

## Devizes Community Area Status Report

March 2021

### Background and context

The overarching aim of this document is for Devizes 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 Devizes community area has seen an incredible response to the Covid-19 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, many of which have offered additional support right the way through three lockdowns and even in between these periods of tight restrictions.

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 local 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.

The Devizes Area Board has kept strong working links through councillors and officers and collaborated closely with Devizes Town Council, parish councils and the many community-based groups that came into being due to the pandemic. The area board has supported key local partners, business and community stakeholders working together to rebuild our local community. 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 Devizes community area consists of the town of Devizes as well as the parishes of All Cannings, Bishops Cannings, Bromham, Cheverell Magna, Cheverell Parva, Easterton, Erlestoke, Etchilhampton, Market Lavington, Marston, Potterne, Roundway, Rowde, Stert, Urchfont, West Lavington and Worton. 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, good neighbourliness, new volunteers and the wider use of the internet / social media. There has also been a reduction in car journeys, that has led to an improvement in air quality. This is good news for Devizes, one of Wiltshire's Air Quality Management Areas.

## Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS)

There are around 2000 charities registered in Wiltshire, though c.2,700 registered charities deliver services in Wiltshire with many more unregistered local groups and community organisations. Many of these VCS organisations are based in and around Devizes and have offices, day centres, etc. here.

Wiltshire's VCS provides vital services, core to our communities' resilience and sustainability, our health, wellbeing and economy.

Predicting the long-term impact on the sector is challenging: *latest national research by ProBono Economics (Aug.2020)*:

- 85% of charities expect a negative financial impact
- 70% think it will take over a year for pre-covid income levels to be restored
- 68% expect demand for services to increase
- 58% expect to scale back their provision

### **Current local picture: (as of December 2020 Wiltshire VCS Impact Survey – Part 2)**

- 32% of those VCS who continued to offer a service saw a 32% increase in demand with the biggest demand being around Befriending support / supporting peoples mental health and wellbeing.
- 45 % of services remained partially open; 31% fully open and 20% still temporarily closed and 4% permanently closed
- 75% have stated they have changed the way they are delivering their core services
- 73% stated they are operating at a reduced level of service delivery
- 44% of the VCS said they will need more volunteers to meet the increased demands for their services

### **Positive local grant-making:**

- Wiltshire Community Foundation c.£514,000 to 144 groups (*March to August*) and TNLCF: c.£370,000 (*April to June*) a 'drop in the ocean' when considering £150M - £200M sector income and estimated reductions in income.
- 55% of organisations had been successful in securing funding in the last 6 months (*Wiltshire VCS Impact Survey Part 2 2020*)

## Community data and information

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

- JSNA local data sets – (collected in winter 2019)  
<https://www.wiltshireintelligence.org.uk/community-area/Devizes/>
- Covid-19 support group survey – (June 2020)
- Wiltshire CAJSNA 2020 Community Survey Results (Devizes)

- Wiltshire Council Housing Team Universal Credit Data – December 2020
- Wiltshire Citizen Advice – Universal Credit Data – December 2020
- Wiltshire’s Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Report - Prepared for Wiltshire Recovery Coordination Group (RCG) – 9th September 2020
- Devizes Air Quality & Sustainable Transport Group meeting – February 2021

## 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 or positive activities, as well as disruption to education. 11.3% of 0-19 year olds in Devizes Community Area are thought to be living in poverty. This is higher than across Wiltshire (9.4%) (JSNA data pack). There are two areas within Devizes town that rank in the 30% most deprived areas of England and one further area within the 40% most deprived (IMD, 2019).
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. Many of the volunteer-led support groups offered telephone support calls to those most at risk of loneliness. Those living with dementia have been one of the most vulnerable groups. Life expectancy amongst both males and females is lower in Devizes area, by one year each, than the Wiltshire average. (JSNA data pack)
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. In Devizes Community Area, 8.9% of homes are considered to be in fuel poverty, compared with 9.3% in Wiltshire.
4. *Minority and BAME groups* – The BAME population of Devizes is very similar to the make-up of Wiltshire overall, with a slightly smaller Black community than average. However, better awareness, understanding and collaboration with BAME groups who reside in Devizes area needs to be explored and built. There is a known Polish community which is supported by its own cultural groups.

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

Possible Emerging Issue	Impact of Covid-19	Supporting evidence source
<b>Community Safety</b>		
Anti-social behaviour rate in Devizes is 17 reports per 1,000 compared to Wiltshire average of 14 per 1,000. “Anti-social behaviour & crime” was ranked second highest	No significant impact, although young people not engaging with school are known to local police.	JSNA 2020 data CAJSNA 2020 Community survey results

priority for Devizes community area		
The rate of alcohol related hospital admissions in Devizes is 1,846 per 100,000 persons. This is higher than the rate for Wiltshire of 1,827 per 100,000.	Possible increase due to increased pressure on mental health due to Covid-19 impacts	JSNA 2020 data
21 violent offences were recorded per 1,000 persons in Devizes Community Area, compared with 18 per 1,000 in Wiltshire	Possible decrease of violent offences as a result of Covid-19 lockdown.	JSNA 2020 data
Devizes Community Area has a rate of reported domestic abuse offences of 9 per 1,000 persons. This is slightly higher than that across Wiltshire	Possible increase of domestic violence due to Covid-19 lockdown.	JSNA 2020 data
Between 2016 - 2018, almost 3,000 road traffic collisions causing injury were recorded on Wiltshire roads. In Devizes Community Area, the rate of these collisions is 175 per 100,000 persons, lower than the rate of 196 per 100,000 persons across Wiltshire	Certainly a decrease will be seen in the Devizes area due to marked decrease in the volume of road traffic during lockdown. However some drivers have increased speeds due to empty roads.	JSNA 2020 data
<b>Housing</b>		
In Devizes Community Area, 8.9% of homes are considered to be in fuel poverty, compared with 9.3% in Wiltshire	Possible increase due to increased financial pressures as a result of job losses and furlough	JSNA 2020 data
In November 2019, there was demand in Devizes Community Area for 141 affordable one bedroom homes, 91 affordable two bedroom homes, and 45 affordable three or more bedroom homes	Possible increase due to increased financial pressures as a result of job losses and furlough	JSNA 2020 data
Between 2016/17 and 2018/19, 425 new homes were completed in Devizes Community Area, of which 147 new affordable There are 2,500 new homes planned in Devizes Community Area in the current plan period of 2006-2026	Possible increase in the need for more affordable homes due to the economic impact of Covid-19	JSNA 2020 data
<b>Environment</b>		
63% of Energy Performance Certificates issued to homes in Devizes Community Area have a rating of D-G (low	No significant impact	JSNA 2020 data

efficiency), this is worse than the average of 56% across Wiltshire		
“Climate change & renewable energies” and “Waste and recycling” were ranked first and fourth choices from the CAJSNA 2020 Community survey	No significant impact	CAJSNA 2020 Community survey results
Less than 16% of Wiltshire's waste went to landfill in 2018/19 89% of Wiltshire's recycled, composted and reused waste is now being handled in the UK In 2018/19, there were 120 reported incidences of fly tipping in Devizes Community Area	Possible reduction on the amounts being recycled and increases in the number of fly-tips due to reduced hours of Household Recycling Centres and need to pre-book visits.	JSNA 2020 data
18% of Devizes Community Area is classified as either a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSI) or a County Wildlife Site (CWS) 2,965 individual species have so far been recorded in Devizes Community Area	Possible impact as focus move from environment to other factors as a result of Covid-19	JSNA 2020 data
Devizes is an Air Quality Management Area	Reduced volumes of traffic due to lockdown have meant that air quality at monitoring sites in town has increased during the last 12months. These sites now comply with levels. Work will need to be done to keep these levels down.	Wiltshire Council Public Protection team, 2021.
<b>Highways and Transport</b>		
Devizes Community Area has a total road network of 260kms. The committed spend for road resurfacing in Devizes Community Area in 2019/20 was £587,580. This is 5% of the total committed spend for Wiltshire	Possible impact due to pressures on Wiltshire Council budgets.	JSNA 2020 data
“Highway infrastructure and maintenance” was ranked third most important priority in Devizes area.	No significant impact bar some backlog	CAJSNA 2020 Community survey results

Between 2012-2017, there was an estimated 6.0% increase in traffic flow on roads in Devizes Community Area.	This is likely to have reduced due to Covid-19 lockdowns. Work needs to happen to encourage alternative means of transport, when safe to do so.	JSNA 2020 data
Out of 25 speed surveys that were conducted in Devizes Community Area between 2017-2019, only 7 surveys met the criteria for further action. All other surveys required no further action	No significant impact. Devizes CATG has begun to meet remotely to work on highways and safety schemes.	JSNA 2020 data
The rate of killed or seriously injured casualties on roads in Devizes Community Area is 34 per 100,000 persons. This is lower than the rate for Wiltshire (46 per 100,000)	No significant impact. Devizes CATG has begun to meet remotely to work on highways and safety schemes.	JSNA 2020 data
Between September 2019 and February 2020, 271 children in Devizes Community Area completed Walk Safe training	With schools not open and children under lockdown, this training will have stopped during the pandemic.	JSNA 2020 data
<b>Employment and Economy</b>		
The percentage of working age population in Devizes Community Area is 59%, compared with 60% in Wiltshire	Probably impact on numbers of unemployed due to the effects of Covid-19	JSNA 2020 data
6% of the working age population in Devizes Community Area are on out of work benefits, which is higher than the Wiltshire average (5%)	Probably impact on numbers of unemployed due to the effects of Covid-19	JSNA 2020 data
According to a 2018 survey of local businesses, the biggest two employment sectors in Devizes Community Area are wholesale and retail and manufacturing	Probably impact on numbers of unemployed due to the effects of Covid-19	JSNA 2020 data
Devizes Community Area has a rate of 78 apprenticeships per 10,000 people aged 16+. This is significantly lower than the Wiltshire rate of 139 per 10,000	Probably impact on numbers of unemployed and opportunities for employment and training due to the effects of Covid-19	JSNA 2020 data
The average estimated personal loan amount per person for those in Devizes Community Area is £685.64,	Loans and debt are anticipated to increase significantly as furlough ends and as further	JSNA 2020 data Wiltshire Money data

which is lower than the Wiltshire average of £796.23	restrictions are placed on the public due to Covid-19	
The transition across to Universal Credit has ongoing challenges that affect housing association tenants. E.g. The minimum 5 week wait for first payments, the way it is paid monthly in a lump sum, which in some cases causes budgeting issues etc	Probable increase due to furlough and reduction in hours due to Covid-19	JSNA 2020 data Wiltshire Money data
Increase in poverty	Devizes and District Foodbank saw an increase in demand in March – June '20 and then again in November coinciding with lockdowns	Devizes and District Foodbank.
Footfall for businesses within the town is reduced on 2019 levels	With lockdowns and only essential retail staying open customer numbers have been lower. Devizes Indie has sprung up supporting local businesses. They held a successful 'Indie Day' in September '20	Devizes Indie
<b>Arts, Culture and Leisure</b>		
40% of residents in Devizes Community Area are currently members of the local libraries compared with 34% across Wiltshire	Devizes Hub opened for limited browsing during autumn but closed in November to offer an order & collect service. Market Lavington library has remained closed during the pandemic.	JSNA 2020 data
2.1% of working people in Devizes Community Area are employed in the arts, entertainment and recreation sector, compared with 2.5% across Wiltshire	With arts venues unable to open, many are struggling. With slightly less people employed in this sector that average, Devizes is slightly less exposed to unemployment.	JSNA 2020 data
In Devizes Community Area, there are 34 venues hosting Cultural Activities. There are 414 in total across Wiltshire	Possible reduction in the number of venues in future as grants and furlough schemes run out.	JSNA 2020 data

In 2018/19, there were 201,323 visits to Wiltshire Council owned leisure centres, swimming pools, or health and wellbeing centres in Devizes Community Area.	Significant restrictions on leisure use due to Covid-19. Devizes leisure centre re-opened in autumn for limited, pre-booked classes but closed in November as restrictions tightened. Lack of income now might mean less investment in facilities in future	Discussions with partners and leisure services
<b>Community</b>		
Life expectancy for both men (80 years) and women 83 years) in Devizes is slightly lower than that of the Wiltshire average (81 men & 84 women)	Direct impact from Covid-19 on physical and mental health, loneliness and isolation	JSNA 2020 data
The ethnicity in Devizes is predominantly White British 94.4%, with White other making up 2.9% and BAME making up 2.7%	Possible disproportionate Covid-19 effect on BAME communities.	Census 2011
Building back better requires a strategy for harnessing the skills and enthusiasm of the new volunteers who have come forward - this means getting a Volunteer Bureau infrastructure into place to both harness and support volunteers	Increased volunteers but little infrastructure in place to harness and support the good will going forward. New Love Devizes organisation aiming to harness will to volunteer and act as hub for VCS and those in need of volunteer help and those looking to give their time.	Conversations with DCS19, Love Devizes and local VCS.
<b>Health and Wellbeing</b>		
29% of 10-11 year olds in Devizes Community Area are obese or overweight. This is similar to the Wiltshire average (28%) but still equates to almost 1 in 3 children in Year 6	Possible increase due to more time spent at home. More activities and ways to exercise are now online	JSNA 2020 data
The rate of hospital admissions as a result of accidental injury in Devizes Community Area is 139 per 10,000 persons, compared to 140 per 10,000 persons in Wiltshire	Possible fall in numbers of those attending medical help as a result of Covid-19. Not wanting to access medical services out of fear of contracting virus	JSNA 2020 data



	or not wanting to put strain on services.	
In 2018/19, 51% of people at particular risk from the impact of flu in Devizes Community Area received the flu vaccination	Possible indicator to number of people who may be susceptible to symptoms of Covid-19. Uptake in future may be higher as people more likely to protect themselves against flu.	JSNA 2020 data
The rate of hospital admissions as a result of self-harm in Devizes Community Area equates to 34 per 10,000 persons, higher than the Wiltshire rate of 27 per 10,000	Possible increase in numbers due negative mental health impact of Covid-19.	JSNA 2020 data
Before the pandemic Sport England's <i>Active Lives</i> survey (May 2019/20), which presents information on three levels of activity for adults aged 16+, showed Wiltshire's participation figures at <b>64.3% Active</b> (at least 150 minutes a week); <b>14% Fairly active</b> (an average of 30-149 minutes a week) and <b>21.7% Inactive</b> (less than 30 minutes a week).	Possible increase due to Covid-19, lockdowns and spending more time at home. Reports that some older people are no longer physically fit enough to leave their home due to inactivity and muscle wastage.	Wiltshire Council Sports Development.
<b>Children and Young People</b>		
57% of children in Devizes Community Area achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of primary school. This is lower than the Wiltshire average of 64%	Disruption in education due to closures, for many from March to July and again January to March. Isolation as year group "bubbles" need to self-isolate.	JSNA 2020 data
14% of pupils in Devizes Community Area have either an Education, Health and Care Plan or Special Educational Needs. This is similar to the Wiltshire average of 13%	Possible disproportionate, detrimental impact on SEND pupils as needs during Covid-19 lock downs not being met. People with some learning disabilities seem more susceptible to Covid-19	JSNA 2020 data
60% of schools in Devizes Community Area are engaged with the Healthy Schools programme. This is higher than the Wiltshire average of 56%	Possible drop-off of this number as schools re-evaluate their priorities, however most recognise need to support students'	JSNA 2020 data Conversations with local schools

	mental and physical health	
“Accessible, positive activities for all ages” was rated eighth most important priority by Devizes area.	Fewer activities for young people available due to Covid-19 restrictions. Youth clubs have closed and many planned events have been cancelled. Detached youth work taking place in some areas. Grassroots sport for young people restarted over the summer but has closed again in lockdowns.	CAJSNA 2020 Community survey results Discussions with partners
<b>Older People</b>		
74% of people aged 65+ received the flu vaccination in Devizes Community Area in 2018/19, compared with 75% for Wiltshire	Possible indicator to number of people who may be susceptible to symptoms of Covid-19. Uptake in future may be higher as people more likely to protect themselves against flu.	JSNA 2020 data
In Devizes Community Area 55% of people aged 40-74 who were offered an NHS Health Check, also received one. This is higher than the Wiltshire average of 51%	Possible fall in numbers of those attending medical help as a result of Covid-19. Not wanting to access medical services out of fear of contracting virus or not wanting to put strain on services.	JSNA 2020 data
The rate of hospital admissions due to falls for people aged 65+ in Devizes Community Area is 2,073 per 100,000 persons, compared with 2,135 per 100,000 persons for Wiltshire	Possible fall in numbers of those attending medical help as a result of Covid-19. Not wanting to access medical services out of fear of contracting virus or not wanting to put strain on services.	JSNA 2020 data
In Devizes Community Area, the rate of carers aged 65+ known to Carers Support Wiltshire is 44 per 1,000 persons Across Wiltshire, only 13.4% of adult carers aged 65+ feel	Lockdown and the effects of Covid-19, the closure of clubs and social opportunities is going to make the sense of isolation worse at this time.	JSNA 2020 data

that they have as much social contact as they would like.		
The rate of people aged 65+ supported to live independently in Devizes Community Area is 49 per 1,000 persons. This is higher than Wiltshire's average of 45 per 1,000	Possible decrease as the needs and dependencies of people increase due to Covid-19. Increased demand on Wiltshire Council's adult services.	JSNA 2020 data
Use and access to technology, especially amongst older people	Closure of shops and services has led to many of these now going online only. This has seen an increased use of the internet but not all people can access it. More awareness of the limited reach of technology.	Local knowledge from partners and charities

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.

### How local actions can be supported

The local response within the Devizes 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.

**Devizes Area Board** covers the whole community area and is responsible for this document. It links local delivery to Wiltshire Council, Wiltshire Police, Public Health Wiltshire and other partners. It is an accountable body with influence and powers. It has its own funding to help support local initiatives that support the recovery and also encompass issues that existed 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 the Devizes area:

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

Devizes Area Board working with existing (and where needed) new sub-groups, Devizes Town Council and local parish councils, community groups, the voluntary & community sector and other partner organisations, will carry out further investigation on the community

issues, themes and priorities, bringing together work currently happening and identifying areas for development.

### **Next Steps**

- I. Discuss this document and agree an approach at Devizes Area Board meeting (15<sup>th</sup> March)
- II. Engage and consult with partner organisations (Continually)
- III. Engage and consult with specific groups (Continually)
- IV. Produce a rolling action plan including **up to 5 priority actions** at any one time to demonstrate where it will contribute to addressing the identified issues. (21<sup>st</sup> June)
- V. Use the above information to inform the formation of a vision for what the community in the Devizes area to be like.
- VI. Review this document and priorities regularly in response to changes and select new priority work (at every area board meeting)