

Group K People living in rural areas far from urbanisation

5.36% 



Overview

Key Features

- Older people
- Small communities
- Neighbourly
- Distinct rural life
- Farming
- Agro-tourism
- Good diet and lifestyle
- Work long hours
- Cars important

Regional Houses



Tavistock, PL19



Banff, AB45



York, YO51



Rankings

- Age Rank (9/11)
- Wealth Rank (3/11)
- Good Health (4/11)
- Fear of Burglary (11/11)
- Degree (3/11)
- Public Renting (8/11)
- Higher Tax (5/11)
- Environment (3/11)
- Internet (5/11)

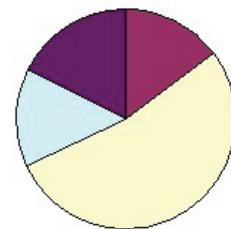
Top Councils

- Isles of Scilly (54.63%)
- Ceredigion (52.75%)
- Eden (50.86%)
- Orkney Islands (48.56%)
- South Shropshire (47.10%)
- Powys (46.15%)
- Ryedale (45.56%)
- North Cornwall (43.77%)
- Torrige (38.01%)

Constituencies



Regional Distribution



- London (0.13%)
- South East (14.56%)
- East Anglia, Midlands, South West, Wales (53.28%)
- North, North West, Yorkshire (14.55%)
- Scotland, Northern Ireland (17.48%)

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Group K contains people whose pattern of living is distinctively rural. They live not just outside major population centres but also deep in the countryside, in small communities which have been little influenced by the influx of urban commuters. These are places where people with different levels of income share attachments to local communities, and where engagement with the community and with the natural environment are more important to most residents than material consumption.

Key Features	Communication
Older people	Receptive
Small communities	Internet
Neighbourly	Telephone advice lines
Distinct rural life	Broadsheet newspapers
Farming	Heavyweight magazines
Agro-tourism	Unreceptive
Good diet and lifestyle	Telemarketing
Work long hours	Posters
Cars important	TV

Description - Public Sector Focus

Education The educational attainment in areas of *Group K* is varied. However, it is most likely that adults will have either left school at 16 with good basic qualifications, or the more gifted will have gone on to obtain a degree. Children of those living in *Group K* have successful educations, with some evidence of increasing levels of attainment compared to the population as they get older. Only *Group A* has a higher proportion of pupils gaining 5 or more GCSE Grades A to C. Similarly, the rate of university admissions is high, perhaps because many realise that their potential will only be fulfilled if they leave these remote areas firstly to further their education and ultimately to start a career. Virtually no pupils in these areas of *Group K* come from homes with refugee status, or where English is not the first language.

Health These people tend to eat a good diet, and not to smoke. Alcohol consumption is frequent rather than high volume. A lack of facilities means formal exercise opportunities, such as gym membership, are not available, but the opportunities for a naturally active lifestyle abound. Consequently, most forms of serious disease, with the exception of some cancers, are less prevalent in these areas than in the country as a whole. Mental illness, and social problems such as alcohol and drug abuse, and teenage pregnancies, are also much less of an issue than elsewhere.

Crime The isolated nature of these areas makes the inhabitants see them as distinctly good places in which to live. Neighbours may not be on the doorstep, but there is a general willingness to help each other. Fear of crime is generally very low, as the perpetrators are unlikely to live locally and are unlikely to move into such remote places. Only fear of motor crime is anything like the national norm, arising mainly because the car will, on occasion need to be driven to local population centres where crime is more evident. This is borne out by those unfortunate enough to become victims of crime, as most incidents occur well away from home. Given the nature of these incidents it is not surprising that repeat victimisation is rare. Overall this Group is very satisfied with the police.

Finances *Group K* tends to have low disposable incomes but quite high value, though non-liquid, assets. They therefore gain considerable benefit from access to well informed financial advice. A key feature of much rural life is the thin line separating business and private finances and the frequent use of credit that is tied to specific physical assets. Their overall financial situation means that people generally have sufficient incomes, either from employment, or savings and investments, or both, to not require financial assistance from the state. Clearly the elderly will claim the state pension, but most do not require Pension Credits. The relative financial security, plus more traditional values, means these people are amongst the least likely to default on their council tax.

Environmental Issues *Group K* is amongst the least environmentally friendly, but this is through circumstance rather than choice as they are very environmentally concerned. Their large, isolated houses and the need to drive many miles for work and leisure ensure these people are likely to cause high levels of CO₂ emissions. Some make efforts to minimise this impact by paying more for environmentally friendly goods, or by buying more efficient cars where practicable. Others, however, drive upmarket vehicles, particularly convertibles, estates and 4x4s, with makes such as Jeep, Subaru and Land Rover particularly common.

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Description - Sociology and Environment

Summary *Group K* contains people whose pattern of living is distinctively rural. They live not just outside major population centres but also deep in the countryside, in small communities which have been little influenced by the influx of urban commuters. These are places where people with different levels of income share attachments to local communities, and where engagement with the community and with the natural environment are more important to most residents than material consumption.

Demography *Group K* is distinctive in its belief in the superiority of a rural way of life.

Most people live deep in the countryside, not just surrounded by open farmland but way beyond the reach of all but the most dedicated long distance commuter. People live in houses whose unique individual designs reflect the individual personality of country people, in villages which have yet to accrete small 'estates' built to a common style at a particular time. Some live in nucleated villages whose focus will be the parish church and whose history may extend back to early medieval periods, other in the isolated cottages more characteristic of the western and Celtic areas of the country.

Some live in farmhouses surrounded by barns, silos and tractors by means of which they manage their large farmland. Today, though farming is still the mainstay of the local economy, more residents are increasingly employed in non farm occupations, for example in the small businesses that support the tourist industry. Incomes in these rural areas vary considerably, with wealthy landowners living close by postmen or people responsible for maintaining the roads. A key feature of *Group K* communities is the common identification with the life of the village that transcends differences in income and status, and demands that people should be treated with respect and as equals irrespective of position. Despite the mix of incomes most people own their homes and, notwithstanding the low level of many rural incomes, there is substantial hidden wealth, much of it inherited, in the form of land, property, investment and small business ownership. Many *Group K* communities have managed to stem their historic loss of population but now suffer from the increased average age of their residents. Other than work on family farms there are few opportunities for ambitious young people to return to the countryside once they have acquired their qualifications. Young couples who might otherwise be happy to raise their children in these places worry about the lack of facilities and social networks for their children. By contrast, rural living becomes attractive to many footloose empty nesters working in knowledge industries and increasingly to retirees wanting to escape from the increased noise and confusion of city suburbs.

Environment Neighbourhoods of *Group K* contain a mixture of buildings of all ages and styles - which is part of the attraction of the British village. Some of these villages are very pretty, built using local building materials and passionately protected by local amenity societies. These may attract weekenders, tourists, retirees and some wealthy long distance commuters. Others are ancient settlements whose names appear on road signs but are recalled only by the most dedicated local historian. Elsewhere people live more isolated existences in cottages beside lonely country lanes, or in isolated farmhouses reached only via bumpy, unmade roads only passable by off road vehicles. Common to all, is a preference for the quietness of rural living, enthusiasm for small scales of production, for local, hand crafted merchandise and for country 'pursuits' that require a deep understanding of rural customs.

(Continued)

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Description - Sociology and Environment *(Continued)*

Economy *Group K* neighbourhoods are found in much of Eastern England, in Suffolk and Norfolk, the Fens and Lincolnshire, in the remoter areas of Devon and Cornwall, in much of rural Wales and along the Welsh Border and on both sides of the English / Scottish border. In some of these areas, such as the Fens, the land has been consolidated into very large and very productive holdings, the economy relying on capital intensive 'agribusiness' that incorporates sophisticated post harvest processing and transportation. Elsewhere owner/managers prosper on a mixture of arable and dairy farming. In remote upland areas small hill farmers eke out a marginal existence on thin soils, relying on tourism as a secondary source of income. In much of Northern Scotland, this Group relies on summer visitors, on the support of local defence establishments and on winter work on oilrigs to provide a reliable level of income.

Consumer Values *Group K* has very different values to its urban counterparts. People should be seen as they are and not in terms of their position or in terms of the products that they consume. In these stable and small communities everyone is known to everyone, and in times of difficulty it is important that people should offer material support or personal comfort. Personal self reliance is also highly valued. People should have an adaptable repertoire of skills rather than rely on a single narrow specialist competence.

In recent years these neighbourhoods have also attracted ex-urbanites who have intensified the natural tendency among these neighbourhoods towards a 'small is beautiful' culture, which supports values such as authenticity of materials, craftsmanship and local provenance in opposition to the automation, the high tech and the depersonalised nature of urban consumption cultures.

Consumption Patterns *Group K* works long hours and leisure time is spent outside the home in walking, fishing and gardening. Commercial TV viewing is lighter than average and most are beyond the reach of cable networks, of the Sky sales force and of broadband connectivity. Likewise, many are poorly exposed to alternative media channels such as poster sites, door-to-door distribution and commercial radio. Few village stores stock any but the most mass-market magazines. Other than by direct mail these are therefore hard markets to reach and ones in which consumers are little exposed to promotions.

However the remoteness of many of these neighbourhoods does lead many to purchase from mail order catalogues, to bank over the phone and to purchase over the Internet.

Due to the poor public transport, cars are very important and almost all families own at least one car, and many have two or three. Most cars are privately owned and quite old: rural people tend to purchase and replace their cars much less frequently than their urban counterparts.

Increasingly, shopping trips are made on a weekly basis to nearby market towns that support national supermarket chains to a much greater extent than they did ten years ago. Purchases are made in large pack sizes and frozen foods are very popular as many have a large freezer at home, often in a garage or outhouse. Top up shopping increasingly occurs at petrol stations.

Leisure activities are much influenced by access or lack of access to different facilities. Quite apart from traditional rural activities many people are enthusiastic visitors to car boot sales and have considerable knowledge about antiques, china and specialist collectibles.