### 1.2 Urban and Rural Processes and Change in the UK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Word</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greenbelt</td>
<td>An area of protected rural land surrounding major UK cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbanisation</td>
<td>The growth of urban areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban Sprawl</td>
<td>The spread of the suburbs which causes a town or city to grow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counter-urbanisation</td>
<td>Population movement from urban to rural areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-urbanisation</td>
<td>The movement of people back into a city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deprived zone</td>
<td>An area that is perhaps high in crime, unemployment and antisocial behaviour and low in income.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commuter settlements</td>
<td>Rural areas dominated by people working in other places.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural depopulation</td>
<td>Migration of young people away from remote rural areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic migrants</td>
<td>People who move to find a better job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brownfield site</td>
<td>An area that has been previously built upon; e.g. a disused factory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenfield site</td>
<td>An area that has not previously been built upon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convenience goods</td>
<td>Low cost items that consumers buy frequently e.g. a newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison goods</td>
<td>Higher cost items that consumers buy less frequently such as clothes or a TV.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBD</td>
<td>Central Business District – The area of a city that contains mainly shops, offices and leisure activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Minority</td>
<td>A person who belongs to a different ethnic group of race e.g. British Indians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable Development</td>
<td>The ability to meet the needs of the present generation without jeopardising future generations to meet their needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commuter</td>
<td>A person who travels to another town/city for work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Urban areas of the UK

Urban areas of the UK contain zones with different characteristics. The Burgess model (right) helps to see how urban areas are structured. Not every urban area will perfectly follow this model though!

**A:** Central Business District (CBD): normally near the centre of the urban area where transport connections focus. Contains the **most expensive** land in the urban area and is therefore dominated by **retail and offices**. Often retail areas have been developed to attract consumers by using **pedestrianisation**, street festivals, and shopping malls.

**B:** Factory zone: where factories are traditionally located in cities, near to major transport hubs e.g. rivers, stations.

**C:** Inner city: Originally built to house factory workers, mostly containing rows/grids of terraced housing. This area is often being **gentrified** by young professionals, looking to get on the housing ladder and make a profit when they sell the house.

**D/E:** Inner/outer suburbs: contains semi-detached and detached housing, with more open space and larger gardens. Traditionally this would be inhabited by older, more wealthy residents. This is also the ‘commuter zone’ as residents will travel to the CBD or other cities for work.

#### Urbanisation and (sub)urban sprawl

As urban areas expand, the decision of where to build new housing is controversial. Do planners choose **greenfield** land (land not previously built on) or **brownfield** land (land that has previously been built on)?

Planners sometimes choose **greenbelt land** (green areas around the city which have previously had strict laws against any development) for new housing areas. There are reasons for and against building on this land:

**Reasons to build**
- There is a growing demand for new housing in the UK
- This housing needs to be affordable so that a range of people can live in the area
- Greenbelt land allows good access to transport like motorways and major roads. This will lead to suburban sprawl which would cause the merging of urban areas

**Reasons not to build**
- Greenbelt land is often near villages which might lose their character
- Some greenbelt land is on the flood plain of rivers so is at risk from flooding
- More traffic would be added to the motorways and major roads nearby
- There are bound to be environmental consequences of building on greenbelt land e.g. habitat destruction

#### Examples

- **Examples of areas experiencing counter-urbanisation:** SE England surrounding London, and West Oxfordshire linking to Oxford.
- **Example of a commuter settlement:** Bicester (commuting to Oxford)
- **Examples of areas experiencing rural depopulation:** Cornwall and North Wales (both are remote rural areas with no motorway connections).
**Rural depopulation** is the process of rural population decline. Less accessible rural areas can experience damaging rural depopulation. This occurs when a large proportion of the population (especially young adults) decide to leave an area.

Factors that encourage rural depopulation are:
- Lack of accessibility (isolation)
- Lack of entertainment/social life for young people
- Shortage of jobs

**Counter-urbanisation**

However, many rural areas in the UK are seeing counter-urbanisation grow their villages again. This is due to:
- The local road networks improving
- More people working from home (teleworking) due to better broadband access
- People who have lived in the city now want/need a ‘slower pace of life’ and more green space

**Socio-economic disparities in urban areas**

Urban areas often have **zones of affluence and zones of disparity**. Sometimes these neighbourhoods exist very close to each other.

Wealth and poverty can be measured by health statistics, household income, education levels and unemployment figures.

Often inner city areas can be more **deprived** as people with lower levels of education and lower paid jobs will buy the smaller, terraced housing in this area. However, recent trends have shown that these areas are being bought by young professionals, wanting to **gentrify** the area and improve its status into a zone of

**Shopping in the UK**

Over time, the UK’s shopping habits have changed significantly. One of the most recent changes is the negative change we have seen on the UK’s high street. Many are in decline due to:
- Out-of-town shopping centres opening on the edge of cities/towns offering free parking, undercover shopping and bigger stores with food and entertainment
- The growth of online shopping due to the rise of online retailers like Amazon and eBay
- The rise in price of the rent for shops on the high street compared to being an online store/renting in retail parks

**Sustainable living in UK urban areas**

As UK urban areas grow (urban sprawl), there is a significant need for new housing and buildings. There is a growing pressure for developers to ensure that new housing/transport routes are **sustainable** (see key words). They can do this by:
- Building affordable housing
- Ensuring facilities are kept local (reducing transport needs)
- Promoting schemes to reduce car usage e.g. cycle lanes
- Putting green technologies on new houses e.g. solar panels
- Using brownfield sites rather than greenfield sites
- Promoting recycling schemes

**Leisure in Urban Areas of the UK**

Urban areas often host large sporting events like the Rugby World Cup (2015). This benefitted a number of cities such as Newcastle, Leeds, Manchester, Cardiff and London. 16,000 people were employed directly as a result of the tournament, and many more were employed indirectly such as taxi drivers, hotel owners and bar staff. It is estimated that food and drink sales generated £32 million across the country.

These positive effects can bring about a positive multiplier effect, like the one shown below:

- Investment in local facilities e.g. stadiums
- Local businesses and local government make profits
- Visitors spend money in local businesses
- Large sporting event takes place

However, the tournament brought about negative effects such as:
- Traffic congestion and diversions
- Drunkenness in the streets
- Noise into the early hours of the morning
- Litter in the streets

**Ethnic Minorities in UK Urban Areas**

In many urban areas of the UK, there are often clusters of ethnic minorities. These people have often come to the UK in search of work, but it may also be due to family connections.

Clusters of ethnic minorities tend to develop because:
- They want to be close to family members/ others who speak the same language or have the same religion
- They can be catered for in retail - e.g. halal meat in a butchers
- Some find it hard to mix with UK culture and prefer to live near others of the same culture

An example of an area of ethnic minorities Grangetown in Cardiff where a large proportion of Cardiff’s Somali community live.

**Leisure in Rural Areas of the UK**

Rural areas of the UK are very popular with tourists seeking leisure opportunities because of the beautiful scenery, natural surroundings and opportunities for outdoor sports.

However, leisure in the UK’s rural areas have put considerable pressure on their natural resources.

The Lake District the north-west of England receives almost 12 visitors per year, earning the region £1 billion and creating 16,000 jobs.

However there are negative consequences such as:
- Footpath erosion on hills damaging the soil
- Homes being bought by ‘second-home owners’, pushing up prices for locals
- Few people in their 20s and 30s living there due to the lack of jobs outside the tourism sector
- Air and noise pollution from cars and coaches
- Noise pollution from waterskiing and speed boats

The Lake District is part of the National Park Authority (NPA) who control what can and can’t be built and how to manage to problems above.