

General Details	
Dataset Title:	Rural and Urban Area Classification for Output Areas, 2004
Domain(s):	Indices of Deprivation and Classification
Time Period of Dataset(s):	24 March 2004
Geographic Coverage:	England and Wales
Lowest Area Output:	Output Area (OA)
Supplier(s):	Office for National Statistics (ONS), Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), Communities and Local Government, National Assembly for Wales (NAW), Countryside Agency (CA)
National Statistics Data?	The supplier of this dataset has declared that it DOES belong within the National Statistics profile.
No. of Variables (excluding area names and codes):	Six
Scope and Purpose	
<p>The classification of rural and urban areas is the outcome of a project co-sponsored by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office for National Statistics (ONS); • Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra); • Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now Communities and Local Government); • Countryside Agency (CA); and • National Assembly for Wales (NAW). <p>The classification was developed in 2004 by a consortium co-ordinated by Prof. John Shepherd from Birkbeck College. The technical work was lead by Peter Bibby of University of Sheffield and the project also involved the University of Glamorgan and Geowise.</p> <p>The rural and urban classification of Output Areas (this dataset), Super Output Areas and Wards has been provided to enable datasets to be analysed according to the classification. This provides a powerful tool for the development and monitoring of rural and urban policies.</p> <p>Please Note: Output Areas do not have <u>all</u> the same codes as the SOA and Ward level Datasets. For SOAs and Wards the classifications for ‘Villages, Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings’ have been combined.</p>	

Details of the information held on this dataset are outlined below.		
Variable Name	Data Type	Variable Description
Morphology Name	Text	<p>The predominant ‘named’ morphology of an Output Area. That being either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Urban >10k' (Urban Settlements with greater than 10,000 population); • 'Town and Fringe' (Small Towns and Fringe areas that are located within the rural domain); • 'Village' (Villages that are located within the rural domain); <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Hamlet & Isolated Dwellings' (Hamlet & Isolated Dwellings that are located within the rural domain). ' <p>‘Morphology’ here means the form or structure of the settlement which includes this area - e.g. whether this area is part of a town, a village or an urban fringe etc. The 'morphology' of a given area is determined by the population density of the area and its wider surroundings - Annex 1 of the Methodology Report provides more details.</p>
Morphology Code	Numeric	<p>A code from 1-4 to denote the predominant morphology of an Output Area. The key being:</p> <p>1 = Urban > 10k (with a population of 10,000 or more); 2 = Town and Fringe; 3 = Village; 4 = Hamlet & Isolated dwellings.</p>

Context Name	Text	<p>The 'named' sparsity of an Output Area.</p> <p>Less Sparse = measure of local area <30km postcode density.</p> <p>Sparse = measure of local area >30km postcode density</p>
Context Code	Numeric	<p>A code to denote sparsity of an Output Area, where</p> <p>0 = Less Sparse;</p> <p>1 = Sparse.</p>
RUC01NM	Text	<p>The combination of the 'Morphology' and 'Sparsity' names to denote the Rural and Urban Area Classification name for an Output Area, where:</p> <p>Urban >10k - Sparse = Urban Settlements located in sparsely populated areas;</p> <p>Town and Fringe - Sparse = Small Town and Fringe areas located in sparsely populated areas;</p> <p>Village - Sparse = Villages located in sparsely populated areas;</p> <p>Hamlet & Isolated Dwellings - Sparse = Hamlet & Isolated Dwellings located in sparsely populated areas;</p> <p>Urban >10k - Less Sparse = Urban Settlements located in less sparsely populated areas;</p> <p>Town and Fringe - Less Sparse = Small Town and Fringe areas located in less sparsely populated Areas;</p> <p>Village -Less Sparse = Villages located in less sparsely populated Areas;</p> <p>Hamlet & Isolated Dwellings - Less Sparse = Hamlet & Isolated Dwellings located in less sparsely populated areas.</p>

RUC01CD	Numeric	<p>The combination of the 'Morphology' and 'Sparsity' codes to denote the Rural and Urban Area Classification code for an Output Area, where:</p> <p>1 = Urban >10k - Sparse 2 = Town and Fringe - Sparse 3 = Village - Sparse 4 = Hamlet & Isolated Dwellings - Sparse 5 = Urban >10k - Less Sparse 6 = Town and Fringe - Less Sparse 7 = Village - Less Sparse 8 = Hamlet & Isolated Dwellings - Less Sparse</p>
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Methodology - Background Information

The classification builds on the recommendations of a review of urban and rural definitions commissioned by the then Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (now Communities and Local Government) in 2001. The report concluded that it was appropriate for most policy purposes to employ the ‘physical settlements’ definition as represented by the Communities and Local Government defined ‘urban areas’ and to treat those with more than 10,000 people as ‘urban’.

Output Areas have been classified as ‘urban 10k’ where the majority of the population in the Output Area falls inside an ‘urban area’ with a population of 10,000 or more. All other Output Areas are treated as rural.

The methodology for the remaining ‘rural’ Output Areas focuses on all settlements of whatever size below the 10,000-population figure. The classification was constructed from an underlying settlement classification based on hectare squares (100m x 100m). For each hectare square a series of densities are calculated based on the number of addresses in a given hectare square and the surrounding squares. Every hectare square is then associated with particular settlement type: dispersed dwellings, hamlet, village, small town, urban fringe and urban. Secondly, each hectare square is given a sparsity score based on the number of people in surrounding hectare squares. For example, a square might lie within a village and be relatively sparse.

Output Areas (for Super Output Areas and Wards – see other datasets) are then classified by looking at the mix of hectare squares within them. All Output Areas are classified as either sparse or less sparse. They are then grouped into four predominant settlement types (urban 10k, town and fringe, village, hamlet and isolated dwellings).

It is possible to analyse Output Areas using one or both layers - For example, sparse Output Areas, village Output Areas, or villages located in sparse Output Areas. Although when analysing the latter, users MUST be aware that sparse relates to the surrounding area. Users should interpret the village-sparse Output Area ‘as a village that is surrounded by a relatively sparse population density’.

Concepts and Definitions

The classification enables each of the 175,434 Output Areas in England and Wales to be classified on the basis of context i.e. whether the surrounding area of a given Output Area is sparsely populated or less sparsely populated. Secondly, the classification enables Output Areas to be distinguished on a morphological basis - as predominantly urban or predominantly town and fringe, predominantly village or predominantly dispersed (which includes Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings). The key for these are shown below. The town and fringe, village, hamlet and isolated dwellings classifications are taken as being rural.

2005 Rural and Urban morphology indicator:

- 1 - denotes predominantly urban >10k
- 2 - denotes predominantly town and fringe
- 3 - denotes predominantly village
- 4 - denotes predominantly dispersed (hamlet and isolated dwellings)

2005 Rural and Urban context indicator:

- 0 denotes less sparsely populated areas
- 1 denotes sparsely populated areas

Data Classifications	
Standard Classifications used (if any):	Standard Names and Codes
Further Details about Classifications:	To access more information about the rural and urban classifications, a methodology report and introductory guide is available via the following web address: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/geography/nrudp.asp
Edit and Imputation Procedures	
Not relevant.	
Validation and Quality Assurance	
The Output Areas which are allocated to urban settlements (>10,000 population) agree with the ONS Census Output Area allocation to ODPM Urban Settlements 2001. The Output Area and Statistical Ward Rural and Urban Classifications presented here were open to public validation during April and May 2004 approx. 75% of the 100 respondents said that they were either 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the methodology and results of the Rural and Urban Area Classifications.	
Geographic Referencing	
<p>The classification is based on Output Areas created for the 2001 Census.</p> <p>The Rural and Urban Area Classifications were produced using the Royal Mail's 'Postcode Address File' (PAF) as packaged in its <i>Address Manager</i> product. PAF contains the postal addresses of premises together with a 10m resolution OS grid reference for the unit postcode allocated to each address.</p> <p>The underlying settlement classification is generated from the PAF by grouping every postal address on the basis of the hectare (100m x 100m) cell within which it falls. Using the 2001 Second Quarter version of PAF means the grid is virtually coterminous with information on the distribution of households from the 2001 Census.</p> <p>In all cases Output Areas, Super Output Areas and Wards have been identified using the Office for National Statistics Standard Names and Codes product.</p>	
Data Quality	
Relevance:	The rural and urban classification of Output Areas, Super Output Areas and Wards has been provided to enable datasets to be analysed according to the classification. This provides a powerful tool for the development and monitoring of rural and urban policies.

Accuracy:	It must be recognised that the rural and urban classification of Output Areas, Super Output Areas and Wards is based on the predominant settlement component within the relevant boundary.
Timeliness and Punctuality:	This dataset is the most recent version of the Rural and Urban Area Classification.
Accessibility and Clarity:	The characteristics of an Output Area shown on a map may appear relatively mixed in settlement type but it is the predominant component for example, 'village' or 'town and Fringe' settlement indicator, which is assigned to a given Output Area. Similar procedures are applied to Super Output Areas and Wards.
Comparability:	<p>This dataset can be compared with the following datasets released on the NeSS website:</p> <p>Rural and Urban Area Classification, Super Output Areas, 2004 Rural and Urban Area Classification, Wards, 2004.</p> <p>Please Note: Output Areas do not have <u>all</u> the same codes as the SOA and Ward level Dataset. For SOAs and Wards the classifications for 'Villages, Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings' has been combined.</p>
Disclosure Control	
The Office for National Statistics carries out a number of checks to safeguard confidentiality. In accordance with standard procedures this dataset has been reviewed and approved for release.	
Sources for Further Information or Advice	
<p>Background Information can be found on the ONS Geography website: http://nswebcopy/geography/nrudp.asp</p> <p>ONS provide general support on the use of UK geography for statistics. General enquiries: ons.geography@ons.gov.uk</p> <p>Information on the work of ONS Geography and geography of the UK: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/geography/default.asp</p> <p>ONS contact:</p> <p>Dev Virdee Deputy Director, Regional Economic Analysis and Allsopp Division Office for National Statistics Zone D2/12, 1 Drummond Gate, London SW1V 2QQ email: dev.virdee@statistics.gov.uk Tel: +44 (0)20 7533 5790 Fax: +44 (0)1633 652648</p>	

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