

Demographic Change in Rural Areas

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Demographic Change in Rural Areas

Definitions of Rural

Office of National Statistics (ONS):

- In the 2001 Census each Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) was given a rural/urban classification
- This definition provides an accurate idea of the true rural population, but is difficult to apply in practice as it is generally not convenient (or possible) to analyse data or develop policy at this level of detail.
- Under the ONS definition, **19.1%** of England's population lives in rural areas

Defra:

- Classified local authority districts (unitary authorities are counted as districts in this classification) into six categories based on the proportion of their population living in different sized towns and settlements.
- This gives a much coarser definition, but allows policy development at district level and interpretation of many statistics available at district level.
- Under the Defra classification, **37.8%** of England's population lives in districts classified as "rural"

NOTE: All data sourced from ONS mid year population estimates/Defra

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Definitions of Rural

Office of National Statistics (ONS):

- Under the ONS definition, **19.1%** of England's population lives in rural areas:
 - **9.5%** in villages, hamlets or isolated dwellings
 - **9.6%** in towns or their fringe

- The ONS definition also identifies "sparse" and "less sparse" areas:

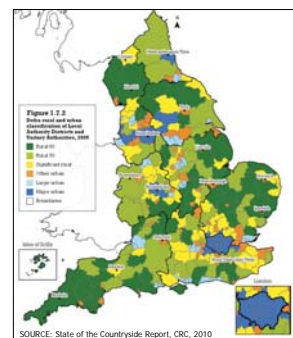
- **6.4%** of the rural population lives in sparse areas
- **1.4%** of the total population lives in sparse areas

Defra:

- Under the Defra classification, **37.8%** of England's population lives in districts classified as "rural":
 - **10.3%** in districts with more than 80% of the population classified as rural (R80)
 - **14.0%** in districts with more than 50% of the population classified as rural (R50)
 - **13.5%** in districts with more than 26% (or 37,000 residents) classified as rural (Significant Rural)

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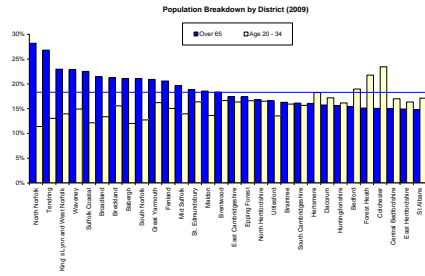
Rural England: The Defra classification



Demographic Change in Rural Areas

East of England's Population by Age

- There is considerable variation between districts – this variation is reflected nationally
- There is no correlation between the two age groups that show the biggest difference



Demographic Change in Rural Areas

England's Population Growth

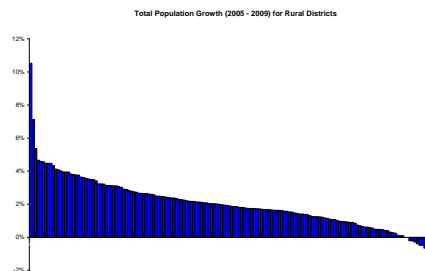
- The demographic profile is being driven by differential population growth
- Migration within the UK is the greatest driver of change in most rural areas



Demographic Change in Rural Areas

England's Population Growth

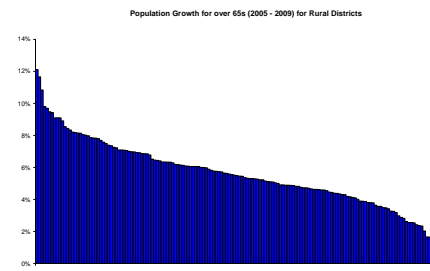
- However, there is considerable variation in overall population growth across rural England so we need to look to local factors for an explanation



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England's Population Growth

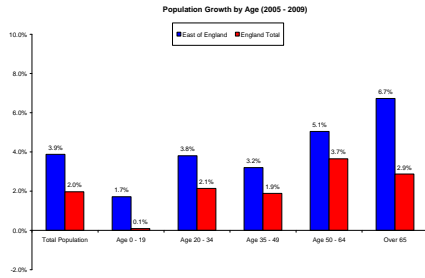
- Although higher than overall population growth, growth in the over 65's population across rural England also shows considerable variation



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East of England's Population Growth

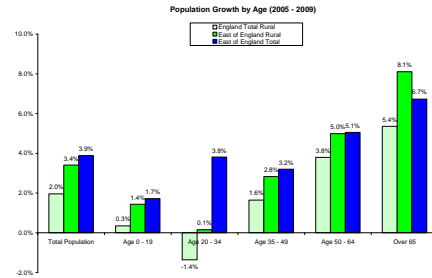
- Population growth across East of England districts is higher than the UK total
- This holds true across all age ranges, but the gap is wider for the very young and old



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East of England's Rural Population Growth

- Growth in the young is driven by the region's urban areas, but the growth in the older population is greater in rural areas



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For Discussion ...

- Do the policies pursued by the public sector (and others) adequately reflect the significance of the rural population?
- What are the implications of the key trends:
 - Increasing average of the rural population?
 - Out-migration of young adults?
- Given the large variations across the region and the country, how important is the emerging Localism agenda to addressing the issues raised?