

Dumfries and Galloway Council
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2

Settlement Hierarchy

TECHNICAL PAPER

JANUARY 2018



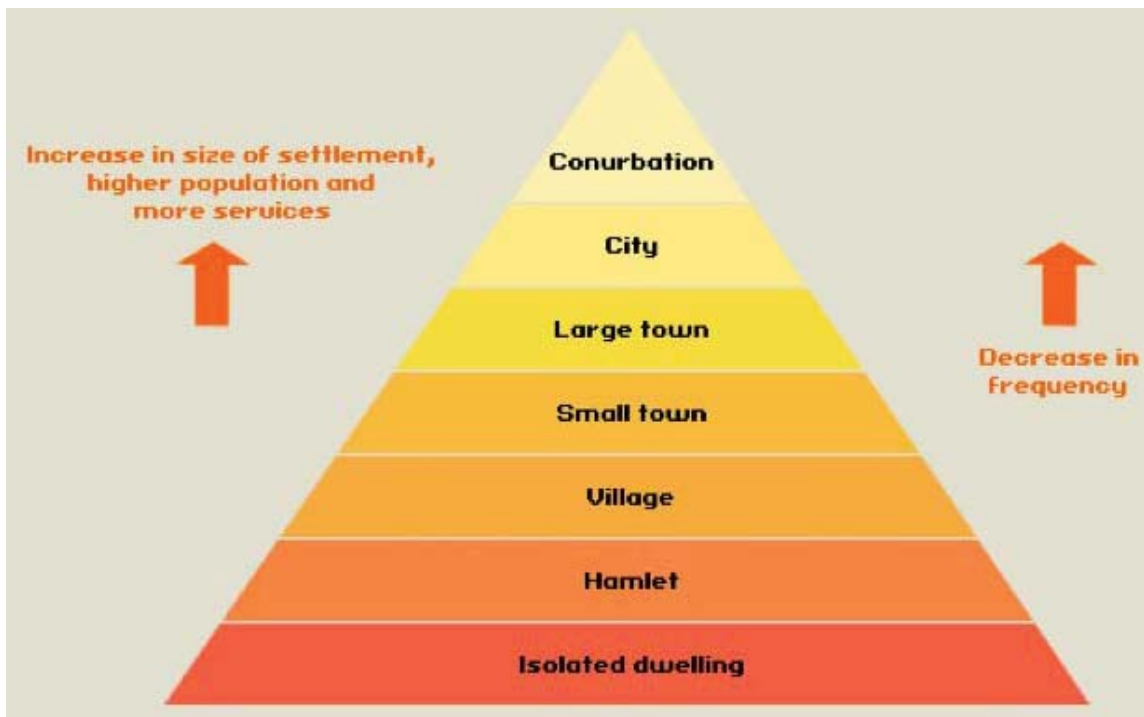
Introduction

In reviewing the Spatial Strategy for Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) one of the first activities is to carry out an assessment and consideration of the importance, distribution, size and nature of existing settlements (towns and villages). The most common way to do this is through the development of a settlement hierarchy.

What is a settlement hierarchy?

A settlement hierarchy is when settlements are put in an order and classified based on their size and/or the range of services that they provide for people. The higher up the hierarchy you go, there are fewer settlements but they increase in their size in terms of population and the number of services provided. The resulting hierarchy tends to be pyramid in shape as shown below in Fig. 1.

Figure 1: General Settlement Hierarchy



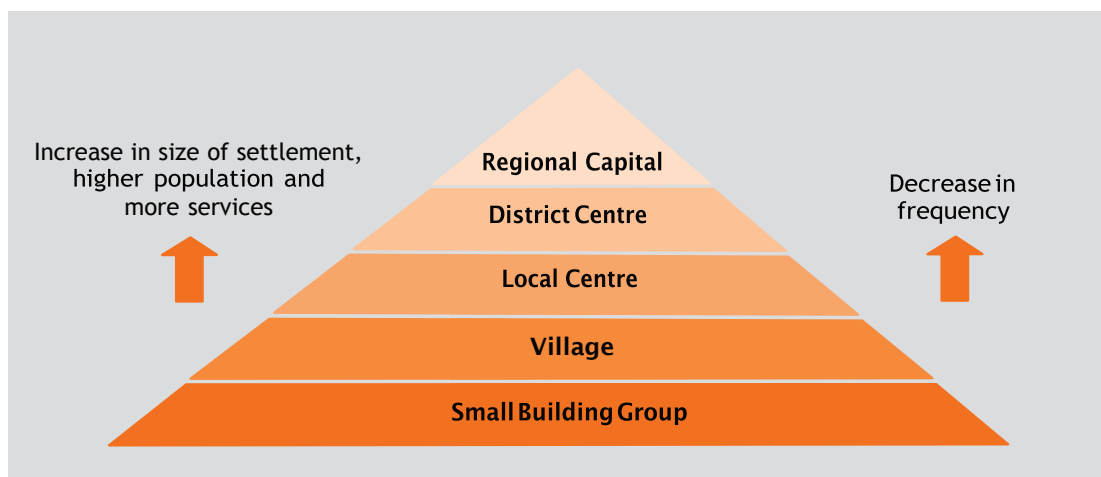
Source: http://www.geographyalltheway.com/igcse_geography/population_settlement/settlement/imagesetc/settlement_hierarchy.gif

Within Dumfries and Galloway, the top two tiers shown above (conurbations and cities), are not relevant but the same principles apply.

In order to produce and establish a relevant settlement hierarchy for LDP2, the settlement hierarchy flow chart was reviewed taking account of population and a number of social, economic and environmental factors. The flow chart is shown in Figure 3 overleaf.

All settlements that are identified in the LDP have been assessed using the settlement hierarchy flow chart. This results in a simpler settlement hierarchy that is more relevant to Dumfries and Galloway and is shown in figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Dumfries & Galloway Settlement Hierarchy pyramid



What does this mean for Dumfries and Galloway?

The first consideration that has been taken into account when producing a settlement hierarchy for Dumfries and Galloway is population. The Scottish Government publishes a document on an biannual basis called Rural Scotland Key Facts. This document defines rural Scotland as “settlements with a population of less than 3,000”.

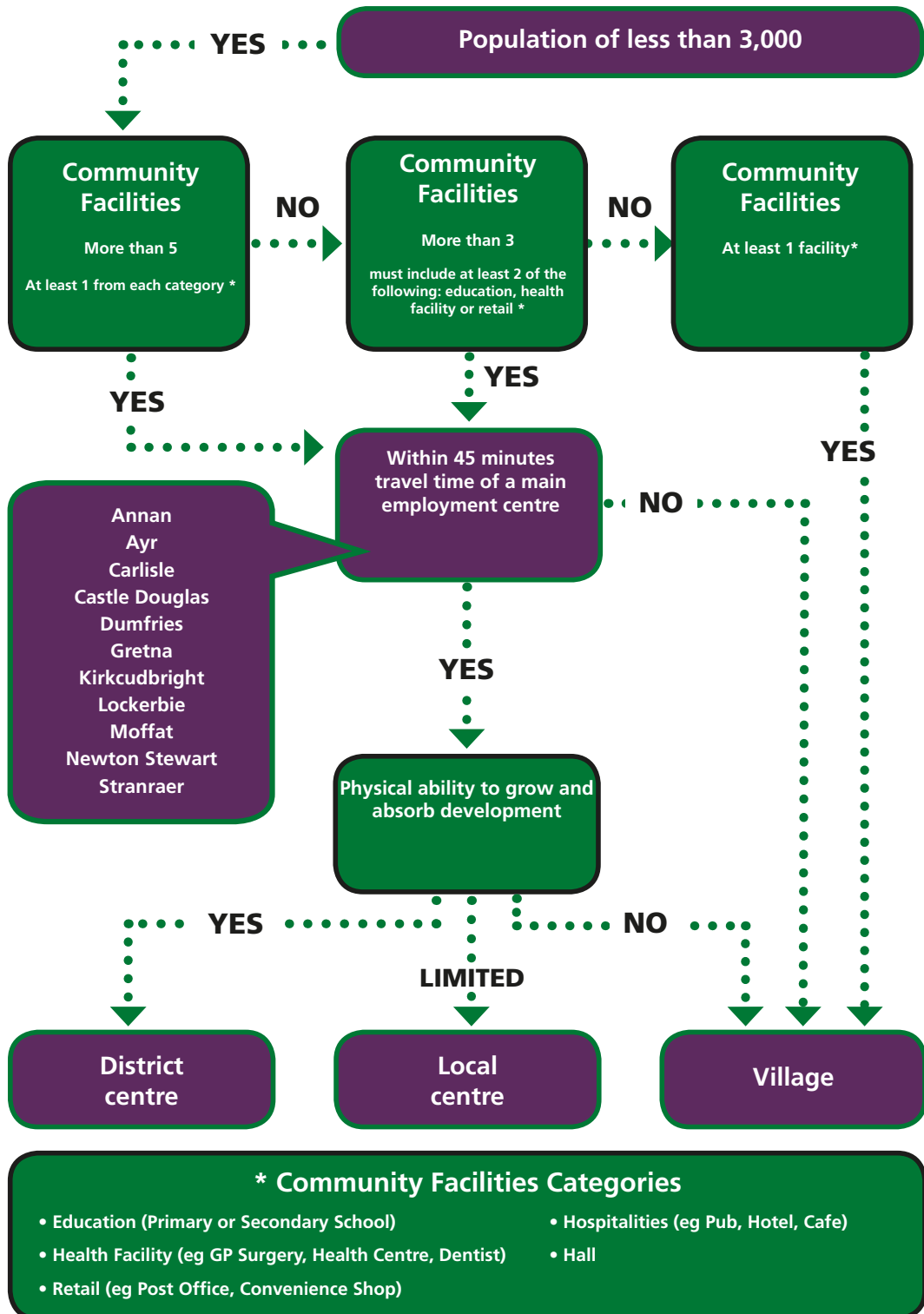
In July 2014, the National Records of Scotland produced mid-2012 population estimates for settlements where the population is 500 or more. For settlements with a population of less than 500, the 2011 Census figure was utilised. There are only 9 settlements in the region with a population over 3,000 as shown in the table below.

Settlement	2012 Population Estimate
Dumfries (regional Capital))	39,850
Stranraer	10,510
Annan	8,920
Dalbeattie	4,260
Castle Douglas	4,070
Lockerbie	4,290
Newton Stewart / Minnigaff	4,010
Kirkcudbright	3,390
Gretna Border	3,445

In terms of the settlement hierarchy, a settlement with a population of more than 3,000 is automatically classified as a District Centre with Dumfries classified as the Regional Capital. If the settlement has a population less than 3,000 then it works through the settlement hierarchy flow chart shown in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3

Settlement Hierarchy Diagram



Community Facilities

The range of facilities within a settlement is a key consideration when determining a settlement's position in the hierarchy. The importance placed on a particular facility will vary from person to person depending on their needs and particular circumstances. In developing the hierarchy, the following facilities are considered to be the most important in providing both for every day needs and also a sense of community:

- School – either primary or secondary
- Health Facility – doctors' surgery, health centre or dentist surgery
- Retail – convenience shop (one that sells general foodstuff) and/or a post office
- Hospitality – pub, hotel (with non-resident facilities), café, or restaurant
- Hall

The settlement hierarchy flow chart indicates different routes depending on the number and type of facilities available in each settlement, each leading to a different classification of District Centre, Local Centre and so on.

If a settlement has at least one of the five facilities listed above, it will follow the route on the left hand side of the diagram (and possibly become a District Centre).

The above is not an exhaustive list of services but these facilities are considered to be the most important in identifying settlements within the hierarchy. Therefore, the Settlement Hierarchy flow chart only relates to the five types of facilities outlined above. It is acknowledged that although other facilities can be very important to the local area and community, such as an open space / play facility or a church, they may not be required to provide every day needs or a sense of community.

Within 45 minutes of a main employment centre

Due to the rural nature and characteristics of the region, for the purposes of the hierarchy, the Council has taken 45 minutes as an acceptable commuter journey (the travelling time between a person's home and their place of work) within the region. A key factor in determining the sustainability of communities is reducing, as far as possible, the need to travel. Therefore, the distances between where people want to live and potential employment opportunities has been taken into account within the hierarchy which equates to travelling times between settlements and the nearest main employment centre.

For the purposes of this exercise, a main employment centre has been defined as a settlement that has a variety of existing employers and employment opportunities across a number of different sectors of the economy. The sectors may include manufacturing, food processing and the service sector which includes tourism, retail, public sector (including the Council and Health Board), etc. Within the region, the main employment centres are taken as follows:

Dumfries, Stranraer, Newton Stewart, Castle Douglas, Kirkcudbright, Annan, Gretna and Lockerbie

Two centres outside the region have also been included at Ayr and Carlisle, which also potentially provide easily accessible employment opportunities for residents of the region.

Those settlements that are outwith 45 minutes travel time from a main employment centre are classified as Villages.

Travel times were calculated using the quickest means of locally available transport be that vehicles (cars / vans), buses, or trains. In order to ensure that these were calculated consistently for all road journeys, the AA Routemaster has been used whilst timetables have been considered for train and bus journeys.

Ability to grow and absorb development?

The last factor to be taken into account in developing the hierarchy is the ability of a settlement to grow and absorb additional new development. In answering this question, the following factors have been taken into account:

- Can the landscape and topography surrounding the settlement absorb more development?
- If the settlement is within a sensitive landscape, such as a National Scenic Area or a Regional Scenic Area, are there opportunities for that settlement to grow?
- Are there significant archaeological or historic environment (such as Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings or Designed Landscapes) constraints which would prevent the settlement growing?
- Could additional development be at risk of flooding itself or could it exacerbate flooding elsewhere?; or is the flood risk so significant that there is no land available for development?
- Can the settlement physically accommodate any more development without having a detrimental effect on character, appearance and setting? This would involve considering the size of the existing settlement, the built form of the settlement and whether there are any physical structures such as main roads and railway lines that have or would constrain future development.

Having taken the above factors into account, if the settlement can grow in a sustainable manner (and it meets the facilities criteria) then it becomes a District Centre. In some cases, there is an ability to grow but it may be more limited and constrained, in which case the settlement becomes a Local Centre. Where it is considered that there are no further opportunities due to the above constraints then the settlement would become a Village. The number of locations which have no growth opportunities will be few and far between. It is accepted that some of the above factors are subjective by nature but further advice has been sought to support and justify the decisions that have been made from other organisations and experienced officers in the field.

Small Building Groups

Small Building Groups are defined as three or more separate habitable or occupied houses which are well related to each other and which create a sense of place. They are not regarded as settlements and generally will have no facilities. They are identified through a different process and assessed against criteria outlined in the Housing in the Countryside Supplementary Guidance. A current list of Small Building Groups is published on the Council's webpage (www.dumgal.gov.uk/LDP).

Dumfries and Galloway Settlement Hierarchy

The list of District Centres, Local Centres and Villages resulting from this exercise can be found in Appendix 1.

Appendix 1: Settlement Hierarchy

The following table shows each settlement's position in the settlement hierarchy

Annan HMA	<p>District Centres – Annan, Gretna Border</p> <p>Local Centres – Eaglesfield, Eastriggs, Ecclefechan</p> <p>Villages – Brydekirk, Chapelknowe, Cummertrees, Dornock, Kirtlebridge, Kirkpatrick Fleming, Powfoot</p>
Eskdale HMA	<p>District Centre – Langholm</p> <p>Local Centre – Canonbie</p> <p>Villages – Bentpath, Eskdalemuir, Evertown</p>
Dumfries HMA	<p>Regional Capital – Dumfries</p> <p>District Centres – Kirkconnel/Kelloholm, Lochmaben, Lockerbie, Moffat, Sanquhar, Thornhill</p> <p>Local Centres – Beattock, Dunscore, Glencaple, Johnstonebridge, Moniaive, New Abbey, Penpont</p> <p>Villages – Ae, Amisfield, Auldgirth, Bankend, Bankshill, Beeswing, Boreland, Carronbridge, Carrutherstown, Carsethorn, Clarencefield, Closeburn, Collin, Corrie Common, Dalton, Hightae, Holywood, Islesteps, Kirkbean, Kirkton, Lakehead (Closeburn), Lochfoot, Middlebie, Mouswald, Shawhead, Southernness, Templand, Terregles, Torthorwald, Tynron, Wanlockhead, Waterbeck</p>
Stewartry HMA	<p>District Centres – Castle Douglas, Dalbeattie, Kirkcudbright</p> <p>Local Centres – Auchencairn, Carsphairn, Crossmichael, Gatehouse of Fleet, New Galloway, Palnackie, Springholm, St. John's Town of Dalry, Twynholm</p> <p>Villages – Balmaclellan, Borgue, Bridge of Dee, Clarebrand, Colvend, Corsock, Crocketford, Dundrennan, Gelston, Glenlochar, Hardgate/Haugh of Urr, Kippford, Kirkgunzeon, Kirkpatrick Durham, Laurieston, Parton, Rhonehouse, Ringford, Rockcliffe</p>
Mid Galloway HMA	<p>District Centres – Newton Stewart, Whithorn, Wigtown</p> <p>Local Centres – Creetown, Garlieston, Kirkcowan, Kirkinner/Braehead, Port William</p> <p>Villages – Bladnoch, Carsluith, Glentool, Isle of Whithorn, Sorbie, Whauphill</p>
Stranraer HMA	<p>District Centre – Stranraer</p> <p>Local Centres – Drummore, Glenluce, Kirkcolm, Leswalt, Portpatrick</p> <p>Villages – Cairnryan, Castle Kennedy, Dunragit, Lochans, New Luce, Port Logan, Sandhead, Stoneykirk</p>