



Norfolk County Council

Norfolk County Council's Budget Proposals 2015/16

Rural impact assessment of the proposals

**With thanks to the Norfolk Rural Community Council
for advice on methodology and approach**

www.norfolkrcc.org.uk/

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1. Introduction

1.1 About rural impact assessment

- 1.1.1 Norfolk is a rural county with 53% of its population designated as rural and only two districts, Great Yarmouth and Norwich, which are primarily urban. This means that addressing rural issues is central to sound strategic planning, and it is important that the Council considers the impact of new proposals, service redesign or commissioning decisions on rural areas.
- 1.1.2 'Rural proofing' seeks to achieve effective and successful outcomes for communities, businesses and individuals, regardless of their size or location, by embedding a local focus in policy making, service design and commissioning.
- 1.1.3 Rural impact assessment assesses whether changes to policy or service delivery may have a disproportionate and/or significantly detrimental impact on rural areas and is a critical part of the rural proofing process.
- 1.1.4 When it is effective, rural impact assessment should:
- Highlight any potential for rural communities to be disadvantaged;
 - Enable the Council to take full account of differences related to 'place' and the different impacts a proposal may have in different settings, particularly with regard to cost, accessibility and outcomes of service provision;
 - In appropriate cases, recommend actions that may help to mitigate any identified disproportionate rural impacts e.g. unintended gaps in service accessibility;
 - Identify opportunities to discuss with communities and neighbourhoods how best use can be made of all available local resources and assets to mitigate rural impacts.

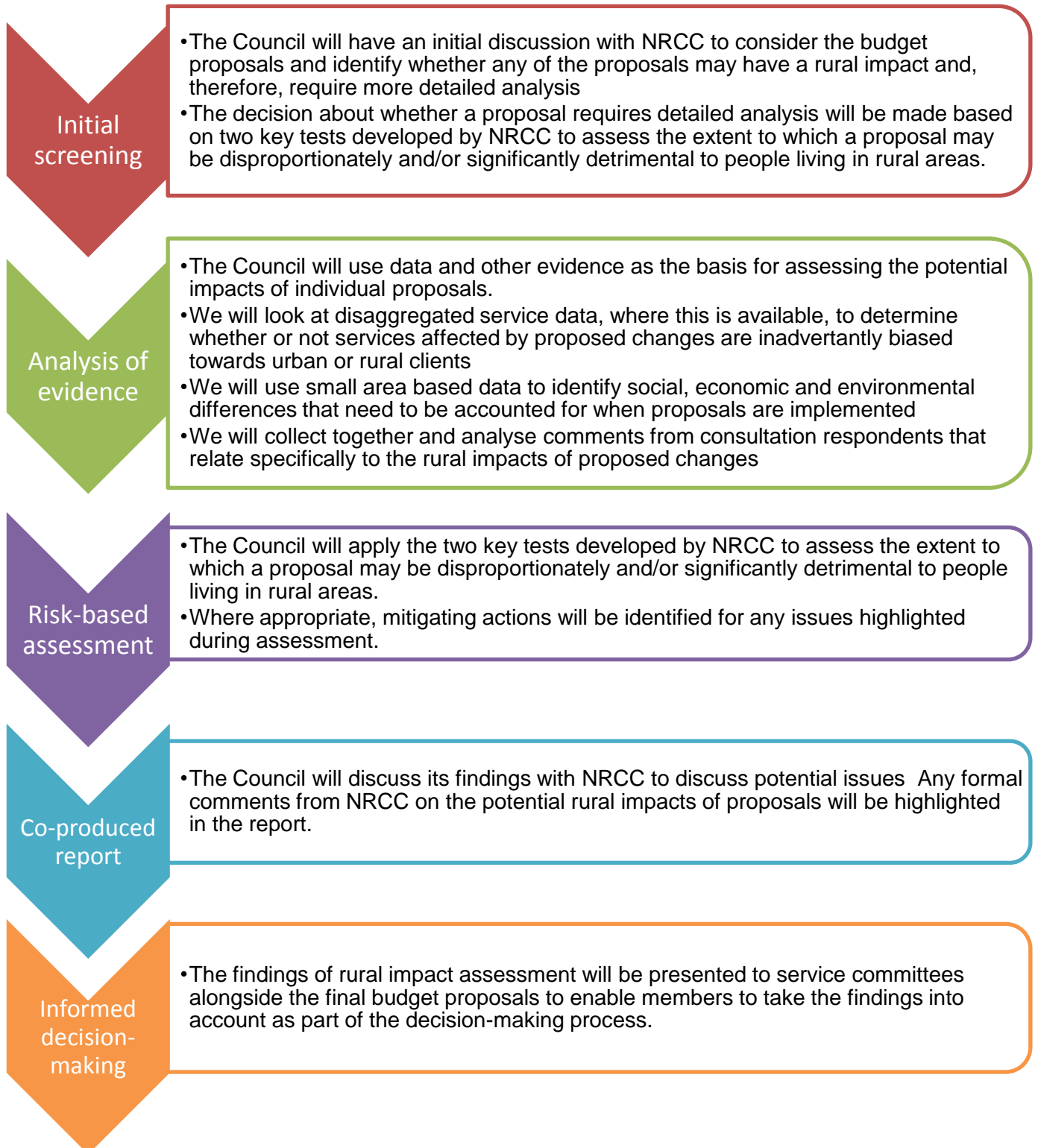
1.2 Methodology & approach to rural impact assessment

- 1.2.1 To ensure that any changes the Council is considering making as part of the budget process for 2015/16 take into account the needs and interests of rural people, communities and businesses, the Council has worked with the Norfolk Rural Community Council (Norfolk RCC) to agree a methodology for rural impact assessment.
- 1.2.2 Norfolk RCC is an independent charity and one of 38 that make up the national Rural Community Council Network, supported by a national body ACRE. Norfolk RCC lobbies on rural issues at a strategic level, providing a voice for rural communities in Norfolk.

1.2.4 Norfolk County Council is grateful for the support of Norfolk RCC in co-producing the rural impact assessment. This assessment relates to whether proposals may have a disproportionate and/or significantly detrimental impact on rural areas. Norfolk RCC will submit separately into the consultation process its views on the wider implications of proposals.

1.2.5 The approach the Council and Norfolk RCC have agreed is set out below.

1.3 Summary of methodology for rural impact assessment:



2. Norfolk's rural demography

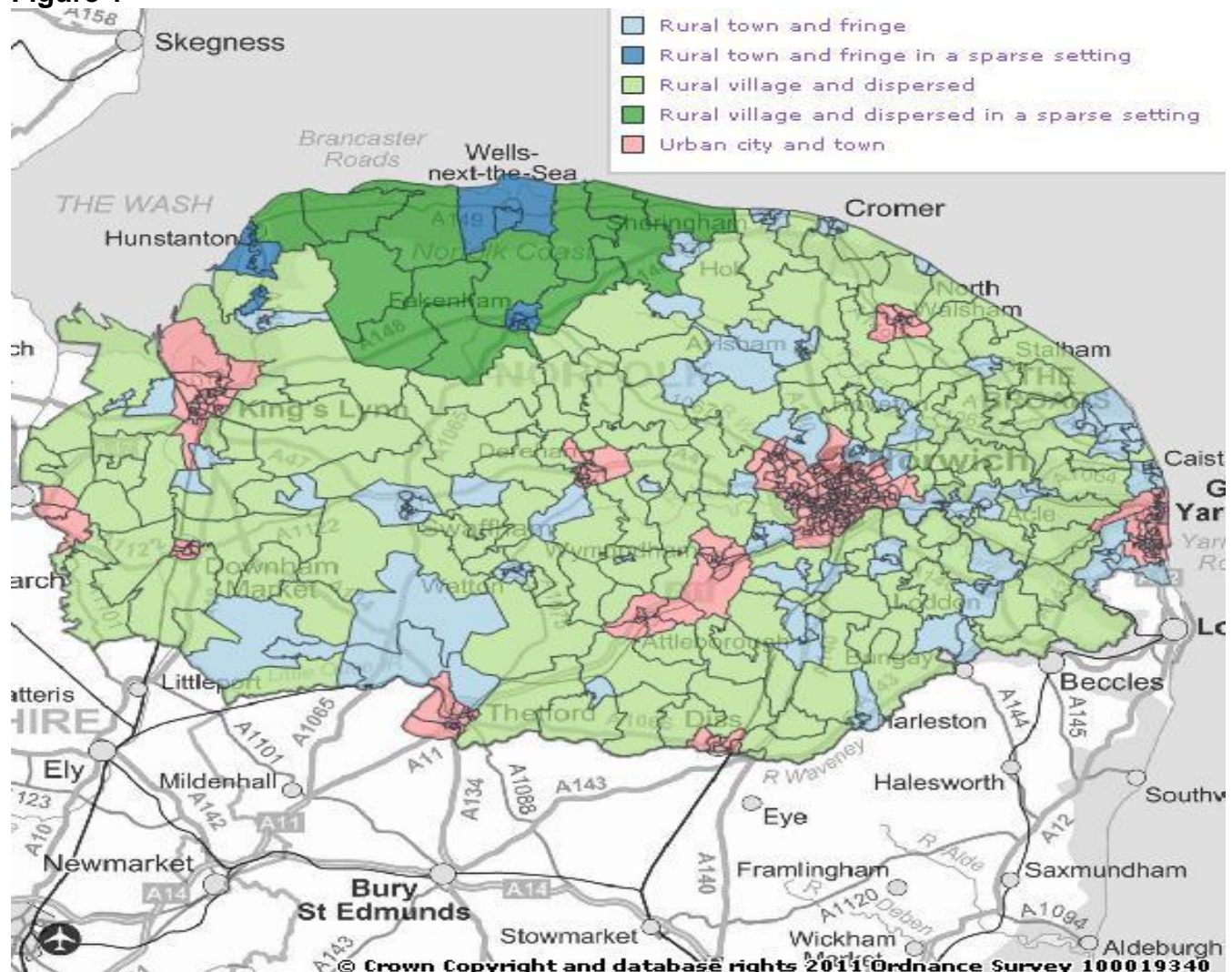
2.1 How much of Norfolk is rural? ¹

2.1.1 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are geographical units built from joining together clusters of adjacent postcodes. They are used as a way of breaking geographical areas up into neighbourhoods with an average population of 1,500 for statistical reporting.

2.1.2 Each LSOA in England has a rural or urban classification based on the classifications of the smaller Output Areas (OAs) that they are made up of. If an Output Area is allocated to a built up area with a population of more than 10,000 it is considered to be urban. Figure 1, below, shows the rural/urban classifications of all of Norfolk's 530 LSOAs.

2.1.3 **Figure 1** shows Norfolk to be extremely rural, in particular with a good many sparse rural areas in the north of the county.

Figure 1



¹ The information in this section is drawn from Norfolk County Council's 'Norfolk's Story' report, version 5.0, published August 2014, unless stated otherwise.

2.1.4 **Table 1** shows in more detail how Norfolk's population and land area are divided between each of the area types. Norfolk's land area is around 95% rural, including smaller towns and their fringes, villages and hamlets, and this area is home to a little over half of the county's population.

2.1.5 The concept of sparsity is essentially one of population density. Around 78% of the county is classed as less sparse, though this includes 92% of the population. Areas classed as sparse, over a fifth of the county, have a density of population that by definition is quite low.

Table 1: Norfolk urban and rural area types, mid-2010

Wider area type	Narrower area type	Mid-2010 population	% of mid-2010 population	% of total land area
Urban	Urban - less sparse	409,800	47.5	5.7
	Urban - sparse	0	0.0	0.0
Rural	Town & fringe - less sparse	147,900	17.2	9.1
	Town & fringe - sparse	37,300	4.3	4.2
	Village, etc* - less sparse	233,100	27.0	63.4
	Village, etc* - sparse	34,300	4.0	17.6
Urban		409,800	47.5	5.7
Rural		452,500	52.5	94.3
Less sparse		790,800	91.7	78.2
Sparse		71,600	8.3	21.8
Total		862,300	100.0	100.0

* Note: 'Village etc' means villages, hamlets and isolated dwellings

Source: ONS mid-2010 population estimates, and land areas (2001 Census Table UV2)

2.1.6 Delivering services to people in sparse areas is likely to be challenging and more costly. Any proposals to make savings on the costs of delivering services may need to consider arrangements for people living in sparse areas to make sure they are not disproportionately affected.

Research conducted by Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion (OCSI) for ACRE in 2011² shows that Rural Norfolk has a higher proportion households particularly vulnerable to exclusion compared to rural England as a whole. This includes in rural areas of Norfolk 6,820 lone parent households and 28,795 pensioners who live alone.

² 'The rural share of deprivation in Norfolk', v1.1, published March 2011, ©ACRE/RCAN/OCSI 2011

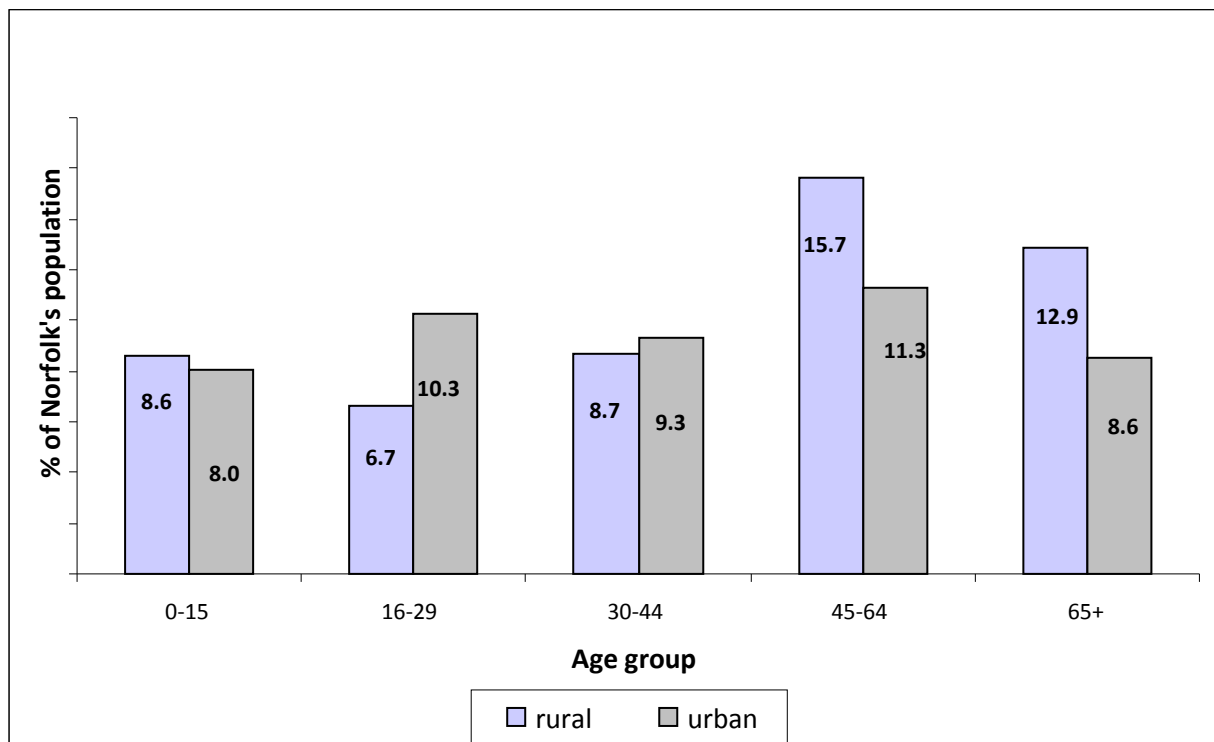
2.2 Is there a different population profile in rural areas? (3)

2.2.1 There are some differences in the age profiles of Norfolk's urban and rural population.

2.2.2 **Figure 2** shows that middle aged (45-64) and older people (65+) are more likely to be found in rural as opposed to urban areas. Younger adults (16-29) are more likely to be found in urban areas.

2.2.3 It is also worth noting that 60% of people of pensionable age live in rural areas.

Figure 2: Rural and urban population of Norfolk by age, mid-2010



Note: the sum of all the bars is 100 per cent of the Norfolk population

Source: ONS mid-2010 population estimates

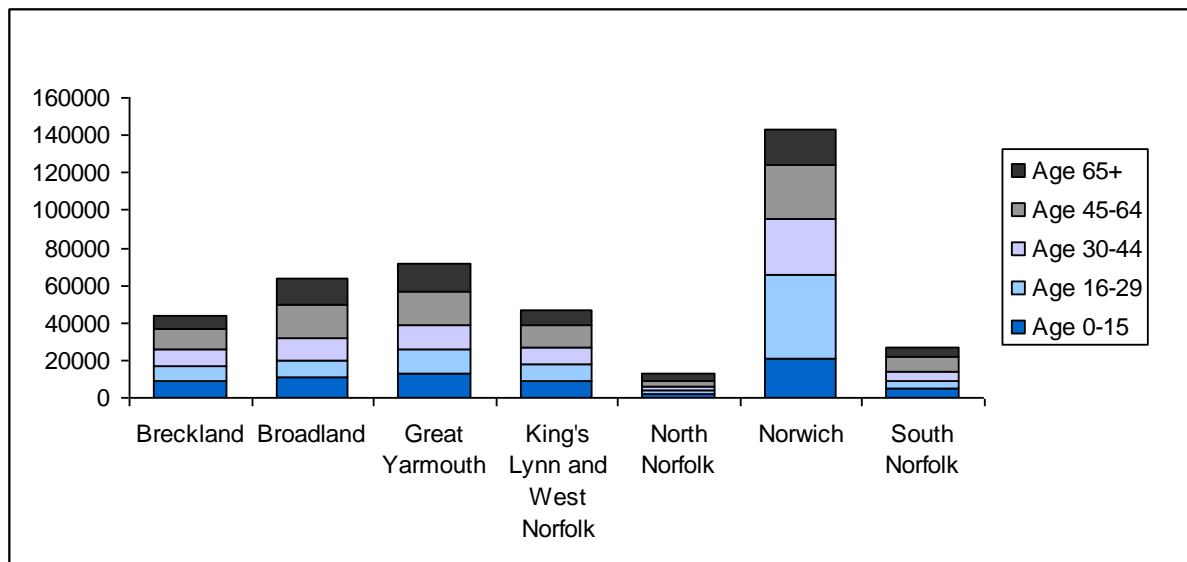
2.2.4 There are some variations at local authority area level. **Figures 3 and 4** compare the age structure of Norfolk's urban and rural areas by district.

2.2.5 **Figure 3** shows there is a very large number of 16-29 year olds in Norwich, which is entirely urban. That is the main reason why there are more people in this age group in Norfolk categorized as being in urban rather than rural areas.

2.2.6 **Figure 4** shows that the 45-64 and 65 and over age groups are typically greater in number in the rural parts of each area than the urban parts.

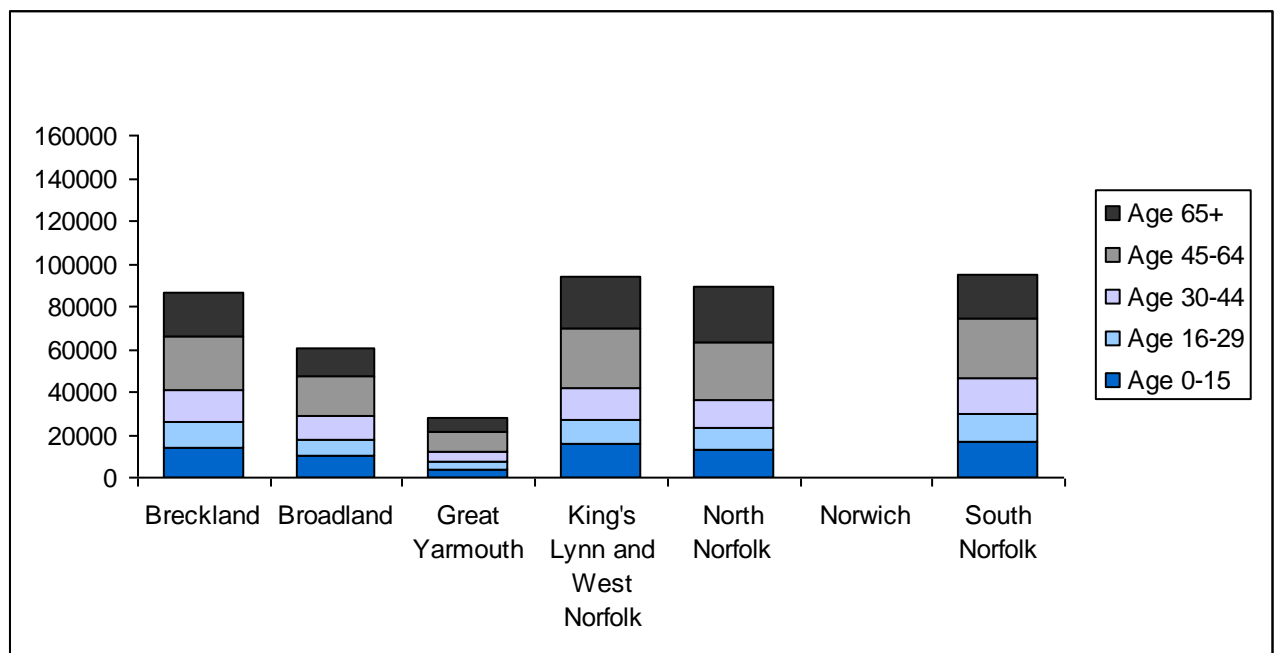
³ The information in this section is drawn from Norfolk County Council's 'Norfolk's Story' report, version 5.0, published August 2014, unless stated otherwise.

Figure 3: Age structure of urban areas, mid-2010



Source: ONS mid-2010 population estimates

Figure 4: Age structure of rural areas, mid-2010



Source: ONS mid-2010 population estimates

The information in this section shows that generally there are marked differences between Norfolk's urban and rural populations when we look at broad age range. This information may influence decisions about access to services and resource allocation, though it should be noted that not everyone classed as 'older', for example, needs the same level of assistance or care.

2.3 What quality of life do people living in Norfolk's rural areas experience?⁴

2.3.1 Deprivation

2.3.1.1 People living on a low income are among the most deprived groups in society and are likely to experience a lower quality of life than people on higher incomes.

2.3.1.2 Research conducted by Oxford Consultants for Social Inclusion (OCSI) for ACRE in 2011 shows that the rural share of deprivation in Norfolk is larger than is typically understood.

2.3.1.3 Here are some of the headlines from their report:

- 30,185 people of working age in rural areas are receiving some form of DWP benefit – 42.3% of total claimants across Norfolk.
- 47,360 people in rural areas are income deprived – 42.7% of Norfolk's total
- The number of people receiving 'out of work' benefits (JSA and IB) in rural areas is 19,125 – 41.7% of the total across Norfolk
- 9,995 children in rural areas live in income deprived households - 37.6% of the total across Norfolk
- 99,705 adults in rural areas have no qualifications – 53.5% of Norfolk's total
- 11,290 rural households lack central heating – 47.0% of Norfolk's total

2.3.1.4 **Figure 5** indicates that the rural share of deprivation in Norfolk is high compared to regional and national figures:

⁴ The information in this section is drawn from 'The rural share of deprivation in Norfolk', v1.1, published March 2011, ©ACRE/RCAN/OCSI 2011, unless otherwise stated.

Figure 5

The proportion of people experiencing deprivation or low income that live in rural areas in Norfolk (rural share)

	Norfolk - Rural		East of England - Rural		England - Rural	
	N	% share	N	% share	N	% share
Total People	452,270	53.2	1,756,635	30.7	9,803,535	19.1
Working-age client group	30,185	42.3	99,235	22.6	592,525	12.0
Income Support (IS) claimants	7,850	36.4	25,235	18.4	147,590	9.0
People who are "income deprived"	47,360	42.7	147,520	22.2	859,850	10.9
Children living in income deprived households	9,995	37.6	33,930	18.7	195,930	9.0
Pension Credit claimants	22,670	51.9	66,840	29.4	372,675	16.3

Source: DWP 2009, CLG 2007. 'Share' refers to the proportion of the total population (on an indicator) that live in rural areas.

2.3.2 Health

- 2.3.2.1 Health is a key determinant of quality of life, not least because poor health can affect an individual's ability to work and earn income.
- 2.3.2.2 **Figure 6** shows that about half of the people in Norfolk who have limiting long-term illnesses or permanent disabilities live in rural areas.
- 2.3.2.3 It also shows that the rural share of limiting long term illness and permanent disability is higher in Norfolk compared to regional and national figures.
- 2.3.2.4 Not surprisingly, given the older age profile of Norfolk's rural areas, the majority (56.3%) of people receiving Attendance Allowance (56.3%) are also shown to live in rural areas.

Figure 6

Proportion of people by key health condition living in rural areas in Norfolk (rural share)						
	Norfolk - Rural		East of England - Rural		England - Rural	
	N	% share	N	% share	N	% share
All people	452,270	53.2	1,756,635	30.7	9,803,535	19.1
People with a limiting long-term illness (aged 0-64)	38,155	50.8	127,720	28.9	771,295	16.4
Working age adults who are permanently sick or disabled	13,945	48.9	40,675	26.8	272,355	14.4
Attendance Allowance claimants	16,150	56.3	51,190	31.3	297,620	20.1
Disability Living Allowance claimants	19,080	48.0	59,580	26.7	375,465	14.8
Source: DWP 2009, Census 2001. 'Share' refers to the proportion of the total population (on an indicator) that live in rural areas.						

2.3.3 Access to services⁵

- 2.3.3.1 Access to services, or lack of access, can have a significant impact on the quality of life that people in rural communities experience. Where transport is inadequate and necessary services such as hospitals, education, work or shops are not easily accessible, there is a risk of social exclusion.
- 2.3.3.2 Poor access is especially likely to present difficulties for people who do not have use of a car or have limited mobility, lone parents and older people.
- 2.3.3.3 For each of the following key services, the proportion of households in rural Norfolk that live more than 2km away is higher than the regional and national figures:
- Cashpoint - 40.4%
 - GP (all) – 47.6%
 - GP (principal) – 56.1%
 - Primary schools – 13.7%
 - Supermarket – 68.1%
 - Petrol station – 50.9%
 - Pub – 15.6%

⁵ The information in this section is drawn from 'Access to services in Norfolk', v1.1, published March 2011, ©ACRE/RCAN/OCSI 2011, unless otherwise stated.

- 2.3.3.4 **Figure 7** shows that the majority of the households in Norfolk that are situated a long way from key amenities such as places of work, job centres and secondary schools are based in rural areas.
- 2.3.3.5 This clearly has an impact on people's working arrangements as the majority of people who work from home live in rural areas and 66.3% of all self-employed people across Norfolk live in rural areas.⁶
- 2.3.3.6 This could explain why close to two thirds of VAT registered enterprises in the county are located in rural locations and 90% of them employ fewer than ten people.

Figure 7

The proportion of people living in rural areas in Norfolk (rural share) - distance to work and amenities indicators

	Norfolk - Rural		East of England - Rural		England - Rural	
	N	% share	N	% share	N	% share
People aged 16-74	193,810	54.0	797,380	30.9	4,433,315	19.8
Households with no car or van	26,065	36.6	86,325	19.5	537,450	9.8
Working at home	24,940	66.7	99,600	40.9	605,920	29.5
Travelling more than 10 km to work	7,245	57.3	36,870	40.5	171,520	28.2
Households 6+km from principal GP site	4,850	100.0	7,160	100.0	67,805	98.2
Households 10+km from a Job Centre	114,805	96.1	382,975	80.3	2,129,770	76.6
Households 6+km from Secondary School	20,500	100.0	50,950	95.0	303,955	94.7

Source: CRC 2009, Census 2001. 'Share' refers to the proportion of the total population (on an indicator) that live in rural areas.

- 2.3.3.7 The distance lying between Norfolk's rural households and key services can result in long travel times to access them.
- 2.3.3.8 **Figure 8** illustrates the extent of this problem across Norfolk. For example, it shows that 41 (about 8%) of Norfolk's LSOAs have a travel time of more than two hours to get to hospital.

⁶ 'The rural share of deprivation in Norfolk', v1.1, published March 2011, ©ACRE/RCAN/OCSI 2011

Figure 8

No. of LSOAs more than 120 minutes travel time of a key service	
Employment centre	5
Further Education (FE) college	15
Hospital	41
Secondary School	25
Supermarket	4
Town Centre	15
Source: Department of Transport (DfT)	

2.3.3.9 The distance people in rural areas are required to travel to access services impacts on their quality of life in several key ways:

- a. It means that they are more reliant on private transport
- b. It means they generally spend more on transport than their urban counterparts
- c. It means they travel nearly twice as far by car each year compared to urban residents, most often as a result of needing to access work
- d. This extra travel also has a time implication creating a significant opportunity cost (often more significant for rural businesses) and potentially acting as a disincentive to participation.

2.3.3.10 In the most deprived rural areas in Norfolk, 35% of households have no access to a car or van. These people are likely to face particular challenges to accessing key services and amenities.

2.3.4 Communications

2.3.4.1 Access to communications technology, including mobile and digital services can make a significant difference to individuals day to day. For example, it can enable:

- access to a wide range of goods and services
- greater choice and comparison between options to increase value for money
- access to information eg about healthcare
- access to employment opportunities and learning resources
- social contact and reduced isolation

2.3.4.2 Increasingly, public services are being delivered through mobile and digital media but the access issues for Norfolk's rural areas are significant.

2.3.4.3 The County Council's Better Broadband for Norfolk consultation in 2012 identified that the high cost of delivering commercially sustainable broadband in rural locations has resulted in large parts of Norfolk having poor or no broadband capability, and that there is a significant urban/rural divide in terms of access to broadband services.

2.3.4.4 **Table 2** below shows average speeds in Norfolk in 2012, for location type, based on Broadband Delivery UK speed data:

Table 2

Location Type	Average Speed obtainable
Village, Hamlet and Isolated Dwellings	4.2Mb/s
Urban > 10K population	6.032Mb/s
Town and Fringe	8.134Mb/s

The County Council's Better Broadband for Norfolk campaign means that by the end of 2015 more than 80% of Norfolk's premises are expected to be able to access superfast broadband (24 Megabits per second and above) and it is intended that all Norfolk premises will be able to access a minimum broadband speed of at least 2Mbps. However, some rural areas will remain at risk of digital exclusion due to poorer performing connections.

2.3.4.5 Mobile phone coverage is also an issue across Norfolk; the Government's Mobile Infrastructure Project (MIP) has identified that there are 12 'Not Spot clusters' in Norfolk currently – a Not Spot is any 200 metre square where no mobile emergency signal exists.

2.3.4.6 Not-spots raise important policy issues because of the reliance that society now places on mobile phones.

2.3.4.7 For commercial reasons, the exact location of Norfolk's Not spots is unavailable for this report, but research by Ofcom has shown that 'complete Not Spots' exist mostly in rural areas⁷.

A Norfolk County Council Member Working Group is lobbying to see mobile coverage in Norfolk improved. A key issue is that complete not-spots are likely to continue to persist to some extent, particularly in rural areas, which are a lower priority for mobile operators to extend their coverage because of low levels of use.

Comparatively poor access to mobile and digital technology places rural areas at risk of exclusion from services and socio-economic opportunities that are open to people in better connected areas. It also means that consideration will continue to need to be given to the rural implications of proposals to 'channel shift', or change services in a way that requires good communications access to function effectively.

⁷ 'Mobile not-spots – an update on our research', published 5 November 2010, Ofcom.

3. Norfolk's key rural issues

3.1 The information provided in this section of the report summarises key rural issues for Norfolk:

- a. **More than half of Norfolk's population live in rural areas** – therefore, any identified rural impacts associated with a proposal may potentially affect a significant number of people.
- b. **Over a fifth of Norfolk's land area is classified as sparse and these areas are home to nearly 72,000 people** – delivering services to people in these areas is likely to be challenging and more costly. Any proposals to make savings on the costs of delivering services may need to give additional consideration to the implications for people living in sparse areas.
- c. **Norfolk's rural areas have an older age profile than urban areas.** 60% of people of pensionable age live in rural areas, as do 56.3% of people claiming Attendance Allowance. This means changes to services for older adults and their carers are more likely to have a disproportionate impact on the populations of rural areas.
- d. **43% of people who are considered to be income deprived in Norfolk live in rural areas** – this means that targeting resources and services at highly deprived urban places alone means they may not reach substantial numbers of deprived people.
- e. **The rural share of limiting long term illness and permanent disability is high in Norfolk** compared to regional and national figures. This means that services for people with disabilities and their carers must give adequate consideration to how delivery can be managed effectively in rural areas, which often have challenging access issues.
- f. **Rural households are more likely to be situated a long way from key amenities** such as places of work, job centres, health services and schools, resulting in long travel times to access them. This means they generally spend more on transport than people in urban areas and are more reliant on private car use. Any decision to centralise services could add to access challenges and especially the 35% of rural households in the most deprived rural areas in Norfolk that have no access to a car or van. This could effectively mean the costs of service delivery are shifted to people needing the service in rural areas and some people may struggle to afford this.
- g. **Comparatively poor access to mobile and digital technology places rural areas at risk of exclusion** from services and socio-economic opportunities that are open to people in better connected areas. It also means that consideration may need to be given to the rural implications of proposals to

'channel shift', or change services in a way that requires communications to function effectively.

- h. **The majority of Norfolk's self-employed workers and small enterprises are located in rural areas.** This means that changes to service delivery that affect small businesses, for example, regarding infrastructure or economic development, may have a particular impact on rural areas.

4. The rural assessment - initial screening

- 4.1 The Council has worked with Norfolk RCC to assess whether any of the savings proposed for 2014/15 could have a significant rural impact and will, therefore, require more detailed analysis.
- 4.2 The decision about whether a proposal requires detailed analysis has been made based on two key tests developed by Norfolk RCC - these assess the extent to which a proposal may be disproportionately and/or significantly detrimental to people living in rural areas.
- 4.3 Any proposals considered to have the potential to be disproportionately and/or significantly detrimental to rural areas will be subject to further analysis in Section 5 of this report.
- 4.4 The results of the Council's initial discussion with Norfolk RCC about the potential rural impact of the proposals are provided at Appendix A.

4.5 Overview of the results

- 4.5.1 The results of this initial screening exercise indicate that further rural impact assessment was required for the following proposals:

Ref	Name of proposal
1d	Reduce the cost of our buildings and make full use of our own facilities
3c	Redesigning the way we deliver our services to reduce our costs
3d	Cutting some budgets
3e	Reduce the costs of delivering services
3g	Reduce library staff
4a	Reduce funding for the arts
4b	Remove subsidy we give to schools for community groups using their facilities
5a	Reduce the amount we spend on transport for people who use Adult Social Care services
5b	Reduce highway maintenance

5. Rural impact assessment findings

5.1 Summary of findings related to efficiency proposals

- 5.1.1 Budget savings proposals 1a to 1d, 2a and 3a to 3f are efficiency savings - this means that they involve the Council cutting its own costs and becoming even more efficient. None of these proposals is considered to require public consultation as they are not anticipated to affect services that people receive.
- 5.1.2 Following discussion with the Norfolk RCC some further information was gathered to consider whether any rural issues may be highlighted. The findings of this research are presented below.
- 5.1.3 In summary, no detrimental or disproportionate impact on rural areas was found:

5.2 Findings in relation to proposal 1d – Reduce the cost of our buildings and make full use of our own facilities (spending less on external venues)

- 5.2.1 This saving is intended to be achieved through making better use of Council buildings, such as fire stations or libraries, which we may not currently be considering for meetings, so we can reduce spend on hiring other facilities.

5.3 Findings in relation to proposal 3c – We will redesign some of our Adult Social Care services

- 5.3.1 The Council has been working with HP to look at some of our business processes and consider where these could be re-engineered to make time efficiencies. As part of this work, we have been looking at our adult social care assessment and care management and financial back office processes to identify where we can simplify what we are doing and reduce the time it takes to complete certain parts of our processes.

5.4 Findings in relation to proposal 3d – Cutting some budgets (reducing the consultation budget)

- 5.4.1 This saving is intended to be achieved through reducing procurement costs associated with purchasing consultation support (eg software), rather than reducing spend on consultation activity, so there is not anticipated to be any impact on rural outreach.

5.5 Findings in relation to proposal 3e – Reduce the costs of delivering services (Reducing the transport costs for Looked After Children)

- 5.5.1 When arranging meetings in relation to Looked After Children (LAC), social workers try to make any associated transport arrangements as efficient and cost-effective as possible. This means that they will consider whether it is possible to use public transport instead of private hired transport, where it is appropriate and practical to do so. This is an approach that social workers have implemented for some time.
- 5.5.2 As a result of taking this approach, savings have already been made on the LAC transport budget. This has not yet been reflected in the Council's budget. The proposed reduction in funding for LAC transport is therefore a budget adjustment to reflect this saving and not a cut to service funding.

5.6 Summary of findings related to proposals requiring consultation

- 5.6.1 The initial screening process of this assessment identified that five of the budget proposals requiring public consultation had the potential to have a disproportionate and/or significantly detrimental impact on rural areas and further analysis was required to assess whether this is the case.
- 5.6.2 Further information has been gathered about these proposals and the findings of this research are presented below.
- 5.6.3 In summary, it was found that:
- Proposal **5a (Reduce the amount we spend on transport for people who use Adult Social Care services)** appears likely to have a **disproportionate and significantly detrimental impact** on rural areas.
 - Proposal **5b (Reduce highway maintenance)** is likely to have a **disproportionate impact** but is not likely to have a significantly detrimental impact on rural areas.
- 5.6.4 No detrimental or disproportionate impacts on rural areas have been identified for the other proposals assessed.
- 5.6.5 Where potential adverse impact has been identified, the assessment recommends an appropriate mitigating action/s for the Committee to consider as part of the decision-making process.

5.7 Findings in relation to proposal 3g - Reduce library staff

Overall findings:

This proposal does not appear likely to have a disproportionate or significantly detrimental impact on rural areas.

Detail

5.7.1 Proposal 3g proposes to reduce the Council's spend on library staff by £80k in 2015/16. This is intended to be achieved through a combination of:

- a. Reducing staffing on some outreach projects
- b. Vacancy monitoring
- c. Finding more opportunities to share managers between libraries

5.7.2 At the Council's initial discussion with Norfolk RCC about the budget proposals, it was identified that this proposal could have a disproportionate impact in rural areas if it would result in staffing reductions at smaller libraries that only have a small staff base to begin with. To illustrate, the overall effect of reducing one staff member would be more significant in a small library with only two staff than it would be in a large library with ten or more staff.

5.7.3 Further information has been gathered about how it is proposed to achieve the proposed library staffing savings. This confirms that:

- There are no plans to close libraries or reduce opening hours – this includes mobile libraries
- There are no plans to reduce staff in small libraries
- None of the outreach activity that is likely to be reduced as a result of this proposal is targeted at rural areas or at groups that are represented in rural areas
- Vacancy monitoring has been in use for some time and will continue to be used as a way of reducing staffing costs – this means that when a staff post becomes vacant the needs of the library are reviewed to ensure that the post is still needed and has not become superfluous. Sometimes, for example, a full time position might be reduced to part time. If data about library use shows that the post is still needed it will be retained. Library data shows that the greatest staff turnover tends to be in larger urban libraries so vacancy monitoring is likely to occur more frequently outside of rural areas.
- The roles of library assistants (who serve the public) and library managers (who focus on management specific tasks) are clearly separated in the library service. This means that sharing a manager between libraries should not impact on the amount of face to face time between staff and the public. Where managers are spending a lot of time serving the public, extra library assistant hours are brought in to replace this before moving to shared management. Consultation is always carried out with library staff before shared management arrangements are introduced to make sure that concerns about any significant impacts on service

delivery are highlighted. 26 libraries, in both rural and urban areas, are already successfully using shared management arrangements.

- Staffing reductions resulting from this proposal could potentially mean some smaller libraries could end up with just one staff member working at a time, if data shows this is sufficient to meet the needs of people using the library. This is already the case in 34 of Norfolk's libraries and in mobile libraries. A review of lone working in libraries conducted in October 2014 showed that library staff are concerned that lone working means they have fewer opportunities to support library customers, but also that the amount of customer complaints about reduced staffing levels has been minimal.

5.7.4 Based on the above, we can conclude that reducing staffing on some outreach projects is unlikely to have a disproportionate impact on rural areas. Other staff savings will be made on an unplanned basis where vacancies arise - there are no specific plans to reduce staff in small libraries.

5.7.5 Since rural libraries are more likely to be small it could be argued that they are more likely to be considered for lone working or shared management arrangements where vacancies do come up. However, the library service's evidence-based approach to staffing means that this should not impact on the amount of face to face time between staff and the public.

5.7.6 One consultation respondent has suggested that reducing staffing could limit the ability of libraries to further develop their role as community hubs and offer more support in areas where access to services is reducing. However, since this proposal does not include plans to close libraries or reduce their opening hours and staffing levels should always be sufficient to meet the needs of the people using them, it is not considered likely to have a significantly detrimental impact on rural areas.

5.8 Findings in relation to proposal 4a - Reduce funding for arts

Overall findings:

This proposal does not appear likely to have a disproportionate or significantly detrimental impact on rural areas. The Council should, however:

- Continue to allocate arts grants in line with the Council's Arts Policy, which states that "we will invest in the arts to meet the needs of local communities, rural and urban"
- Monitor implementation of this policy going forward to ensure that rural arts organisations are not being disproportionately impacted by the reduction in grants funding.

Detail

5.8.1 The proposal will reduce the Council's funding for the arts by £150k in 2015/16. This is intended to be achieved through a combination of:

- Removing a special grant of £70k that has been made annually to support the Norfolk and Norwich festival as part of the Strategic Ambitions programme (this programme has come to an end);
- Removing £80k from the Council's annual arts grants awards programme (this would reduce the current arts grants funding budget by about 50%)

5.8.2 At the Council's initial discussion with the NRCC about the budget proposals, it was queried whether this proposal could have a disproportionate impact in rural areas if:

- a. It results in larger, urban based arts organisations being considered a priority for the remaining funding at the cost of smaller rural organisations;
- b. it affects local tourism-based enterprise;
- c. It impacts on organisations delivering prevention activities in rural areas.

5.8.3 This assessment considers these issues in detail below.

- a. Is the reduction in arts funding likely to have a disproportionate and detrimental impact on rural areas because larger, urban based arts organisations will be considered a priority for the remaining funding at the cost of smaller rural organisations?**

5.8.4 Some respondents to the Council's consultation have suggested that the proposal may affect the ability of arts organisations to draw in match funding and could mean they will struggle to continue operating. Specific concerns are raised about the financial risk to rural based arts organisations, such as Welborne Festival and Sheringham Little Theatre. However, concerns are also raised about urban based arts organisations, such as the Garage and Cinema City.

- 5.8.5 The Council's Arts Policy states specifically that "we will invest in the arts to meet the needs of local communities, rural and urban".
- 5.8.6 In deciding which organisations to award grants to, the strategic priorities of the County Council are taken into account, along with the need to support a balance of small and larger organisations and to support an equitable geographic spread of funding between rural and urban areas.
- 5.8.7 If the Council continues to allocate arts grants in line with this policy, there is not anticipated to be any disproportionate impact on rural areas.

b. Is the reduction in arts funding likely to have a disproportionate and detrimental impact on rural areas because it may affect local tourism-based enterprise?

- 5.8.8 Tourism is a particularly important sector in rural areas as it creates employment and opportunities for business growth and supports the economic viability of local services and amenities.⁸
- 5.8.9 The importance of tourism for rural economies is growing. Nationally, enterprises in tourism related industries increased their share of England's rural economy from 9.5% to 10.2% between 2003 and 2010, and the share of employment in rural based tourism related industries increased from 11.2% to 12.6%.⁹
- 5.8.10 Significant investment is currently being made in the development of cultural tourism across the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area to support growth and attract inward investment. An estimated 1,013 organisations and 5,815 jobs exist in the sector across the region (of which only one-third are in Ipswich and Norwich) reflecting a higher proportion of people working in culture than the national average.¹⁰ Commitment from local authorities is seen as being critical to the success of this initiative.
- 5.8.11 The organisations that currently receive Council arts grant funding provide training, employment and volunteering opportunities. In 2013/14 this included 18 posts, 86 volunteering roles and 2 apprenticeships within organisations based in rural areas.
- 5.8.12 The proposed reduction in funding could risk the loss of some of these opportunities or affect the Council's strategic plans to develop cultural tourism, and either of these would have a detrimental impact on the economies and people living in some of Norfolk's rural areas.
- 5.8.13 However, national research shows that any impact on tourism in Norfolk is likely to be felt equally by urban areas – for example, the share of tourism related industry (enterprise, turnover and employment) specifically connected to arts,

⁸ Rural Tourism Action Plan 2010-2020, Visit England

⁹ September 2011 Statistical Feature Report -Tourism , DEFRA, 14 December 2011

¹⁰ 'Building Cultural Tourism in New Anglia' – New Anglia Final Report, Creative Tourist Consults, January 2013

creative and entertainment activities was slightly higher for urban areas in 2009/10 (6.7%) than it was for rural areas (5.4%).¹¹

c. Is the proposal likely to affect the role that arts organisations play in prevention activity in harder to reach areas?

5.8.14 In 2013/14 the 19 arts organisations that received NCC Arts Grants worked with an estimated total of 237,112 people with protected characteristics as artists, performers, participants, volunteers and audience members (approximately 34% of the total worked with). These figures included:

- **99,784** Older People
- **37,508** Rurally Isolated people
- **33,059** People with Physical Disabilities & Sensory Impairment
- **24,367** Children under 5
- **14,416** People with Mental Health issues
- **8,280** Young people at risk in Low income/Deprived circumstances
- **7,276** People with Learning Difficulties
- **7,337** Young carers
- **1,540** Refugees/people from migrant communities
- **989** people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET & PreNEET)
- **771** Looked After Children
- **815** individual young people with rural and/or socio/economic deprivation
- **510** Young People in Challenging Circumstances
- **352** people from Black and Minority Ethnic groups
- **75** people from traveller communities
- **30** Young Mothers and referral families
- **3** School Refusers

5.8.15 All of the arts organisations receiving Council funding are delivering some sort of prevention activity through the arts services that they provide. This could include:

- Providing learning and social opportunities that support the health and wellbeing of older people or people with disabilities
- Supporting education, skills and talent development, work experience and opportunities for social enterprise
- Support for young people, early years and schools, including children at risk of exclusion or who struggle to engage with formal education

5.8.16 Some of this prevention activity is delivered in rural areas. For example:

- Community Arts East leads delivery of the Norfolk Arts and Wellbeing Programme, which seeks to demonstrate the value and impact of using creative approaches to addressing health and social care priorities for older people and disadvantaged young people.
- The Garage's 'Creative Gym' project provides access countywide to physical activities for adults and older young people who do not regularly exercise.

¹¹ September 2011 Statistical Feature Report -Tourism , DEFRA, 14 December 2011

- Thalia Theatre Company runs a Community Outreach Programme that aims to promote disability art
- Welborne Festival has provided outreach opportunities for older people by offering dance workshops to local care facilities
- Cinema Plus has provided courses to rural communities in partnership with Film Hub Central East

5.8.17 Arts organisations also play a wider role in the development of volunteering and third sector organisations, which can be critical to the sustainability of other prevention activities in small communities. For example, in 2013/14 the Garage trained 50 volunteers supporting programmes in Norwich and in community centres and schools across the county. Community Arts East has also supported voluntary groups and community venues across the county with training, programming, marketing assistance and financial subsidy.

5.8.18 A reduction in arts grant funding may lead to a reduction in this prevention activity. However, we do not have any evidence at this stage to suggest that this will be more detrimental to rural areas than urban areas.

5.8.19 It is possible that if urban based arts organisations receive reduced funding, they may cut back on rural outreach activity. A small number of consultation respondents have highlighted the difficulty of accessing arts in rural communities, particularly for vulnerable or low income groups, and the important role that the Council plays in supporting this.

5.8.20 To mitigate this risk, the Council should:

- Continue to allocate arts grants in line with the Council's Arts Policy, which states that "we will invest in the arts to meet the needs of local communities, rural and urban"
- Monitor implementation of this policy going forward to ensure that rural arts organisations are not being disproportionately impacted by the reduction in grants funding.

5.8.21 Taking into account all of the information presented above, this proposal does not appear likely to have a disproportionate or significantly detrimental impact on rural areas if the proposed mitigating actions are taken.

5.9 Findings in relation to proposal 4b - Remove subsidy we give to schools for community groups using their facilities

Overall findings

This proposal does not appear likely to have a disproportionate or significantly detrimental impact on rural communities

Detail

- 5.9.1 The proposal aims to save £97k in 2015/16 by removing a subsidy we give to schools for community groups using their facilities.
- 5.9.2 The subsidy means that schools are able to charge most voluntary groups 15% less than their normal rate for the use of school premises outside of school hours. As long as the schools apply the standard scale of lettings charges appropriate to the let, they can then claim the difference back from the Council.
- 5.9.3 A higher rate of subsidy is available to Norfolk Schools Association groups – they can use the school premises for free (100% subsidy). This year, six Norfolk Schools Association groups have used school premises and claimed a subsidy. These groups are all providing sports activities and all are situated in schools in urban areas.
- 5.9.4 At the Council's initial discussion with Norfolk RCC about the budget proposals, it was agreed to undertake additional analysis to ensure that the proposal would not have a disproportionate impact in rural areas. Further information has now been gathered about the groups that have been benefitting from both levels of this subsidy. This shows us that:
- Currently 67 schools are hosting groups that benefit from this subsidy – this is approximately 15% of all schools in Norfolk
 - There is an even balance of subsidy use across rural and urban areas - 49% of the schools where groups are receiving a subsidy are based in rural areas.
 - Of the schools in rural areas, 82% have alternative community facilities nearby that the subsidised voluntary groups could be using.
 - 54% of the schools where groups are receiving a subsidy are hosting sports groups
 - Schools in urban areas are more likely to host subsidised sports groups than schools in rural areas (65% of urban schools where groups are receiving a subsidy are hosting sports groups compared to 42% of rural schools where groups are receiving a subsidy)
 - Subsidised sports organisations in rural areas are less likely to have alternative facilities nearby - across Norfolk as a whole, 31% of schools hosting subsidised sports groups do not appear to have any suitable

alternative facilities within close proximity but this rises to 43% when just rural schools are considered.

5.9.5 Based on the above, we can conclude that removing the subsidy we give to schools for community groups using their facilities is unlikely to have a disproportionate impact on rural areas, since the subsidy is not being used more in rural areas than it is in urban areas.

5.9.6 In the majority of the rural areas where the subsidy is being used there appear to be suitable alternative community facilities available that the subsidised groups could be using. Arguably, this could mean that the provision of a subsidy for school use could unfairly disadvantage rural community centres and village halls which might also have facilities for hire. It also means that most of the organisations in rural areas that could potentially be affected by the removal of the subsidy would have the choice of using other venues if the cost of the school facilities became too expensive for them.

5.9.7 The possible exception to this is the subsidised sports organisations. Over half of the schools where groups are receiving a subsidy host sports organisations, and for nearly a third of these there do not appear to be alternative facilities nearby. In rural areas 43% of schools hosting subsidised sports groups do not appear to have suitable alternative facilities nearby. This means that for community sports organisations in rural areas, there would potentially be no options for moving venue if costs increased too much as a result of removing the current subsidy. This could disincentivise community sports provision in rural areas.

5.9.8 The size of the current subsidy is relatively small for all but the Norfolk Schools Association groups. **Table 3** below provides some illustrations of what the financial impact of removing the 15% subsidy could be for most community and voluntary groups.

Table 3

	Typical hourly cost with 15% subsidy	Typical hourly cost without subsidy	Estimated total annual cost of a 3 hour hire per week - with 15% subsidy	Estimated total annual cost of a 3 hour hire per week - without subsidy
Football pitch hire	£12.99	£15.28	£2033.36	£2,391.82
Hall hire	£15.64	£18.40	£2448.17	£2880.20
Classroom hire	£7.28	£8.56	£1139.56	£1339.92

5.9.9 The schools hosting organisations that are currently subsidised could choose to continue offering them a reduced rate for the hire of school premises. While it is probable that most schools would seek to cover their costs in full, there is a chance that the removal of the subsidy would not result in an increase in costs for some voluntary and community organisations.

5.9.10 It should be remembered that only a small proportion of Norfolk schools currently have groups making use of the 15% subsidy and six groups making use of the 100% subsidy so the overall impact of the reduction is likely to be limited.

5.10 Findings in relation to proposal 5a – Reduce the amount we spend on transport for people who use Adult Social Care services

Overall findings

This proposal appears likely to have a disproportionate and significantly detrimental impact on rural areas.

Detail:

- 5.10.1 This proposal will affect people who receive a transport service from Adult Social Care and people who use their personal budget to pay for transport. It will affect older people, disabled people and people with a learning disability, because these are the people who use this service.
- 5.10.2 If this proposal goes ahead the Council would look more closely at transport costs when we assess what social services people need. This means that:
- a. We will make sure people are using their Motability vehicle or mobility for their transport.
 - b. We would ask people to use public transport or community transport where we assess that they are able to do this.
 - c. We would ask people to use the service that is closest to them if this will meet their needs, for example, their local day center. If they don't want to use the local service as they prefer to use a service that is further away, we would not pay for them to travel there.
 - d. If we could not find a service that meets people's needs in their local area we would not automatically pay for them to travel a long way to get the service elsewhere. Instead we would work with the person who needs the service and their carer/s to come up with a more creative solution that involves less travel. For example a group of people in a town could pool their Personal Budgets and pay for a personal assistant to help them access local services rather than travel to a day center in another town.
 - e. If we cannot meet people's care needs through the options listed above, we would pay for people's transport through their personal budget.
- 5.10.3 At the high level screening, this proposal was identified as having potential to impact on people from rural areas. This arose from two factors – first, the proposal relates to transport, and as detailed earlier in this report it is evident that transport, and access to transport, is a major issue for people living in rural areas. Secondly, the service users likely to be affected - older people, disabled people and people with a learning disability – were likely to have complex transport needs.

5.10.4 For example:

- People from rural areas are likely to have more complex transport needs than people living in urban areas. They are more likely to need to travel further or pay more to get to services than those living in urban areas. In addition, they may have limited public or community transport options, and the transport options available may not be accessible.
- Consultation with disabled and older people in Norfolk consistently highlights access to transport as a major enabling factor and doorway to participation in education, employment and social opportunities. Disabled people are more likely to experience barriers to the built environment and transport and fall into low income groups.

5.10.5 In undertaking the analysis, evidence was gathered to find out more about the service users likely to be affected. Consideration was also given to each specific element of the proposal. This analysis and conclusions are described below.

Looking closely at the profile of service users who may be affected

The Transport Plus service

5.10.6 The County Council, through the Transport Plus service, arranges transport for social care clients, including those with personal budgets. The service currently supports 2,100 service users, arranging around 568,000 individual journeys each year.

5.10.7 Around 50% of people using the transport service are from rural areas. A significant number of people (over 39%) using the Transport Plus service are 75+ years oldⁱ. Around 10% of service users are under 30 years of age. This is important to note because research shows that service users may have different transport needs depending on their ageⁱⁱ. For example, young people, particularly those in rural areas, may rely on accessible transport to attend educational and social/leisure opportunities. As people age, they may become less mobile and increasingly reliant on transport. Disabled people of all ages in rural areas are at risk of social isolationⁱⁱⁱ.

5.10.8 People use the transport service mostly to access day services and day/leisure activities. Other uses include getting to respite care, to colleges and other educational establishments, to visit council offices, places of worship and community hospitals.

People who use personal budgets to pay for transport

5.10.9 The Council is not able to record detailed data on all of the things that people spend their personal budgets on and as such isn't able to analyse what journeys everyone might use theirs for. In view of this, the Council has written to everyone receiving a direct payment (and those currently in receipt of a transport service - around 4,000 in total) asking service users for their views, to make sure we fully understand the potential impact of this proposal on these users.

5.10.10 Overall, the Council provides personal budgets to around 9,152 people every year. 48% of people in receipt of personal budgets are from rural communities^{iv}. Around 49% of people in receipt of personal budgets are aged 75 and over^v.

People in receipt of a Motability vehicle or mobility allowance

- 5.10.11 If the proposal goes ahead the Council will make sure people are using their Motability vehicle or mobility allowance for their transport. Motability vehicles and mobility allowance are paid from Personal Independence Payments (PIP), a new national benefit introduced in April 2013, replacing Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for eligible people aged 16 to 64. PIPs cover 'daily living' and 'mobility'. The mobility component is paid at either a 'higher' rate (£55.25 per week) or a 'lower rate' (£21 per week). People on the higher rate have severe walking difficulties and people on the lower rate need guidance or supervision outdoors.
- 5.10.12 People can choose to exchange their higher rate mobility allowance to lease a car, scooter or powered wheelchair ('Motability vehicles'). PIP's are not means-tested or taxable and can be paid whether people are working or not.
- 5.10.13 The Government estimates that it will be around two years before all eligible people will have transferred to PIP. In view of this the most reliable indication of the number of people in receipt of a Motability vehicle or mobility allowance in Norfolk are the DLA figures for the period 2012/2013.
- 5.10.14 These figures show that around 44,000 people across Norfolk claimed DLA^{vii} during this period. Around 48% of recipients lived in rural areas^{vii}, with around half of all claimants falling into the 'higher rate' mobility category^{viii}. The majority of higher rate claimants were aged 50+.
- 5.10.15 The analysis below considers each element of the proposal in detail:

a. We will make sure people are using their Motability vehicle or mobility allowance for their transport.

- 5.10.16 This aspect of the proposal may particularly impact upon people living in rural areas, because people in rural areas may need to travel further to reach services and may have limited access to accessible public or community transport, making travel more challenging and costly.

b. We would ask people to use public transport or community transport where we assess that they are able to do this.

- 5.10.17 People in rural areas are likely to have less access to accessible public or community transport than people in urban areas. This means that they may have fewer options or opportunities to travel.

c. We would ask people to use the service that is closest to them that meets their needs, for example, their local day centre. If they don't want to use the local service as they prefer to use a service that is further away, we would not pay for them to travel there.

- 5.10.18 This aspect of the proposal may reduce the amount of choice that service users in rural areas have about the services they access. People in rural areas may be at

particular risk of reduced choice, as they may have fewer accessible travel options available and the options available may be more costly.

d. If we could not find a service that meets people's needs in their local area we would not automatically pay for them to travel a long way to get the service elsewhere. Instead we would work with the person who needs the service and their carer/s to come up with a more creative solution that involves less travel. For example a group of people in a town could pool their Personal Budgets and pay for a personal assistant to help them access local services rather than travel to a day centre in another town.

5.10.19 This aspect of the proposal could present service users in rural areas with some genuine opportunities to improve provision in their community and tailor it specifically to their needs. The idea of pooled personal budgets initiatives has proven to be a success in some areas of Norfolk.

5.10.20 There might also be an opportunity to use this initiative as a way of supporting service users in rural areas to become involved in existing mainstream community activities in their area, which might not currently be accessible, but which, with the right intervention, could become accessible and meet service users' needs.

5.10.21 Some social work staff may need to develop new skills to be able to support people properly in exploring more creative options such as pooling personal budgets. The Council would need to make sure social work staff have the support that they need to be able to offer this sort of help effectively.

e. If we cannot meet people's care needs through the options listed above, we would pay for people's transport through their personal budget.

5.10.22 The proposal is clear that if none of the above options are possible, then the Council will pay for people's transport through service users' personal budgets. The main issue here is that some disabled people, particularly those in rural areas, might have complex transport needs and the proportion of their personal budget that may need to be used for transport may be higher than for other people. This may only affect a small number of service users, but for the purposes of this assessment it is important to highlight.

5.10.23 Potential mitigating actions, if the proposal goes ahead:

	Action/s	Lead	Date
1.	Where the assessment process highlights areas of limited accessible community or public transport provision in some parts of the county, which might result in affordability issues or a loss of independence for service users, work with service users to try to find ways to address this, offering where appropriate travel planning support to make sure people are spending as effectively as possible.	Janice Dane	From 1 April 2015

2.	Where the assessment process highlights areas of limited accessible community or public transport provision in some parts of the county, work with commissioners, communities and community transport providers to find opportunities to address this, and inform strategic transport planning, to enable consideration to be given to whether there are opportunities to address this at a strategic level over the medium/long term.	Janice Dane	From 1 April 2015
3.	Provide service users with support to help them plan and establish pooled budgets. Ensure staff supporting service users in this work have the appropriate skills – eg this may include community development skills. Monitor the extent to which service users are able to participate in this initiative.	Janice Dane	From 1 April 2015
4.	Continue ongoing dialogue with transport providers to promote disability awareness and identify where further action can be taken to improve accessibility and increase the confidence of disabled people in using community and public transport.	Tracey Jessop	From 1 April 2015
5.	Monitor the implementation of these mitigating actions, reporting back to the committee at six monthly intervals on progress.	Janice Dane	From 1 April 2015

5.11 Findings in relation to proposal 5b – Reduce highway maintenance

Key findings

This proposal may have a disproportionate impact on rural areas. However, it is not likely to have a significantly detrimental impact on rural areas.

Detail

- 5.11.1 Proposal 5b proposes to save £385k in 2015/16 by making a saving on highway maintenance costs.
- 5.11.2 In 2014/15 a £1m reduction to the highway maintenance budget was agreed. This was intended to be a one-off saving with the highways maintenance budget restored to its previous level in 2015/16. This proposal will mean that only £615k is restored, instead of the full £1m.
- 5.11.3 The Council would continue to carry out all urgent work and any work that is needed to keep people safe. However, the proposal could mean:
- It may take longer for some road markings to be re-painted

- It may take longer for some damaged verges to be repaired
 - We may postpone some bridge maintenance work
 - We may inspect traffic signals less often – although we would still meet national standards
 - We may only repair safety barriers where they have been damaged and postpone our routine maintenance work.
- 5.11.4 At the Council's initial discussion with Norfolk RCC about the budget proposals, it was identified that this proposal could have an impact in rural areas, as rural roads are often less well used and harder to get to, and therefore less cost effective to maintain.
- 5.11.5 Further information has now been gathered about how it is proposed to achieve the highway maintenance savings, and this is set out below.
- 5.11.6 The highway network in Norfolk is classified according to a route hierarchy, which distinguishes roads and footways on the basis of their function and level of use. The hierarchy is used to determine which routes are a priority for non-urgent maintenance. It is also a factor in how often highway inspections are carried out - either monthly, quarterly, six monthly or annually depending upon the road and location.¹²
- 5.11.7 This hierarchy means that emphasis is placed on ensuring that Norfolk's principal and major urban and inter-urban routes are kept in good condition, and other routes, including many in rural areas, will be a lower priority for maintenance. This means that over the last 10 years the condition of Norfolk's A and B road network has improved, but there has been some deterioration of the remainder of the road network and bridges.¹³
- 5.11.8 While all urgent work required to keep people safe will continue to be carried out, wherever it is needed, non-urgent maintenance work may take longer to be completed in rural areas.
- 5.11.9 Taking into account the information presented above, it is considered that proposal 5b may have a disproportionate impact on rural areas. This is because:
- a. people living in rural areas are more reliant on cars to access key amenities and travel nearly twice as far by car each year compared to urban residents (as described earlier in this report)
 - b. the Council's hierarchy approach to highways maintenance means that highway assets in rural areas will be less of a priority for maintenance.
- 5.11.10 Savings proposal 5b will not result in the overall budget available for highway maintenance being any lower in 2015/16 than it is currently. The proposed saving is also reasonably small relative to the size of the budget, representing a 1.6% saving, which suggests that it is unlikely to have a significant impact on Norfolk's road users.

¹² Norfolk's Transport Asset Management Plan 2014/15-2018/19

¹³ Connecting Norfolk – Norfolk's Transport Plan for 2026

- 5.11.11 The Council's Transport Asset Management Plan suggests that sufficient funds currently exist to carry out "inspection regimes, any emergency and high priority works identified... However, anticipated funding is insufficient to maintain the entire highway asset in a 'steady state'. Deterioration is expected across most asset types".¹⁴ It is estimated that a capital investment of £72.5m would be required to get Norfolk's highway back to the same condition it was in during 2006/07.
- 5.11.12 The most recent National Highways and Transport satisfaction survey demonstrates that public satisfaction with the condition of Norfolk's highway is high compared to other county councils and increasing, despite ongoing reductions to the maintenance budget, which suggests that the Council's overall approach to asset management has been effective.¹⁵ However, it should be noted that, although Norfolk ranks well nationally because satisfaction with the condition of highways is low across the country, its satisfaction score was not very high.
- 5.11.13 Taking into account all of the information above, the proposal is not considered likely to be significantly detrimental to people living in rural areas as the total highways maintenance budget will not reduce overall in 2015/16 as a result of it being implemented. If further reductions continue to be made over the longer term, however, it will be important to continue monitoring this area for potential rural impact.

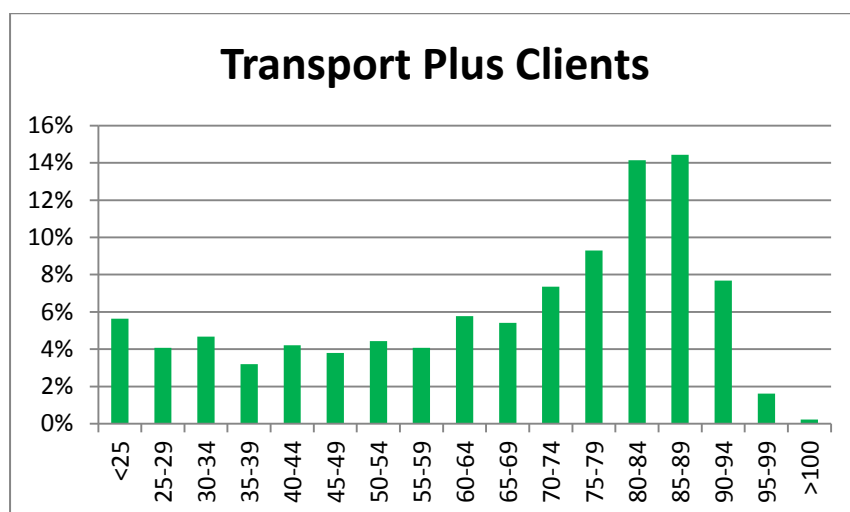
¹⁴ Norfolk's Transport Asset Management Plan 2014/15-2018/19

¹⁵ NHT Survey 2013

6. Conclusion and next steps

- 6.1 This is the first time that Norfolk County Council has undertaken a separate rural impact analysis on its budget proposals with this level of detail. In addition to highlighting some issues that the Council will need to consider as it is making decisions about the budget for 2015/18, the assessment process has also provided some valuable learning about wider issues, such as the importance of access planning in commissioning.
- 6.2 Following Full Council on 16 February 2016, Policy and Resources Committee may wish to consider the role of rural impact assessments in determining the Council's budget and other wider initiatives, to identify opportunities for developing this in going forward.

ⁱ Age of Transport Plus Clients: (latest data available on 24 November 2014)

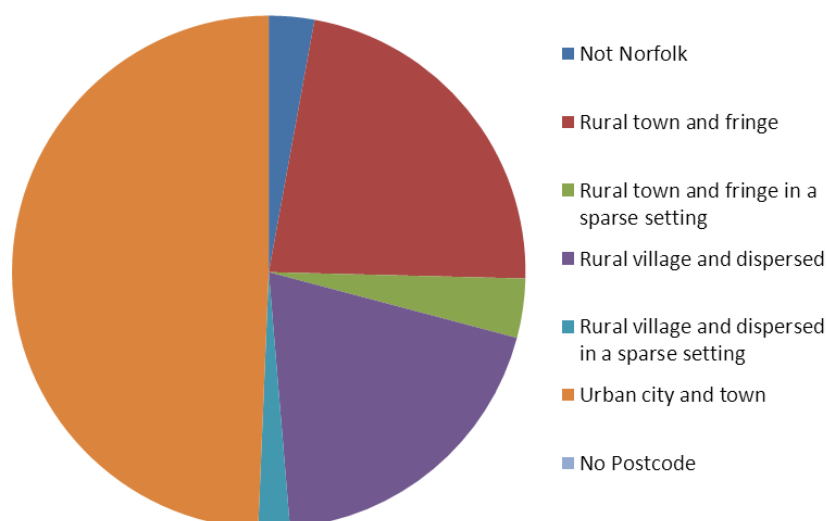


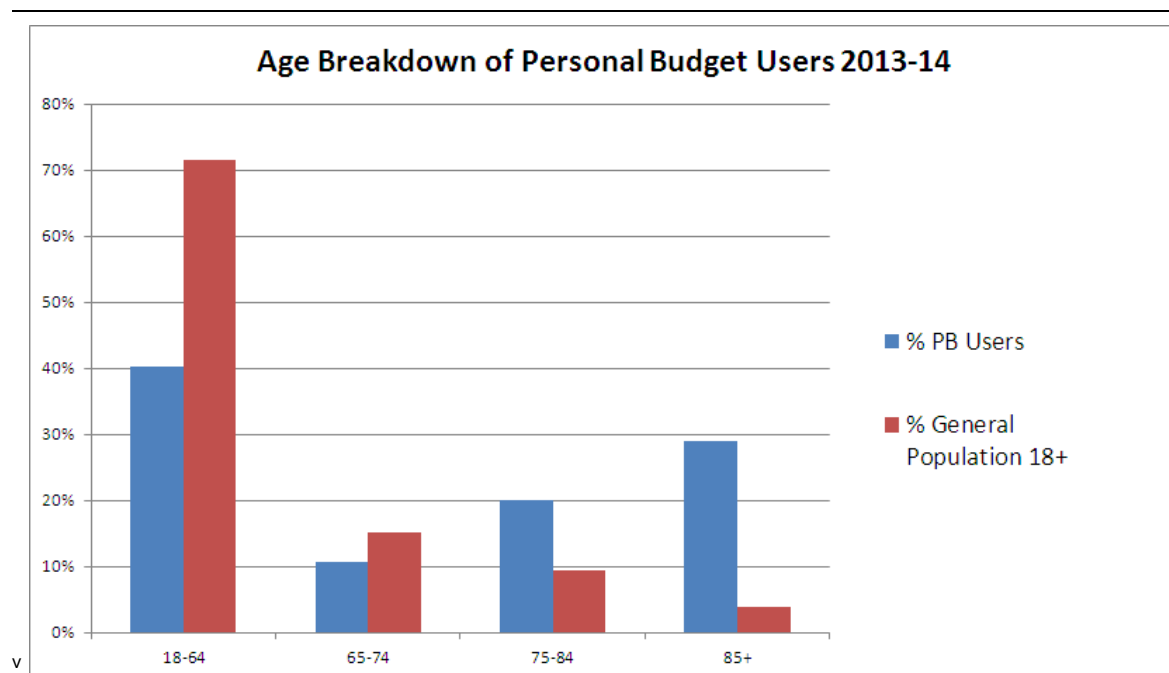
ⁱⁱ *Travel behaviour, experiences and aspirations of disabled people*, Department for Transport, 2008;
Young People with Special Educational Needs/Learning Difficulties and Disabilities:

Research into Planning for Adult Life and Services, LG Group Research Report, Martin, K., Hart, R.,
 White, R. and Sharp, C, September 2011

ⁱⁱⁱ *Preventing loneliness and social isolation: interventions and outcomes*, Karen Windle, Jennifer Francis
 and Caroline Coomber, Social Care Institute for Excellence, 2001

^{iv} **Personal budget users in 2012-13 by where they live**





vi Department for Work & Pensions
vii Department for Work & Pensions

viii DLA higher rate mobility claimants, February 2013 data

Age	Total	Male	Female
All ages	21,920	10,080	11,830
Aged 16-24	530	300	230
Aged 25-49	4,220	1,810,	2,410
Aged 50-64	7,880	3,450	4,230
Aged 65+	8,780	4,120	4,860

ix Priced out: ending the financial penalty of disability by 2020, SCOPE, 2014