

The **Rural Services Network** is the national champion for rural services, ensuring that people in rural areas have a strong voice. We are fighting for a fair deal for rural communities to maintain their social and economic viability for the benefit of the nation as a whole.



Equitable public sector funding remains a key goal of our work. Central Government has historically and systematically underfunded rural areas giving them less grant per head than urban areas – despite the fact that it costs more to provide the services. Rural residents earn less on average than those in urban areas and pay more Council Tax for fewer local government services. Government policy, implicitly, is that council services in rural areas are more reliant on funding through council tax than their urban counterparts. We demand fairer funding for all public services serving rural areas.

Urban areas in 20/21 still receive some 42% (£112) per head in Government Funded Spending Power more than their rural counterparts.

Public Health Grant Allocations to local authorities in 2020/21 are 54.3% greater per head in urban areas than rural.

Rural residents pay more, receive fewer services and, on average, earn less than those in urban areas and that is inequitable.

Hourly rates for personal social home care (external) are 5.7% greater in Predominantly Rural local authority areas when compared with the England average (using data from Adult Social Care Activity and Finance: England 2018-19).

Using figures from the final local government settlement, 2020 to 2021, rural residents pay 22.7% (£105) per head more in council tax than their urban counterparts due to receiving less government grant. Rural residents fund 68% of their Local Government Spending Power through Council Tax compared with urban residents who fund theirs by 55%

Adult social care as a percentage of local authority total service expenditure is higher in Predominantly Rural areas, standing at 26% in 2020/21 (21% for Predominantly Urban)

Taking the core spending power figures from the final local government finance settlement 2020 to 2021 for combined fire and rescue authorities and the metropolitan fire and rescue authorities (excluding the Greater London Authority), average per capita Government funding levels were:

Government Funded Spending Power (per head)

Predominantly Rural                    £12.77 (23% less than PU)

Predominantly Urban (PU)    £16.68

Below is just a snapshot of the rural inequalities which creates vulnerability across England's rural communities:

	Rural	Urban
Amount paid on average by residents in Council Tax due to disparities in Government Grant received (2020/21)	£569	£464
Hourly rate for personal social care home (external) 2018/19	£17.82	£15.96
Public Health Allocations to local authorities in 2020/21	£43.58	£67.26
Average weekly transport costs	£101.90	£78.60
% of weekly disposable income spent on average weekly transport cost	12.5%	10.6%
Estimated percentage of households not connected to the gas network (2018)	25.2%	10.0%
Percentage with access to a Further Education site within 30mins travel time using public transport/walking	48.1%	92.3%
Percentage of employees, self employed people and trainees receiving on the job training in the previous 4 weeks	12.0%	13.2%
Percentage of working age population with NVQ level 4 or above	37.2%	46.7%
Predicted percentage increase in the next 23years of number of people aged 85 and over	118%	93%
Percentage of dwellings that cannot access a 10 Mbps broadband connection (2018)	7%	1%
Residual fuel usage (non gas, non electricity, non road transport fuels) (tonnes of oil equivalent) per resident (2017)	0.43ktoe	0.10ktoe
Average domestic electricity consumption, sales per consumer (kwh) (2018)	4167kwh	3510kwh
2017/18 hospital admissions as a result of self-harm directly standardised rate per 100,000 aged 10-24	484.5	415.2
2015/16 – 17/18 Admission episodes for alcohol-specific conditions – crude rate per 100,000 under 18 yrs	40.8	34.4