



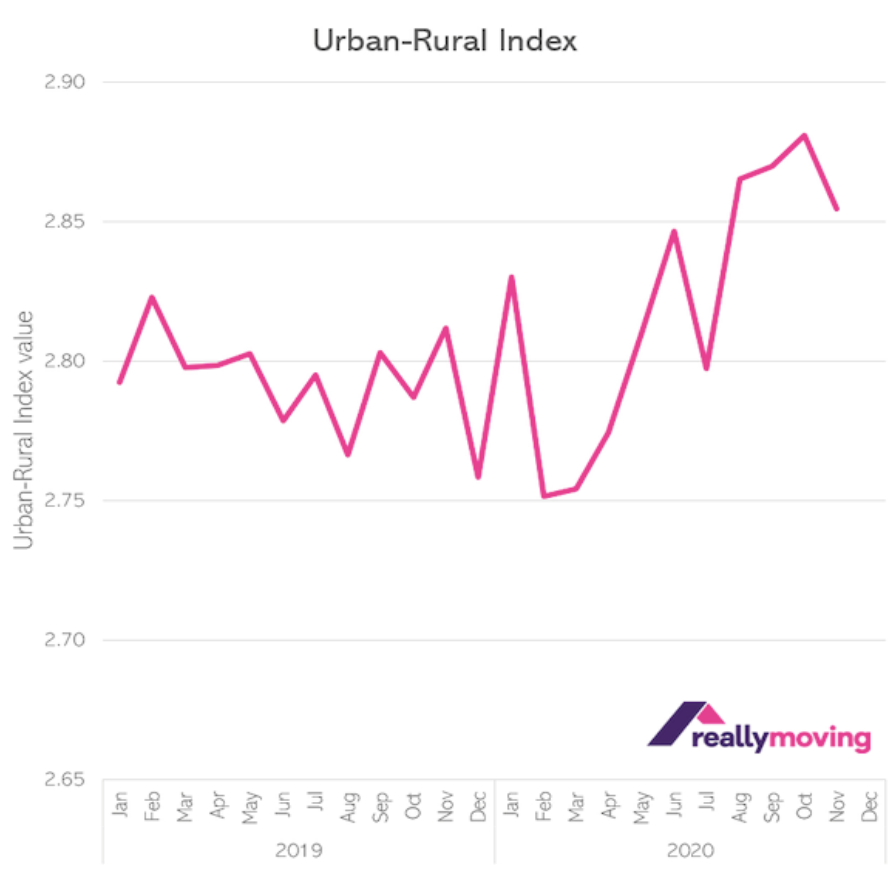
Towns and cities remain primary destinations for home movers

New data shows majority of home moves are taking place within urban areas, albeit to less densely populated locations

Xx February 2021: The vast majority (82.1%) of home moves over the last twelve months have taken place within urban areas, albeit to less densely populated locations within our towns and cities, reveals reallymoving in new research released today. This proportion remains virtually unchanged from 2019 when 81.5% of moves took place within urban areas.

By matching the Government's [urban and rural classifications](#) to postcode districts, reallymoving has been able to track the movement of 195,000 home movers using the site for conveyancing quotes during 2019/20 to determine whether they are moving up or down the Urban-Rural index, or in other words, whether they are moving to a more urban or a more rural location.

Graph 1: Reallymoving Urban-Rural Index



Buyers are choosing more rural locations within towns and cities

Typically, people move between 2 and 3 on the Index (below), which is where the most properties are located, and this remained unchanged in 2020. Yet there was a clear shift within the Urban-Rural index from July 2020 onwards when the average move jumped from 2.8 (July 2020) to 2.88 (October 2020), suggesting people are choosing more rural locations within our towns and cities.

Index	Urban / Rural	Density	Code	Type
1	Urban	Not sparse	A1	Major conurbation
2			B1	Major conurbation
3			C1	City & town
4		In a sparse setting	C2	City & town
5	Rural	Not sparse	D1	Town & fringe
6			E1	Villages
7			F1	Hamlets & isolated dwellings
8		Sparse setting	D2	Town & fringe
9			E2	Villages
10			F2	Hamlets & isolated dwellings

While agents have reported a strong trend for urban to rural migration during the second half of the year, prompted by changing lifestyle demands as a result of the pandemic, this could be driven by a relatively small number of equity-rich, economically mobile buyers who are financially secure enough to undertake such a move. Most home moves have in fact taken place within urban areas, although there is a shift to less populated locations within them, for example from the centre of towns and cities to the outskirts.

Schools, jobs and support networks

The trend for working from home has been accelerated by the pandemic, yet for some it may only be temporary and many people are therefore unwilling to move too far away from an office or workplace they will probably have to return to in some capacity in the future, even if only part time. Similarly, schooling and family networks are more important than ever and while people are willing to move slightly further away in order to secure more space, larger gardens or more rural surroundings, most are reluctant to move away from them completely.

Consequently, the number of moves from urban to rural areas has risen only slightly from between 8% and 9% in 2019 to between 9% and 10% after the property market reopened in May 2020.

There has also been a 9.7% decline in the number of moves to conurbations since the start of 2020.

Distance moved

The median distance moved by UK homebuyers in 2020 was 10 miles, an increase of just 1 mile from the 2019 average (9 miles), further indicating that most home movers stayed relatively local.

CEO Rob Houghton says: *“The urban to rural migration agents are reporting may be taking place in a relatively small section of the market, probably among financially secure, equity rich homebuyers are who less tied to a location by work and the need for family support.*

“Our data indicates that the vast majority of moves during 2020 took place within our urban districts, though there was a shift towards less populated locations within those areas, such as from large conurbations to cities and towns, and from city and town centres to the outskirts.

“We suspect that most families are realistic about the need to be close to their workplace again in the future and are reluctant to diminish ties to school, friends, family and support networks during such a challenging time.”

-- ENDS --

Notes to Editors

About reallymoving

Launched in 1999, reallymoving has become the UK's leading provider of free instant quotes for home-moving services, serving over 2 million customers since its inception. It is an independent and privately financed company, majority owned by its management and directors.

During 2020 reallymoving received 280,000 registrations and generated almost a million quotes on behalf of its UK-wide network of partners, representing approximately £220 million worth of work in 12 months. Reallymoving believes approximately 9% of the UK's home movers receive quotes from the site.

Reallymoving provides instant quotes for Conveyancing, Surveys, Removals, Home Reports (in Scotland) and Energy Performance Certificates.

Reallymoving also owns The Law Superstore, the comparison site for legal services.

www.reallymoving.com

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