

1 World Population Growth

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the growth of world population was slow and steady. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the growth rate has increased at an alarming rate – sometimes called ‘The Population Explosion’. This growth is due to higher birth rates and lower death rates as societies developed. The reasons for this are summarised as follows:

Reasons for high birth rates

- High infant deaths (mortality) means parents have more children
- No family planning
- Children needed to work
- Certain religions encouraged large families, eg Catholicism

Reasons for low birth rates

- Better medical care, eg doctors, hospitals, drugs, diseases cured
- Better hygiene, eg water and sanitation
- Improved status of women
- Better food quality and increased production

These increases in population have caused great problems in many parts of the world. **Overpopulation** describes a situation where there is an imbalance between resources and demand ie too many people compared to resources. Countries like Ethiopia suffer even more due to famine and disease.

Overpopulation is not simply too many people. Many nations like the United Kingdom and Japan have population densities (the number of people in a given area) of over 500 people per square kilometre. However, they generally have enough resources such as homes, jobs, food and heating to cope with the large numbers of people. Hence these nations can be described as **overcrowded** but not overpopulated.

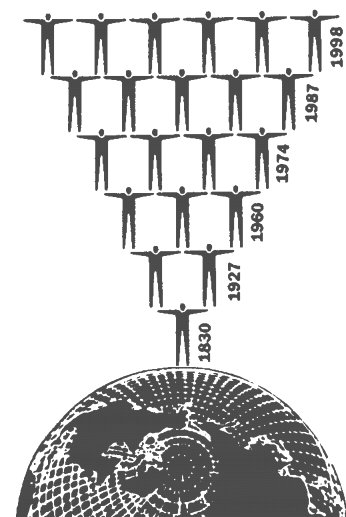
Asia	3155
Africa	677
North America	280
Latin America	451
Europe	502
Former USSR	292
Oceania	27

Table 1: World population in millions by region. (Source: UN data 1991)

Population growth and food supply

The Earth has limited resources and cannot continue to support an ever-growing population. The fear that food supply could not keep up with population growth was expressed as early as 1798 when the Rev Thomas Malthus published his essay on ‘The Principle of Population’. He believed that animals, plants and people increased as a geometric progression (2, 4, 8, 16, 32, etc) whereas food supply only increased as an arithmetic progression (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, etc). He claimed that if population growth was not controlled by voluntary ‘**preventative checks**’ such as contraception, then the ‘**positive checks**’ such as famine and war would take over.

POPULATION



A Growing Concern

Each figure shown here represents 1 billion people

Figure 1: A leaflet cover produced by Population Concern



- 1 Read the text carefully and draw a suitable graph to show the increasing population of Sheffield between 1730 and 1931.
- 2 What range of hills is Sheffield located on?
- 3 What trade had the area been famous for since the Middle Ages?
- 4 What natural advantages did the local area possess, which enabled Sheffield to develop into a major steel centre?
- 5 Draw a time line marking on the important events in the history of the growth of Sheffield from 1730 to 1931.
- 6 Why was steel in such demand during the nineteenth century?
- 7 What were the disadvantages of Sheffield's rapid growth as an industrial city?
- 8 Why did the wealthy move to the west?
- 9 What form of transport enabled the city to spread? Explain why this was so.

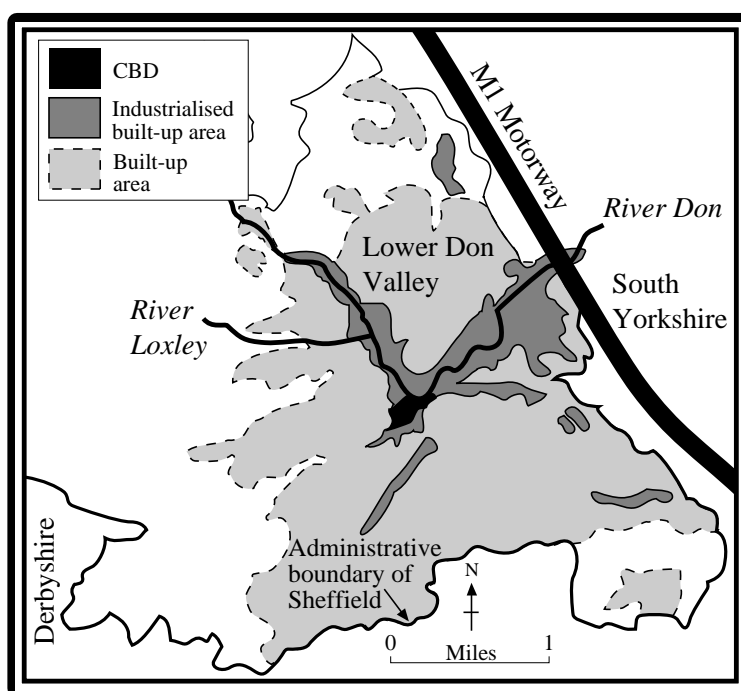


Figure 1: Map of Don Valley
CBD = Central Business District)

- 10 Using the map of Sheffield (Figure 1) and the information provided, draw a labelled sketch map that summarizes the main points about the growth of Sheffield.
- 11 Imagine that you lived and worked in the Don Valley. What would have been your reaction to being rehoused in the 1960s?
- 12 Explain how the recent developments in the Don Valley may encourage new investment and industry.
- 13 Design an advertisement for a national newspaper to be produced by the city council, aimed at attracting new industry to Sheffield.

19 New Towns

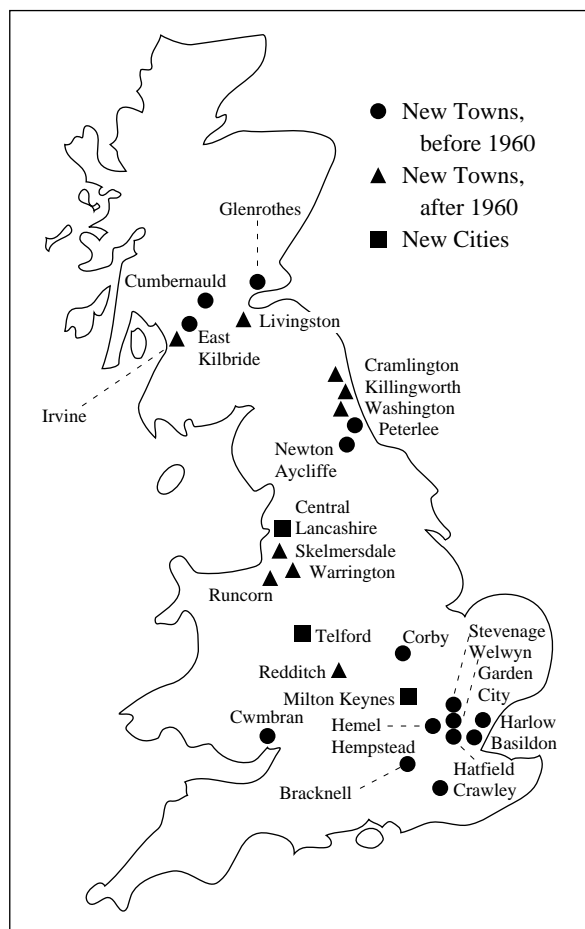


Figure 1: Some of the New Towns in Britain. Most of these were built on largely green-field sites and owe their origins to the 1946 New Towns Act. Some, like Welwyn Garden City, were built at the beginning of this century and have since been redesignated as New Towns.

In 1944 Sir Patrick Abercrombie published the Greater London Plan. The plan proposed that new settlements built from scratch should be built in southeast England to provide homes for London's expanding population and to rehouse families from slum housing areas.

The towns were to be self-contained and carefully planned. As well as providing good housing there should be employment for all inhabitants, as well as a full range of services, shopping and entertainment facilities. People could make a new start in a clean and pleasant environment.

The New Towns Act of 1946 started the building programme and today about 1.5 million people live in New Towns. The first generation of New Towns included Stevenage, Harlow, Crawley and East Kilbride. Separate communities called neighbourhoods were built. These can be easily identified on Ordnance Survey maps of these towns. Each neighbourhood housed about 5000 people, with each community having its own local school, shopping parade, church and social centre. Industry and housing

were kept apart and wide streets recognised that car ownership was increasing. Houses were built at low density in a variety of styles. More recent New Towns have had less rigid land-use zoning, more attention has been given to car ownership, public transport and the separation of pedestrians and traffic.

New Towns have had mixed success. Perhaps more could have been spent on redeveloping inner city areas. Many inhabitants have found that New Towns are ugly soulless places, lacking the character of established towns, with a lack of community spirit, bustle and the variety of building styles found in established towns. But they did provide spacious homes for people in a clean rural setting and modern locations for industry.

New country towns and villages

In recent years private developers have been seeking to build 12 new small communities in rural areas around London. The developers claim that these settlements are needed to house the increase in the number of households in the southeast over the next few years. The proposed settlements are intended to be self-contained communities of up to 20 000 people. This makes them much smaller than New Towns. They will be located away from established settlements with good road and rail access to London. Pubs, roads, schools, shops and churches will be built by the developer. They have been criticised, because they will not really solve any problems. The people living in them will be the wealthy middle class commuters with company cars or salaries that allow them to buy railway season tickets to London. They will be attracted by the prospect of buying a comfortable, modern house and by the quiet semi-rural lifestyle but development will eat up valuable countryside in a crowded part of Britain whilst derelict land in London remains undeveloped. Meanwhile, the poor and the unemployed will be trapped behind in inner city areas.

