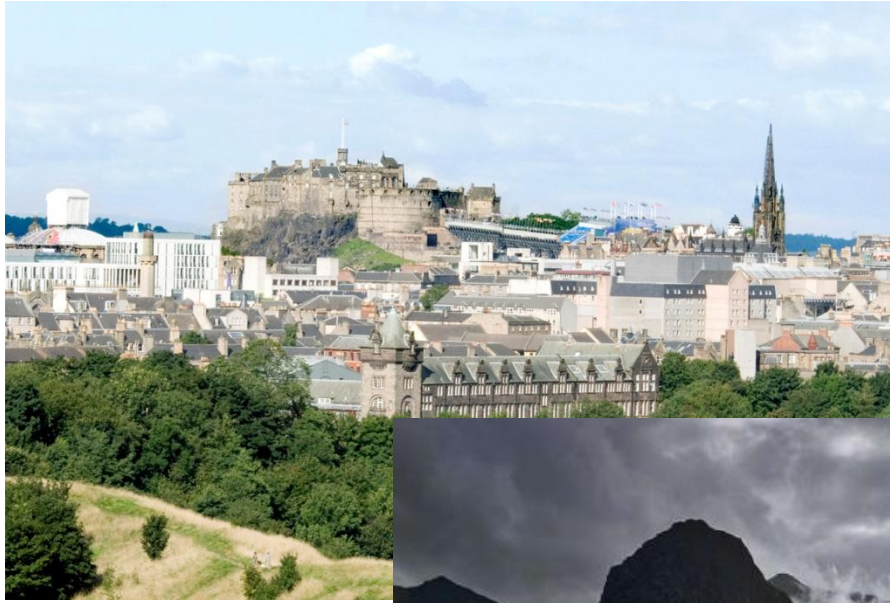


Do health impacts of development differ between rural and urban settings?

Margaret Douglas
Martin Higgins
NHS Lothian

Scottish Health and Inequalities Impact Assessment
Network

(on behalf of Rural Development Steering Group)



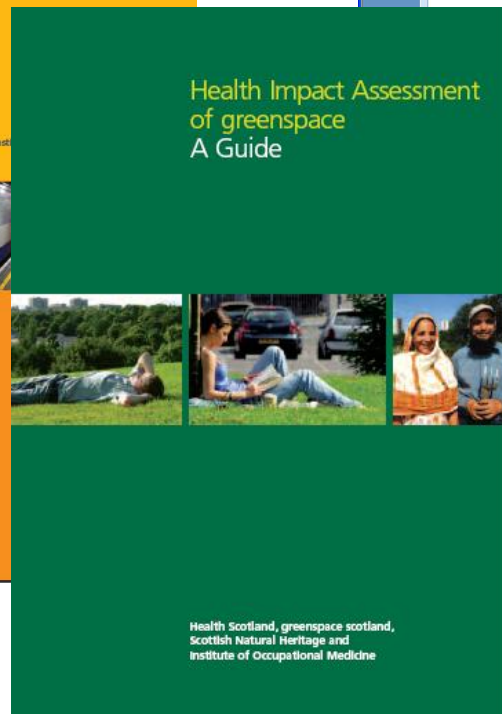
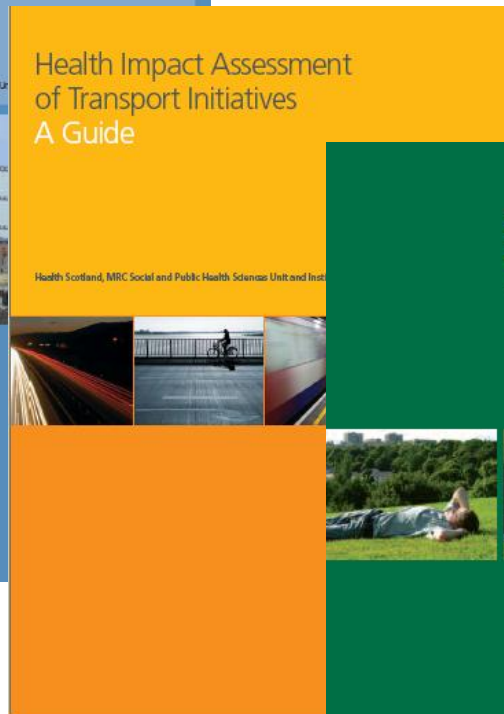
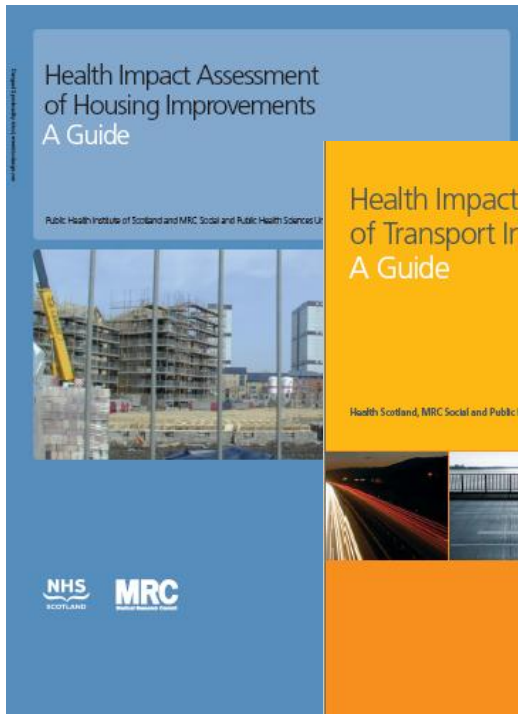


It started with a windfarm...

- Population influx
- Pressure on infrastructure
- Employment
- Traffic
- Heritage
- Community conflict
- Mental wellbeing



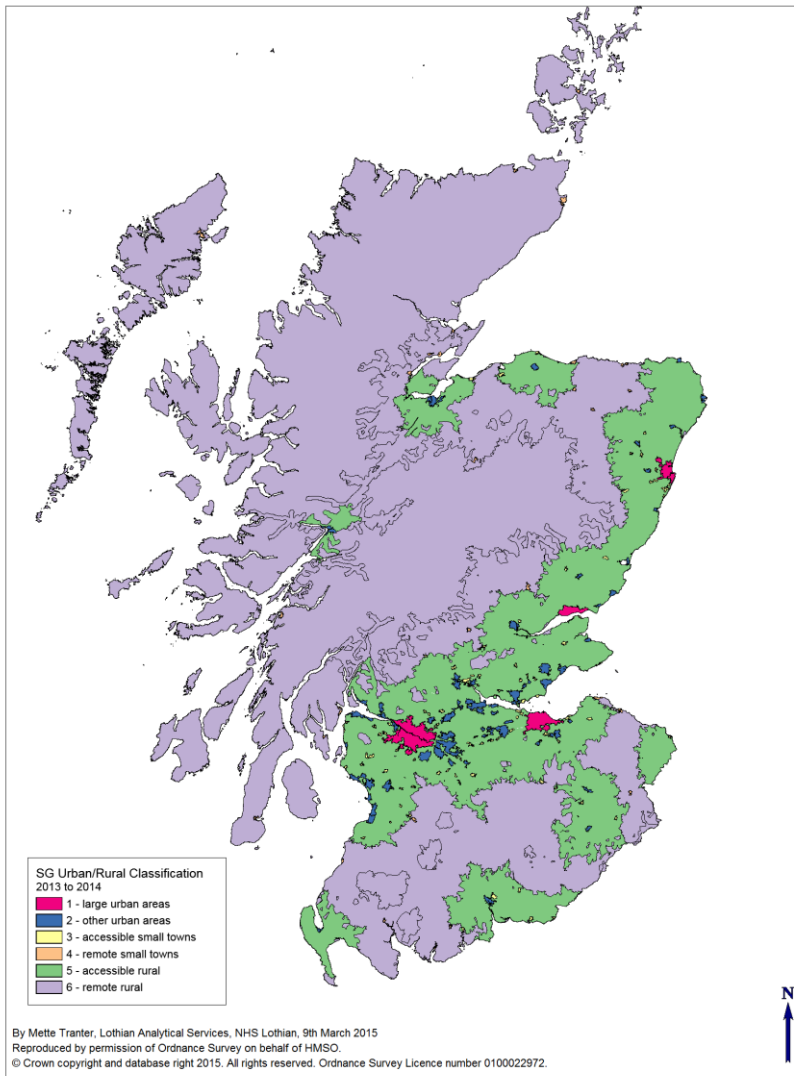
Scottish HIA Network



Methods

- Workshops with scenarios to scope common impacts
- Policy context and data
- Critical literature review
 - Significance of the impacts for health
 - Differences between rural and urban impacts
- Review of HIAs and HIA guidance
- Using the evidence - Key questions

Map showing Scottish Government Urban/Rural Classification (6 fold) 2013-2014



- 94% of land mass
- 20% of population – 1M people
- Older population
- Low pay, high costs
- Low unemployment, seasonal / second jobs
- High neighbourhood satisfaction
- Heterogenous population
- Urban-rural dynamic

‘Rural communities are often attractive for the very reasons that give rise to their problems.’

Manthorpe, J., et al., *Elderly people's perspectives on health and well-being in rural communities in England: findings from the evaluation of the National Service Framework for Older People*. Health & Social Care in the Community, 2008. **16**(5): p. 460-468.

Social context

- Many reasons to live there!
- Low crime
- Sense of place and community
- Resilience of people
- Youth out-migration and ageing
- Different populations



Economic context

- Economy – few major employers, lack of diversity
- Employment – ‘portfolio’ careers; low wages; few jobs for young people
- Cost of living – fuel and food
- Housing – cheaper than equivalent in cities but less choice so high overall costs



Physical context

- Access to Services – need to travel long distances
- Physical Environment – land use, physical terrain, water
- Infrastructure – vulnerable supply and distribution chains



So in this context...

- How might a development affect people and health?



Psychosocial impacts

- ‘Solastalgia’
- Good evidence of health impacts
- Many influences – community involvement



Social capital

- Good evidence of health impacts
- Concerns in many HIAs but limited evidence, could be positive or negative
- Integration of existing and new communities

Employment

- Clear impacts on health
- Importance of ‘good’ work
- Common lack of required skills



Impact on local economy

- Could be positive or negative
- Smaller local businesses more likely to use local supply chains

Infrastructure

- Water
- Transport / Traffic
- Housing
- Loss of amenity



Pressure on services and/or needs for new and different services

Underpinning issues

- Population movement
- Magnitude of comparatively small changes in rural and remote areas with sparse populations.



Plus all the more direct impacts...

- Noise
- Accidents
- Pollutants
- Zoonoses
- Allergens
- Etc

- Sector specific



Conclusions

- Many issues commonly identified in EIA but health impacts not unpicked
- Rural context does matter



Postscript...

