

# AQA Geography GCSE

## Urban Change in the UK Detailed Notes

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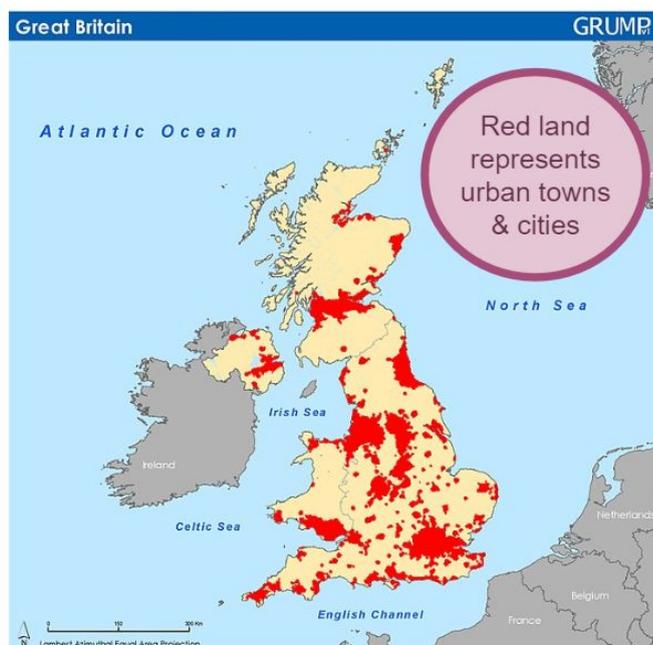


## The UK's Urban Population

**90%** of the UK's population live in an urban town and city. Despite this, urban land only accounts for **7%** of the UK's total **land mass**. This means the **population density** in UK cities is very concentrated; many people live or work in UK cities and towns.

These urban areas are distributed fairly evenly across the UK:

- **England** has an even spread of cities in the North and South.
- **Wales** has cities on the North and South coast, but none inland.
- **Northern Ireland** has small cities predominantly in the East and near the coast.
- **Scotland's** major cities are found in the South of the country, as the North is very mountainous and more difficult to live in (more extreme weather, colder temperatures, large number of islands).



On a whole, important **trading points** in the UK have developed into major cities, ever since the **British Empire**: Liverpool, Bristol, Cardiff. Despite there being so many cities, London is **unproportionally** important to the UK since it is the capital city and home to 8.7 million residents.

In the future, the UK's population may change. This may be because **rural-urban migration** will increase populations in the cities, as well as **international migration**. On a whole, more people move into the cities than out of the cities, which is known as the **net migration**.

	Reasons for Migrating
<b>Rural Workers</b>	Migrates INTO the city: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For better <b>work opportunities</b>, as rural work is predominantly farming (which is hard work) or seasonal tourism (which is poorly paid).</li> <li>- For a more <b>exciting lifestyle</b>, since there are more cinemas, shops and clubs in towns and cities.</li> <li>- For education opportunities as <b>universities</b> are found in cities in the UK. This means students have to move away from home to study, many of whom don't move back home after their degree.</li> </ul>
<b>International Working Migrants</b>	Migrates INTO the city: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To <b>fill gaps</b> in employment for skilled roles. For example, the NHS requires international doctors and nurses to continue running.</li> <li>- To send money back home - which is called <b>remittance</b> - to provide for their families even though they aren't living there.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For better opportunities and lifestyle for <b>their children</b>. In some countries, girls are frowned upon if they want an education, whereas in the UK this isn't the case.</li> </ul>
<b>Retiring Couples</b>	Migrates OUT of the city: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For a quieter, more <b>idyllic lifestyle</b>. Retiring couples would prefer outdoor walks rather than going clubbing!</li> <li>- To <b>avoid traffic congestion</b> and air pollution, which can irritate asthma sufferers and cause lung cancer</li> </ul>
<b>New Families</b>	Migrates OUT of the city: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To find more <b>affordable houses</b>, since city apartments tend to be <b>rising</b> in price in the UK and offer limited space to live</li> <li>- For a more <b>pleasant lifestyle</b>, especially if they are starting a family. Many parents want to move to greener spaces for a more pleasant childhood.</li> </ul>

## Factors that Affect the City

There are many factors that affect the population, atmosphere and attraction of a city. Many of the UK's cities have unique characteristics and feel different.

### Cultural Mix

The UK has an **open immigration policy** - nearly all nationalities are welcome to migrate to the UK, so long as they apply for a visa to migrate legally. This means cities can become mixing pots of different **nationalities**, cultures and religions.

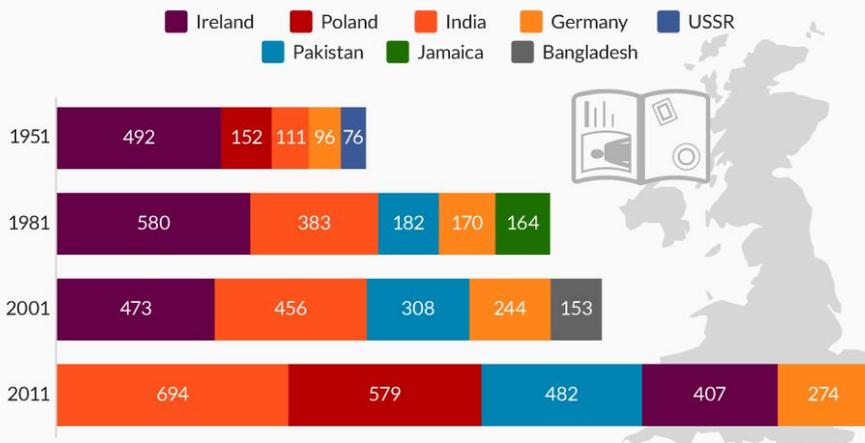
Remember! **Migration** is the movement of people within a country, whereas **immigration** involves people moving from one country to another

Historically, immigrants that settled in the 1950s were from countries with **strong political connections** with the UK, such as countries in the **commonwealth**. In the 1980s, there was a peak in **Caribbean immigrants** during the [Windrush Era](#). More recently, there has been a large volume of Eastern European immigrants coming to the UK. For example, many **Polish immigrants** work on farms picking the harvest.



### Where Britain's immigrants historically come from

Top five origin countries of British immigrants from 1951 to 2011 (in thousands)




 @StatistaCharts Source: ONS  from The INDEPENDENT 

However, not everyone believes that immigration and multicultural cities are good for the UK. This has caused **tensions** between communities and hate crime against **ethnic minorities**, which escalated recently during the Brexit debate.

Advantages of Multicultural Cities	Negative Perceptions of Multicultural Cities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>👍 <b>Skilled migrants</b> can fill gaps in the economy and services, so everyone can have access to doctors and dentists</li> <li>👍 <b>Multicultural events</b> such as Chinese New Year, Notting Hill Carnival and Eid are becoming very popular in some cities. <b>Tourists</b> come to stay to watch these events, bringing extra revenue.</li> <li>👍 New <b>foods</b> are introduced, which makes the restaurant market more <b>diverse</b> and encourages people from a young age to learn about different cultures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>👎 Some people worry that more people moving to the city will make job opportunities more rare, and so <b>unemployment</b> might rise</li> <li>👎 Some ethnic groups are <b>targeted</b> for attacks and <b>hate crime</b>, such as Jewish and Muslim communities.</li> <li>👎 In some cities, ethnic groups remain <b>segregated</b>. Therefore culture isn't shared and instead hostilities can rise.</li> </ul>



## Facilities and Attractions

Different cities have **different facilities**, which enhance residents' **lifestyles** or provide economic opportunities in tourism. **Leisure** facilities are particularly important to young people, who might migrate to the city for a more exciting lifestyle than rural villages can provide. A city can become well-known for:

- **Sports Stadiums** and Teams, especially if the local team is high in the league tables for football, cricket or rugby
- **Shopping centres and markets**, which can become tourist attractions and provide many jobs in retail
- Clubs, bars and restaurants are important in influencing a **city's nightlife**
- **Tourist attractions** such as art galleries, museums and historical buildings are all influential to the local economy, and can attract tourists from local surrounding areas or internationally.

## Transport Systems

**Congested cities** soon become **unpopular** with residents and visiting tourists, since journeys are long to cross the city and **rush hour** upsets commuters. Therefore, it is important for governments to work on improving the transport network across the city.

An **integrated transport system** links together different types of transport, so an individual can travel across the city between many different locations. They still have a **choice** of transport, which is important because not everyone can afford to travel by car or are fit enough to cycle everywhere!

For a city to become more **sustainable**, the transport system must benefit everyone

Source:  
[www.quickmap.com/cities/see-inside/5londonAo1.htm](http://www.quickmap.com/cities/see-inside/5londonAo1.htm)  
 whilst **reducing emissions** produced.



This could include:

- Building **cycle paths** to encourage more bike use
- Making buses and trams more available across the city
- Reducing the amount of **stand-still congestion**, as cars produce emissions in traffic



## Urban Greening

**Urban Greening** is the process of encouraging more **vegetation** and green spaces amongst the city. Many local governments are starting urban greening in their cities as part of their **sustainability goals** as well as to make their city more **attractive**.



Source: About Manchester



Source: London.gov



Source: The Shaftesbury

**Planting trees** along streets or in central reservations, which can be home to birds nests and provide shade

**Green walls** can be constructed along offices and buildings, which are pretty

**Parks** can become protected land in the middle of the city, offering residents an open space for exercise and leisure



Source: Sheffield University



Source: My Landscapes



Source: We are Urban Green

**Raised plant beds** can be built on pavements, which can be home to wildflowers or mini allotments

**Rooftop gardens** are becoming increasingly popular, especially for rooftop bars or cafes

**Cemeteries** are being protected as they can be home to many wildlife habitats, even in the centre of the city



## Problems with Urban Cities

Change in urban cities may not always be for the best. Sometimes change doesn't benefit the entire population or can destroy the **environment** surrounding.

### Urban Sprawl and Housing Developments

As the city's population increases, so does the **demand** for housing. Developers and builders will prefer to use cheaper **greenfield** land, rather than any **brownfield** land, to keep the **cost of construction** low.

- **Greenfield Land** - Land that hasn't been built on before, often used for farming or left naturally.
- **Brownfield Land** - Land that has been previously built on. The buildings may still be standing or demolished.

Developers and builders must choose the type of land to build on, as each type has benefits and disadvantages:

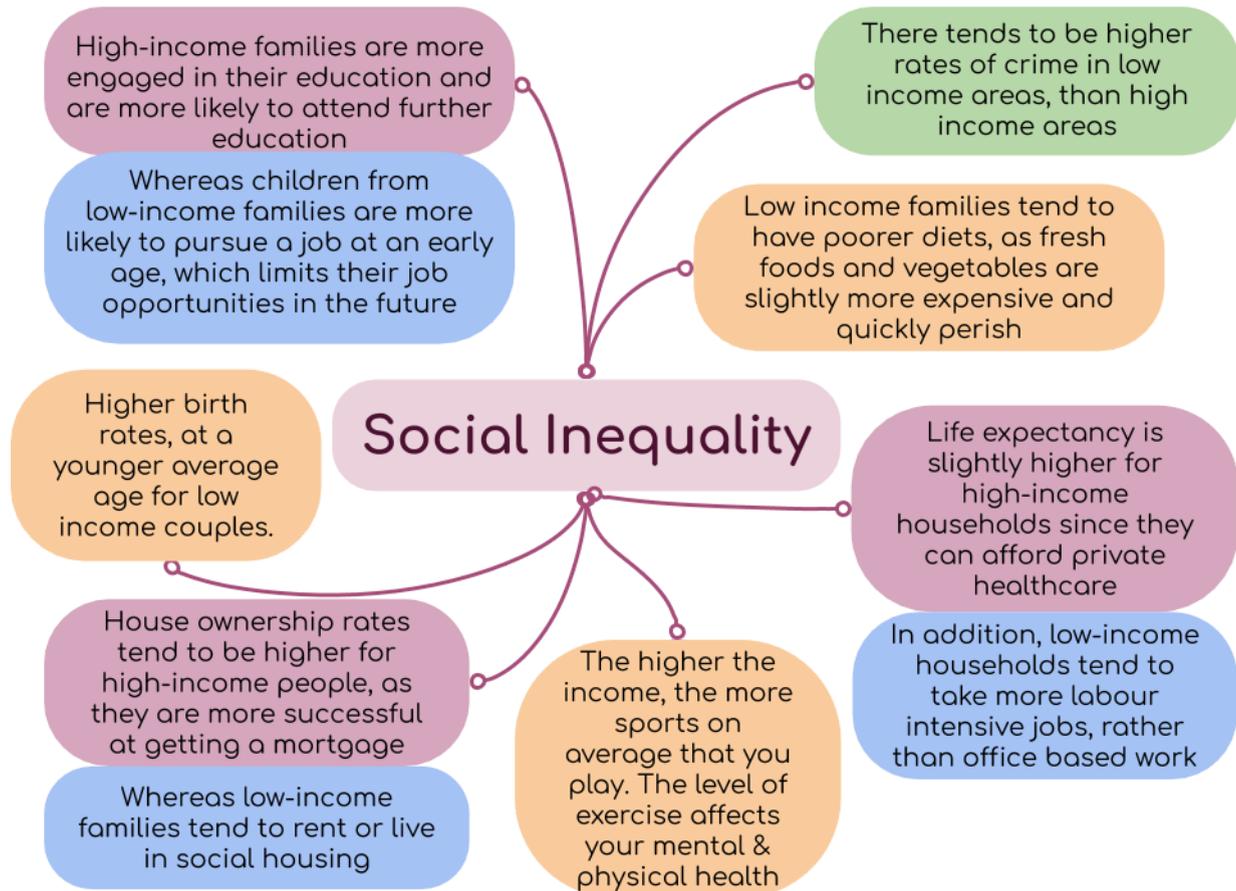
	Greenfield Land	Brownfield Land
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>👍 Never been built on before, so <b>no additional cost</b> to remove rubble or waste.</li> <li>👍 <b>Cheaper</b> land price, as greenfield tends to be slightly further from the city centre.</li> <li>👍 For <b>struggling farmers</b>, selling their land to developers can be a good source of <b>income</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>👍 Developers use up land rather than leaving it <b>derelict</b>, which can detract from the surrounding area and become a target for crime.</li> <li>👍 Housing developments would be close to the <b>city centre</b>, so developers can charge more for the houses that they build.</li> </ul>
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>👎 Once buildings have been built, the land will never be greenfield again, so cannot be <b>turned back</b> into farms after construction.</li> <li>👎 The city can grow uncontrollably, which is called <b>urban sprawl</b>. If the city sprawls too much, it may become too far for residents to commute to the centre or lose its characteristics.</li> <li>👎 <b>Habitats</b> are destroyed and wildlife pushed further away from the city.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>👎 <b>Expensive</b> to remove all waste, demolish any existing buildings or remove any chemicals (if there was industry here in the past).</li> <li>👎 To compensate for the high cost of preparing the land, housing tends to be <b>unaffordable</b> and <b>high-value apartments</b>. So not everyone can afford to live in brownfield developments.</li> </ul>

**Dereliction** and **urban sprawl** are two main issues facing UK cities. Therefore, it is important for local governments to **balance** the amount of **greenfield** land and the amount of **brownfield** land used for housing developments. This will stop the city growing uncontrollable, and becoming empty wasteland in the centre, where old industry or housing exists.



## Social Inequality

Local governments want to limit inequality between the poorest and richest communities in the city. Inequality can have many different impacts on an individual's life:



If the government doesn't spread its funding and investment, regions of the city can fall behind in development. This leads to social inequality.



## Regeneration

Alternatively, cities may want a **change of appearance** or reputation. Governments may decide to regenerate in the aim of:

- Encouraging **economic growth** and attracting new businesses to invest in the city
- Changing the appearance of a region especially if it has become **derelict or unattractive**
- Trying to attract a **different group of residents**, for example high wage investors or multicultural groups of workers

There are many examples of urban regeneration in cities across the world. Even in the **UK**, there are many cities that have changed their appearance to attract new investors or improve lifestyle. Some iconic examples include:



Source: Johns and Co.

**Canary Wharf, London** - Previously, the wharf was a **dock** for trade and industry till it closed in 1981. 60% of the docklands was left **derelict**, making it **unattractive** for new businesses and a target for **crime**. Now, Canary Wharf is home to many **modern skyscrapers** which have added to London's iconic skyline! The businesses here are mainly in finance and **banking** headquarters, so the area has attracted many high-paying, **skilled workers**.



Source: Manchester's Finest

**Manchester** - Following a series of **terrorist attacks**, the city has had to rebuild sections of the city. However, this has created opportunities for new attractions and more attractive public spaces. For example, **Spinningfield** has been built with large glass-fronted shops which has attracted **high-end stores** such as Selfridges. Alternatively, following the 2018 terrorist attack, the MEN arena faces large remodelling and a new appearance, to tie in with the **city's identity** and culture.





**Glasgow** - Glasgow started regeneration following the **2014 Commonwealth Games**, since its economy and reputation were fading. Glasgow's local government have set up many **initiatives** to try to improve the city:

- Constructing new **tourist attractions**, such as the Glasgow Science Centre and SECC.
- The waterfront alongside the River Clyde has been developed into **attractive offices** for leading businesses.
- The city centre has been made more attractive and accessible, with more **tree-lined roads**, **cycle paths** installed and reducing car traffic down some roads.

## Sustainable Cities

Alternatively, some governments may want more **environmentally friendly** developments.

**Sustainability** means that a city has minimal environmental damage and **social inequality**, whilst conserving resources for the future: clean water, energy sources, etc.

