

# Impact of Unfair Funding on rural areas



# Rural Facts



**Urban areas get 38% more in Government Funded Spending Power than rural areas.**

Urban areas in 2023/2024 will receive some 38% (£135) per head in Government Funded Spending Power more than their rural counterparts



£110

# Rural Residents pay on average £110 per head more in Council Tax

Rural residents will pay on average, 20% (£110) per head **more** in Council Tax than their urban counterparts due to receiving less Government Grant

## Rural residents :

- pay **more**,
- receive **fewer** services and,
- earn **less** than those in urban areas

The cost of living is higher in rural areas

# Result of unfair funding...

RURAL



Funding allocated per head to predominantly Rural areas



URBAN



Funding allocated per head to predominantly Urban areas

Rural Councils get less Government Grant than Urban Councils



Statutory Services have to be funded by Councils and those services are also more underfunded in rural areas



The impact is that there are **MUCH LESS** funds for rural councils to spend on essential but discretionary services



Rural areas are *disadvantaged* by public funding allocations for core services and economic growth that work against them.

To close the *productivity gap* between the rural and urban economy, support is needed to build an infrastructure that creates *better paid* and *more secure* jobs.

# RURAL

Shire Counties

# URBAN

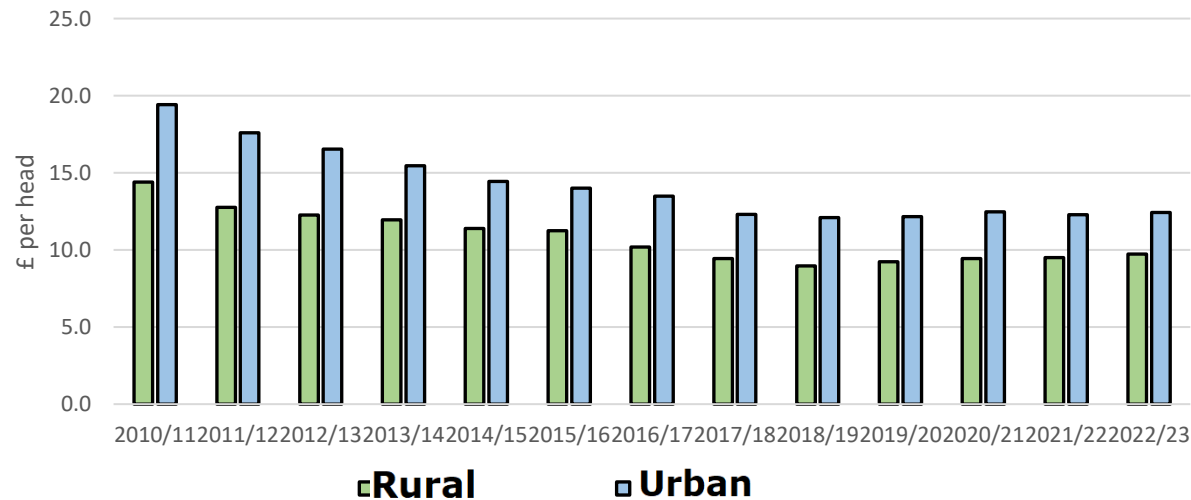
Shire Counties



2022/23

+23%

Library service - overall average



## LIBRARY SERVICES

### Discretionary Spend Comparison

Again we can see that rural authorities can spend much less per head...



# RECREATION & SPORT

## Discretionary Spend Comparison



The percentage difference between urban & rural shire district local authority budgeted spend is...

# INCREASING

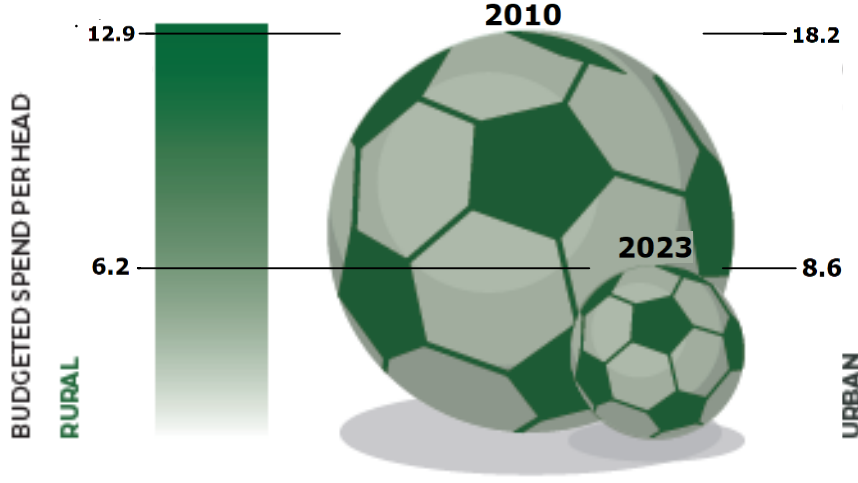
2010/11

2022/23



28%  
difference

45%  
difference





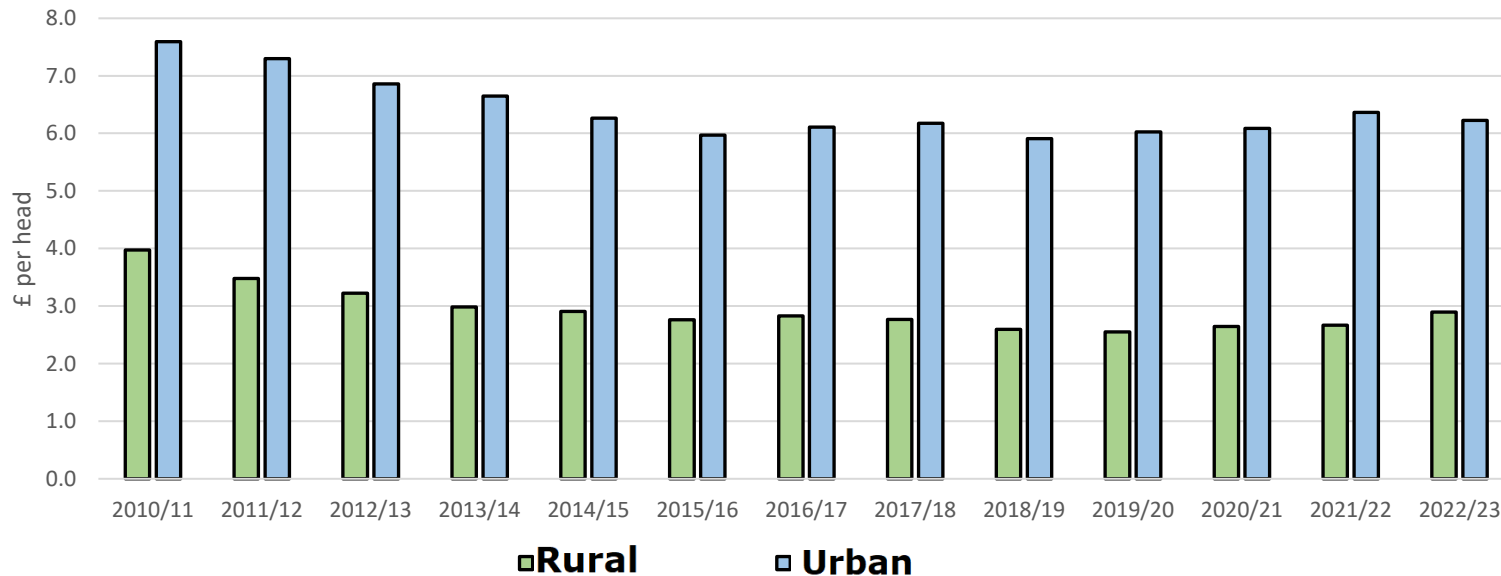
# CULTURE

## Discretionary Spend Comparison



### Rural authorities have less to spend...

Urban residents get more spent on Cultural Services than rural. For Shire Districts this spending gap is over 100% greater than for rural Shire Districts



In the period from **2010 to 2023**

this equates to:

**URBAN** per head  
**£130.80**



**RURAL** per head  
**£76.00**



# **PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

## Discretionary Spend Comparison

In **2022/23** planned expenditure on **PUBLIC TRANSPORT** per resident is **OVER 5X MORE IN** predominantly **URBAN AREAS**



Students from rural areas often face ***little*** or ***no realistic choice*** of Further Education providers and courses due to poor public transport links.



# CATHY SAYS

“One of the biggest problems I encountered after I started working is the fact that rural transport finishes too early in the evening. Sometimes I would be allocated long shifts that usually end at 9.30 p.m, or even later, and of course most of the buses in Wellington finish before 9 p.m which means quite often, cycling/walking in the dark is the only option for me around that time of the day.”



The scarcity of rural transport options strikes at the heart of *rural disadvantage*, impacting people's access to *employment, education* and *training, health* and *vital services*

It is a key driver of *rural isolation* and *loneliness*

# URBAN

## Total Discretionary Spend

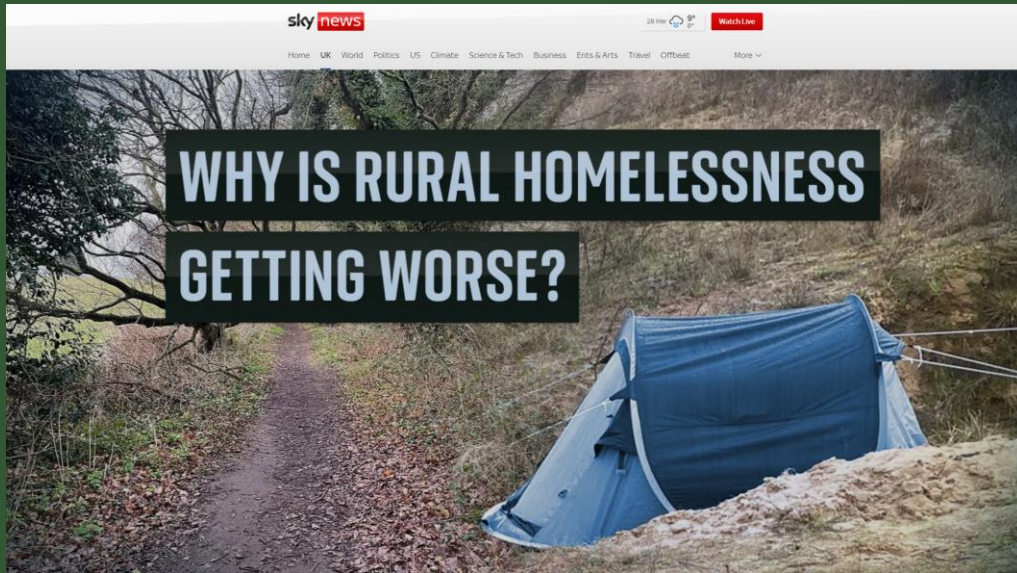
Urban authorities are able to spend considerably more per head than those in rural areas

In looking at the latest figures for 2022/2023 their spend is almost

**DOUBLE**  
per head!



# Homelessness in the Countryside: A Hidden Crisis



The countryside is battling a 'hidden homelessness' crisis driven by soaring housing costs and a gaping shortfall in local authority funding

Rural poverty exacerbated by high housing costs are fundamental drivers of rural homelessness. Severe restrictions in local authority funding since 2009 intensifies risk.

Rural areas receive 65% less funding per capita than urban for homelessness prevention who themselves are severely underfunded.

Funding for genuinely affordable housing and state support for housing costs are also highly inadequate and have limited impact in rural areas.

## 'A village's goodwill saved me from life on the streets'

© 17 March



BBC/MALCOLM PRIOR

Mo says giving back to the village has given him a sense of self-worth.

**By Malcolm Prior**

BBC News rural affairs producer

**Mo would be the first to admit he has led a deeply troubled life.**

Caught up in a county lines drug-dealing gang, in and out of prison and battling his own drink and drug addictions, he spent years homeless.

At first, that was in London. But then, after the break-up of a relationship, he found himself sleeping rough across the rural boroughs, market towns and coastal resorts of southeast England.

A new report has found that not only has rough sleeping and homelessness increased across the English countryside in the past year but also that rural support services are facing a lack of vital funding, compared to those in urban areas.

The year-long study, called "Homelessness in the Countryside: A Hidden Crisis", found there had been a 24% increase in rough sleeping in rural areas in 2022 compared to the year before.





**Greater Digital Adoption in rural areas could add between £12-26 billion to the UK economy every year**

**Rural areas need access to digital skills training and support to help enable the rural economy to achieve its full potential**



**The Rural Services Network is fighting for a fair deal for rural communities, in all public sector funding**