Settlements – Introduction

Settlements are **places where people live**. They vary in size from the smallest (single buildings) to the largest (conurbations).

### The Hierarchy of Settlements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conurbations</th>
<th>Cities</th>
<th>Towns</th>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>Hamlets</th>
<th>Single Buildings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- **Population**: The population is greatest in conurbations.
- **Services**: The number and variety of services increases.
- **Frequency**: There are a greater number of settlements with smaller populations.

### Site and Situation

The **site** of a settlement is where the settlement has been built. The **situation** of a settlement is where it is in compared with the surrounding area. Situation can also be described as whereabouts a settlement is.

- A **nucleated** settlement is where the buildings are grouped together.
- A **linear** shape is where the settlement has developed along a line.
- A **dispersed** settlement is where the buildings are spread apart.
Choosing a Site

The site of a settlement is where the settlement has been built. There are a number of factors that were important to the original settlers.

- Water supply – this needs to be fresh, clean and reliable
- Building material – either stone or wood
- Food supply – farmland and fishing grounds were important
- Land for building – needs to be solid and unlikely to flood; best on low and flat land which is not marshy
- Fuel supply – e.g. peat, wood or coal
- Defensive site – a place that is difficult to attack because it is e.g. on top of a steep–sided hill.

Functions of a Settlement

The function of a settlement is its main economic activity or purpose. Types of functions include

- Industrial Towns e.g. Sheffield
- Ports e.g. Liverpool
- Market Towns e.g. Kelso
- Seaside Resorts e.g. Blackpool
- Fishing Ports e.g. Peterhead
- Dormitory Settlements e.g. Haddington

Settlements which have the same function will have many of the same features, and these can be shown on a model. Models are simplified versions of the real thing, and allow you to compare a particular settlement with a typical one.
Market Towns

Market Towns tend to have the following features

- Found in a fertile farming area
- Many services e.g. shops and offices
- Good transport links – often they are route centres
- They may be at the site of important bridges. Often mills were built on the river
- Market places in the town centre; Markets may no longer be held there

An example of a market town is **Kelso** in the Scottish Borders, which is shown on the map below.

It is similar to the model as it is a bridging point over a river, is in a farming areas and has good transport links.

It is different to the model as it does not have a railway line.
Ports

Ports tend to have the following features

- Found where there are sheltered harbours
- Flat land for building on nearby
- Modern ports need deeper water for today’s larger ships
- Many ports have gone through a lot of redevelopment

The largest ports are found where there is a major industrial area inland that needed a place to import and export its goods.
An example of a port is Liverpool in the north–west of England, which is shown on the map below.

It is similar to the model as it is has a sheltered harbour, is built on flat land, and the newer docks are found downstream.

It is different from the model as Liverpool is only built on one side of the River Mersey.

**Industrial Towns**

"Old" Industrial Towns tend to have the following features

- Found on or near coalfields
- Has railways and canals for transport
- Has housing and industry mixed in together
- Newer industry is found on the outskirts, near main roads for transport

In the newer industrial towns planning ensures the housing and industry are located apart.
An example of an industrial town is **Barnsley** in Yorkshire, England, which is shown on the map below.

It is similar to the model as it is built on a coalfield and has canals.

It is different from the model as it has good motorway links.

**Seaside Resorts**

Seaside Resorts tend to have the following features

- Found on the coast with beaches
- Close to industrial areas with large populations, with good rail and road links
- On the sea–front are hotels and entertainments such as pubs and bingo
Guest houses are found inland where the land is cheaper to buy
• Housing found further inland, with industry on the outskirts
• Caravan, camp−sites and golf courses also on the edge of town, but near the coast
• Promenades – pedestrianised roads along the front of the resort

With the increase in cheap package holidays in the last 30 years many seaside resorts have had to diversify. Many people chose to retire to these resorts, and therefore have an ageing population.

Model of a Seaside Resort

An example of an seaside resort is Blackpool in north west England, which is shown on the map below.

It is similar to the model in every way.

It is different from most other seaside resorts as it continues to be successful holiday resort, unlike most British resorts which have looked to other functions.
## Services in Settlements

Services are things that people use in settlements. Examples include shops, schools, banks and sports centres. Services are split into three groups – low, middle and high.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services in Settlements</th>
<th>Low Order Services</th>
<th>Medium Order Services</th>
<th>High Order Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number found in a settlement</strong></td>
<td>Very many</td>
<td>Quite a few</td>
<td>Fewest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How often are they used</strong></td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>Quite often</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Found in</strong></td>
<td>All size of settlements</td>
<td>Usually towns and larger</td>
<td>The largest settlements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Size of the Sphere of Influence</strong></td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examples</strong></td>
<td>Newsagents and Post Offices</td>
<td>Hairdressers and Chemists</td>
<td>Furniture Shops and International Airports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Services in Settlements

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**Sphere of Influence**

The sphere of influence of a service is how far people will travel to make use of that service. A primary school, which is a low order service, will have a smaller sphere of influence than a secondary school which is a middle order service. People are willing to travel a long distance to get to a high order service (e.g. Harrods shop in London) and it therefore has a very large sphere of influence.

Settlements as a whole can also be said to have a sphere of influence. People will usually only travel a short distance to a hamlet (e.g. Levenwick in Shetland) but will travel further to a town (Lerwick in Shetland).

**Urban Zones**

When we look at cities and large towns in Britain we find many have similar patterns of land use. For example, at or near the centre of the settlement there will be a business area with offices, large shops, and main train and bus stations. We will look at the four main land-use areas or zones –

- The Central Business District (CBD)
- The Inner City
- The Suburbs
- New Industrial Areas
Central Business District

The central business district (C.B.D.) has the following characteristics –

- Has the departmental shops, large offices, main railway and bus stations, many churches, pubs, clubs and cinemas and the town hall
- The main roads head into the C.B.D.
- The value of the land is greatest here
- Due to the high cost of the land buildings are built upwards
- C.B.D.s suffer from the worst traffic congestion
- It is often the oldest part of the city
- It may have a grid-iron street pattern, that is parallel straight roads and other roads running at right angles
The Inner City

The inner city has the following characteristics –

- Old factories and houses are mixed in together as they were built during the 19th century when most people walked to work (no cars); there was little open space left between the buildings
- The street pattern is often grid iron
- In Scotland the housing is usually tenements; in England terraced housing (think "Coronation Street")
- Often have empty buildings, derelict land, vandalism, crime, poverty, unemployment and other social and economic problems
- In the last fifty years much redevelopment has taken place in these areas; many high rise multi-storey residential blocks of flats have been built
- As both the houses and factories had chimneys air pollution was a problem; with industrial decline and housing redevelopment this has reduced
The Suburbs

The suburbs have the following characteristics –

- Younger buildings than in the middle of the city
- The street pattern is made up of crescents and cul-de-sacs (dead ends); this slows down traffic to make the streets safer
- More detached and semi-detached houses; as the land is less expensive people have gardens
- Less factories than the inner city
- More open space and parks
- Many people commute from here to work in shops and offices in the C.B.D.
- Less pollution than the centre of the city

New Industrial Areas

The new industrial areas have the following characteristics –

- They have modern factories with car parks
- The factories are laid out in an orderly fashion – they are planned areas
- The buildings are usually lower than in the old industrial areas
- The areas are landscaped with, trees, bushes, flowers and grass
- They are kept apart from the residential areas
- They found close to good road transport links
- Less pollution than the centre of the city – electricity is almost always used as the power source, and there are very few chimneys

Modern Industrial Estates
Urban Problems – Traffic Congestion

There are two main problems that modern day cities face, namely urban decay when parts of the city become run down and undesirable to live in, and traffic congestion. Traffic congestion is caused by

- Many people working in the C.B.D. which may have narrow streets
- Shortage of off-street parking which means people park on the roads and so increase congestion
- People not using public transport – either because it is less convenient, too expensive or not available
- More people own and use cars

As an example of how bad traffic jams now are, a hundred years ago it took about one hour to travel from Paramatta to the centre of Sydney (Australia) by horse and cart. Today it takes longer by car. As well as causing aggravation stationary traffic cause severe air pollution from exhaust fumes. Various solutions to these problems have been tried.

- Ring roads and by-passes; these can be unpopular as countryside around towns and cities are lost when they are built
- Park and Ride – you park your car on the edge of the built up area and then ride a bus or train into the C.B.D.
- One way streets to speed up traffic flow
- Multi-storey car parks
- Banning cars from the from the C.B.D., either with pedestrianised streets (e.g. Renfield Street in Glasgow) or by stopping them coming into the city centre at all. Cars are banned from the centre of Milan (Italy) on Sundays.
- Charging car drivers when they enter the city centre

A complete solution to traffic congestion needs people to be able and willing to travel on public transport more.

Urban Problems – Sprawl

Cities continue to get bigger and bigger. People want to live in the leafy suburbs. Modern supermarket chains like Asda want to set up new stores on the edge of town. Here land is cheaper, and there is space for the large car parks. Ring roads and by-passes are build around cities. All this means that more and more countryside and farmland is lost.

One solution is to declare a "green-belt" around urban areas, where development is not allowed. This has not always been successful as new factories bring jobs and housing is often in great demand. Developments have also been "leap-frogging" the green belt and been built further away from the city.

Urban Problems – Urban Decay

Urban decay is when parts of the city become run down and undesirable to live in. It causes economic (money), social (people) and environmental (our surroundings) problems. Examples of urban decay are –

- Slum housing – with outside toilets, overcrowding, no hot water or central heating
Many buildings have been poorly built and now have leaking roofs, draughty windows and crumbling stonework. Empty buildings are vandalised; gap sites where buildings have been knocked down turn into derelict land. As the factories and housing have been in the same areas, air, noise and water pollution have been common.

There have been a number of schemes to reduce the problems of urban decay. They have had mixed success.

**Comprehensive Redevelopment**

This is when you knock down all the buildings and start from scratch. It was felt to be needed in some places as the problems were so bad. In Kingston and the Gorbals in Glasgow, for example, the old tenements were knocked down and replaced by new flats and multi-storey high rise buildings.

Unfortunately, many of the new buildings were poorly built and have also been knocked down. This approach has also been criticised as it destroyed the **social fabric** of the area – people no longer knew their neighbours and they were moved away from their friends and relations.

Urban Regeneration

Another idea was to **renovate** the existing housing and improve the environment and economy. In Glasgow this involved:

- New roofs
- Rewiring the houses and fitting central heating
- Fitting double glazing
- Secure entry-phone systems on tenement closes
- The outsides of tenements were cleaned by sand-blasting
- Combining two small flats into a larger one
- Improving the environment by landscaping
- Building or improving the social facilities such as clubs and medical centres
- Encouraging new business and industry to set up in the areas with grants and loans

This has proved more popular as people have been able to stay in their own area.
Cleaned and renovated tenements

**New Towns**

Another approach to solve the problems of urban decay was New Towns. These were started up after the second world war.

They were planned settlements which were close to the cities that were being regenerated. Housing was built in neighbourhood areas, which had their own schools, play areas and small shopping centres. Industries were developed in separate estates out on the edge of town, which had good road transport links. Pedestrians are kept apart from traffic and this improved road safety. The city centre shopping areas are easily accessible.

The five New Towns in Scotland are *East Kilbride, Irvine, Cumbernauld, Livingston and Glenrothes.*
Settlements – Introduction

[Diagram: Model of a New Town]

- Roundabout
- Town Centre
- Housing Neighbourhoods
- Industrial Areas
- Main Road
- Countryside