

DUMFRIES AND
GALLOWAY COUNCIL

**Local
Development
Plan**

Technical Paper

SEPTEMBER 2014



*Settlement
Hierarchy*

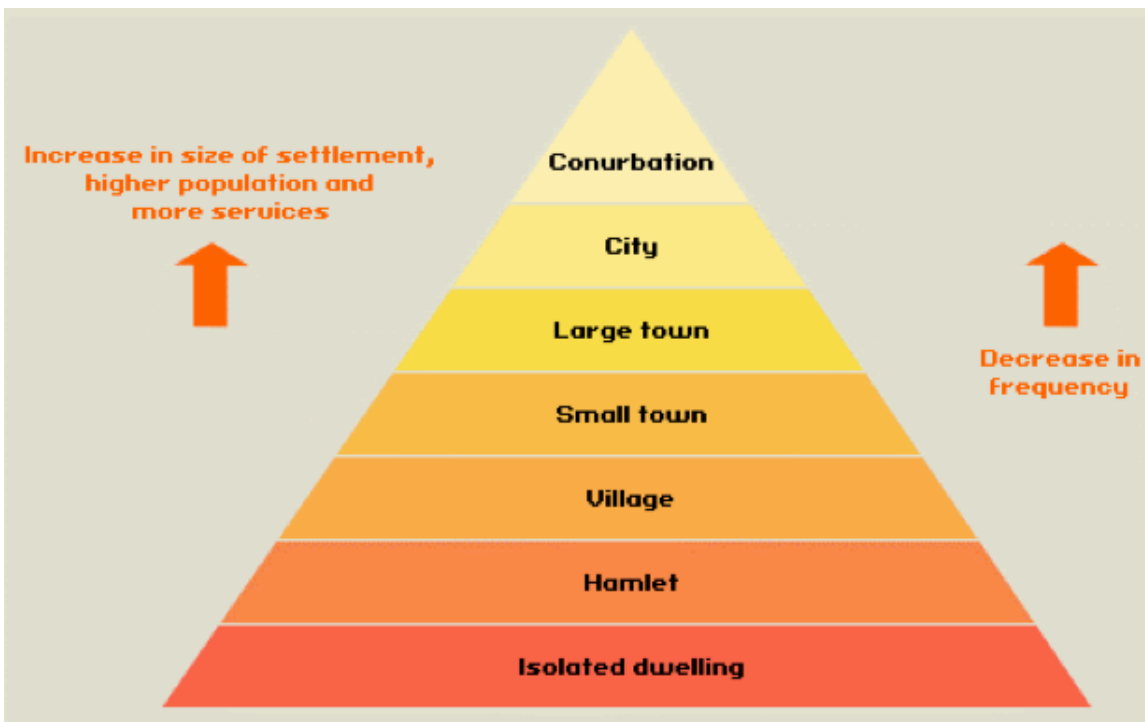
Introduction

In bringing forward a new Spatial Strategy for the Local Development Plan (LDP) 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 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



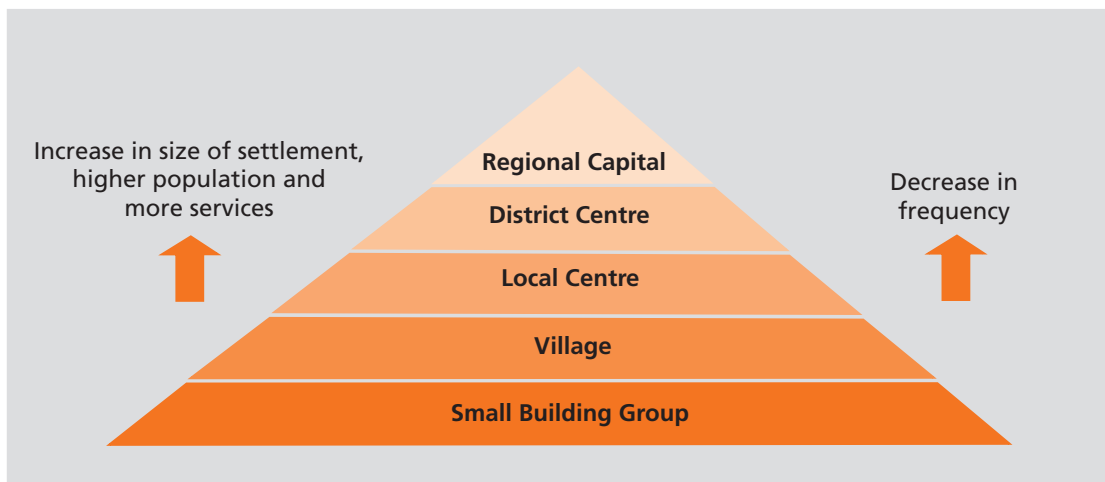
Source: http://www.geographyalltheway.com/igcse_geography/population_settlement/settlement/imageset/settlement_hierarchy.gif

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 the LDP a settlement hierarchy flow chart was developed taking account of population and a number of social, economic and environmental factors. The flow chart is shown in Figure 3 overleaf.

All 120 settlements that currently have an inset map in the four Local Plans and locations on the current (Suitable) Small Building Group lists 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 on an annual basis a document called Rural Scotland Key Facts, this document defines rural Scotland as “settlements with a population of less than 3,000”.

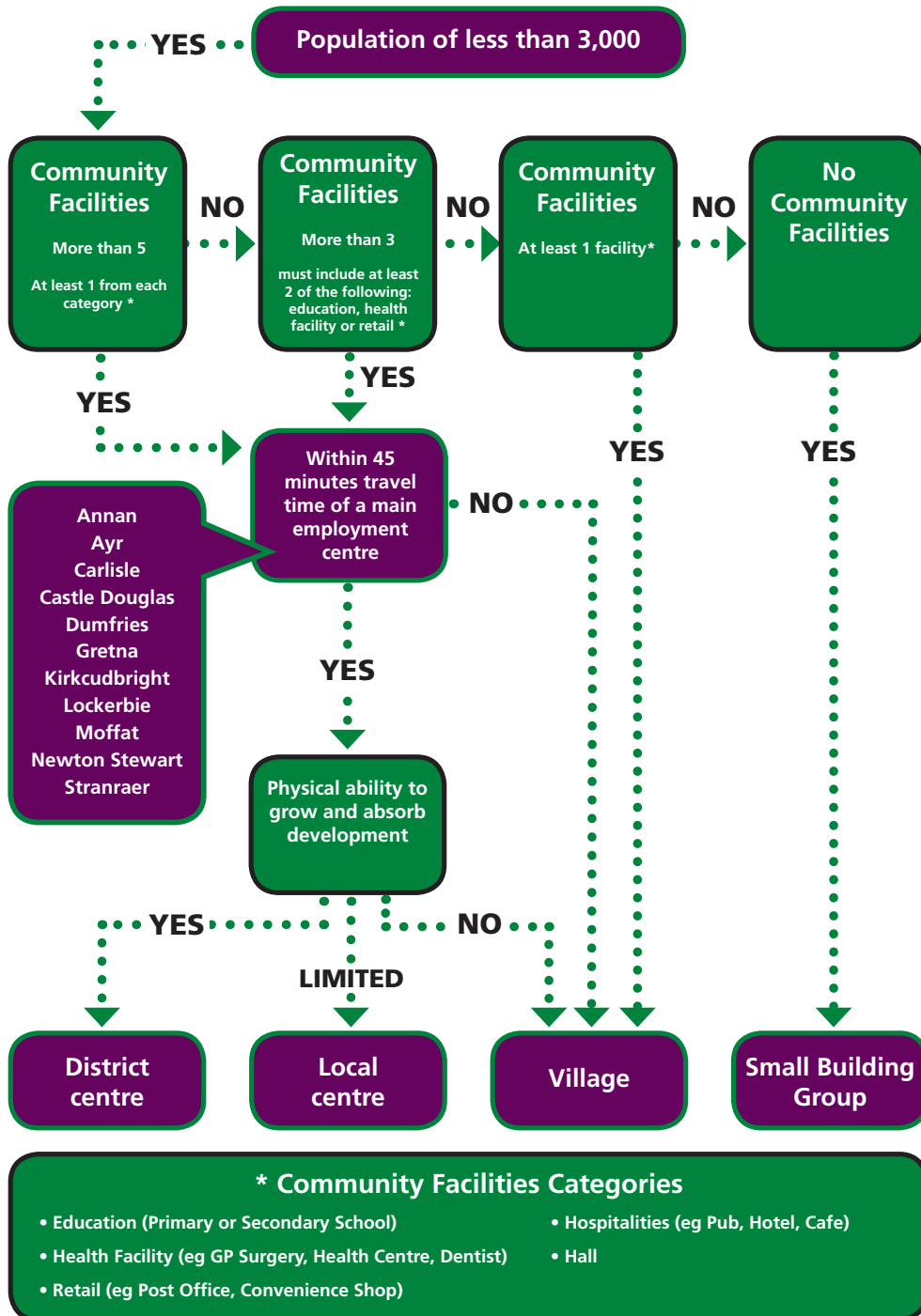
In March 2010 the GRO(S) (General Register Office for Scotland) produced mid-2008 population estimates for settlements where the population is 500 or more. For settlements with a population of less than 500 the 2001 Census figure was utilised. There are only 9 settlements in the region with a population over 3,000 as shown in the table below.

Settlement	2008 Population Estimate
Dumfries (including Heathhall, Locharbriggs and Cargenbridge)	38,250
Stranraer	10,380
Annan	8,450
Dalbeattie	4,190
Castle Douglas	4,160
Lockerbie	4,100
Newton Stewart (including Minnigaff and Creebridge)	3,830
Kirkcudbright	3,240
Gretna Border (including Gretna Green and Springfield)	3,040

In terms of the settlement hierarchy a settlement with a population of more than 3,000 it 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 settlements' 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 all five of the facilities listed above it will follow the route on the left hand side of the diagram (and possibly become a District Centre). Conversely, those settlements that have none of the above facilities automatically become Small Building Groups.

The above is not an exhaustive list of services but those 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 church, they may not be required to provide everyday 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, however further advice has been sought to support and justify the decisions that have been made from other organisations and experienced officers in the field.

Dumfries and Galloway Settlement Hierarchy

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

Appendix 1

Regional Capital – Dumfries		
District Centre Annan HMA	Local Centre Annan HMA	Village Annan HMA
Annan Gretna Border	Eaglesfield Eastriggs/Lowthertown Ecclefechan	Brydekirk Carrutherstown Chapleknowe Cummertrees Dalton Dornock Kirkpatrick Fleming/Newton Kirtlebridge Powfoot Waterbeck
Eskdale HMA	Eskdale HMA	Eskdale HMA
Langholm	Canonbie	Bentpath Eskdalemuir Evertown
Dumfries HMA	Dumfries HMA	Dumfries HMA
Kirkconnel/Kelloholm Lochmaben Lockerbie Moffat Sanquhar Thornhill	Closeburn Dunscore Glencaple Holywood Johnstonebridge Moniaive New Abbey Penpont	Ae Amisfield Auldgirth Bankend Bankshill Beattock Beeswing Boreland Carsethorn Carronbridge Clarencefield Collin Corrie Common Hightae Kirkbean Kirkton Lakehead Lochfoot Middlebie Mouswald Shawhead Southernness Templand Terregles Torthorwald Tynron Wanlockhead

HMA = Housing Market Area

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District Centre Stewartry HMA	Local Centre Stewartry HMA	Village Stewartry HMA
Castle Douglas Dalbeattie Kirkcudbright	Auchencairn Carsphairn Crossmichael St. John's Town of Dalry Gatehouse of Fleet New Galloway Palnackie Springholm Twynholm	Balmacellan Borgue Bridge of Dee Colvend Corsock Crocketford Dundrennan Gelston Hardgate/Haugh of Urr Kippford Kirkgunzeon Kirkpatrick Durham Laurieston Mossdale Parton Rhonehouse Ringford Rockcliffe
Mid Galloway HMA	Mid Galloway HMA	Mid Galloway HMA
Newton Stewart Whithorn Wigtown	Braehead/Kirkinner Creetown Garlieston Kirkcowan Port William	Bargrennan Bladnoch Carsluith Elrig Isle of Whithorn Mochrum Monreith Sorbie Whauphill
Stranraer HMA	Stranraer HMA	Stranraer HMA
Stranraer	Drummore Glenluce Kirkcolm Leswalt Portpatrick Sandhead	Ardwell Cairnryan Castle Kennedy Dunragit Lochans New Luce Port Logan Stoneykirk

HMA = Housing Market Area

