

September 2025

# Sevenoaks District Settlement Hierarchy



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## Executive Summary

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) encourages Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to identify within their Local Plans, appropriate locations for development. These should account for social, economic and environmental opportunities and ensure that the location of development is sustainable.

The Settlement Hierarchy is a useful tool to determine the role of settlements, according to a number of factors, including population size, services and facilities available within a settlement and in safe walking distance, consideration of Green Belt boundaries and transport connections.

The Settlement Hierarchy for Sevenoaks District has seven settlement classifications, ranking from the most sustainable (Principal Town) to the least sustainable settlements (Clusters), the latter being a newly introduced category, alongside Primary Service Settlements and Secondary Service Settlements.

This updated Settlement Hierarchy focuses more than ever on the sustainability of settlements. We have taken into consideration a greater range of services, as well as re-evaluating the methodology, in order to afford more weight to the most important facilities.

This Settlement Hierarchy has also taken into account the changes seen in the country, aligning itself more closely with the national and district-wide priority of Climate Change.



Image 1: Sevenoaks Town

## Settlement Hierarchy for Sevenoaks District

<b>Principal Town</b>	<u>Sevenoaks Urban Area (Sevenoaks Town including Bessels Green, Chipstead, Dunton Green and Riverhead)</u>
<b>Towns</b>	<u>Swanley</u> , <u>Edenbridge</u> and <u>Westerham*</u>
<b>Primary Service Settlements</b>	<u>Hartley</u> , <u>Otford</u> , <u>New Ash Green</u>
<b>Secondary Service Settlements</b>	<u>West Kingsdown</u> , <u>Eynsford</u> , <u>Seal</u> , <u>Kemsing</u> , <u>South Darenth</u> , <u>Pratts Bottom</u> , <u>Hextable</u>
<b>Villages</b>	<u>Crockenhill</u> , <u>Leigh</u> , <u>Farningham</u> , <u>Brasted</u> , <u>Knockholt (including Knockholt Pound)</u> , <u>Shoreham</u> , <u>Four Elms</u> , <u>Sundridge</u> , <u>Halstead</u> , <u>Sevenoaks Weald</u>
<b>Hamlets</b>	Hever, Fawkham, Ide Hill, Penshurst, Chiddingstone Causeway, Horton Kirby, <u>Badgers Mount</u> , Ash, Fordcombe, Chiddingstone, Cowden, Seal Chart, Marsh Green, Swanley Village, Crockham Hill, Markbeech, Lullingstone, Hodsoll Street, Godden Green, Toys Hill
<b>Clusters</b>	Fort Halstead, Morants Court, Twitton, Charcott, Skeet Hill, Bough Beech, Hoath Corner, Brasted Chart, Pootings, Woodlands, Goathurst Common (including Mackerels Plain and Whitley Row), Romney Street, Well Hill (including Rock Hill), Bayleys Hill, Riverhill, Stone Street, Knotley Hall, Powder Mills, Cotman's Ash, Crowdleham, Heaverham, Noahs Ark, Shorehill, Austin Lodge, Darns Hill, Marwood, Park Gate, Petham, Chiddingstone Hoath, Wellers Town, Salters Heath, Starhill, Ridley, Knatts Valley, Bitchet Green, Wested, Chevening, East Hill, Birchfield, Dryhill, Norman Street (including Brook Place), Oveny Green and Combe Bank, Winkhurst Green, Underriver, Poundsbridge, Walters Green, Sepham Heath, Coopers Corner, Threshersfield, Everlands, Emmetts, Phillippines Shaw, Barnfield Park

\*Westerham has been historically categorised as a town and has a town council, due to this it will remain in the Town category as an exception despite its scoring within the Primary Service Settlement boundaries.

N.B. Settlements that have been underlined are washed over by the Metropolitan Green Belt. Whilst Knockholt (including Knockholt Pound), Badgers Mount and Pratts Bottom have been classified as Hamlets due to limited services and facilities, the settlements do have a defined Green Belt boundary.

## Introduction

- 1.1. In 2011, Sevenoaks District Council adopted its Core Strategy, which sets out the overarching strategy and vision for the District up to 2026 as well as identifying a number of key strategic policies to enable the vision to be delivered.
- 1.2. The Council also adopted its Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP) in 2015. The Council is currently developing a new Local Plan to cover the Plan period up to 2042. In order to achieve this, the Council has prepared a new evidence base to reflect the current circumstances of Sevenoaks District. Once adopted, the new Local Plan will replace the current Core Strategy and ADMP.
- 1.3. The Settlement Hierarchy is a key piece of evidence that will be used to prepare the emerging Local Plan. It helps to define the role, function and sustainability of each settlement within Sevenoaks District. This document will help to inform the profile of settlements as well as their capacity to accommodate future development requirements.

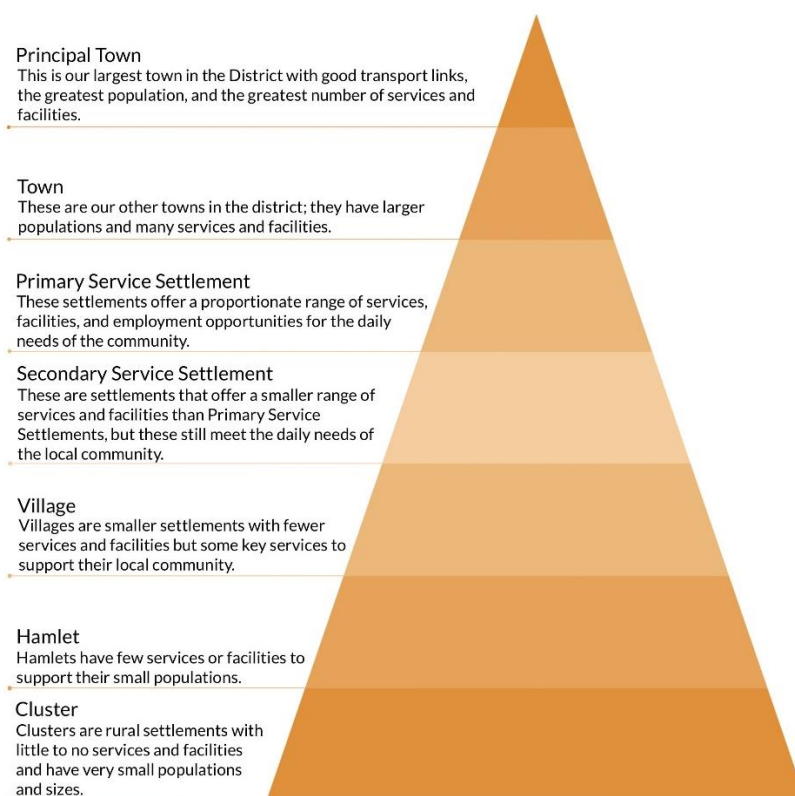


Image 2: Swanley



- 1.4. The Sevenoaks District has a total of 97 settlements which vary in size, character and function. These include a number of towns, service settlements, villages, hamlets, and clusters which consist of only a small number of homes.
- 1.5. The Settlement Hierarchy is a way of categorising the settlements in the District, in order to understand their different roles. The hierarchy groups together the settlements that have similar characteristics.
- 1.6. An example of a Settlement Hierarchy is shown at Figure 1 below. At the top of the hierarchy are the larger settlements that fulfil the most functions, have the best infrastructure provision (facilities and services) and are the most accessible by sustainable forms of transport. The smaller settlements, with fewer functions, infrastructure and transport links are nearer to the bottom of the hierarchy. This will help the Council determine which settlements are the most suitable to accommodate additional growth

**Figure 1 – The Settlement Hierarchy**



N.B. Settlements with the best access to services and are considered the most sustainable are located at the top of the Settlement Hierarchy, whereas settlements with little to no access to services, which are considered least sustainable, are located towards the bottom of the Settlement Hierarchy.

- 1.7. The Sevenoaks District Settlement Hierarchy was first prepared in 2007/2008 and subsequently updated in July 2009, October 2014 and July 2022.
- 1.8. The most recent iteration of the Settlement Hierarchy was published in 2022 and included an audit of key services and facilities for each settlement. However, the 2022 audit was undertaken in early 2021, during a period of Covid-19 lockdown, which undoubtedly effected the outcome of the audit. For this reason, an update to the Settlement Hierarchy is now necessary to reflect the current sustainability of settlements across the District and to reliably inform the new Local Plan Development Strategy.
- 1.9. The purpose of this document is to outline the new Settlement Hierarchy for Sevenoaks District and how it will help to inform the new Local Plan.
- 1.10. This document:
- Provides a brief overview of the national and local planning policy context;
  - Describes the broad methodology used to develop the Hierarchy; and
  - Outlines and justifies the classification of each of the District's Settlements.



Image 3: Edenbridge

# Policy Context

## National Policy Context

“Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area”

(NPPF 2024, Paragraph 9)

- 2.1. National planning policy states that any development should take place within the most sustainable and deliverable locations. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 states that a series of land-planning principles should be used when undertaking plan making and decision taking, in order to maintain sustainable development.
- 2.2. At Paragraph 98, the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should “*plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments*”.
- 2.3. The NPPF sets out individual planning policies for specific elements of development. Regarding the development of town centres, paragraph 90 states that planning policies and decisions should “*support the role that town centres play at the heart of their local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation*”. This include the development of strong rural economies, which is important for the majority of settlements within the Sevenoaks District.
- 2.4. The Settlement Hierarchy plays a key role in ensuring development takes place in the most sustainable locations. Paragraph 148 of the NPPF promotes “sustainable patterns of development” and highlights that, when reviewing Green Belt boundaries, Local Planning Authorities should “consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary”.
- 2.5. Where Green Belt is required to be released for development, Paragraph 147 makes clear that plans should give first consideration to land which is “well served by public transport”.

## Local Policy Context

The Council promises to “Protect the strong local identities of our neighbourhoods, ensuring residents will be safe, healthy and proud of the area in which they live and work”

(The Council Plan, 2018)

- 2.6. Sevenoaks District Council (SDC) is currently preparing a new Local Plan. The Council has produced adopted policies through the Core Strategy (2011) and the Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP) (2015) to reflect the national planning policy and guidance.
- 2.7. The over-arching aims of the Core Strategy’s Spatial Vision promote sustainable development within the District throughout the plan period, including the commitment to “*locate development in sustainable locations*” as well as “*[...] ensuring that the main focus for major developments is Sevenoaks, Swanley and Edenbridge*” (ADMP, paragraph 1.5).
- 2.8. The policies within the ADMP are reflective of the adopted policies within the Core Strategy, while maintaining compliance with the NPPF. ADMP Policy SC1 sets out that all development within the District will be in favour of sustainable development whereby “*[...] the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained within the National Planning Policy Framework*”.
- 2.9. This allows the Sevenoaks District to develop in a positive and sustainable manner. The Council is aware of the constraints that affect development within the District and have adopted policies that consider these. This accounts to protection of community services and amenity, within settlements of the District, especially rural settlements.
- 2.10. The ADMP recognises that local shopping provision is important to many settlements within the District and small-scale retail development should be allowed, in scale with the settlement. This can be split into town and local centres.
- 2.11. Under Core Strategy Policy LO7, the Council seeks to retain local services and facilities, in order to manage the sustainability of rural locations and settlements, including the local character and the needs for services. This has been extended within the ADMP, whereby neighbourhood services within urban confines are equally important as those services that can be lost in rural settlements (ADMP Policy CF2).

## New Local Plan

- 2.12.** The Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan. The Sevenoaks District Local Plan will be based on an up-to-date evidence base, including demographic changes and the need for new homes, employment floorspace, gypsy and traveller pitches and retail land across Sevenoaks District.
- 2.13.** It is expected that development will be distributed and delivered according to the sustainability of the settlements within the District. The Settlement Hierarchy will therefore form part of the Evidence Base, which will help to inform and determine the general distribution of development in the emerging Local Plan.



Image 4: Westerham



## District Profile

- 3.1. Located in West Kent, Sevenoaks District is a high-quality landscape with a mostly rural character. The District covers almost 143 square miles, of which 93% is designated as Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB). 60% of Sevenoaks District lies within the Kent Downs or High Weald National Landscapes (previously Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty [AONB]). Both land designations are important in terms of national planning policy and guidance, with National Landscapes (NL) seen as environments of national importance.
- 3.2. Within Sevenoaks District, there are also many areas of woodland, much of which is designated as Ancient Woodland, one Country Park and a large network of Public Rights of Way (PROWs).
- 3.3. The District has a number of major roads, including the M25, M26, M20, A25 and A21 (as shown in Figure 2 overleaf). These provide access to Greater London, Gatwick, Heathrow and Stansted airports, as well as Ashford and Ebbsfleet international stations and the Channel Ports.
- 3.4. Rail services are focused on lines to London, though services also run towards the Kent and Sussex coastline, Gatwick (via Redhill and Edenbridge), Uckfield and East Croydon. A majority of the larger settlements, as well as a number of the smaller settlements, in the District have access to at least one rail station (as shown in Table 6).
- 3.5. There are 97 settlements within Sevenoaks District. As it is a predominantly rural District, there are a number of villages and smaller settlements as well as some well-defined urban areas.

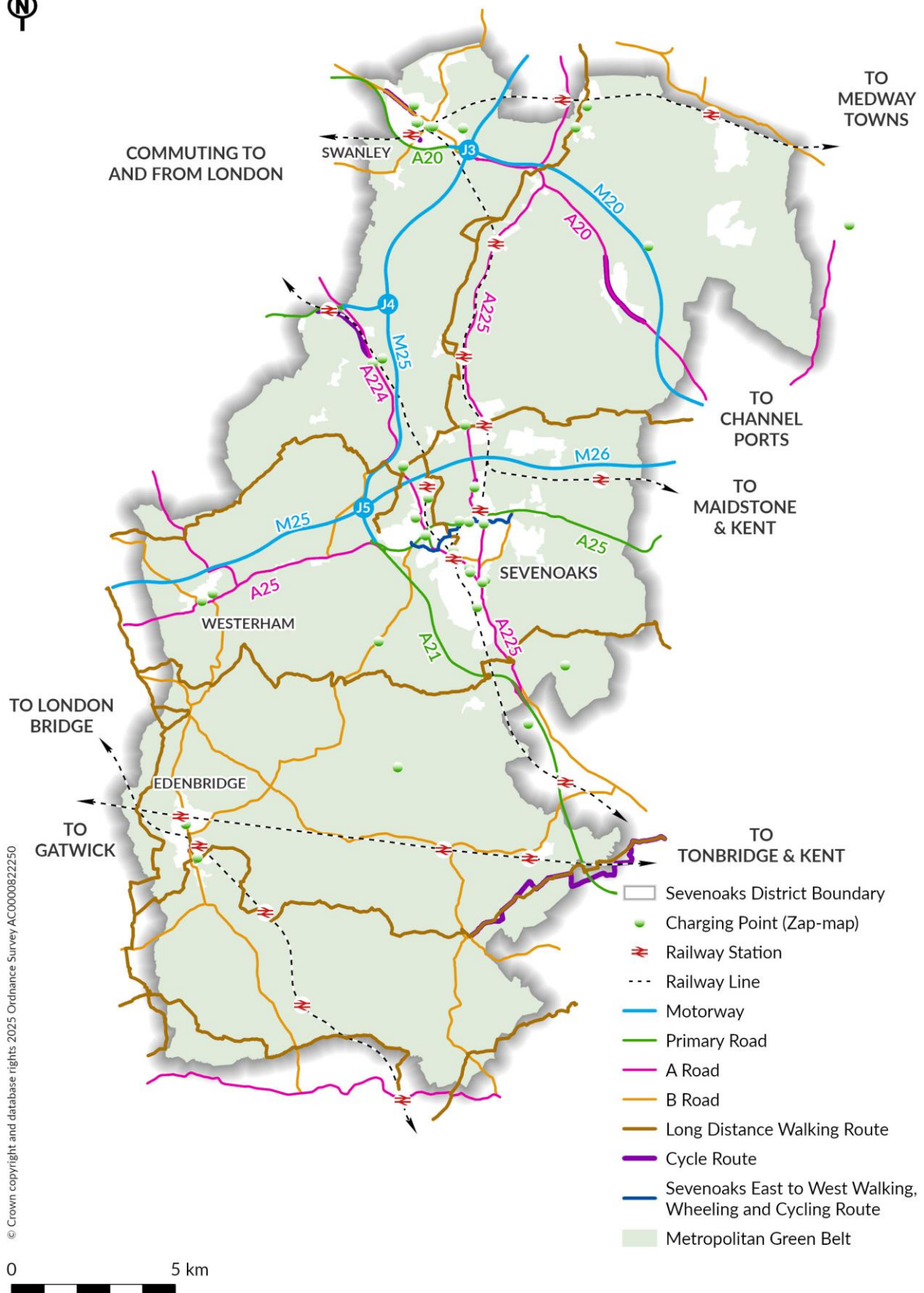


Figure 2: Sevenoaks District map showing key transport routes

- 3.6. Settlements across the District provide a range of facilities and services which support the day-to-day activities of residents, with some settlements having a wider and greater number of services than others.
- 3.7. Due to the rural character of the Sevenoaks District, a number of smaller settlements have a limited number of services and facilities available to them, and residents may travel to the larger settlements, as well as surrounding areas outside of the District, to use particular services.
- 3.8. It is worth noting that some settlements may be washed over by the Green Belt and offer a greater number of services and facilities than those which do have defined Green Belt boundaries.



Image 5: Chiddingstone

## Methodology

- 5.1 This section sets out the methodology and justification for producing this update to the Settlement Hierarchy.
- 5.2 The Settlement Hierarchy uses the criteria set out in Table M1 below to determine the position and grouping of the settlements

**Table M1 – Criteria Included in the Settlement Hierarchy**

Criteria Used	Justification
<b>The population of a settlement</b>	The population of a settlement serves as a good indicator of its size. This can then be used proportionally against the other criteria to determine the position of a settlement in the hierarchy
<b>Facilities and services to meet the daily needs of residents</b>	<p>These are services and facilities which support a community. These include, but are not limited to, shops and businesses, community facilities, such as village halls and places of worship, and sport and leisure facilities.</p> <p>The range of facilities and services available in each settlement gives an indication to how sustainable a settlement is. It also indicates whether a settlement is dependent on others to provide the facilities and services for its residents.</p>
<b>Access to education</b>	Access to education is considered as a key service for a settlement and the local community. Access to education encompasses all forms of education provision (i.e. early years education, primary, secondary, higher education). However, due to accessibility requirements, this excludes private education.
<b>Access to health services</b>	Access to health services is an important service within a community. Therefore, this is identified as a facility that contributes towards a settlement being sustainable.
<b>Connectivity and access to public transport</b>	It is important that a settlement is connected by public transport and allows greater choice and opportunities for residents to travel. Therefore, public transport is important when looking at the sustainability of a settlement.



**A defined urban confines boundary (the reverse of the Green Belt boundary)**

Settlements with a defined urban confines boundary are more likely to be sustainable locations than those that are washed over by the Green Belt. Identifying opportunities for urban renewal and regeneration to contribute towards the sustainability of a settlement is increasingly likely with larger towns and villages which have a defined urban confines boundary.



Image 6: Otford



# Settlement Scoring

## Population

- 5.3 To determine approximate population figures for the Settlement Hierarchy, we have followed a methodology aligned with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) approach, specifically incorporating the use of Population Weighted Centroids.

### Definitions

**Population Weighted Centroid** – This is a calculated point that represents the centre of population distribution within a geographical area. It takes into account the distribution of the population across the area. The Population Weighted Centroids have been used as at the 2022 mid-year population estimates.

**Output Area (OA)** – These are small, stable geographical units used for statistical purposes. They are designed to have a similar population size and are used to ensure consistency in data collection and analysis. The Output Areas have been used as at the 2022 mid-year population estimates.

**OS Built Up Areas Layer** – This is a geographical boundary that defines built-up areas, which are regions of significant human settlement and structure.

**OS Named Areas Layer** – In the absence of an OS Built Up Area boundary, this boundary is used to define the extent of a settlement based on recognised place names and boundaries.

### Methodology

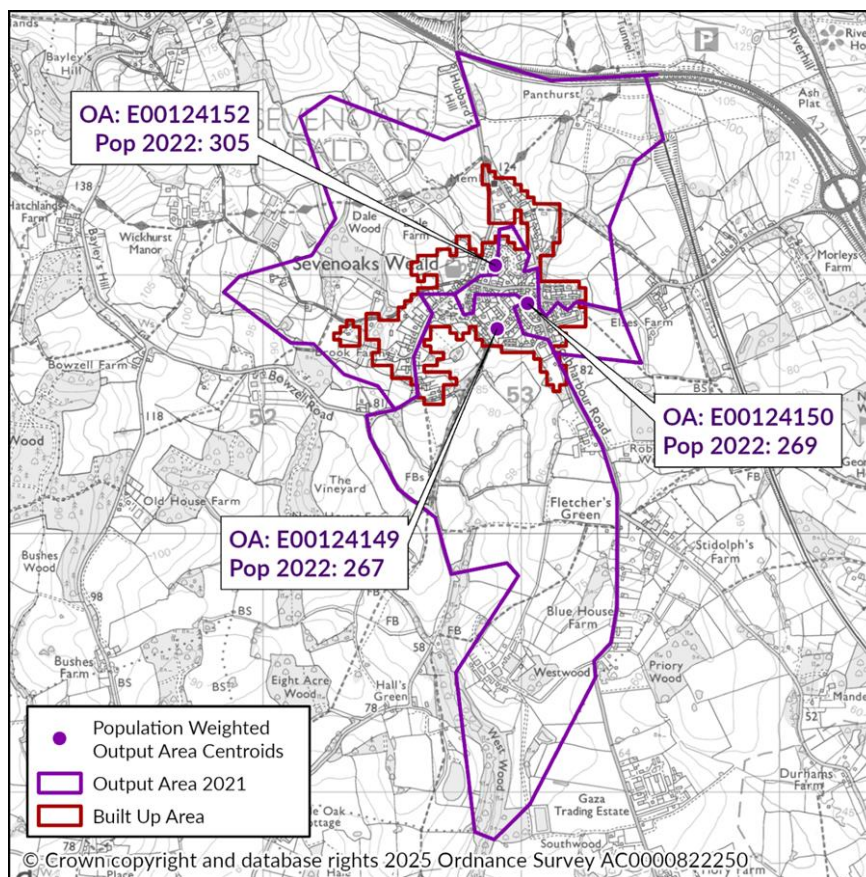
**Geographic Unit of Analysis** – In most cases, OA boundaries are not the same as the settlement boundaries. Population calculations are based on Output Areas (SOAs), which represent the smallest level of geography at which data is recorded.

#### 5.4. Incorporating Population Data:

- Where an Output Area overlaps with the OS Built Up Areas Layer, and where its Population Weighted Centroid falls within this boundary, the population of that OA has been included in the Settlement Population.
- In cases where a settlement does not have an OS Built Up Area boundary, we have instead used the OS Named Areas Layer to determine the population inclusion.

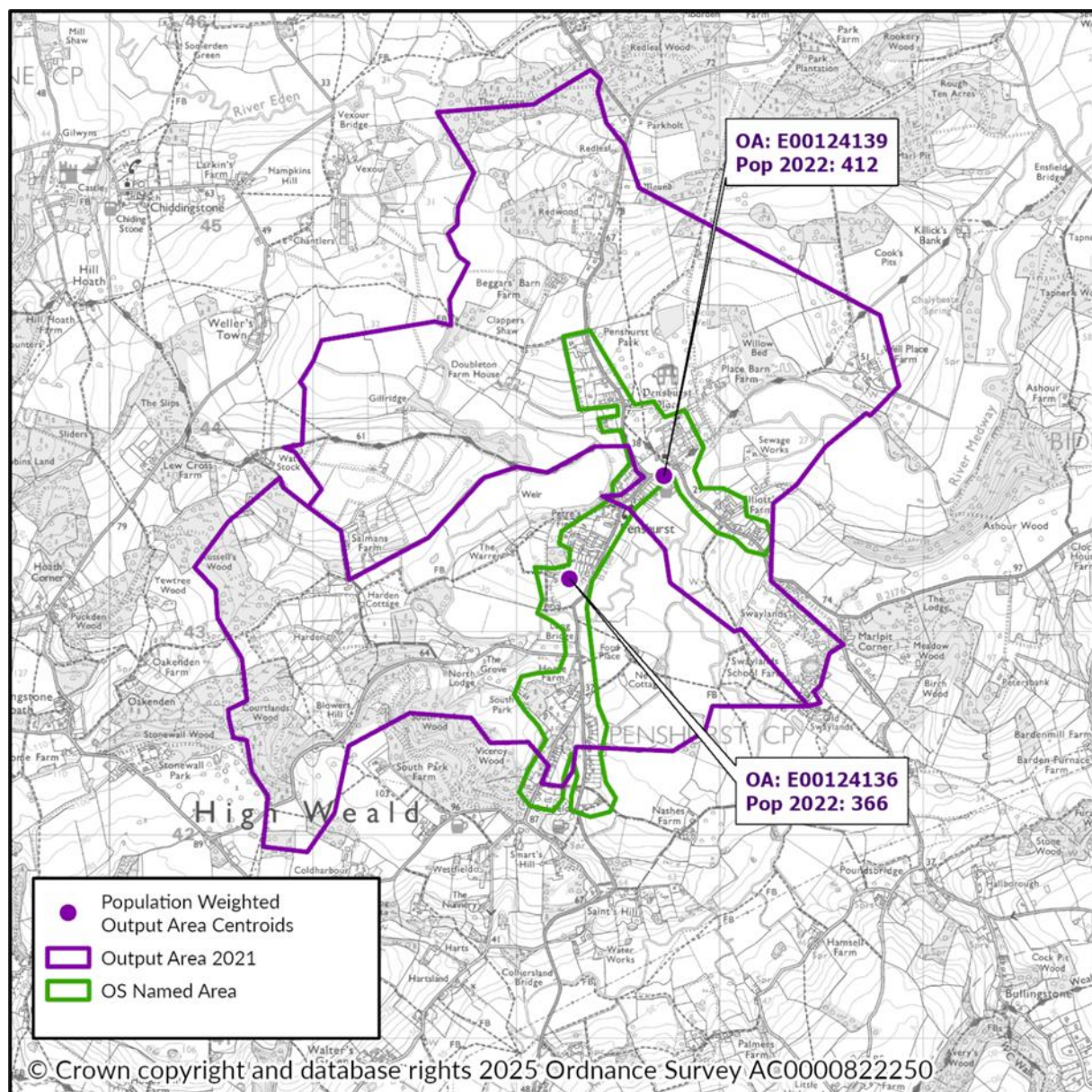
## Worked Example – Sevenoaks Weald

- 5.5. The map below shows the OS Built Up Area layer surrounding Sevenoaks Weald. The Output Areas which overlap with the Built Up Area are shown on the map. Within each OA, the Weighted Population Centroid has been shown on the map.
- 5.6. In the case of Sevenoaks Weald, all of the Weighted Population Centroids fall within the boundary of the Built Up Area, and therefore these will all be counted towards the population of the settlement. Had one of these Weighted Population Centroids fallen outside of the Built Up Area boundary, then it would have been discounted.



## Worked Example – Penshurst

- 5.7. The map below shows the OS Named Area layer surrounding Penshurst. The OS Named Area layer has been used for this settlement as there is no Built Up Area layer available in this location.
- 5.8. In the case of Penshurst, both of the Weighted Population Centroids fall within the boundary of the Named Area, and therefore these will both be counted towards the population of the settlement. Had one of these Weighted Populations Centroids fallen outside of the Named Area boundary, then it would have been discounted.





## Settlement Exceptions

**5.9.** In some limited circumstances, as set out below, both the OS Built Up Area and the OS Named Area layer have been inappropriate to use. Where this is the case, we have reverted to the urban confines boundaries where these are available. This is the case for:

- Hartley – Hartley and New Ash Green form one single Built Up Area, and therefore we have utilised the Urban Confines boundaries for these two settlements so as to calculate separate population estimates.
- Kemsing – Kemsing and Otford form one single Built Up Area, and therefore we have utilised the Urban Confines boundaries for these two settlements so as to calculate separate population estimates.
- New Ash Green - New Ash Green and Hartley form one single Built Up Area, and therefore we have utilised the Urban Confines boundaries for these two settlements so as to calculate separate population estimates.
- Otford – Otford and Kemsing form one single Built Up Area, and therefore we have utilised the Urban Confines boundaries for these two settlements so as to calculate separate population estimates.

**5.10.** Where an urban confines boundary is not available, and the OS Built Up Areas or Named Areas layers are not appropriate, we have not been able to calculate an approximate population. It is important to note that this circumstance only applies to the District's smallest settlements and will not affect the outcome of the Settlement Hierarchy. This is the case for:

Austin Lodge	Park Gate
Barnfield Park	Petham
Birchfield	Phillippines Shaw
Cotman's Ash	Powder Mills
Crowdleham	Riverhill
Darns Hill	Rock Hill
Emmetts	Salters Heath
Everlands	Seal Chart
Fawkham	Shorehill
Fort Halstead	Skeet Hill
Knotley Hall	Starhill
Marwood	Threshersfield
Morants Court	Wellars Town
Norman Street	Wested
Oveny Green and Combe Bank	Winkhurst Green

## Scoring

- 5.11.** One point has been awarded for every 1000<sup>th</sup> resident within each settlement. It is important to note that the populations have not been rounded up for the purposes of scoring. The population total for Sevenoaks Urban Area includes all settlements that lie within the defined urban confines boundary.
- 5.12.** Whilst many of the District's settlements have approximate populations far below 1,000, and therefore will not be scored according to population, this information is useful to calculate and publish and we have therefore endeavoured, where possible, to calculate approximate populations for all settlements in the District.

## Urban Confines Boundaries

- 5.13.** Settlements with a defined urban confines boundary are more likely to be sustainable locations than those which are washed over by the Green Belt. Identifying opportunities for urban renewal and regeneration, to contribute towards the sustainability of a settlement, is increasingly likely with larger towns and villages which have a defined urban confines boundary.
- 5.14.** The following settlements have a defined urban confines boundary and therefore will receive one point each:

**Table M2 – Settlements with defined urban confines boundaries:**

Sevenoaks Urban Area	Hextable
Swanley	Crockenhill
Edenbridge (including Marlpit Hill)	Farningham
Westerham	Leigh
Hartley	Brasted
Otford	Knockholt (including Knockholt Pound)
New Ash Green	Shoreham
West Kingsdown	Sundridge
Eynsford	Halstead
Seal	Sevenoaks Weald
Kemsing	Badgers Mount
South Darenth	Horton Kirby
Pratts Bottom	

- 5.15.** It is important to highlight that Sevenoaks Urban Area has been given one point between all settlements within the defined urban confines boundary. Sevenoaks Urban Area includes Bessels Green, Chipstead, Dunton Green, Riverhead and Sevenoaks Town.



## Transport Links

**5.16.** The District has strong rail connections, given its proximity into London and other nearby key destinations such as Bromley, Tunbridge Wells and Hastings. There are four rail lines that run through the District:

- The London to Tonbridge mainline servicing Sevenoaks, Dunton Green and Knockholt;
- The Swanley to Maidstone East line servicing Eynsford, Kemsing, Otford, Shoreham and Swanley
- The Tonbridge to Redhill (via Edenbridge) line which services Leigh, Chiddingstone Causeway and Edenbridge; and
- The Uckfield to London line servicing Cowden, Hever and Edenbridge

**5.17.** Sevenoaks Urban Area has three stations available, which offer services to different destinations. Sevenoaks Station, Bat and Ball Station and Dunton Green all have services to London Terminals. Edenbridge has two stations, with Edenbridge Town having services to London Terminals, and Edenbridge Station also having access to Gatwick Airport via the Tonbridge to Redhill line. There is no direct service between Sevenoaks and Edenbridge.

**5.18.** It is important to highlight that in this update to the Settlement Hierarchy, the following changes have been made in relation to railway provision:

- Hildenborough Station has been included, as it is situated within cycling distance of Leigh. Due to the direct services to London, it is reasonable to assume that this station would be preferable for residents in nearby settlements.
- The additional scoring of train stations within cycling distance of a settlement.

**5.19.** It should be noted that Oxted Station, which lays just outside of the District boundary in Tandridge, plays a key role in servicing residents in Westerham. However, for consistency, Oxted Station has not been included in the scoring for Westerham, due to its distance, just over the 5km, from the settlement boundary of Westerham.

**5.20.** For the purposes of this scoring, peak and off-peak times have been informed by National Rail's definitions: follows:

- Peak times (Travelling to London): Weekday services that depart from the station between 4.30am and 9.30am
- Peak times (Travelling from London): Weekday services that depart from London Zones 1-9 between 4.00pm and 7.00pm

- Off-peak times: Services that depart after 9.30am

**5.21.** Also for the purposes of train station scoring, in considering walking and cycling distances between settlements and train stations, we have utilised the industry accepted standards published by Active Travel England, in relation to the '15-minute City' concept. This considers that:

- The average walking distance within 15 minutes is 1.2km; and
- The average cycling distance within 15 minutes is 5km.

**5.22.** We note that there is a selection of small settlements, which have no defined settlement boundary, which lie only within cycling distance of a train station, which will affect access to public transport options. However, it is considered that local residents remain likely to utilise the closest train station through different access options, such as driving and parking or lift-sharing, and it is therefore considered that a score should still be given for these smaller settlements. Therefore, where this criteria is met, the scores associated with the settlement will be capped at 2 points, to reflect the limited safe access to public transport options.

**5.23.** A scoring mechanism for footfall through train stations has also been added to this Settlement Hierarchy update, to reflect the difference in usage of stations across the District. Footfall estimates have been taken from the latest statistical release from the Office of Rail and Road, for the year April 2023 – March 2024.

**5.24.** The following stations are located outside of the District boundary, and have been included due to their proximity to settlements within the District and playing a key role in the sustainability of the settlement:

- Farningham Road Station
- Hildenborough Station
- Knockholt Station
- Longfield Station
- Ashurst Station

**5.25.** Table M3 overleaf below sets out the methodology for rail service scoring.

**Table M3 – Methodology for rail service scoring**

<b>Peak Scoring</b>	One service departing per hour: 1 point Two or more services departing per hour: 2 points
<b>Off-Peak Scoring</b>	One service departing per hour: 1 point Two or more services departing per hour: 2 points

<b>Number of Lines</b>	One point has been given for each additional line serving the station
<b>Fast Service to London</b>	One point has been given if the station has a fast service to London
<b>Footfall</b>	One point for train stations which had over 500,000 entries and exits in 2023/24.
<b>Within Walking Distance</b>	One point has been given where the station is within walking distance (up to 1.2km) from the settlement
<b>Within Cycling Distance</b>	One point has been given where the station is within cycling distance (between 1.2km and 5km) from the settlement.



**Image 9: Sevenoaks Station**

### Facility Scoring

- 5.1. Many services and facilities contribute towards the sustainability of a settlement, meeting the daily needs of residents and providing a variety of services for a range of people.
- 5.2. When considering services and facilities, it is important to account for all facilities within walking distance of the settlement, whether they are within the settlement boundary, or just outside. This marks a key change in methodology since our previous iteration of the Settlement Hierarchy. It is important for us to acknowledge that the movement of people, in and around their communities, does not necessarily align with administrative boundaries. It is true that services and facilities lying outside of urban confines, where safely accessible by foot, positively influence the sustainability of the settlement, and therefore it is correct that these are taken into account in our scoring.
- 5.3. In scoring services and facilities which lie outside of the District Boundary, we have again utilised the Active Travel England industry accepted standard for the '15-minute City' concept. Therefore, we have considered services and facilities which lie within 1.2km of the settlement boundary. It is important to note that, where a service or facility lies within 1.2km of the settlement boundary, it has only been included where there is a safe walking route (i.e. where there is a Public Right of Way, or pavement, for the entirety of the route).
- 5.4. Whilst we have considered train stations which lie within cycling distance of the settlement, we have made the decision not to consider services and facilities that lie within cycling distance. This is due to a number of factors:
  - Train stations often have specific bicycle storage available, whilst it is not expected that individual services and facilities would have
  - Cycling is a common method of commuting and is usually undertaken by younger generations, who are more physically able to cycle. This trend is not similarly reflected in the use of day-to-day services and facilities within the community.
  - The ability of residents to cycle to services and facilities would also depend on the topography of the route, and therefore it is not expected that we would be able to apply the cycling methodology consistently to all services and facilities.
- 5.5. It is important to note the rise in popularity of electric bicycles as a mode of transport, and the impact that this has on the sustainability of settlements for certain residents. Whilst the increase in electric bicycle use is welcomed and encouraged, and the increased potential for sustainable locations is acknowledged, we have chosen not to take account of this in our scoring methodology. Given the higher cost associated with electric bicycles, in comparison with non-electric bicycles, it is considered that they are not equally accessible to all residents and as such as fair and justified scoring methodology is difficult to implement. For the purpose of this Settlement Hierarchy,

the use of electric bicycles should be considered alongside the methodology for regular cycling distance.

**5.6.** It is important to recognise that the services and facilities that contribute towards a sustainable settlement and meet the daily needs of residents can change regularly with current affairs. For example, in recent Settlement Hierarchy methodologies, it has become important for us to include an audit of cycling routes and Electric Vehicle Charging Points, due to national and district-wide climate change priorities and policies.

**5.7.** The way in which we have scored these services and facilities has also changed in this update to the Settlement Hierarchy. A 'key' service is defined as one that supports a sustainable, smaller settlement by fulfilling the essential needs of daily life. These services ensure that residents can access all necessary provisions within their settlement, without the need to travel elsewhere. In this Settlement Hierarchy, the key services are identified as:

- Primary School
- Doctors Surgery
- Post Officer
- Convenience Store / Newsagents / Pharmacy
- Community Hall (for hire)
- Recreation Ground / Park
- Permanent Library
- Recycling Facilities (beyond what is offered by Council collection services)
- Access to Bus Service

**5.8.** In this version, what we consider 'key' services and facilities have been afforded more weight and therefore scored higher, to account for the fact that they contribute more significantly to the sustainability of a settlement. For example, a Doctors Surgery would score 2 points, whereas a Flower Shop would score 1 point. This change to the scoring ensures that the most sustainable settlements are higher up the Hierarchy.

**5.9.** Table M4 overleaf sets out the services and facilities which are included in the audit, the services we consider as 'key' to the sustainability of a settlement and also sets out the scoring methodology.

**5.10.** With the exception of Transport provision, the scoring mechanism set out at Table M4 below will be applied per available service and additional points will be given where there are multiple of the same service available. For example:

- If the settlement has a single doctor's surgery, it would score 2 points
- If the settlement has three doctor's surgeries, it would score 6 points, 2 for each surgery



**5.11.** It is also important to note that the Settlement Hierarchy provides a snapshot of the services and facilities available at the time of the audit. It is noted that these services will change over time, and it is expected that the Settlement Hierarchy be reviewed every 5 years to account for these changes. In the meantime, specific changes to services and facilities, especially where this impacts on planning decisions, will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

**Table M4 – Services and Facilities Scoring Methodology**

	Services and Facilities	Key Service?	Scoring
<b>Transport</b>	Rail Services		See <b>Table M3</b>
	Bus Services	Yes	1 point per route
	Electric Vehicle Charging Points		1 point if Yes
	Public Bicycle Storage		1 point if Yes
	Cycle Lanes		1 point if Yes
<b>Education</b>	Primary School	Yes	2 points
	Nurseries / Childcare Facility		1 point
	Secondary School		1 point
	Other Educational Facility		1 point
<b>Employment</b>	Designated Business Area		1 point (as designated in ADMP Employment policies)
<b>Health</b>	Doctors Surgery	Yes	2 points
	Dentist		1 point
	Hospital / Minor Injuries Unit		1 point
	Other Medical Facility		1 point
	Older Persons Care Facility		1 point
<b>Retail and Consumer Services</b>	Post Office	Yes	2 points
	Convenience Store / Newsagents / Pharmacy	Yes	2 points
	Bank / Building Society		1 point
	Superstore (over 2,500m <sup>2</sup> )		1 point
	Other Shops and Services (e.g. Butchers /		1 point

	Hairdressers / Other Shops / Office or Business)		
	Pubs / Takeaways / Restaurants / Tea Rooms		1 point
	Visitor Attraction		1 point
<b>Community Facilities</b>	Community Hall (for hire)	Yes	2 points
	Recreation Ground / Park	Yes	2 points
	OR Where there are one or more of the following additional services at the same location:  Children's Play Area Playing Pitch Outdoor Sports Facility Sports Pavillion		With one extra point for each additional service at the same address, to be capped at: 4 points
	Permanent Library	Yes	2 points
	Recycling Facilities	Yes	2 points
	Mobile Library		1 point
	Place of Worship		1 point
	Playing Pitch		1 point
	Outdoor Sports Facilities		1 point
	Children's Play Area / Provision for Young People		1 point
	Major Indoor Sports & Leisure Facility		1 point
	Veterinary Practice		1 point
	Hotel		1 point
	Public Car Park		1 point

## Reasonable Alternatives

- 5.12.** When preparing this new Settlement Hierarchy methodology and following extensive research into methodologies adopted by other Local Planning Authorities, several changes have been made. In addition, following recent consultations on the emerging Local Plan, we received valuable feedback on the previous Settlement Hierarchy methodology, including suggestions on how to alter this going forwards.
- 5.13.** The draft Settlement Hierarchy has also been presented to all District Council Members, for comment. All suggestions on methodology have been fully considered and this has been reflected, either by implementation in the above methodology, or addressed in the below reasonable alternatives section.
- 5.14.** We have considered this research and stakeholder comments on our methodology and subsequently reached conclusions on whether these suggestions should be implemented in the new methodology. The options, outcomes and reasonings are set out at Table M5 below.

**Table M5 - Reasonable Alternatives**

Suggested Change	Outcome	Discussion
Considering Services and Facilities located outside of administrative boundaries	Accepted	<p>Previously, the methodology for Sevenoaks District has not taken account of services and facilities outside of administrative boundaries, such as settlement boundaries of the District boundaries.</p> <p>However, it is important to note that these administrative boundaries do not define the movement of communities, and it is justified to consider that services and facilities, within walking distance of a settlement, do contribute positively to the sustainability of a settlement.</p> <p>This has therefore been implemented in this new methodology.</p>
Considering cycling distance to train stations	Accepted	<p>Previously, only train stations within walking distance of a settlement have been included in the settlement scoring.</p> <p>However, it is reasonable to assume that train stations which are within cycling distance of a settlement contributes positively to</p>

Suggested Change	Outcome	Discussion
		<p>sustainability for the local community. This is especially true where these stations are on commuter lines into London.</p> <p>For this reason, this change has been implemented in this new methodology.</p>
Scoring of Recreation Grounds	Accepted	<p>Feedback on the previous methodology highlighted concerns with the scoring for recreation grounds which had additional services available, such as a children's play area or a sports pitch, which was inflating the scoring for these locations.</p> <p>This feedback has been taken on board and is reflected in the scoring for Recreation Grounds.</p> <p>A Recreation Ground will be awarded an initial 2 points, as a key service, with an extra point for each additional service available at the same site (e.g. outdoor gym, children's play area etc.). This will be capped at 4 points, where additional facilities are available.</p>
Additional categories included in services and facilities audit	Accepted	<p>Consideration was given to the categories set out in the 'services and facilities' audit at Table M4.</p> <p>Whilst in previous audits, additional services have been picked up in the 'Other Shops and Services' category, it was considered important to specify additional services in this audit.</p> <p>This has resulted in new categories: Nurseries/Childcare Facility, Other Educational Facility, Other Medical Facility, Visitor Attraction, Car Park.</p> <p>We have also specifically mentioned 'Minor Injuries Unit' alongside 'Hospital'.</p>
Introducing a scoring cap in relation to train stations,	Accepted	<p>Feedback from member consultation highlighted that there is a selection of small</p>



Suggested Change	Outcome	Discussion
for small settlements, without a defined settlement boundary, which have a station within cycling distance only		<p>settlements, which have no defined settlement boundary, which lie only within cycling distance of a train station, which will affect access to public transport options.</p> <p>However, it is considered that local residents remain likely to utilise the closest train station through different access options, such as driving and parking or lift-sharing, and it is therefore considered that a score should still be given for these smaller settlements.</p> <p>Therefore, where this criteria is met, the scores associated with the settlement will be capped at 2 points, to reflect the limited safe access to public transport options.</p>
Consider including Footfall into the scoring methodology for train station scoring	Accepted	Scoring mechanism for footfall at train stations added to Table M3 to reflect the difference in use of train stations across the District.
Considering Oxted Station in the scoring methodology for Westerham	Partially taken forwards	Oxted Station lies beyond the cycling distance of 5km as set out in our methodology and therefore has not been included in the scoring for Westerham. This reasoning is explained in full at paragraph 1.22.
Considering Services and Facilities within cycling distance of settlement boundaries	Not taken forwards	Whilst we have considered train stations which lie within cycling distance of the settlement, we have made the decision not to consider services and facilities that lie within cycling distance. This reasoning is explained in full at paragraph 1.30.
Discounting train stations outside of settlement and District boundaries	Not taken forwards	<p>Feedback on the previous methodology highlighted concerns regarding the inclusion of train stations which lay outside of settlement or the District boundary.</p> <p>This feedback has been considered. However, it is considered that administrative boundaries do not reflect the movement of residents. If a</p>

Suggested Change	Outcome	Discussion
		station is within walking or cycling distance of a settlement, it is considered that this contributes to the sustainability of the location, and therefore stations outside of administrative boundaries continue to be included in this methodology.
Consideration of additional environmental constraints	Not taken forwards	<p>Whilst additional environmental constraints, such as National Landscapes, Conservation Areas and Flooding, do affect the suitability of settlements for new development, we have specific Evidence Base documents which take account of these constraints.</p> <p>The Settlement Hierarchy reflects an audit of sustainability for settlements at a specific point in time and does not in itself consider the potential for future development.</p>
Counting additional services as 'Key Services'	Not taken forwards	<p>Consideration was given to additional services which could be included as 'key' services, namely Hospitals, Dentists and Secondary Schools.</p> <p>However, it is considered that, whilst these services undoubtedly contribute towards sustainability of a settlement, they are not a key service required in each settlement and residents are likely to travel to nearby larger settlements to access these services.</p> <p>Therefore, there has been no change to the 'key services' considered in this methodology.</p>
Considering the reliability of transport services	Not taken forwards	<p>It is important to note that we are aware of periodic reliability issues with rail and bus services across the District, and that this will undoubtedly have an impact on residents' ability to access these services.</p> <p>Whilst these issues are important to be aware of, there is no clear way to accurately measure and record the reliability of these specific services for the purpose of the Settlement Hierarchy, and therefore it is difficult to</p>

Suggested Change	Outcome	Discussion
		<p>implement a fair and justified scoring methodology for this issue.</p> <p>As such we propose that they are dealt with on a case-by-case basis, at site allocation or planning application stage, and as such these issues will not be considered in relation to settlement sustainability for the purposes of the Settlement Hierarchy.</p>
Adding methodology for electric bicycles and the greater distance they can cover in relation to cycling distance to train stations	Not taken forwards	<p>We are aware of the rising popularity of use surrounding electric bicycles. So, touching on this we investigated including wording in support of electric bicycle use within our methodology regarding the improved distance of travel in comparison to regular bicycles. With much consideration we have decided to not take this point forwards due to the implications it causes due to there not being as much widespread guidance at this time.</p>
Considering that Recycling Facilities are not considered a key service	Not taken forwards	<p>Recycling facilities are currently considered a key service due to the fact that the current SDC collection services do not cover specific materials, such as glass and clothing.</p> <p>It should be noted that this is a technical document which audits the services and facilities at a specific point in time and future collection services would be taken account of in future iterations of the Settlement Hierarchy.</p> <p>Therefore, recycling facilities such as bottle banks, which collect materials not currently collected by the Council, should be considered a key service.</p>
Considering that Hotels and Visitor Attractions should not be included in the audit	Not taken forwards	<p>It is important to highlight that hotels and visitor attractions have not been considered a key service contributing towards sustainability, since they would not be a requirement for everyday life.</p>

Suggested Change	Outcome	Discussion
		<p>However, both Hotels and Visitor Attractions provide additional services and facilities for the local community. For example, they provide employment opportunities, recreational facilities and amenities such as event venues, restaurants and green and open spaces.</p> <p>Therefore, it is considered that Hotels and Visitor Attractions should be included in the audit and will be awarded one point per service, towards the settlement which they lie within, or are within walking distance of.</p>



Image 10: Bessels Green



Table 1 – Scoring for Rail Services

Settlement	Railway Station	Peak Score	Off-Peak Score	Additional Lines Score	Fast service to London Score	Footfall over 500,000 entries and exits in 23/24.	Within Walking Distance	Within Cycling Distance	Score	Scores (inc. capping)	Final Score
Austin Lodge	Eynsford	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	2
Badgers Mount	Knockholt*	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	2
Bayleys hill	Sevenoaks	2	2	2	1	1	0	1	9	2	2
bough beech	Penshurst	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	2
Charcott	Penshurst	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	2
Chiddingstone	Penshurst	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	2
Chiddingstone Causeway	Penshurst	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	4	4	4
Chiddingstone Hoath	Cowden	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	2
Cotmans Ash	Otford	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	5	2	2
Cowden	Cowden	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	2
Crockenhill	Swanley	2	1	2	1	1	0	1	8	2	2
Crowdleham	Kemsing	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	2
Darns Hill	Swanley	2	1	2	1	1	0	1	8	2	2
Edenbridge	Edenbridge	2	1	0	0	0	1	1	5	5	10
	Edenbridge Town	2	1	0	0	0	1	1	5	5	
Eynsford	Eynsford	2	2	0	0	0	1	1	6	6	6
Farningham	Eynsford	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	2
Fawkham	Longfield*	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	2
Fordcombe	Ashurst*	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	2

Settlement	Railway Station	Peak Score	Off-Peak Score	Additional Lines Score	Fast service to London Score	Footfall over 500,000 entries and exits in 23/24.	Within Walking Distance	Within Cycling Distance	Score	Scores (inc. capping)	Final Score
Fort Halstead	Knockholt*	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	4
	Dunton Green	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	
Four Elms	Edenbridge	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	4
	Edenbridge Town	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	
Godden Green	Sevenoaks	2	2	2	1	1	0	1	9	2	2
Halstead	Knockholt*	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	2
Hartley	Longfield*	2	2	0	0	0	1	1	6	6	6
Heaverham	Kemsing	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	2
Hever	Hever	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	2
Hextable	Swanley	2	1	2	1	1	0	1	8	2	2
Hoath Corner	Cowden	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	2
Horton Kirby	Farningham Road*	2	1	0	0		0	1	4	2	2
Kemsing	Kemsing	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	4
	Otford	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	5	2	
Knockholt (including Knockholt Pound)	Knockholt*	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	2
Knotley Hall	Penshurst	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	2
Leigh	Hildenborough*	2	2	0	1	0	0	1	6	2	8

Settlement	Railway Station	Peak Score	Off-Peak Score	Additional Lines Score	Fast service to London Score	Footfall over 500,000 entries and exits in 23/24.	Within Walking Distance	Within Cycling Distance	Score	Scores (inc. capping)	Final Score
	Leigh	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	4	4	
	Tonbridge*	2	2	2	1	1	0	1	9	2	
Lullingstone	Eynsford	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	2
Markbeeceh	Cowden	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	2
Marwood	Swanley	2	1	2	1	1	0	1	8	2	2
Marsh Green	Edenbridge	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	4
	Edenbridge Town	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	
Morants Court	Dunton Green	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	2
New Ash Green	Longfield*	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	2
Noahs Ark	Kemsing	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	2
Otford	Otford	2	1	1	0	0	1	1	6	6	6
Park Gate	Eynsford	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	2
Penshurst	Penshurst	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	2
Petham	Swanley	2	1	2	1	1	0	1	8	2	2
Pootings	Edenbridge	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	4	2	2
Powder Mills	Tonbridge*	2	2	2	1	1	0	1	9	2	2
Pratts Bottom	Knockholt*	2	2	0	0	0	1	1	6	6	8
	Chelsfield*	2	2	0	1	0	0	1	6	2	
Riverhill	Sevenoaks	2	2	2	1	1	0	1	9	2	2
Romney Street	Otford	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	5	2	2
Salters Heath	Sevenoaks	2	2	2	1	1	0	1	9	2	2

Settlement	Railway Station	Peak Score	Off-Peak Score	Additional Lines Score	Fast service to London Score	Footfall over 500,000 entries and exits in 23/24.	Within Walking Distance	Within Cycling Distance	Score	Scores (inc. capping)	Final Score
Seal	Bat and Ball	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	6
	Kemsing	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	
	Sevenoaks	2	2	2	1	1	0	1	9	2	
Seal Chart	Kemsing	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	2
Sevenoaks Urban Area	Bat and Ball	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	4	4	20
	Dunton Green	2	2	0	0	0	1	1	6	6	
	Sevenoaks	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	10	10	
Shoreham	Shoreham	2	2	0	0	0	1	1	6	6	6
Shorehill	Otford	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	5	2	2
Skeet Hill	Chelsfield*	2	2	0	1	0	0	1	6	2	2
South Darenth	Farningham Road*	2	1	0	0	0	1	1	5	5	5
Starhill	Dunton Green	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	5	2	2
Stone Street	Kemsing	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	2
Swanley	Swanley	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	9	9	9
Swanley Village	Swanley	2	1	2	1	1	0	1	8	2	2
Twitton	Otford	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	5	2	2
Well Hill (Including Rock Hill)	Chelsfield*	2	2	0	1	0	0	1	6	2	2
Wellers town	Penshurst	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	2
Wested	Swanley	2	1	2	1	1	0	1	8	2	2

Settlement	Railway Station	Peak Score	Off-Peak Score	Additional Lines Score	Fast service to London Score	Footfall over 500,000 entries and exits in 23/24.	Within Walking Distance	Within Cycling Distance	Score	Scores (inc. capping)	Final Score
Woodlands	Oxford	2	1	1	0	0	0	1	5	2	2

\*Stations which are marked with an asterisk are located outside of the District boundary.



**5.2.** Table 2 shows the total facility score for each individual settlement, taking into account the criteria set out in Table 7. With the exception of Transport provision, each service has been given 2 points or more if there are multiple of the same facility. For example:

- If the settlement has a single doctor's surgery, it would score 2 points
- If the settlement has three doctor's surgeries, it would score 6 points, 2 for each surgery

**5.3.** Please note that the Services and Facilities scoring in Table 8 incorporates the scoring for both Green Belt boundaries and rail services, as identified in Tables 4 and 6.

**Table 2 – Services and Facilities scoring per settlement**

Settlement	Population score	Facilities score	Final Score:
Sevenoaks Urban Area	29	755	784
Swanley	17	165	182
Edenbridge (including Marlpit Hill)	9	167	176
Hartley	4	144	148
Westerham	3	123	126
Otford	3	95	98
New Ash Green	5	85	90
West Kingsdown	3	52	55
Eynsford	1	52	53
Seal	1	49	50
Kemsing	3	44	47
South Darenth	1	44	45
Pratts Bottom	0	39	39
Hextable	4	34	38
Crockenhill	1	34	35
Farningham	1	32	33
Leigh	1	32	33
Brasted	0	31	31
Knockholt (including Knockholt Pound)	0	30	30

Shoreham	0	29	29
Four Elms	0	28	28
Sundridge	0	27	27
Halstead	0	25	25
Sevenoaks Weald	0	21	21
Hever	0	19	19
Fawkham	0	18	18
Ide Hill	0	17	17
Penshurst	0	17	17
Chiddingstone Causeway	0	16	16
Badgers Mount	0	15	15
Horton Kirby	0	15	15
Ash	0	14	14
Chiddingstone	0	13	13
Fordcombe	0	13	13
Cowden	0	11	11
Marsh Green	0	9	9
Seal Chart	0	9	9
Swanley Village	0	7	7
Crockham Hill	0	6	6
Hodsoll Street	0	6	6
Lullingstone	0	6	6
Markbeech	0	6	6
Godden Green	0	5	5
Toys Hill	0	5	5
Fort Halstead	0	4	4
Bough Beech	0	3	3
Brasted Chart	0	3	3
Charcott	0	3	3
Hoath Corner	0	3	3
Marwood	0	3	3
Morants Court	0	3	3
Skeet Hill	0	3	3
Twitton	0	3	3
Austin Lodge	0	2	2
Bayleys Hill	0	2	2
Chiddingstone Hoath	0	2	2
Cotman's Ash	0	2	2
Crowdleham	0	2	2
Darns Hill	0	2	2
Goathurst Common (Including Mackerels Plain and Whitley Row)	0	2	2
Heaverham	0	2	2

Knotley Hall	0	2	2
Noahs Ark	0	2	2
Park Gate	0	2	2
Petham	0	2	2
Pootings	0	2	2
Powder Mills	0	2	2
Ridley	0	2	2
Riverhill	0	2	2
Romney Street	0	2	2
Salters Heath	0	2	2
Shorehill	0	2	2
Starhill	0	2	2
Stone Street	0	2	2
Well Hill (Including Rock Hill)	0	2	2
Wellers Town	0	2	2
Woodlands	0	2	2
<u>Bitchet Green</u>	0	1	1
<u>Chevening</u>	0	1	1
<u>Knatts Valley</u>	0	1	1
<u>Wested</u>	0	1	1
Barnfield Park	0	0	0
Birchfield	0	0	0
Coopers Corner	0	0	0
Dryhill	0	0	0
East Hill	0	0	0
Emmetts	0	0	0
Everlands	0	0	0
Norman Street (including Brook Place)	0	0	0
Oveny Green and Combe Bank	0	0	0
<u>Phillippines Shaw</u>	0	0	0
<u>Poundsbridge</u>	0	0	0
<u>Sepham Heath</u>	0	0	0
<u>Threshersfield</u>	0	0	0
<u>Underriver</u>	0	0	0
<u>Walters Green</u>	0	0	0
<u>Winkhurst Green</u>	0	0	0

N.B. Settlements which are underlined do not have a defined Green Belt boundary.

## Settlement Hierarchy for Sevenoaks District 2022

6.1. The final scoring and classifications for each settlement within Sevenoaks District are set out in Table 3 below.

Table 3 – The Settlement Hierarchy for Sevenoaks District

Settlement Type	Settlement	Final Score:
Principal Town	Sevenoaks Urban Area	784
Towns	Swanley	182
	Edenbridge (including Marlpit Hill)	176
	Westerham*	126
Primary Service Settlements	Hartley	148
	Otford	98
	New Ash Green	90
Secondary Service Settlements	West Kingsdown	55
	Eynsford	53
	Seal	50
	Kemsing	47
	South Darenth	45
	Pratts Bottom	39
	Hextable	38
Villages	Crockenhill	35
	Farningham	33
	Leigh	33
	Brasted	31
	Knockholt (including Knockholt Pound)	30
	Shoreham	29
	Four Elms	28
	Sundridge	27
	Halstead	25
	Sevenoaks Weald	21

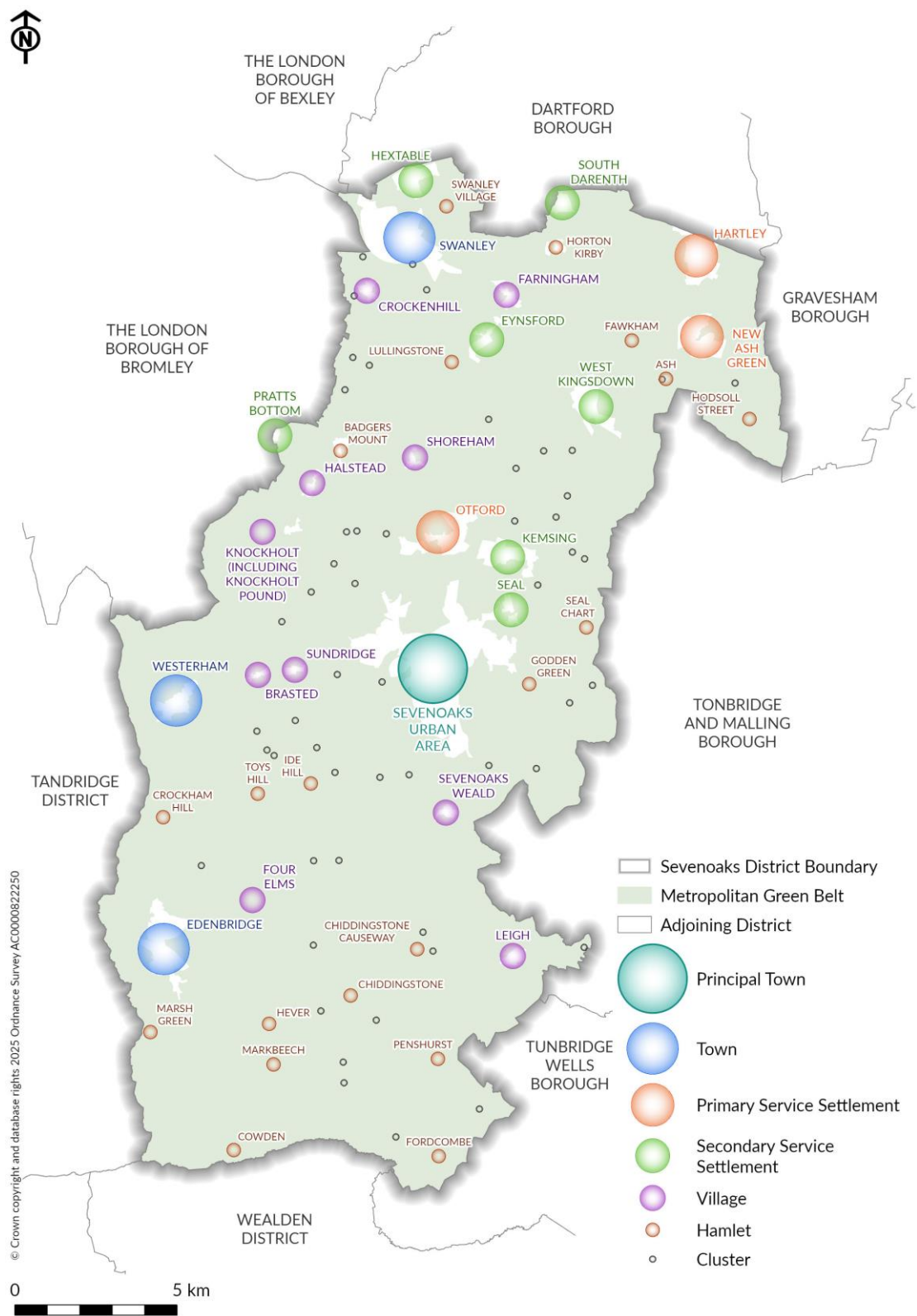
Settlement Type	Settlement	Final Score:
Hamlets	<u>Hever</u>	19
	<u>Fawkham</u>	18
	<u>Ide Hill</u>	17
	<u>Penshurst</u>	17
	<u>Chiddingstone Causeway</u>	16
	<u>Badgers Mount</u>	15
	<u>Horton Kirby</u>	15
	<u>Ash</u>	14
	<u>Chiddingstone</u>	13
	<u>Fordcombe</u>	13
	<u>Cowden</u>	11
	<u>Marsh Green</u>	9
	<u>Seal Chart</u>	9
	<u>Swanley Village</u>	7
	<u>Crockham Hill</u>	6
	<u>Hodsoll Street</u>	6
	<u>Lullingstone</u>	6
	<u>Markbeech</u>	6
	<u>Godden Green</u>	5
	<u>Toys Hill</u>	5
Clusters	<u>Fort Halstead</u>	4
	<u>Bough Beech</u>	3
	<u>Brasted Chart</u>	3
	<u>Charcott</u>	3
	<u>Hoath Corner</u>	3
	<u>Marwood</u>	3
	<u>Morants Court</u>	3
	<u>Skeet Hill</u>	3
	<u>Twitton</u>	3
	<u>Austin Lodge</u>	2
	<u>Bayleys Hill</u>	2
	<u>Chiddingstone Hoath</u>	2
	<u>Cotman's Ash</u>	2
	<u>Crowdleham</u>	2
	<u>Darns Hill</u>	2
	<u>Goathurst Common (Including Mackerels Plain and Whitley Row)</u>	2
	<u>Heaverham</u>	2
	<u>Knotley Hall</u>	2
	<u>Noahs Ark</u>	2
	<u>Park Gate</u>	2



Settlement Type	Settlement	Final Score:
	<u>Petham</u>	2
	<u>Pootings</u>	2
	<u>Powder Mills</u>	2
	<u>Ridley</u>	2
	<u>Riverhill</u>	2
	<u>Romney Street</u>	2
	<u>Salters Heath</u>	2
	<u>Shorehill</u>	2
	<u>Starhill</u>	2
	<u>Stone Street</u>	2
	<u>Well Hill (Including Rock Hill)</u>	2
	<u>Wellers Town</u>	2
	<u>Woodlands</u>	2
	<u>Bitchet Green</u>	1
	<u>Chevening</u>	1
	<u>Knatts Valley</u>	1
	<u>Wested</u>	1
	<u>Barnfield Park</u>	0
	<u>Birchfield</u>	0
	<u>Coopers Corner</u>	0
	<u>Dryhill</u>	0
	<u>East Hill</u>	0
	<u>Emmetts</u>	0
	<u>Everlands</u>	0
	<u>Norman Street (including Brook Place)</u>	0
	<u>Oveny Green and Combe Bank</u>	0
	<u>Phillippines Shaw</u>	0
	<u>Poundsbridge</u>	0
	<u>Sephram Heath</u>	0
	<u>Threshersfield</u>	0
	<u>Underriver</u>	0
	<u>Walters Green</u>	0
	<u>Winkhurst Green</u>	0

N.B. Settlements which are underlined do not have a defined Green Belt boundary.

Figure 3: Sevenoaks District Settlement Hierarchy Map



N.B. Not all settlements have been labelled on the above figure, due to accessibility.

# Settlement Profile

## Principal Town

- 7.1. The Principal Town is defined as Sevenoaks Urban Area (including Sevenoaks Town, Dunton Green, Riverhead, Chipstead, and Bessels Green).
- 7.2. The Sevenoaks Urban Area comprises Sevenoaks Town, Riverhead, Dunton Green, Chipstead and Bessels Green, which share the same Green Belt boundary. The area has been classified as the District's Principal Town as it has the greatest population with 29,870 residents, as well as the greatest number of services and facilities (755), giving it an overall score of 784.

## Towns

- 7.3. The three settlements of Swanley, Edenbridge (including Marlpit Hill) and Westerham have been classified as Towns. It should be noted that, although all three settlements are classified as towns, they are recorded in hierarchical order (i.e. second town, third town, fourth town).
- 7.4. Swanley has the second largest population in the District with 17,252 residents. It is also one of the Districts major employment centres. Swanley has good transport links, with rail and bus connections to surrounding areas and Central London, as well as retail provision focused towards convenience facilities and services. Additionally, there is both primary and secondary education provision in the Town. This is reflected in the overall score of 182 for Swanley.
- 7.5. Edenbridge is the third largest settlement within the District, with 9,214 residents. The town provides a good range of services and facilities for residents, as well as two train stations providing links to Central London as well as a variety of other destinations including Gatwick Airport. Edenbridge (including Marlpit Hill) has an overall score of 176.
- 7.6. Westerham is the smallest Town in Sevenoaks District and has a good provision of services and facilities for its 3,389 residents. However, Westerham does not have a train station and therefore scores lower than Swanley and Edenbridge, with an overall score of 126. Please note Westerham did score within the Primary Service Settlement category, below Hartley, but has historically been considered a town and has a Town Council so is included as an exception within this category.

## Primary Service Settlements

- 7.7. Hartley, Otford, and New Ash Green have been classified as Primary Service Settlements.

- 7.8.** Local Service Centres do not offer as wide a range of services and facilities as Town Centres. However, they do offer a proportionate range of service, facilities and employment opportunities for the daily needs of the local community and surrounding settlements.

### Secondary Service Settlements

- 7.9.** West Kingsdown, Eynsford, Seal, Kemsing, South Darenth, Pratts Bottom, and Hextable have been classified as Service Villages.
- 7.10.** Similar to Primary Service Settlements, Secondary Service Settlements offer services and facilities that meet the daily needs of the local community and surrounding settlements. However, it is recognised that Secondary Service Settlements tend to have a smaller range of services than Primary Service Settlements.

### Villages

- 7.11.** Classified as Villages are Crockenhill, Leigh, Farningham, Brasted, Knockholt (including Knockholt Pound), Shoreham, Four Elms, Sundridge, Halstead, and Sevenoaks Weald.
- 7.12.** Villages are smaller settlements than those further up the Hierarchy and offer fewer services and facilities. However, many of these settlements score higher than Hamlets due to them having access to multiple key services which contribute to the settlement's sustainability.

### Hamlets

- 7.13.** Classified as Hamlets are: Hever, Fawkham, Ide Hill, Penshurst, Chiddingstone Causeway, Horton Kirby, Badgers Mount, Ash, Fordcombe, Chiddingstone, Cowden, Seal Chart, Marsh Green, Swanley Village, Crockham Hill, Markbeece, Lullingstone, Hodsoll Street, Godden Green, and Toys Hill.
- 7.14.** These Hamlets have very small populations (less than 1,000 inhabitants) and have a limited range of services and facilities. All the settlements in this classification are washed over by the Green Belt.

### Clusters

- 7.15.** Clusters are a new category that has been added to this update of the Settlement Hierarchy. They are the largest of the categories with the 53 settlements.
- 7.16.** Clusters are rural settlements with little to no services and facilities and have very small populations and sizes. All the settlements classified as Clusters are washed over by the greenbelt.

- 7.17. N.B. Settlements within the 'Villages', 'Hamlets' and 'Clusters' tiers are considered to be in unsustainable locations, characterised by a lack of services and facilities, limited public transport options, and small resident populations. These factors significantly constrain the ability of these settlements to support growth in a way that aligns with the principles of sustainable development.

## Conclusion

- 8.1. The Settlement Hierarchy is a key piece of evidence that will be used to inform and prepare the emerging Local Plan, helping to define the role, function and sustainability of each settlement within Sevenoaks District.
- 8.2. The District has a total of 97 settlements which all offer a differing variety of services and facilities to meet the day-to-day needs of the community. The settlements range from the most sustainable Principal Town (Sevenoaks Urban Area) to the least sustainable Clusters, with the inclusion of additional categories Primary Service Settlements, Secondary Service Settlements and Clusters.



## To find out more, please contact us:

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