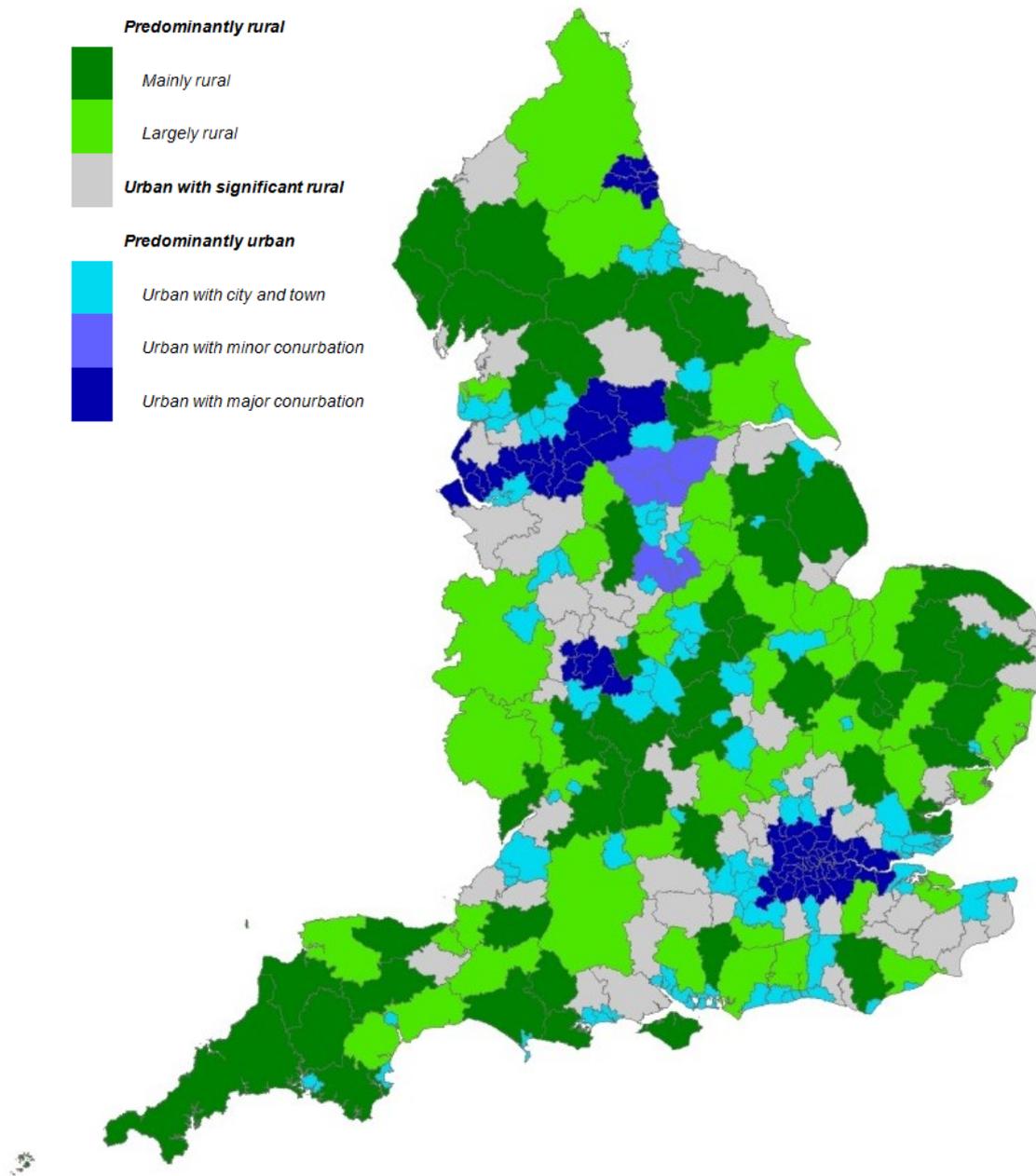


- 2.5 It should be clear that the RUCLAD2011 classifications depend on the one hand on the definition of rural related population, and on the other on RUC for small areas (described in Bibby and Brindley, 2013a), and for which a user guide may be found at [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/239478/RUC11user\\_guide\\_28\\_Aug.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/239478/RUC11user_guide_28_Aug.pdf).
- 2.6 The assignment of a LAD to one of the three urban categories depends upon its location relative to conurbations and free-standing towns and cities (which is explicitly recorded at OA level in RUC for small areas). Each district in which the rural and rural-related population components account together for less than 26% of the usually resident population is assigned to one of categories 4-6 in Figure 1 depending on the specific classification of the majority of its constituent OAs.
- 2.7 The 'rural related' population of an authority is assessed by reference to the usually-resident population of its Hub Towns. Hub Towns in this sense are a subset of settlements within the 10,000 to 30,000 population band that have been identified by reference to tests designed to pick out substantial local concentrations of households and business, the location of which enables them to provide services to a rural population. Whilst primarily such Hub Towns are required for the purposes of classification, they have already found application in defining areas that are eligible for rural development funding through Local Enterprise Partnerships and Local Action Groups (LAGs) as part of the Rural Development Programme for England 2014-2020.
- 2.8 The aim is to identify a group of settlements within the urban domain that are likely to play an enduring (though not unchanging) role as a service hub for a rural hinterland. The tests applied are outlined by Bibby and Brindley (2014).
- 2.9 The distribution of LADs across the six categories is shown in Table 1. Figure 1 presents the six categories on a continuum depending on the relative importance in combination of their rural and rural-related population components, while Figure 2 shows the geographic distribution of the assigned categories. It should be noted that the three categories 'urban with significant rural', 'largely rural' and 'mainly rural' correspond to the 'Significant Rural,' 'Rural50' and 'Rural80' categories of RUCLAD2001 respectively. For some purposes it would seem useful to identify the group of 'Mainly and Largely Rural' LADs, paralleling practice in some applications of the previous local authority classification.

**Table 1: Distribution of Local Authority Districts And Population by RUCLAD Class, 2011**

| Category  | LADs       |            | Population (000s) |               |                       |               | Rural & rural-related Share (%) |
|---|------------|------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|
|   | Number     | %          | Rural             | Rural-related | Rural & rural related | Total         |                                 |
| Mainly Rural (rural including hub towns ≥80%)                   | 50         | 15.3       | 3,008             | 1,443         | 4,451                 | 4,723         | 94.2                            |
| Largely Rural (rural including hub towns 50-79%)                | 41         | 12.6       | 2,946             | 1,092         | 4,039                 | 6,335         | 63.8                            |
| Urban with Significant Rural (rural including hub towns 26-49%) | 54         | 16.6       | 2,022             | 469           | 2,491                 | 6,898         | 36.1                            |
| Urban with City and Town  | 97         | 29.8       | 853               | 82            | 936                   | 14,078        | 6.6                             |
| Urban with Minor Conurbation                                    | 9          | 2.8        | 149               | 30            | 179                   | 2,107         | 8.5                             |
| Urban with Major Conurbation                                    | 75         | 23.0       | 366               | 40            | 406                   | 18,872        | 2.2                             |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>326</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>9,344</b>      | <b>3,157</b>  | <b>12,501</b>         | <b>53,012</b> | <b>23.6</b>                     |

**Figure 2: RUCLAD Assignments; England; Local Authority Districts; 2011**



2.10 Table 1 demonstrates that when the rural population (in a strict sense) of each authority has been augmented by its rural related population, a group of 41 districts may be identified where the sum of the two components accounts for between 50% and 80% of the total population. Moreover 6.3 million people live in districts so classified. A further 4 million residents are found to live in 50 'Mainly Rural' authorities where in combination the rural and rural related population components account for 80% of the district population. In each of the 54 districts styled 'Urban with Significant Rural', the rural and rural related population components when combined account for between a quarter and a half of its total population. In 2011 there were 6.9 million people living in such districts. Away from these areas, local authorities serving the major conurbations had a combined population of 18.9 million in 2011, while the combined population of those serving minor conurbations reached 2.1 million, and that of other overwhelmingly urban authorities stood at 14.1 million.

### **3. Assessing Fitness for Varying Purposes**

3.1 Potential users of the Rural Urban Classification should consider whether it is likely to be appropriate for their particular analytic purposes. They should also consider whether RUCLAD or use of RUC for small areas would be more appropriate.

3.2 Neither RUC nor RUCLAD takes any explicit account of economic function. This may render it inappropriate for some purposes, but it allows the economic functions of the rural domain (defined simply on the basis of settlement form) or rural local authorities to be measured rather than presumed.

3.3 In distinguishing appropriate uses of RUCLAD and RUC it is important to consider the geographic scale that is analytically appropriate. Defra's *Foreword* to the technical document introducing RUCLAD2001 (RERC2005) advised that 'the classification proposed here is seen as a tool for the purposes of presenting and analysing data that are only available at LAD level on a comprehensive national basis' adding that 'we do not recommend that the classification is used to inform detailed policy design (e.g. for targeting local service delivery)'.

3.4 This point remains essential. Moreover, if the user's aim is simply to apply an urban-rural marker to datasets at a high level of resolution than the local authority district scale, it will usually be more appropriate to use RUC. Obvious examples here might include urban-rural classification of individual community centres records, individual house price records, land use change records, or any postcoded records. Using the urban-rural classification of a LAD is unlikely to be appropriate if the concern is with the characteristics of rural *localities*, rural *neighbourhoods* or local rural *communities* given the degree of heterogeneity within LADs.

- 3.5 It would seem appropriate to use RUCLAD for assigning urban-rural flags in two circumstances. The first, which has been heavily emphasized in previous Defra advice, is that RUCLAD may be used where data are simply not made available at finer scales.. The second is where there is interest in areas as a whole and especially about the implications for the operation of their local authorities. This might be the case if a rural-urban indicator were to be included among other variables used in assessment of specific aspects of service delivery.
- 3.6 To assess whether RUC is likely to be appropriate for a particular purpose it is also important to understand the implications of the nature of the units which it classifies (OAs, LSOAs, and MSOAs). When using RUC to assign point data or small area data to OAs, a specific set of issues must be considered related to the geographic scale and configuration of the units that are being classified. These are set out in the RUC2011 User Guide (Bibby and Brindley, 2013b).
- 3.7 Finally, great care is required if the user intends to use RUCLAD to examine change between 2001 and 2011. It is important to appreciate that apparent change results not only from underlying change in the various population components of a LAD but also two forms of methodological change. These changes are discussed in Bibby and Brindley 2014.

#### **4. Understanding change over time**

- 4.1 Caution is required when using RUCLAD to examine change between 2001 and 2011 because there are various reasons why some authorities switched categories between RUCLAD 2001 and RUCLAD 2011. This can be attributed to:
- a shifting balance of urban and rural populations
  - changes to the methodology used to capture physical settlements (built-up areas) for 2011 Census outputs
  - changes in the rural-related population caused by population growth and change
  - changes in the rural-related population caused by methodological changes in the identification of such populations
- 4.2 A small number of authorities have changed categories between RUCLAD versions, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: RUCLAD assignments 2001-2011**

|               |                | 2011 category |  |               |              | <b>Total</b> |
|---------------|----------------|---------------|--|---------------|--------------|--------------|
|               |                | Urban         | Urban with significant rural           | Largely rural | Mainly rural |              |
| 2001 category | Urban          | 166           | 2                                      | 0             | 0            | <b>168</b>   |
|               | SR             | 10            | 42                                     | 3             | 0            | <b>55</b>    |
|               | R50            | 1             | 13                                     | 32            | 2            | <b>48</b>    |
|               | R80            | 1             | 0                                      | 6             | 48           | <b>55</b>    |
|               | <b>Overall</b> | <b>178</b>    | <b>57</b>                              | <b>41</b>     | <b>50</b>    | <b>326</b>   |
|               |                |               | <i>Change to a more urban category</i> |               |              |              |
|               |                |               | <i>Change to a more rural category</i> |               |              |              |

- 4.3 Settlements crossing the 10,000 population threshold between classifications generally became Hub Towns (eg Ludlow, Blandford Forum and Downham Market). A neutral effect on the combined rural and rural-related population of the host district usually results. This is not the case where the town is heavily over-shadowed, or fails to meet the rural share test.
- 4.4 Effects are more marked where towns cross the 30,000 population threshold, which happened to 17 towns in 16 authorities. For example, the growth of Lichfield prompted a shift in the Lichfield district from the former ‘R50’ category to the ‘urban with significant rural’ category. The rural-related population of Mid Sussex fell by almost 60,000 because two of its towns, Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath, crossed the 30,000 threshold.
- 4.5 Changes to the methodology used to define physical settlements may imply that a town is no longer considered freestanding, but is instead regarded as part of another larger settlement. Eight towns in seven authorities lost the potential to be identified as Hub Towns on this basis, for example two towns Ferndown and Three Legged Cross, and Wimborne Minster and Oakley result in East Dorset passing from the former ‘R50’ category to ‘urban with significant rural’.
- 4.6 Urban areas that form part of the rural-related population (ie Hub Towns) may potentially contribute to an authority’s rural profile as they undergo organic growth. Nevertheless because such growth usually tends to be gradual it does not seem to be responsible for any change in LAD assignments between 2001 and 2011.
- 4.7 An authority’s rural-related population may have changed over time due to technical differences between identifying Hub Towns and Larger Market Towns. For example, the rural-share test and concentration tests in RUCLAD 2011 resulted in the exclusion of Alsager and Middlewich as Hub Towns, changing the classification of Cheshire East unitary authority from the former ‘R50’ class to 'urban with significant rural'. In contrast, Minster was not a Larger Market Town but is classified as a Hub Town, resulting in Swale authority moving to the ‘largely rural’ category from the former 'significant rural' category.

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## Annex 1: Built-up areas (settlements) identified as Hub Towns

| Built-up area Hub Town                  | Built-up area code | Built-up area population | Within local authority district(s)         | Local authority district code(s) 2011 |
|---|--------------------|--------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Alton (East Hampshire) BUA              | E34003769          | 18,261                   | East Hampshire                             | E07000085                             |
| Amesbury BUA                            | E34001982          | 10,116                   | Wiltshire                                  | E06000054                             |
| Amphill BUA                             | E34004222          | 20,026                   | Central Bedfordshire                       | E06000056                             |
| Ashby-de-la-Zouch BUA                   | E34003491          | 12,370                   | North West Leicestershire                  | E07000134                             |
| Ashington (Northumberland) BUA          | E34001445          | 27,670                   | Northumberland                             | E06000048                             |
| Atherstone BUA                          | E34004986          | 11,237                   | North Warwickshire & Hinckley and Bosworth | E07000218 / E07000132                 |
| Attleborough BUA                        | E34003517          | 10,549                   | Breckland                                  | E07000143                             |
| Barnoldswick BUA                        | E34000115          | 10,435                   | Pendle                                     | E07000122                             |
| Beccles BUA                             | E34003308          | 13,868                   | Waveney & South Norfolk                    | E07000206 / E07000149                 |
| * Berkhamsted BUA                       | E34004594          | 21,997                   | Dacorum                                    | E07000096                             |
| Berwick-upon-Tweed BUA                  | E34004204          | 13,265                   | Northumberland                             | E06000048                             |
| Bideford BUA                            | E34005044          | 28,672                   | Torridge                                   | E07000046                             |
| Biggleswade BUA                         | E34002609          | 16,551                   | Central Bedfordshire                       | E06000056                             |
| Bishop Auckland BUA                     | E34004911          | 26,050                   | County Durham                              | E06000047                             |
| Blandford Forum BUA                     | E34004125          | 11,694                   | North Dorset                               | E07000050                             |
| Bodmin BUA                              | E34001604          | 14,614                   | Cornwall                                   | E06000052                             |
| Bordon BUA                              | E34004641          | 20,978                   | East Hampshire                             | E07000085                             |
| Bourne BUA                              | E34003418          | 13,961                   | South Kesteven                             | E07000141                             |
| Brackley BUA                            | E34000857          | 13,018                   | South Northamptonshire                     | E07000155                             |
| Bridgnorth BUA                          | E34004785          | 12,657                   | Shropshire                                 | E06000051                             |
| Bridport BUA                            | E34004484          | 13,737                   | West Dorset                                | E07000052                             |
| Brixham BUA                             | E34003104          | 16,693                   | Torbay                                     | E06000027                             |
| * Brough (East Riding of Yorkshire) BUA | E34004944          | 19,904                   | East Riding of Yorkshire                   | E06000011                             |
| Buckingham BUA                          | E34000850          | 12,890                   | Aylesbury Vale                             | E07000004                             |
| Burnham-on-Sea BUA                      | E34004580          | 23,325                   | Sedgemoor                                  | E07000188                             |
| Buxton (High Peak) BUA                  | E34004138          | 22,115                   | High Peak                                  | E07000037                             |
| Calne BUA                               | E34003294          | 17,274                   | Wiltshire                                  | E06000054                             |
| Carterton BUA                           | E34004919          | 16,364                   | West Oxfordshire                           | E07000181                             |
| Catterick Garrison BUA                  | E34004346          | 11,804                   | Richmondshire                              | E07000166                             |
| Chard BUA                               | E34000290          | 13,074                   | South Somerset                             | E07000189                             |
| Chatteris BUA                           | E34003102          | 10,298                   | Fenland                                    | E07000010                             |
| Cheadle BUA                             | E34003425          | 11,404                   | Staffordshire Moorlands                    | E07000198                             |
| Cinderford BUA                          | E34004957          | 12,942                   | Forest of Dean                             | E07000080                             |
| Cirencester BUA                         | E34005029          | 17,153                   | Cotswold                                   | E07000079                             |
| Clevedon BUA                            | E34003928          | 21,002                   | North Somerset                             | E06000024                             |
| Clitheroe BUA                           | E34001416          | 14,765                   | Ribble Valley                              | E07000124                             |
| Coleford (Forest of Dean) BUA           | E34004910          | 10,397                   | Forest of Dean                             | E07000080                             |
| Congleton BUA                           | E34003723          | 26,178                   | Cheshire East                              | E06000049                             |
| Consett BUA                             | E34004552          | 29,137                   | County Durham & Northumberland             | E06000047 / E06000048                 |
| Cowes BUA                               | E34005011          | 21,226                   | Isle of Wight                              | E06000046                             |
| Cranleigh BUA                           | E34004800          | 11,082                   | Waverley                                   | E07000216                             |
| Croesowallt BUA                         | E34002877          | 18,743                   | Shropshire                                 | E06000051                             |
| Crowborough BUA                         | E34004388          | 20,607                   | Wealden                                    | E07000065                             |
| Daventry BUA                            | E34000473          | 23,879                   | Daventry                                   | E07000151                             |
| Dawlish BUA                             | E34001067          | 11,312                   | Teignbridge                                | E07000045                             |
| Dereham BUA                             | E34002816          | 20,651                   | Breckland                                  | E07000143                             |
| Devizes BUA                             | E34001645          | 18,064                   | Wiltshire                                  | E06000054                             |
| Didcot BUA                              | E34004758          | 29,341                   | South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse    | E07000179 / E07000180                 |
| Diss BUA                                | E34004767          | 10,734                   | South Norfolk & Mid Suffolk                | E07000149 / E07000203                 |
| Dorchester (West Dorset) BUA            | E34000016          | 19,060                   | West Dorset                                | E07000052                             |
| Dorking BUA                             | E34004809          | 17,747                   | Mole Valley                                | E07000210                             |
| Downham Market BUA                      | E34000027          | 10,884                   | King's Lynn and West Norfolk               | E07000146                             |
| Driffield BUA                           | E34001493          | 13,080                   | East Riding of Yorkshire                   | E06000011                             |
| Droitwich BUA                           | E34004685          | 23,834                   | Wychavon                                   | E07000238                             |
| Dursley BUA                             | E34004711          | 14,992                   | Stroud                                     | E07000082                             |
| * Earl Shilton BUA                      | E34004950          | 19,578                   | Hinckley and Bosworth & Blaby              | E07000132 / E07000129                 |

| <b>Built-up area Hub Town</b>    | <b>Built-up area code</b> | <b>Built-up area population</b> | <b>Within local authority district(s)</b>               | <b>Local authority district code(s) 2011</b> |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Ely BUA                          | E34000020                 | 19,090                          | <i>East Cambridgeshire</i>                              | <i>E07000009</i>                             |
| Evesham BUA                      | E34004292                 | 23,576                          | <i>Wychavon</i>   | <i>E07000238</i>                             |
| Faversham BUA                    | E34004278                 | 19,829                          | <i>Swale</i>  | <i>E07000113</i>                             |
| Felixstowe BUA                   | E34004644                 | 29,171                          | <i>Suffolk Coastal</i>                                  | <i>E07000205</i>                             |
| Fleetwood BUA                    | E34003462                 | 25,359                          | <i>Wyre</i>   | <i>E07000128</i>                             |
| Frome BUA                        | E34000692                 | 26,203                          | <i>Mendip</i>   | <i>E07000187</i>                             |
| Gainsborough BUA                 | E34004397                 | 20,842                          | <i>West Lindsey</i>                                     | <i>E07000142</i>                             |
| Gillingham (North Dorset) BUA    | E34002474                 | 11,278                          | <i>North Dorset</i>                                     | <i>E07000050</i>                             |
| Godalming BUA                    | E34004943                 | 22,689                          | <i>Waverley &amp; Guildford</i>                         | <i>E07000216 / E07000209</i>                 |
| Goole BUA                        | E34004857                 | 20,810                          | <i>East Riding of Yorkshire</i>                         | <i>E06000011</i>                             |
| Hailsham BUA                     | E34000755                 | 19,977                          | <i>Wealden</i>  | <i>E07000065</i>                             |
| Halstead BUA                     | E34001263                 | 11,906                          | <i>Braintree</i>  | <i>E07000067</i>                             |
| Harwich BUA                      | E34005034                 | 20,723                          | <i>Tendring</i>   | <i>E07000076</i>                             |
| Haslemere BUA                    | E34004734                 | 13,651                          | <i>Waverley &amp; Chichester &amp; East Hampshire</i>   | <i>E07000216 / E07000225 / E07000085</i>     |
| Haverhill BUA                    | E34000327                 | 27,041                          | <i>St Edmundsbury &amp; Braintree</i>                   | <i>E07000204 / E07000067</i>                 |
| Helston BUA                      | E34004834                 | 12,184                          | <i>Cornwall</i>   | <i>E06000052</i>                             |
| Henley-on-Thames BUA             | E34000430                 | 11,494                          | <i>South Oxfordshire &amp; Wokingham</i>                | <i>E07000179 / E06000041</i>                 |
| Hexham BUA                       | E34004191                 | 11,388                          | <i>Northumberland</i>                                   | <i>E06000048</i>                             |
| Honiton BUA                      | E34002446                 | 11,483                          | <i>East Devon</i>                                       | <i>E07000040</i>                             |
| Huntingdon BUA                   | E34002257                 | 23,937                          | <i>Huntingdonshire</i>                                  | <i>E07000011</i>                             |
| Ilfracombe BUA                   | E34002653                 | 11,184                          | <i>North Devon</i>                                      | <i>E07000043</i>                             |
| Ilkley BUA                       | E34004322                 | 14,809                          | <i>Bradford &amp; Harrogate</i>                         | <i>E08000032 / E07000165</i>                 |
| Immingham BUA                    | E34004847                 | 10,750                          | <i>North East Lincolnshire &amp; North Lincolnshire</i> | <i>E06000012 / E06000013</i>                 |
| Ivybridge BUA                    | E34000867                 | 11,851                          | <i>South Hams</i>                                       | <i>E07000044</i>                             |
| Kendal BUA                       | E34005015                 | 29,147                          | <i>South Lakeland</i>                                   | <i>E07000031</i>                             |
| Kidlington BUA                   | E34004616                 | 15,829                          | <i>Cherwell</i>   | <i>E07000177</i>                             |
| Knutsford BUA                    | E34002605                 | 13,191                          | <i>Cheshire East</i>                                    | <i>E06000049</i>                             |
| Leek BUA                         | E34004811                 | 19,903                          | <i>Staffordshire Moorlands</i>                          | <i>E07000198</i>                             |
| Leominster BUA                   | E34001545                 | 10,938                          | <i>Herefordshire, County of</i>                         | <i>E06000019</i>                             |
| Lewes BUA                        | E34003222                 | 17,297                          | <i>Lewes</i>  | <i>E07000063</i>                             |
| Louth BUA                        | E34001434                 | 16,419                          | <i>East Lindsey</i>                                     | <i>E07000137</i>                             |
| Ludlow BUA                       | E34003206                 | 10,515                          | <i>Shropshire</i>                                       | <i>E06000051</i>                             |
| Lymington BUA                    | E34004953                 | 16,446                          | <i>New Forest</i>                                       | <i>E07000091</i>                             |
| Mablethorpe BUA                  | E34000776                 | 12,531                          | <i>East Lindsey</i>                                     | <i>E07000137</i>                             |
| Maldon BUA                       | E34002041                 | 21,462                          | <i>Maldon</i>   | <i>E07000074</i>                             |
| March BUA                        | E34000055                 | 21,051                          | <i>Fenland</i>  | <i>E07000010</i>                             |
| Market Deeping BUA               | E34000508                 | 13,574                          | <i>South Kesteven &amp; Peterborough</i>                | <i>E07000141 / E06000031</i>                 |
| Market Drayton BUA               | E34001024                 | 11,773                          | <i>Shropshire</i>                                       | <i>E06000051</i>                             |
| Market Harborough BUA            | E34004281                 | 22,911                          | <i>Harborough</i>                                       | <i>E07000131</i>                             |
| * Marlow BUA                     | E34004673                 | 18,261                          | <i>Wycombe &amp; Windsor and Maidenhead</i>             | <i>E07000007 / E06000040</i>                 |
| Matlock BUA                      | E34004225                 | 14,956                          | <i>Derbyshire Dales</i>                                 | <i>E07000035</i>                             |
| Melksham BUA                     | E34004479                 | 19,357                          | <i>Wiltshire</i>  | <i>E06000054</i>                             |
| Melton Mowbray BUA               | E34004343                 | 27,158                          | <i>Melton</i>   | <i>E07000133</i>                             |
| Midsomer Norton/Radstock BUA     | E34005049                 | 27,136                          | <i>Bath and North East Somerset &amp; Mendip</i>        | <i>E06000022 / E07000187</i>                 |
| Mildenhall BUA                   | E34004588                 | 14,382                          | <i>Forest Heath</i>                                     | <i>E07000201</i>                             |
| Minehead BUA                     | E34000469                 | 11,981                          | <i>West Somerset</i>                                    | <i>E07000191</i>                             |
| Minster (Swale) BUA              | E34004619                 | 22,167                          | <i>Swale</i>  | <i>E07000113</i>                             |
| Morpeth BUA                      | E34004229                 | 14,403                          | <i>Northumberland</i>                                   | <i>E06000048</i>                             |
| * Nailsea BUA                    | E34004581                 | 20,543                          | <i>North Somerset</i>                                   | <i>E06000024</i>                             |
| Nantwich BUA                     | E34000994                 | 17,226                          | <i>Cheshire East</i>                                    | <i>E06000049</i>                             |
| Newmarket BUA                    | E34001461                 | 20,384                          | <i>Forest Heath &amp; East Cambridgeshire</i>           | <i>E07000201 / E07000009</i>                 |
| Newport (Isle of Wight) BUA      | E34001267                 | 24,884                          | <i>Isle of Wight</i>                                    | <i>E06000046</i>                             |
| Newport (Telford and Wrekin) BUA | E34002854                 | 12,741                          | <i>Telford and Wrekin</i>                               | <i>E06000020</i>                             |
| Newquay BUA                      | E34002180                 | 20,189                          | <i>Cornwall</i>   | <i>E06000052</i>                             |
| Newton Aycliffe BUA              | E34002689                 | 25,964                          | <i>County Durham &amp; Darlington</i>                   | <i>E06000047 / E06000005</i>                 |
| North Walsham BUA                | E34003606                 | 12,463                          | <i>North Norfolk</i>                                    | <i>E07000147</i>                             |
| Northallerton BUA                | E34000922                 | 16,832                          | <i>Hambleton</i>  | <i>E07000164</i>                             |
| Norton-on-Derwent/Malton BUA     | E34004960                 | 11,937                          | <i>Ryedale</i>  | <i>E07000167</i>                             |
| Oakham BUA                       | E34001373                 | 10,922                          | <i>Rutland</i>  | <i>E06000017</i>                             |

| <b>Built-up area Hub Town</b>    | <b>Built-up area code</b> | <b>Built-up area population</b> | <b>Within local authority district(s)</b>              | <b>Local authority district code(s) 2011</b> |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Penrith BUA                      | E34000039                 | 15,181                          | <i>Eden</i>  | <i>E07000030</i>                             |
| Penzance BUA                     | E34004797                 | 19,872                          | <i>Cornwall</i>  | <i>E06000052</i>                             |
| Petersfield BUA                  | E34001430                 | 14,974                          | <i>East Hampshire</i>                                  | <i>E07000085</i>                             |
| Prudhoe BUA                      | E34004966                 | 12,075                          | <i>Northumberland</i>                                  | <i>E06000048</i>                             |
| Retford BUA                      | E34001504                 | 22,023                          | <i>Bassetlaw</i>                                       | <i>E07000171</i>                             |
| Ringwood BUA                     | E34004899                 | 14,084                          | <i>New Forest</i>                                      | <i>E07000091</i>                             |
| Ripon BUA                        | E34002624                 | 16,363                          | <i>Harrogate</i>                                       | <i>E07000165</i>                             |
| Ross-on-Wye BUA                  | E34000710                 | 10,582                          | <i>Herefordshire, County of</i>                        | <i>E06000019</i>                             |
| Royston BUA                      | E34000067                 | 15,781                          | <i>North Hertfordshire</i>                             | <i>E07000099</i>                             |
| Rugeley BUA                      | E34002554                 | 24,033                          | <i>Cannock Chase &amp; Lichfield</i>                   | <i>E07000192 / E07000194</i>                 |
| Ryde BUA                         | E34005000                 | 26,082                          | <i>Isle of Wight</i>                                   | <i>E06000046</i>                             |
| Saffron Walden BUA               | E34002562                 | 15,210                          | <i>Uttlesford</i>                                      | <i>E07000077</i>                             |
| Sandbach BUA                     | E34004336                 | 17,976                          | <i>Cheshire East</i>                                   | <i>E06000049</i>                             |
| Sandown/Shanklin BUA             | E34004806                 | 21,374                          | <i>Isle of Wight</i>                                   | <i>E06000046</i>                             |
| Sandy BUA                        | E34004794                 | 11,657                          | <i>Central Bedfordshire</i>                            | <i>E06000056</i>                             |
| Selby BUA                        | E34005037                 | 24,859                          | <i>Selby</i>   | <i>E07000169</i>                             |
| Selsey BUA                       | E34002637                 | 10,550                          | <i>Chichester</i>                                      | <i>E07000225</i>                             |
| Sevenoaks BUA                    | E34004987                 | 29,506                          | <i>Sevenoaks</i>                                       | <i>E07000111</i>                             |
| Sheerness BUA                    | E34001491                 | 11,938                          | <i>Swale</i>   | <i>E07000113</i>                             |
| Shepton Mallet BUA               | E34004415                 | 10,369                          | <i>Mendip</i>  | <i>E07000187</i>                             |
| Sidmouth BUA                     | E34000796                 | 12,569                          | <i>East Devon</i>                                      | <i>E07000040</i>                             |
| Skegness BUA                     | E34004327                 | 24,876                          | <i>East Lindsey</i>                                    | <i>E07000137</i>                             |
| Skipton BUA                      | E34003174                 | 14,623                          | <i>Craven</i>  | <i>E07000163</i>                             |
| Sleaford BUA                     | E34003071                 | 17,359                          | <i>North Kesteven</i>                                  | <i>E07000139</i>                             |
| * South Elmsall/South Kirkby BUA | E34004896                 | 18,899                          | <i>Wakefield</i>                                       | <i>E08000036</i>                             |
| St Austell BUA                   | E34004956                 | 25,447                          | <i>Cornwall</i>  | <i>E06000052</i>                             |
| St Ives (Huntingdonshire) BUA    | E34004769                 | 19,519                          | <i>Huntingdonshire</i>                                 | <i>E07000011</i>                             |
| Stamford BUA                     | E34004894                 | 20,592                          | <i>South Kesteven &amp; Peterborough &amp; Rutland</i> | <i>E07000141 / E06000031 / E06000017</i>     |
| Stocksbridge BUA                 | E34003743                 | 13,069                          | <i>Sheffield</i>                                       | <i>E08000019</i>                             |
| Stone (Stafford) BUA             | E34004421                 | 16,385                          | <i>Stafford</i>  | <i>E07000197</i>                             |
| Stourport-on-Severn BUA          | E34004706                 | 20,586                          | <i>Wyre Forest &amp; Wychavon</i>                      | <i>E07000239 / E07000238</i>                 |
| Stowmarket BUA                   | E34004865                 | 21,028                          | <i>Mid Suffolk</i>                                     | <i>E07000203</i>                             |
| Stratford-upon-Avon BUA          | E34004210                 | 27,830                          | <i>Stratford-upon-Avon</i>                             | <i>E07000221</i>                             |
| Street BUA                       | E34000656                 | 12,911                          | <i>Mendip</i>  | <i>E07000187</i>                             |
| Sudbury BUA                      | E34002053                 | 22,213                          | <i>Babergh</i>   | <i>E07000200</i>                             |
| Swanage BUA                      | E34004282                 | 10,454                          | <i>Purbeck</i>   | <i>E07000051</i>                             |
| Tadley BUA                       | E34004604                 | 15,836                          | <i>Basingstoke and Deane</i>                           | <i>E07000084</i>                             |
| Tavistock BUA                    | E34004090                 | 12,280                          | <i>West Devon</i>                                      | <i>E07000047</i>                             |
| Teignmouth BUA                   | E34004878                 | 17,463                          | <i>Teignbridge</i>                                     | <i>E07000045</i>                             |
| Tewkesbury BUA                   | E34004442                 | 19,778                          | <i>Tewkesbury &amp; Wychavon</i>                       | <i>E07000083 / E07000238</i>                 |
| Thame BUA                        | E34004485                 | 11,329                          | <i>South Oxfordshire</i>                               | <i>E07000179</i>                             |
| Thetford BUA                     | E34004143                 | 24,833                          | <i>Breckland</i>                                       | <i>E07000143</i>                             |
| Thornbury BUA                    | E34000645                 | 11,687                          | <i>South Gloucestershire</i>                           | <i>E06000025</i>                             |
| Thorne BUA                       | E34004742                 | 17,295                          | <i>Doncaster</i>                                       | <i>E08000017</i>                             |
| Tiverton BUA                     | E34003112                 | 19,544                          | <i>Mid Devon</i>                                       | <i>E07000042</i>                             |
| Todmorden BUA                    | E34003742                 | 11,690                          | <i>Calderdale</i>                                      | <i>E08000033</i>                             |
| Tring BUA                        | E34002511                 | 11,929                          | <i>Dacorum</i>   | <i>E07000096</i>                             |
| Truro BUA                        | E34004757                 | 23,041                          | <i>Cornwall</i>  | <i>E06000052</i>                             |
| Uckfield BUA                     | E34004591                 | 18,452                          | <i>Wealden</i>   | <i>E07000065</i>                             |
| Ulverston BUA                    | E34000573                 | 11,356                          | <i>South Lakeland</i>                                  | <i>E07000031</i>                             |
| Uttoxeter BUA                    | E34003596                 | 13,089                          | <i>East Staffordshire</i>                              | <i>E07000193</i>                             |
| Verwood BUA                      | E34002917                 | 13,360                          | <i>East Dorset</i>                                     | <i>E07000049</i>                             |
| Wallingford BUA                  | E34005025                 | 10,348                          | <i>South Oxfordshire</i>                               | <i>E07000179</i>                             |
| Walton-on-the-Naze BUA           | E34004815                 | 17,458                          | <i>Tendring</i>  | <i>E07000076</i>                             |
| Wantage BUA                      | E34003553                 | 18,505                          | <i>Vale of White Horse</i>                             | <i>E07000180</i>                             |
| Warminster BUA                   | E34004483                 | 17,490                          | <i>Wiltshire</i>                                       | <i>E06000054</i>                             |

| <b>Built-up area Hub Town</b>  | <b>Built-up area code</b> | <b>Built-up area population</b> | <b>Within local authority district(s)</b> | <b>Local authority district code(s) 2011</b> |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|---|--|
| Wellington (Taunton Deane) BUA | E34004795                 | 13,822                          | <i>Taunton Deane</i>                      | <i>E07000190</i>                             |
| Wells BUA                      | E34004695                 | 11,343                          | <i>Mendip</i>                             | <i>E07000187</i>                             |
| Wetherby BUA                   | E34004992                 | 13,572                          | <i>Leeds</i>                              | <i>E08000035</i>                             |
| Whitby BUA                     | E34003687                 | 13,213                          | <i>Scarborough</i>                        | <i>E07000168</i>                             |
| Whitehaven BUA                 | E34004947                 | 24,900                          | <i>Copeland</i>                           | <i>E07000029</i>                             |
| Whittlesey BUA                 | E34003389                 | 12,745                          | <i>Fenland</i>                            | <i>E07000010</i>                             |
| Witham BUA                     | E34000527                 | 25,353                          | <i>Braintree</i>                          | <i>E07000067</i>                             |
| Witney BUA                     | E34004274                 | 29,103                          | <i>West Oxfordshire</i>                   | <i>E07000181</i>                             |
| Wootton Bassett BUA            | E34001070                 | 11,265                          | <i>Wiltshire</i>                          | <i>E06000054</i>                             |
| Workington BUA                 | E34005018                 | 27,120                          | <i>Allerdale</i>                          | <i>E07000026</i>                             |
| Wymondham (South Norfolk) BUA  | E34003864                 | 13,587                          | <i>South Norfolk</i>                      | <i>E07000149</i>                             |

\*indicates that the hub town criteria are met at the BUA sub-division level only

## Frequently Asked Questions

*Why is 10,000 population the determination of whether somewhere is rural or urban?*

This allows for consistency both over time and with other constituent countries of the UK. Since 1981, a minimum population threshold of 10,000 has been used in England and Wales to distinguish physical settlements (rather than administrative areas) to be considered urban. Although a variety of cut-offs have been used by different government agencies for specific purposes, a review of urban and rural definitions undertaken for a consortium of government agencies in 2001 recommended the use of the 10,000 threshold. The same threshold is used in Scotland and Northern Ireland - ensuring compatibility of definitions both over time and between countries.

*Why are some locations that are clearly in the countryside regarded as part of urban areas?*

This happens within RUC because of the precise configuration of particular statistical units (Output Areas) and of particular built-up areas. RUC classifies statistical units (OAs, LSOAs, and MSOAs) on the basis of the type of settlement in which their residents typically live. It takes account only of settlement without considering any other aspect of land use or land cover. Output Areas provide an exhaustive coverage of England and Wales. As they are designed so that each includes a roughly equal number of households, many Output Areas will embrace large areas of undeveloped land. Whether settlement included in such units is thinly dispersed across the OA, or (not unusually) concentrated at its edge depends principally on the algorithm used to generate Output Area boundaries. Such an Output Area will in every case be assigned under RUC to the category that appears to reflect the character of the settlement in which its residents live, regardless of the extent of open land. In some cases this may be an urban category, where the limits of a particular settlement impinge upon an essentially undeveloped tract of land. From a landscape perspective, this is perverse. RUC, however, classifies settlements and is designed to support analysis of the characteristics of their inhabitants.

The extreme case of OA E00027390 can be used to illustrate how the effect of Output Area definition protocols and Ordnance Survey built-up area protocols combine to generate effects of this type. Most of the dwellings within this OA lie at the limits of the Pennine fringe settlement of Uppermill which is considered to form part of Manchester (in virtue of Ordnance Survey protocols for defining built-up areas). It is because of the narrow gaps between settlements within a long chain that Uppermill is considered urban under these protocols. In virtue of the protocols used to delimit Output Areas, however, the OA in which these particular dwellings lie extends across Saddleworth Moor. The combination of protocols ensures that RUC treats the OA which might be a reasonable description of the typical setting of the dwellings but not of the unpopulated moorland. Extreme cases of this form where OAs have been 'perversely' assigned to the 'urban' domain can be readily identified on the basis of their areal extent.

### *Why are some local authorities with open countryside classed as urban?*

Most local authority areas include both urban and rural locales. An authority's position within RUC for Local Authority Districts depends on the combined size of its rural population and its rural-related population relative to the entire population of the district. The term 'rural population' refers to the number of people living in Census Output Areas whose dominant physical settlement form comprises settlements with less than 10,000 people. These Output Areas are identified in the Rural Urban Classification for Small Area Geographies. The term 'rural related population' refers to the number of people living in Hub Towns. A Hub Town is a physical settlement with a population of 10,000 or more people but less than 30,000 and additionally which satisfies particular tests confirming that it both represents a significant concentration of population and business and is well-placed to provide services to the residents of nearby rural areas. Where the rural population and the rural-related population components together represent 26% or less of the population of a district, that district is considered overwhelmingly 'urban' and assigned to one of three urban sub-categories depending on whether it is a free-standing town, represents parts of a minor conurbation, or forms part of a major conurbation

### *Why is my local authority classed as urban? / When does a local authority become urban?*

An authority's position within RUC for Local Authority Districts depends on the size of its *rural population* and of its *rural-related population* relative to the entire population of the district. The term 'rural population' refers to the number of people living in Census Output Areas whose dominant physical settlement form comprises settlements with less than 10,000 people. This is identified in the Rural Urban Classification for Small Area Geographies. The term 'rural related population' refers to the number of people living in Hub Towns. A Hub Town is a physical settlement with a population of 10,000 or more people, but less than 30,000 which also meets particular tests indicating that it represents a significant concentration of population and business, well-placed to provide services to the residents of nearby rural areas. Where the rural and rural-related population components together represent 26% or less of the population of a district, that district is considered urban.

### *Where can I find out if I am living in a Hub Town?*

The schedule of Hub Towns was published on 1st May 2014 at

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/307939/2011\\_Rural-urban\\_statistical\\_classification\\_for\\_local\\_authorities\\_interim\\_results\\_-\\_hub\\_towns\\_.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/307939/2011_Rural-urban_statistical_classification_for_local_authorities_interim_results_-_hub_towns_.pdf)

The listing is produced as Annex 1 of this User Guide.

### *Why is a rural-urban classification of local authorities needed?*

The present Rural Urban Classification of Local Authority districts updates a classification constructed ten years ago (updated to take account of changes in local authority jurisdictions which took place in April 2009) grounded partly on work related to the 2001 Census. The LAD classification provides a means of presenting and comparing data that do not exist for areas smaller than local authorities, and provides a vehicle for a consistent approach to summarising, communicating and interpreting data at this particular level of aggregation distinguishing between rural and urban settlement patterns. In contrast to the lower level elements of RUC, which are concerned only with the type of settlement in which resident of a particular geographic unit live, and the broader settlement context RUCLAD attempts to accommodate aspects of the character of localities that depend on urban-rural interdependence. It does this through identifying a group of settlements with a population in excess of 10,000 that are likely to play an enduring (though not unchanging) role as a service hub for a rural hinterland.

### *Which authorities have changed from rural to urban?*

Mid-Sussex (formerly 'R80') and North East Derbyshire (formerly 'R50') are treated as 'urban' under RUCLAD2011.

Within RUCLAD2001, two categories termed 'Rural50' and 'Rural80' were often combined to identify a set of 'rural' or 'predominantly rural' local authorities. Two previously classified as 'rural' in this sense have been assigned under RUCLAD 2011 to one of the three 'urban' categories. This has happened because taken together their 'rural' and 'rural-related' population components have fallen below 26% on the entire population of the district.

In principle, change of this type might result from a fall in the relative size of the rural component of population, the rural related component or both. A relative fall in the 'rural' population component may arise from differential growth in settlements of different sizes. Alternatively, changes in the protocols used by Ordnance Survey and the Office for National Statistics may in principle reduce the 'rural' population by treating a locale as forming part of an urban area rather than as a freestanding settlement.

In practice stark change in the classification of an authority has only resulted from a change in the 'rural related' component of population rather than in the rural population itself. Within RUCLAD 2001 the rural-related component was represented by residents of a subset of towns in the 10,000 and 30,000 population band which were identified as Larger Market Towns. For RUCLAD2011, the rural related population has once again been identified as a subset of towns with between 10,000 and 30,000 people, but the method for identifying them differs technically, and in recognition of this difference the towns themselves are described as Hub Towns. At the general level, towns in the two sets differ for three reasons. First, the population of some of the towns has increased above the 30,000 threshold and so they are no longer eligible for consideration. Second, some of the Larger Market Towns previously identified are not considered under current Ordnance Survey/ONS protocols to be free-standing settlements and hence are excluded. Third, differences between the criteria for identifying Larger Market

Towns and Hub Towns (although prompting inclusion of some towns not previously considered) has led to some further exclusions.

#### *How have Hub Towns been defined?*

Hub Towns constitute a subset of all towns in the 10,000 to 30,000 population band. Those towns included in the subset represent substantial clusters of households and business located at points which allow them to be able to provide services to a rural population. A series of tests set out in Bibby and Brindley, 2014, (Urban and Rural Classification of English Local Authority Areas and Similar Geographical Units: Methodology) is used to identify them. The aim is to identify a group of settlements within the urban domain that are likely to play an enduring (though not unchanging) role as a service hub for a rural hinterland.

The first test assesses the potential advantage for the provision of services implied by the concentration of households around any point (and is referred to as the '*residential concentration test*'). The second test is concerned with the extent to which that potential appears to be realized when the actual configuration of non-residential establishments is considered. This is called the '*non-residential concentration test*'. The third is concerned with whether there exists around a particular town a substantial rural population to be served. This is assessed by reference to a measure termed the anticipated rural share of service custom. This test is referred to below as the '*rural share test*'. To be identified as a Hub Town a settlement in the appropriate population size band must pass the rural share test and *either* the residential concentration test *or* the non residential concentration test.

#### *How are the boundaries of Hub Towns defined?*

The boundaries of Hub Towns are the limits of physical settlements defined by reference to Office for National Statistics / Ordnance Survey mapping for use with the 2011 Census. These are referred to as 'built-up areas' and are available from the Office for National Statistics Geoportal (see <https://geoportal.statistics.gov.uk/geoportal/catalog/main/home.page> for more information. In a small number of cases (indicated by an asterisk in Annex 1 of this User Guide) the geographic limits of a Hub Town are defined at the level of built-up area subdivision rather than an entire built up area.

#### *Why are towns above 30,000 population not Hub Towns?*

In developing the Rural Urban Classification of Local Authorities for 2011, consideration was given to the question of what upper limit if any there might be to the population of a Hub Town. From one perspective, the use of a threshold is not desirable. One of the criteria for identifying a Hub Town is the share of its business which is expected to be attributable to the spending of residents of rural areas. There is an in-built tendency for this share to fall as the population of the town or city itself increases (see Bibby and Brindley, 2014, Urban and Rural Classification of English Local Authority Areas and Similar Geographical Units: Methodology para 5.2), which might suggest that a cut off is not necessary or

appropriate. On the other hand, the previous work adopted a 30,000 population cut-off, and to depart from this practice would introduce easily avoidable discontinuities. Maintenance of the 30,000 population cut-off has therefore been preferred.

*Specifically how were the thresholds for Hub Towns defined?*

Each of the tests used to identify Hub Towns among places within the 10,000 to 30,000 population band - concerned with residential concentration, non-residential concentration and expected rural share of custom - each uses a specific cut-off or threshold. The particular cut-offs and the underlying rationale is set out in Bibby and Brindley (2014).

*My town has a market and serves the rural community. Why isn't it a Hub Town?*

To be included as a Hub Town, a settlement must in 2011 have been a freestanding town with a population of more than 10,000 but less than 30,000 people and also meet specific additional tests. Some 'towns' may not be considered by ONS/Ordnance Survey to represent freestanding settlements, but instead to form part of other larger settlements.

If the settlement is a freestanding town in the relevant population size band it still needs to pass other specific tests to be admitted as a Hub Town. The first is that the expected rural share of service custom (a measure calculated for the purposes of the classification and discussed in Bibby and Brindley (2014)) must exceed 10%. This test is not very demanding as the average share across England as a whole is 18%. The test thus serves only to exclude predominantly suburban towns and dormitory areas.

Finally, the town must represent a significant concentration of population and employment, - which is assessed by reference to the residential concentration test and the non-residential concentration test discussed in Bibby and Brindley, 2014, Urban and Rural Classification of English Local Authority Areas and Similar Geographical Units: Methodology. To be admitted as a Hub Town, a settlement must pass *either* the residential concentration test *or* the non-residential concentration. Together, these tests seek to exclude towns which are very substantially overshadowed by other nearby towns.

*Town X was regarded as a large market town in the previous classification, why isn't it now?*

There are three reasons why a settlement previously regarded as a Larger Market Town might not have been included as a Hub Town in the present work. First, eight settlements previously treated as free-standing towns by Ordnance Survey and Office for National Statistics are under new protocols considered to form part of a larger settlement, and so cannot be considered as candidate Hub Towns. (Ashton-in-Makerfield, Otley and Woodbridge provide examples). The second reason is that the population of a free-standing town might have increased above the 30,000 population threshold between 2001 and 2011, implying once again that it cannot be considered as a Hub Town. This affected 17 towns including Chichester, Cramlington, Deal and Lichfield. Finally it is possible that although

still regarded as a freestanding town in the appropriate population band, a settlement did not satisfy the specific tests required for admission as a Hub Town.

The specific tests seek to establish whether a settlement in the relevant population size-band actually provides a sufficient concentration of residents and businesses to serve as a Hub Town (rather than being overshadowed by one or more other towns), and whether it is well placed to serve a rural population (rather than being a suburban dormitory town, for example). This last issue was not considered in RUCLAD2001. Thirteen towns previously considered as Larger Market Towns (including Belper, Garforth, Guisborough and Yarm) were not identified as Hub Towns as they were overshadowed by much larger neighbours (Derby, Leeds, Stockton-on-Tees and Middlesbrough in these specific cases). A further eighteen towns previously treated as Larger Market Towns were not included as Hub Towns because they are not well placed to serve a rural population. These included Cobham (Surrey), Dronfield (Derbyshire), Neston (Cheshire) and Potters Bar (Hertfordshire). Here the modelled share of service custom was less than 5%, and thus less than a third of the value typical of England as a whole.

*Why is Town X a Hub Town whilst Town Y nearby isn't?*

There are many reasons that this might be the case. To understand why one of these towns is identified as a Hub Town and the other is not, it would be necessary to consider whether each separately meets the criteria discussed in Bibby and Brindley 2014, *Urban and Rural Classification of English Local Authority Areas and Similar Geographical Units: Methodology*. See also the FAQ *My town has a market and serves the rural community. Why isn't it a Hub Town?*

Procedurally, identifying any settlement as a Hub Town is independent of the identification of any other; there are no 'quotas' controlling the number of Hub Towns that might be recognised in any district or sub-region.

It is possible, however, that although there is no procedural reason that two nearby towns cannot both be identified as Hub Towns, in some circumstances competition between them and with other neighbours might make it unlikely that both would meet the criteria. Comparison of two towns in Cheshire East UA - Middlewich and Knutsford (13km away) - may serve to illustrate this. Both are freestanding towns in the 10,000 - 30,000 population band (with 13,600 and 13,200 residents respectively in 2011) and in both cases the expected rural share of service custom exceeds 5% of the total. They differ in their residential concentration scores. Knutsford's score on this measure is 3.29 comfortably above the value of 2.5 required for inclusion on this test. Middlewich on the other hand scores only 1.99, a reflection in part of its proximity to Winsford - a much larger centre with a population in excess of 30,000. Towns with a value for residential concentration of less than 2.5 may still be included as Hub Towns if their level of business concentration is substantially larger than their residential ratio would suggest - more specifically if it exceeds 2.97 (see Bibby and Brindley, 2014, *Urban and Rural Classification of English Local Authority Areas and Similar Geographical Units: Methodology*). Middlewich, however, scores only 1.90 on the non-residential ratio, confirming that it is severely overshadowed. Although Knutsford would be admitted as a Hub Town on the evidence of the residential concentration score alone, it also comfortably exceeds the non-residential concentration threshold with a score of 3.98. Comparison of these two towns thus

suggests the way in which competition between nearby towns sustained over a long period may influence their service offer, and hence their varying capacity to serve as Hub Towns.

*Why are you counting Hub Towns as 'rural' when the population cut off for rural is 10,000?*

Residents of Hub Towns do not form part of the rural population. They are, however, considered to form part of a 'rural-related' component of population.

*Does the inclusion of Hub Town populations mean the rural population threshold has been revised?*

Residents of Hub Towns are *not* included as part of the rural population. Since 1981, only residents of physical settlements with a population of less than 10,000 people are included within the rural population and this threshold remains in place. Residents of Hub Towns are considered as constituting a 'rural-related' component of population.

*How many Hub Towns are there?*

There are 182 Hub Towns in England.

*How many towns are not Hub Towns?*

At the time of the 2011 Census, there were 268 built-up areas in England (on the Ordnance Survey definition) with a population of more than 10,000 but less than 30,000. As 182 are recognized as Hub Towns, 86 of a comparable size are not included as Hub Towns.

*How many towns that were classed as Larger Market Towns last time are not Hub Towns now?*

In total, 56 towns previously classified as Larger Market Towns are not included on the Hub Towns schedule. Twenty-five Larger Market Towns were no longer free-standing towns in the relevant population band, a further 18 were overshadowed and 13 had too small a rural share for inclusion. Thirty Hub Towns appear on the schedule, however, that were not previously included as Larger Market Towns. Twenty of these were below the 10,000 population threshold in 2001; the remaining ten were previously excluded on the basis of assessment of their service offer.

*Which towns were large market towns last time but are not Hub Towns now?*

Those excluded because they are no longer considered free-standing were Ashton-in-Makerfield, Hedge End/Botley, Newton-le-Willows, Otley, Wimborne Minster/Oakley and Woodbridge. Those now exceeding the 30,000 population threshold (whether as a result of growth or redefinition) were East Grinstead, Ferndown/Three Legged Cross, Beverley, Burgess Hill, Chichester, Cramlington, Deal, Eaton Socon/St Neots, Falmouth/Penryn, Harpenden, Haywards Heath,

Heswall, Lichfield, Newton Abbot, Peterlee; Pontefract, Spalding/Pinchbeck, Winsford and Wisbech/Emnet.

*You have produced this classification for local authorities. Will this be done for other areas?*

In principle, it might be appropriate to apply the logic of RUCLAD to classify areas at scales broadly similar to Local Authority Districts, or at somewhat larger scales (such as counties, combinations of LADs at NUTS 3 scale, Fire and Rescue Authorities, Police Authorities, Passenger Transport Authorities, Waste Disposal Authorities and National Parks, for all of which classifications analogous to RUCLAD2001 were published by Defra together with similar classifications for former Primary Care Organizations, and for Parliamentary Constituencies, which are of somewhat smaller spatial extent). It is intended to release particular comparable classifications in future. These might classify, for example, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), Integrated Transport Authorities (ITAs), or more generally for additional areas for which it is sensible to produce statistics from a rural-urban perspective.

It should be appreciated that the merit of using the RUCLAD classification for this purpose rather than one which classifies administrative areas simply as aggregations of their associated Output Areas or other statistical units, rests upon the value of attempting to take account of urban-rural interaction, and the appropriateness of using the rural-related population for this purpose.

*Does the classification affect funding?*

Generally, RUC for Local Authority Districts has no direct implications for the possibility of attracting funds to support activities in local authority districts in any particular category. It does, however, have implications for the operation of the LEADER programme providing (an area based 'bottom-up' approach to rural development delivered through Local Action Groups (LAGs) within areas which they define). Under the LEADER programme for 2014-2020, rural OAs (within the Rural Urban Classification for Small Areas may be eligible for inclusion within LEADER areas). Territory within physical settlements with populations of 10,000 or more is not eligible for inclusion within LEADER areas ***except in the case of settlements recognized as Hub Towns (in the process of identifying the rural-related population).***

*How do I use the classification to generate statistics?*

To generate statistics using RUC, the categorical flags assigned to particular geographic units (whether small areas such as Output Areas or larger units such as Local Authority districts) must be joined to substantive statistical data files referring to units at that same geographic scale from the decennial Census or other sources. RUC provides at each scale a series of categorical 'flags' which describe the character of particular geographic units used for statistical purposes. At fine-grained scales, the attributes flagged are morphology and sparsity (as discussed in paras 1.5-1.6 of the RUC User Guide) together with indicators of change in category since 2001 and the reason for the changes. At the Local Authority District scale the attributes flagged are the rural population, the rural-related

population, the total population, and the RUCLAD category to which the authority is assigned.

*Can the Classification be used for planning applications?*

No. The Rural-Urban Classification either at the local authority district scale or the small area scale (for units such as Output Areas, Lower Layer Super Output Areas, and Middle Layer Super Output Areas) is very unlikely to be useful for this purpose. At the small area scale, the Rural-Urban Classification is designed to identify the types of settlement in which residents of an area typically live, and at the LAD scale it is concerned with an aspect of the character of an entire authority. Therefore, it is not suitable either for categorising land-cover in an area or the physical character of parcels of land on which planning consent might be sought. Local authorities' development plans frequently include policies applying to specific contexts within their jurisdiction which may or may not be explicitly delimited on a proposal map. There is no reason why the definitions of terms referring to settlement type and context used in the development plan should coincide with those used in RUC.