



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Local Planning Authority Green Belt: England 2017/18

- The extent of the designated Green Belt in England as at 31 March 2018 was estimated at 1,629,510 hectares, around 12.5% of the land area of England.
- Overall there was a decrease of 5,070 hectares (0.3%) in the area of Green Belt between 31 March 2017 and 31 March 2018. In 2017/18, ten local planning authorities adopted new plans, with the result being a net decrease in the overall area of Green Belt compared to 31 March 2017.



Planning

Statistical Release

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Introduction

This Statistical Release presents National Statistics on estimates of the area of designated Green Belt land in England and by local authority, as at 31 March 2018.

Context

England has a land area of just under 13,046,200 hectares (according to the Office for National Statistics mean high-water mark¹). Of this area only about 11 per cent is developed². Allowing for overlaps, about 40 per cent of the area of England (5.3 million hectares) is protected against development by one or more environmentally-protected designations. As well as designated Green Belt land, this estimate covers National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)³.

The Government attaches great importance⁴ to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

Green Belt serves five purposes:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

As stated in the National Planning Policy Framework⁵,

Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will

¹ <https://ons.maps.arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=467c0f126d164f17aa3f65561252f19a>

² Derived from Office for National Statistics [Built up Areas 2011](#)

³ The proportions of land in each local authority area are constrained by being Green Belt, National Park, an AONB or an SSSI were published in September 2017 in conjunction with a Housing Need consultation. They are available in the 'Publication Data' sheet at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/644783/Housing_Need_Consultation_Data_Table.xlsx

⁴ [National Planning Policy Framework](#) Chapter 13, MHCLG 2018

⁵ Paragraphs 143 and 144

not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance the beneficial use of the Green Belt, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land.

Local authorities are encouraged to regularly review whether their designated Green Belt continues to meet the five purposes of the Green Belt outlined above. Should the area no longer serve the stated purposes, an authority may consider whether other designations are appropriate, for example, Local Green Space⁶. As such, a decrease in the land designated as Green Belt does not necessarily result in a decrease in the amount of land protected from development.

It is also useful to consider this statistical release alongside the annual Land Use Change statistical release published by the department, which focuses on land changing to a developed use, in particular to residential development. Key information from the most recent Land Use Change release is available in the section titled 'Uses of the Data'.

Urban core areas

Green Belt land is distributed around fifteen urban cores. These are mapped in *Map 1* and listed in *Table 3*, which also gives the area of land associated with each urban core. The largest two areas account for 62 per cent of the total area of Green Belt land between them: the Metropolitan Green Belt (London area) and Liverpool, Manchester and West Yorkshire, at 32 per cent and 31 per cent respectively.

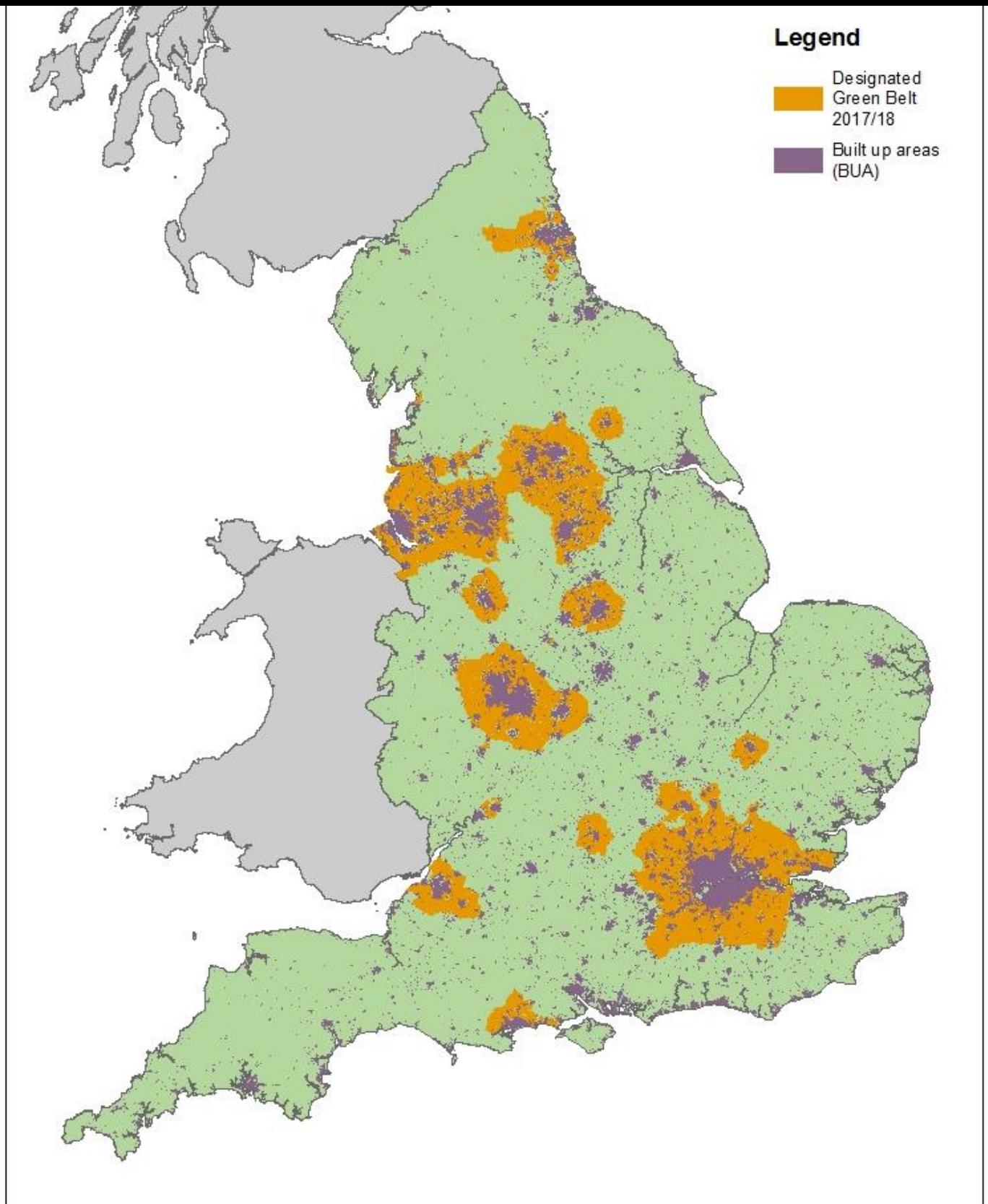
Extent of the Green Belt as at 31 March 2018

The extent of the designated Green Belt in England as at 31 March 2018 is shown in *Map 1*, below. It was estimated at 1,629,510 hectares, around 12.5% of the land area of England.

The 'Area by LA' table in the Accompanying tables shows estimates of the area of Green Belt land in each of the 186 local authorities with some Green Belt land in their area as at 31 March 2018. The 'Change in area by LA' table in the Accompanying tables compares estimates as at 31 March 2018 with the revised estimates as at 31 March 2017 by local authority. The orange areas in *Map 1* show the distribution of Green Belt land in England, surrounding fifteen urban cores. More details are given in *Table 3*.

⁶ Introduced in the [National Planning Policy Framework](#), DCLG, 2012. Local Green Space receives protection equivalent to Green Belt designation.

Map 1: Extent of Green Belt as at 31st March 2018



Produced by the Housing and Planning Analysis Division (HPAD), MHCLG

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Data sources
OS Boundary-Line,
MHCLG AGB1 Return

Revisions to 2016/17 estimates

Revisions are made each year to the published estimates for the previous year in order to accurately calculate the net change in Green Belt area. The revised Green Belt in England as at 31 March 2017 is estimated at 1,634,580 hectares. This is a decrease of 120 hectares on the previous estimate of 1,634,700 hectares published in September 2017. Further information on the reasons for amending last year’s Green Belt estimates, as well as a summary of the scale of revisions over the preceding statistical releases, is available under the ‘Scope and scale of revisions’ heading in the Technical Notes Section.

Net changes

Overall, there was a decrease of 5,070 hectares (0.3 per cent) in the area of Green Belt in England between 31 March 2017 and 31 March 2018.

In 2017/18, ten local authorities adopted new plans that involved a change in area of the authority’s Green Belt, resulting in a decrease in the overall area of Green Belt compared to 31 March 2017. The changes are set out in *Table 1*. There may be discrepancies between individual figures due to rounding, given that all figures have been rounded to the nearest ten hectares.

Table 1: Authorities which adopted new boundaries for the designated Green Belt 2017/18

Authority	Area of designated Green Belt land 31 March 2017 (hectares)	Area of designated Green Belt land 31 March 2018 (hectares)	Change from 31 March 2017 (hectares)
Cheltenham	820	550	-270 (-33%)
Cheshire East	40,730	40,140	-600 (-1%)
Coventry ¹	3,020	1,480	-1,550 (-51%)
Croydon	2,310	2,210	-100 (-4%)
Dacorum	10,690	10,640	-50 (-0%)
Sefton	7,870	7,390	-480 (-6%)
Sunderland ¹	3,500	3,400	-100 (-3%)
Sutton	620	610	-10 (-2%)
Tewkesbury	6,570	6,120	-450 (-7%)
Warwick	20,550	19,070	-1,470 (-7%)

Note: figures are rounded to the nearest ten hectares.

¹ Local authority also revised its estimate for 2016/17. Individual authorities may have provided more detail in Annex A.

Of the ten local authorities reporting changes to their designated Green Belt areas, two (Coventry and Warwick) contributed over 50% of this change between them. For Warwick, this represents a relatively small change in terms of their total Green Belt. With respect to Coventry, whilst the amount of land designated as Green Belt has been halved, according to the local authority’s

explanation for the change (see Annex A), a significant proportion has been designated instead as Local Green Space, and is therefore still under the same level of protection from development.

The reported decrease of 5,070 hectares of Green Belt during 2017/18 is the largest decrease reported in recent years, although the number of LAs making amendments has also increased in recent years, particularly from 2014/15 onwards: see *Table 2*.

Year	2010/ 2011	2011/ 2012	2012/ 2013	2013/ 2014	2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018
Number of authorities changing their Green Belt boundary	3	3	4	3	11	8	8	10
Net change in size of the Green Belt boundary (hectares)	0	-50	-320	-530	-2,130	-1,020	-790	-5,070

Note: the area figures are rounded to the nearest ten hectares.

Local authorities making changes to their Green Belt boundaries were contacted to obtain explanations for the changes, which are detailed in *Annex A*.

Longer term changes

Statistics on the area of Green Belt are available back to 1997, in the 'Area since 1997 – England' table of the Accompanying tables. Figures are, however, available on a consistent basis only from 2006, following the designation of 47,300 hectares of Green Belt land as part of the New Forest National Park in 2005. Those from 31 March 2014 are set out in *Table 3*.

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17 ^R	2017/18	% change 2013/14- 2017/18
England	1,638,630	1,636,500	1,635,490	1,634,580	1,629,510	-0.6
Urban core						
Birmingham	231,350	231,250	231,230	230,560	227,540	-1.6
Blackpool	2,600	2,600	2,600	2,600	2,600	0.0
Bournemouth	36,380	36,000	36,000	36,000	36,000	-1.0
Bristol and Bath	71,730	71,630	71,630	71,630	71,630	-0.1
Burton upon Trent	730	730	720	720	720	-1.4
Cambridge	25,100	25,100	25,180	25,100	25,100	0.0
Derby and Nottingham	61,400	60,700	60,700	61,380	61,380	-0.0
Gloucester	7,500	7,500	7,500	7,500	6,780	-9.6
Liverpool, Manchester & West Yorks	504,570	504,400	503,410	503,390	502,350	-0.4
Metropolitan (London area)	514,200	514,080	514,080	514,020	513,860	-0.1
Morecombe	1,740	1,740	1,740	1,740	1,740	0.0
North East	73,060	72,490	72,430	72,440	72,340	-1.0
Oxford	34,990	34,990	34,990	34,910	34,910	-0.2
Stoke	44,440	44,440	44,440	44,440	44,410	-0.1
York	27,940	27,940	27,940	27,940	27,940	0.0

^R Revised (in this publication) since the original estimate was published.

The area figures reflect any revisions made; they are rounded to the nearest ten hectares. The total of urban core

Green Belt areas will not therefore match the England total.
Some local authorities are included within the Green Belt of more than one urban core.

Accompanying tables

Additional tables, on total area and changes to land designated as Green Belt (annual), are available to download alongside this release. The three tables are as follows:

'Area by LA'	Designated Green Belt land - area by local planning authority as at 31 March 2018 and comparison with total land area
'Change in area by LA'	Change in Green Belt area between 31 March 2017 and 31 March 2018
'Area since 1997 – England'	Area of Green Belt land since 1997, England

They are available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/green-belt-statistics>.

In addition, a geographic boundary (shape) file setting out Green Belt area boundaries as at 31 March 2018 will be made available in due course. Files for previous years are available at <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/english-local-authority-green-belt-dataset4>.

Uses of the data

The local authority Green Belt boundaries are used in MHCLG's Land Use Change Statistics, to assess the level of development within the Green Belt, available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/land-use-change-statistics>

The summary statistics of land use changes within designated Green Belt land are:

- In 2016/17, four per cent of new residential addresses created were within the Green Belt. This is an increase from the two per cent recorded in 2015/16.
- In 2016/17, 51 per cent of new residential addresses created within the Green Belt were built on previously-developed land. This is a decrease from the 57 per cent recorded in 2015/16.
- Of the area of all land changing to residential use in 2016/17, ten per cent was within designated Green Belt, an increase from the eight per cent recorded in 2015/16.

Detailed statistics on changes within the Green Belt can also be found in the Land Use Change Live Tables, numbers P310, P311 and P380 to P383, accessible from the above link.

Annex A – explanation of changes in 2017/18

Cheltenham and

Tewkesbury

The Green Belt was fully reviewed during the preparation and examination of the Gloucester City, Cheltenham Borough and Tewkesbury Borough Joint Core Strategy. On adoption of the plan in December 2017 several areas of the Green Belt were released to enable development at Strategic Allocations and meet housing needs up to 2031. Other small alterations were made to the Green Belt to exclude areas where development had taken place since the last review.

Cheshire East

In line with the government-appointed inspector's recommendations, a number of sites were removed from the Green Belt upon adoption of the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy in July 2017, to assist in meeting the objectively-assessed needs for development in the borough.

Coventry

Following the adoption of the Coventry Local Plan in December 2017, based on evidence and requirements in line with the NPPF and associated guidance, 631ha of land was removed from the Green Belt to facilitate future development. A further 865ha of Green Belt land that was no longer considered to meet the five purposes of Green Belt was reclassified as Local Green Space, as this new and discretionary designation (introduced within the NPPF) better suited the land in question, which is locally significant in terms of its local character, is reasonably close to the community; and, where it is demonstrably special, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife. Our recently adopted Local Plan highlights that areas of green infrastructure delivered as part of the two new SUE's will be considered for Local Green Space designation in future Local Plan reviews.

Croydon

The Council recently adopted the Croydon Local Plan 2018 which saw changes to the Metropolitan Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land. Further information can be found here:

<https://www.croydon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/articles/downloads/review-greenbelt-metopenland.pdf>

Dacorum

The net loss in the Green Belt area stems from the recent adoption of the Site Allocations DPD, which allowed for detailed amendments to the boundaries and also took on board the release of several sites for housing signalled by the Core Strategy.

Sefton

The area of Green Belt in Sefton has reduced by 478.0ha (6%) as a result of the allocation of 18 sites for housing, 1 site for housing and employment purposes, and the identification of 49.0ha of safeguarded land in the Sefton Local Plan which was adopted by the Council in April 2017.

Sunderland

The Green Belt boundary in Sunderland has changed following the adoption of the International Advanced Manufacturing Park Area Action Plan (AAP). This allocates land for a large scale employment site targeted at the automotive and advanced manufacturing sectors. The AAP is a joint plan prepared in partnership with South Tyneside Council and is located within both local authority areas.

Sutton

A limited number of amendments were made to the green belt boundary in LB Sutton through the adoption of the Local Plan in February 2018. Firstly, 1.5ha of green belt was released for Gypsy and Traveller pitches, consisting of 0.6ha for new pitches and 0.9ha of green belt that 'washed over' the existing pitches. Secondly, amendments were made to a former 'Major Developed Site in the Green Belt', which has been redeveloped for a school and housing, to define a more logical and defensible boundary around the development.

Warwick

Sections of green belt removed as part of the Local Plan process, in order to accommodate the required growth in the District. Local Plan was adopted in September 2017.

Technical notes

Scope and scale of revisions

The change to the estimate of the area of Green Belt land as at 31 March 2017 was due to minor corrections of the area of twenty-three local authorities' Green Belts. The reasons given for the updated figures provided for 2016/17 are given in Table 4.

Table 4: Reasons for amending the Green Belt area as at 31 March 2018

Reason for updated Green Belt area	Number of local planning authorities	Size of change hectares
Incorrect figure previously submitted ⁷	16	-100
Positional accuracy improvements	4	-30
Change in boundary layer	2	20
Previous dataset incorrectly digitised	1	-10

The last four scheduled revisions have resulted in minor changes to the overall area of the Green Belt in England:

- the area at 31 March 2014 was revised from 1,638,610 hectares to 1,638,630 hectares,
- the area at 31 March 2015 was revised from 1,636,620 hectares to 1,636,500 hectares,
- the area at 31 March 2016 was revised from 1,635,480 hectares to 1,635,490 hectares,
- the area at 31 March 2017 was revised from 1,634,700 hectares to 1,634,580 hectares.

Individual local authority revisions can however be more volatile.

Data collection and methods

Estimates of Green Belt land in individual local authorities in England are collected annually (as at 31 March) on the 'Annual Green Belt' (AGB1) return via DELTA⁸, the department's electronic data collection system. Authorities were asked to confirm their published Green Belt estimates as at 31 March 2017 and indicate whether they had changed the Green Belt boundary in 2017/18. If the Green Belt boundary had changed, or if the estimated area as at 31 March 2017 had been revised, authorities were contacted to obtain an explanation and to provide a revised geographic boundary file (shape file).

Robust estimates of the area of Green Belt land in England by local planning authority were first published in 1997. Between 1998 and 2002 there was no further publication on the area of Green

⁷ Work undertaken as part of the move to a new data collection system, from Interform to DELTA, improved data validation and has resulted in nine authorities amending their Green Belt figure for the previous year by less than one hectare (to the correct decimal place). These authorities have been included under 'Incorrect figure previously submitted'.

⁸ The Annual Green Belt return was collected on DELTA for the first time in 2017/18; previously the data were collected on Interform. The type of data collected did not change, only the method by which the data are submitted.

Belt, but from 2003, Green Belt estimates were collated on an annual basis to monitor the department's target on the area of Green Belt land in England. However, figures were not published for 2005 due to the extensive quality assurance required in that year.

The analysis carried out by the department verifies the area of the shape files supplied by local authorities, and aggregates them (together with previously provided boundaries for authorities who have not amended the Green Belt boundaries) to provide a national estimate of the area of Green Belt in England at a particular point in time. Any discrepancies are followed up with the authority and a corrected shape file obtained.

If there has been an actual change in Green Belt, rather than an improved measurement of its extent, this is followed up with the authority to determine the reason for the change. The statistics produced allow a comparison of Green Belt area between authorities and between different years.

The data collected have been chosen to provide useful and relevant information on the level and trends in the extent of the Green Belt to users while ensuring that the burden placed on local authorities of completing the return is not excessive. Only authorities who have changed the boundaries of their Green Belt, or who have corrected the boundaries, are asked to supply shape files.

Data quality

Data quality summary

Trends in the area of Green Belt can be reliably and easily assessed both nationally and at a local authority level. The high response rate (consistently over 90%; 94% in 2017/18) and quality assurance procedures followed result in accurate estimates of the Green Belt which should be suitable for many different uses. The flow diagram (*Figure 1*, below) sets out the key steps in producing and quality assuring the Green Belt statistical release.

The minimum expected response rate for the Green Belt return is 90%. The response rate has been consistently above this, as shown in *Table 5*. In 2017/18, the response rate was 94%, with twelve out of 186 (six per cent) of authorities not completing the return. It is assumed for these authorities that there has been no change in the boundary area. They are:

- Bath and North East Somerset
- Chesterfield
- Chiltern
- Chorley
- Havering
- Hounslow
- Lichfield
- Newham
- Redbridge
- South Bucks

- Thurrock
- Waverley

Table 5: Response rates for Annual Green Belt return

Financial Year	Response rates
2013-14	97%
2014-15	99%
2015-16	97%
2016-17	98%
2017-18	94%

Assessment of data quality

In 2015 the UK Statistics Authority (UKSA) published a [regulatory standard for the quality assurance of administrative data](#). To assess the quality of the data provided for this release the department has followed that standard.

The standard is supported with an [Administrative Data Quality Assurance Toolkit](#) which provides useful guidance on the practices that can be adopted to assure the quality of the data they utilise.

The Green Belt Statistical release is produced by MHCLG based on data provided via its DELTA data collection system by 186 local authorities. An assessment of the level of risk based on the Quality Assurance Toolkit is as follows:

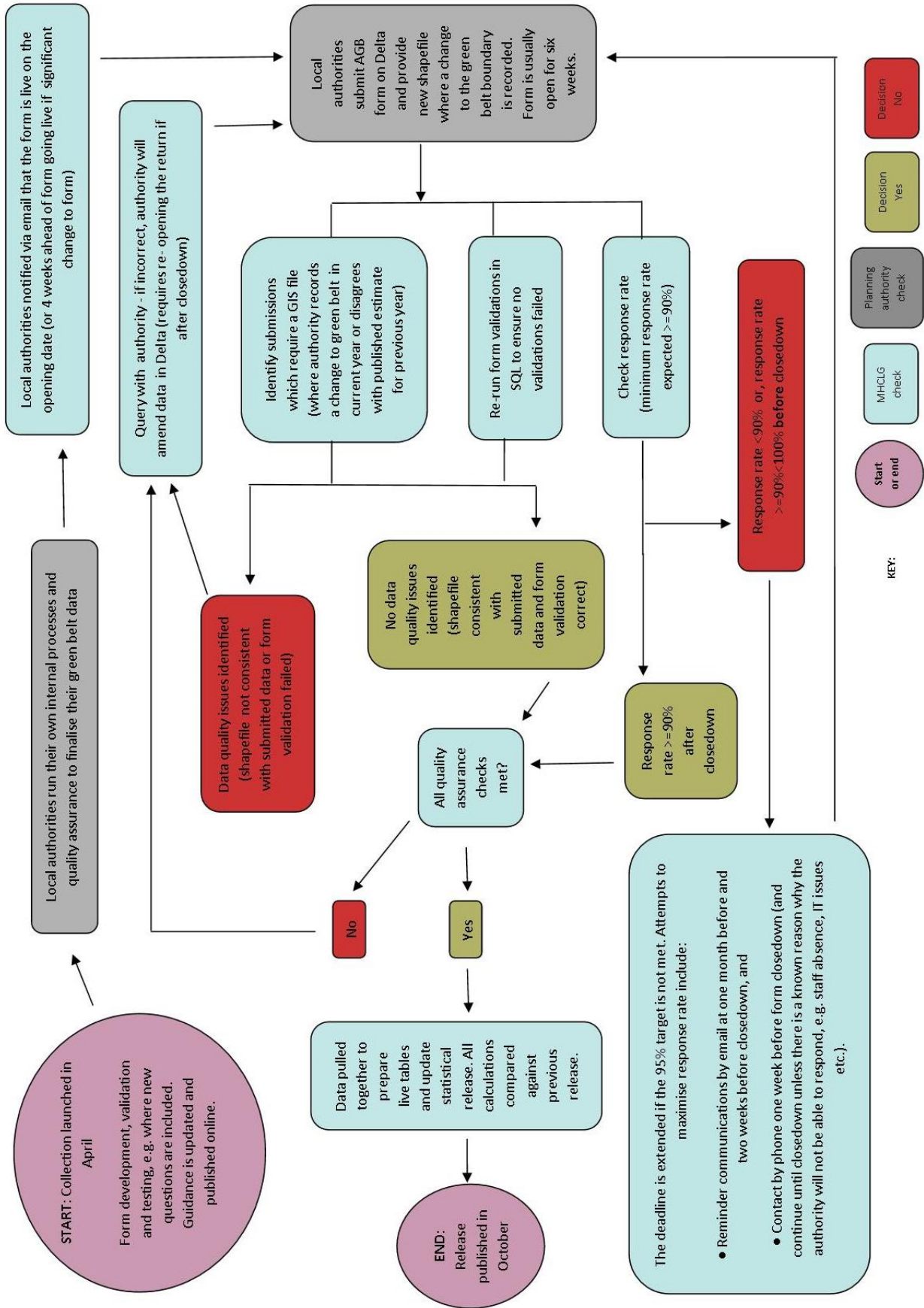
Risk/Profile Matrix Statistical Series	Administrative Source	Data Quality Concern	Public Interest	Matrix Classification
Green Belt Statistics	Local authorities 'individual planning systems	Low	Medium	Low Risk [A1]

The publication of Green Belt statistics can be considered as medium profile, as there is mainstream media interest, with moderate economic and/or political sensitivity.

The data quality concern is considered a low concern given that the data is collected from each local authority, via the data collection system DELTA which includes built in quality assurance checks. The data are then further quality assured by the responsible statisticians, who perform further detailed validation and checks, spotting and correcting any errors.

Overall, the Green Belt statistics have been assessed as A1: Low Risk. A full outline of the statistical production process and quality assurance carried out is provided in the flow chart in *Figure 1*. Further details are also provided against each of the four areas outlined in the Quality Assurance Toolkit.

Figure 1: Quality assurance flow diagram



Operational context and admin data collection

From 2007 to 2017, the department built and maintained its Green Belt dataset from local authority digital data supplied via the Interform return for local authorities, with a migration of this data collection to DELTA taking place for 2018 onwards. Authorities have also been required to provide the boundary of the Green Belt in their area on a suitable digital map to enable the publication of a shapefile for public use.

An England level dataset is created from the individual local authority boundaries, making sure that there is no overlap or duplication between different authorities. Trends in the area of Green Belt can be reliably and easily assessed both nationally and at a local authority level. All calculations are carried out using exact measurements, but published information is rounded to the nearest ten hectares. No imputation is carried out as authorities who fail to respond are assumed to have had no change in Green Belt. Authorities are given the chance to correct previously published estimates, whether due to actual changes that were not submitted in time, or because of more accurate Green Belt boundary information.

Communication with data supply partners

Authorities are supplied with comprehensive guidance to ensure that there is a common understanding of what information is to be supplied. Feedback on the return/statistical release is regularly sought from data providers and users, most recently regarding the move to DELTA data collection system, through a number of formats (Single Data List, the Central Local Information Partnership (CLIP) Planning Statistics Sub-group, and the data collection mailing list).

The form is usually 'live' for six weeks. Should the minimum response rate of 90% not be met by the deadline, an extension is agreed and the Data Collection team will continue attempts to maximise the response rate until the new deadline. However, regular contact with local authorities as well as reminder emails throughout the time the form is 'live', result in relatively high response rates, as outlined in the section on response rates⁹. Whilst errors are minimised by the high response rate on the return, nonetheless they may also occur due to authorities not submitting information in time; authorities who do respond are assumed, perhaps incorrectly, to have had no change in Green Belt.

QA principles, standards and checks by data suppliers

Local authorities may measure their Green Belt using different software to that used by the department (e.g. ArcGIS as used by the department or other popular software such as QGIS or MapInfo). Depending on the mapping software used, a combination of methods may be implemented, which could result in different outcomes. Differences between the data provided

⁹ Should any significant changes to the form be carried out since the previous year, local authorities will be reminded that the form is due to go live four weeks in advance of the 'go live' date.

could result from, for instance, different types of coordinate systems (geographic, i.e. a global or spherical coordinate system, or projected, i.e. on a Cartesian coordinate plane), or different scales of capture (e.g. OS Mastermap or OS landline).

As there are 186 different organisations supplying data to the department, it is not possible to fully understand and monitor each individual provider’s practical processes. To mitigate this lack of direct oversight, the department ensures additional effort is put into the QA checks carried out when the data is received. The department also reviews and updates guidance put out to local authorities each year, maintaining regular communication with providers throughout. Authorities are asked to record which mapping product was used to create the Green Belt boundary, to assist with reconciling any observed differences, and an indication on the level of quality assurance undertaken by the local authority is recorded as part of the final sign-off for this return. All boundaries are checked to ensure that they match the area of the Green Belt as recorded by the local authority on the Interform/Delta return.

Table 6 gives information on the methods used by the ten local planning authorities reporting a change in the area of Green Belt land during 2017/18, as reported on the AGB1 return.

Table 6: Method of estimating the change of Green Belt area in 2017/18	
Method	Number
Figure taken from GIS data file using Cartesian method (usually using ArcGIS or Mapinfo)	7
Figure taken from GIS data file using Spherical method (usually using Mapinfo)	2
Measured manually	1
Other	0
Total	10

Source: AGB 1 returns, question B5

Producers’ QA investigations and documentation

Whilst local authorities are expected to carry out their own checks on the data submitted, and are expected to specify the level of checks carried out in the form itself, discrepancies may arise due to use of different geographical software, or other different procedures used. Any such discrepancies are rare and are investigated with the local authority concerned to ensure that the calculated area of the Green Belt matches the boundary file supplied. The use of digital boundary files is much more cost effective and more accurate than the previous method of digitising paper maps. Given the increasing sophistication and accuracy of the software used to define and measure the Green Belt, estimates of its area should be very accurate and suitable for many different uses.

Local authorities may also incorrectly allocate a change to the wrong explanation, for example they might allocate a revision to last year’s figure as a ‘real’ change in the Green Belt or a ‘real’ change as a revision. These errors are identified either through the explanation for the revision supplied in the form, or through the explanation asked for (by email) to provide context for the real world change.

Revisions policy

This policy has been developed in accordance with the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for Statistics and the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government Revisions Policy (found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statistical-notice-dclg-revisions-policy>).

There are two types of revision that the policy covers:

Non-Scheduled Revisions

Where a substantial error has occurred as a result of the compilation, imputation or dissemination process, the statistical release, live tables and other accompanying releases will be updated with a correction notice as soon as is practical.

Scheduled Revisions

Local authorities are asked to confirm the previously published area of their Green Belt when completing returns for each annual statistical release. If they do not agree with this figure, or they have changed the digital boundaries to more accurately represent the actual Green Belt boundaries, and the difference between the revised and previously published areas is more than ten hectares, they are asked to submit a revised shape file to the department.

User engagement

Users are encouraged to provide feedback on how these statistics are used and how well they meet user needs. Comments on any issues relating to this statistical release are welcomed and encouraged. Responses should be addressed to the "Public enquiries" contact given in the "Enquiries" section below.

The department's engagement strategy to meet the needs of statistics users is published here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/engagement-strategy-to-meet-the-needs-of-statistics-users>

Notes

1. This Release is a web-only publication.
2. Details of officials who receive pre-release access to this statistical release 24 hours before publication can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics>
3. National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure they meet customer needs.

Devolved administration statistics

Information and statistics on planning for the devolved administrations can be accessed at the following links:

Scotland: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning>

Wales: <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/planning/planningstats/?lang=en>

Northern Ireland: <http://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/tools/about-statistics.htm>

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Information on Official Statistics is available via the UK Statistics Authority website:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/>

Information about statistics at MHCLG is available via the department's website:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics

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