

Children's Centre Rationalisation Briefing No 19-002

The Westbury Children's Centre, Eden Vale Road, Westbury.

The best interests of children in the area should be paramount. This is especially important when we remember that 16% of the Westbury population lives within the most deprived areas<sup>1</sup> not just of Wiltshire, but of England. Westbury Children's Centre is in the middle of that area.

I am a retired midwife, who most recently worked in the Trowbridge Birth Centre. Pregnant women from Westbury already are disadvantaged by the need to travel to Trowbridge for ante and post-natal care including breast feeding support.

To disadvantage these families further by making them travel to Trowbridge to a Children's Centre which is difficult to access by public transport is not acceptable. A woman with a new baby, probably other children too will be discouraged from making this effort. This disadvantage will be exacerbated when the various timings of classes and meetings is taken into consideration.

Many vulnerable families already access Westbury Children's Centre where they find non-judgmental support and assistance with parenting, domestic abuse, home learning, healthy lifestyle, and employment issues. Or perhaps just a kind, listening ear.

The Westbury Children's Centre is such a valuable asset to this community and its families. It would be an irreplaceable loss to the community and especially to those less well-off families who live here. It would be so sad to make Westbury an even more deprived area than it already is.

<sup>1</sup> Reference Wiltshire Community Area JSA 2016, Health Wellbeing & Leisure