

# South West Wiltshire Community Area Status Report

## “What Matters in South West Wiltshire”

### Executive Summary

- (A) This paper captures the most up to date information about communities living in South West Wiltshire, including data associated with the economy, environment, housing, education, health and wellbeing, community safety, transport and recovery from Covid-19
- (B) Compared to the rest of the county, South West Wiltshire has the highest population of over 65s, with many young people choosing to leave the county for Higher Education
- (C) On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the most, and 10 the least, South West Wilts ranks 5 in terms of deprivation, with pockets ranked 4 in Mere and Wilton
- (D) This Community Area is ranked bottom, with Warminster CA, in terms of the numbers of private rented properties not meeting the Government’s Decent Homes standard
- (E) Covid-19 is impacting upon our physical and mental health, and we are seeing rising hospital admissions due to self harm and misuse of alcohol
- (F) Children and young people are unable to take part in the usual positive activities that the area board ordinarily funds, and childhood obesity is on the rise, along with anxiety in young people
- (G) Unemployment is rising for South West Wiltshire’s young people population (18-24yr olds)
- (H) The area board resets its focus on local priorities every 3 years, and has done this during the pandemic period, in conversation with parish councils, community groups, schools, businesses and residents. It is vitally important that the issues summarised above, and the further detail below is used to inform how those priorities are reshaped, and even more importantly, how they are tackled
- (I) The priorities identified from this report are taken forward by projects, initiatives, schemes and events detailed in the proposed [Work Plan at Appendix 1](#)
- (J) This status report and its corresponding Work Plan are dynamic documents and will be amended according to feedback. All in South West Wiltshire are strongly encouraged to engage in the work associated with these local priorities.

## 1. Background and Context

The overarching aim of this document is for the South West Wiltshire Area Board to understand how to support local responses from communities, businesses and organisations and link this to the work of Wiltshire Council, it's partners and agencies, so that collaboratively we can tackle issues including those arising from Covid-19.

The South West Wiltshire community area has seen an incredible response to the COVID19 pandemic with volunteers leading the response and strategic partners working collaboratively to support our communities. Every person within the area has access to support from one of the many community groups that were set up, some of which are continuing to offer additional support.

As we now look ahead, this short document provides a summary of information that can be utilised to help inform the local community response. It brings together the differing data and information sources from across the community area that will help us to understand the state of our community and the impact of COVID-19. It also highlights communities that may have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic and it considers how the actions, projects and plans that are emerging will be collated and supported.

Over time this document will be regularly updated in response to changes, new information and actions undertaken.

Through a mutual exchange of support and facilitated dialogue since the start of the pandemic, town and parish councils and neighbourhood volunteers and Wiltshire Council continue to work together to rebuild our local communities. Whilst the impact of COVID-19 is considerable, it is recognised that some local issues already existed and that these will need to be tackled as well.

The South West Wiltshire Community Area consists of Alvediston, Ansty, Barford St Martin, Berwick St John, Berwick St Leonard, Bishopstone, Bowerchalke, Broadchalke, Burcombe, Chicklade, Chilmark, Compton Chamberlayne, Dinton, Donhead St Andrew, Donhead St Mary, East Knoyle, Kilmington, Mere, Netherhampton, Quidhampton, Sedgehill, Semley, Steeple Langford, Stratford Tony, Sutton Mandeville, Swallowcliffe, Teffont, Tisbury, Tollard Royal, West Knoyle, West Tisbury, Wilton, Wylve and Zeals. A key requirement is to ensure that all within the community area have the same opportunity to engage with this work.

Whilst it is natural to focus on the negative impacts of COVID-19, it is important to recognise and build on any positives that have occurred. These include the closer working between organisations, increased community cohesion, new volunteers, wider use of the internet / social media, and perhaps an even sharper appreciation of the need to stay fit and well, and of the need to work better with and protect the environment.

## 2. Community data and information

Local data has been collected from a range of sources to provide an overview of the current situation within our community. This has been combined with the outcomes of discussions on the impact of COVID-19 to inform the key issues emerging and where resources should be focussed.

- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) local data sets – (collected in winter 2019) <https://www.wiltshireintelligence.org.uk/community-area/south-west-wiltshire/> (considered at the 30<sup>th</sup> Sept Area Board meeting)
- COVID19 support groups discussions – (April 2020 May 2021)
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment October 2019 survey findings
- South West Wiltshire Area Board discussions (from Sept 2020 – Mar 2021)
- JSNA Population, Indices of Deprivation, Life expectancy, Mortality (Oct 2020)
- Consultation with Town and Parish Councils- (Nov 2020 – Feb 2021)
- Additional Partner organisation data
  - I. Business Community
  - II. Link scheme data
  - III. Wiltshire Money
  - IV. Citizen's Advice Wiltshire
  - V. Wiltshire Community Foundation
  - VI. Town and Parish Council plans / Neighbourhood Plans
  - VII. Carer Support Wiltshire
  - VIII. Age UK
  - IX. Alzheimers Charities
- Discussions with key groups including:
  - I. Young People, including Seeds4Success
  - II. Health & Wellbeing Group
  - III. Main Surgeries
  - IV. Faith Leaders
  - V. Community Safety Group
  - VI. Community Area Transport Group
  - VII. Schools (Multi Agency Forum / Heads Group / Youth Councils)
  - VIII. Nadder Centre Steering Group

### 3. Understanding the emerging themes and the impact of COVID-19

The impact of COVID-19 has affected some groups in the area more than others and exasperated some pre-existing issues. Further investigation will be required in some cases to ascertain who needs what support. Possible groups may include:

1. *Young people* – They face challenges such as finding employment, poor mental health, lack of support (including transport support) or positive activities, as well as disruption to education. A perceived opinion of a lack of parental support.
2. *Older and vulnerable people* – The need to self-isolate more has had a negative impact on mental health, and an increase in loneliness and depression. Those living with dementia have been one of the most vulnerable groups. Whilst ever growing reliance upon things digital offers advantage to some, to others this is a real challenge.
3. *Families on low income* – We have seen an increase in debt and consequently the demand for supporting services. This is linked to employment, housing, mental health, loan sharks and other issues.
4. *Minority and BAME groups* – South West Wiltshire has the lowest number of BAME groups residing when compared to other community areas – just under 4% of the population (Mere: 0.86%; Wilton: 1.4% ; Tisbury: 1.54%). However, better awareness about what minority groups reside in South West Wiltshire, and better understanding about their needs is something worth taking the opportunity to explore and assist, where possible.

Analysis of the data so far suggests the following issues are emerging as notably worse than the Wiltshire average. This list may increase and change after further consultation and as new data arises.

Possible Emerging Issue	Impact of COVID-19	Supporting evidence source
High hospital admissions (accidental, self-harm and alcohol related)	Covid is impacting upon mental health. Self harming and alcohol dependency are often associated with mental ill-health	JSNA 2020 data
Mortality rate from preventable illness high in Wilton Community Area (CA)	Significant impact	JSNA 2020 data
Highway infrastructure and maintenance	No significant impact bar some backlog	CAJSNA 2020 Community survey results
Accessible positive activities for young people	Fewer activities available due to COVID restrictions and projects on hold	JSNA 2020 data Discussions with partners

Fly tipping especially in Wilton CA	Increase due to restrictions on recycling centres	CAJSNA 2020 Community survey results JSNA 2020 data
Child Obesity for 10-11 year olds is higher than Wiltshire average	Possible increase due to more time spent at home	JSNA 2020 data
Support for older people and carers, including those with dementia. South West Wiltshire has the highest population of older people in Wiltshire.	Significant impact	Previous area board / health & wellbeing group discussions
Higher than average house prices	Impacts on affordability for health/care workers. Impacts upon financial capacities during a time of job insecurity and economic downturn	JSNA 2020 data
Highest number of private rented properties not meeting the Decent Homes standard	High impact, as, housing conditions affect health and wellbeing	Report from Director of Housing, March 2021
High no. road traffic collisions	Speeding incidents have increased	JSNA 2020 data
Lower educational achievement in Wilton CA	Disruption in education due to closures and isolation	JSNA 2020 data
Debt – Average estimated personal loan is £923.81 (Tisbury) and £1,205.63 (Wilton compared to £796.23 as Wiltshire average	Loans and debt are increasing significantly	JSNA 2020 data Wiltshire Money data
Business support and Employment – 51 apprenticeships per 10,000 16+ year olds compared to 139 as Wiltshire average	Unemployment rising steeply and fewer apprenticeships. Some businesses struggling	JSNA 2020 data
Library use – Only 6% of residents are members compared to 34% as Wiltshire average	Libraries currently closed. Opportunities to explore as reopening commences	JSNA 2020 data
Broadband Capacity / Digital Inclusion	Increased use but not all people can access it, whether because of connectivity	Area Board has previously looked at this, and would

	weaknesses or because of financial/other barriers	like to pursue this further
Poor mental health	Deterioration in mental health caused by COVID including isolation and loneliness	Data from local agencies. Discussions with C19 volunteers, area board and parish councils
Keeping people active	Principle is accepted – more active we are, less ill we will be	Area Board to consider
Community Safety	Cyber crime has increased, perception of safety has suffered because of long periods of isolation amongst many vulnerable groups, media reporting risks more divisive outlooks and behaviours, e.g. how the old perceive the young...	Community Safety Group to consider
Protecting the environment and promoting eco-friendly lifestyles	Significant impact	Previous area board discussions
A new focus on disadvantage, however that is manifested, particularly regarding rural disadvantage for the individual and family, and how this also relates to use of facilities, i.e. libraries.	Significant impact. <i>(on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the most, and 10 the least, South West Wilts ranks 5 in terms of deprivation. We have pockets ranked as 4 in Mere CA and Wilton CA and others ranked as 6/7 in Tisbury CA)</i>	Discussions are needed to analyse what is meant by this and where we can add value
Support for village groups to get back up and running	Significant impact	Councillors, volunteers and parish councils discussions
Facilitating more sustainable modes of transport	Significant impact	C19 volunteers discussions

It is important that this is an inclusive process as possible with special attention to ensure that the villages and minority groups have equal opportunity to feed in and partake in this recovery work. However, it is recognised that some may choose not to engage, and that work will take place that is not captured in this document.

#### 4. How local actions can be supported

The local response within the South West Wiltshire Community Area is one of co-production recognising that to rebuild our communities, it is important that we work together, sharing information and resources where appropriate.

The Area Board covers the community areas of Mere, Tisbury and Wilton, and is responsible for this document. It links local delivery to Wiltshire Council, the Police, Public Health and other partners. It is an accountable body with influence and powers. It has its own funding to help support local initiatives. The Area Board will use this document to support local recovery and also encompass issues that were existing prior to COVID-19.

Wiltshire Council's thematic approach to the county's recovery is structured around the following 4 themes, and it will be helpful to use these as we progress our local recovery in South West Wiltshire :

- I. **Economy and employment**
- II. **Health, well-being and adult care**
- III. **Community Resilience**
- IV. **Young people, education and children**

The Area Board, working with existing and new sub groups, leads from parish councils, community groups and organisations, will carry out further investigation on the community issues, themes and priorities from the table at section 3 above, bringing together work currently happening and identifying gaps.

The Area Board will have updates of how this work is progressing as a standing item at its meetings.

#### **The Area Board is recommended to:**

1. Endorse this Status Report
2. Consider and approve the Work Plan (Appendix 1)
3. Adopt a rolling prioritisation process – agreeing which top 6 pieces of work from the Work Plan it will focus on in 2021/22 (see appendix 2)
4. That the Area Board hosts up to 4 community engagement events in 2021/22, covering themes such as Young People, Eco-Friendly Villages, Affordable Housing, Health & Wellbeing.
5. That the Area Board appoints councillors and community volunteers to work in conjunction with the CEM to provide leadership and capacity for each of the Work Plan's priorities.
6. Review the status report and work plan regularly in response to changes and celebrate completed actions (At least every 2 months or as required)