Wiltshire Local Development Framework

Working towards a Core Strategy for Wiltshire

Topic paper 14: Building resilient communities

Wiltshire Core Strategy
Consultation January 2012

Council - 7 February 2012

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This paper is one of 18 topic papers, listed below, which form part of the evidence base in support of the emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy. These topic papers have been produced in order to present a coordinated view of some of the main evidence that has been considered in drafting the emerging Core Strategy. It is hoped that this will make it easier to understand how we had reached our conclusions. The papers are all available from the council website:

Topic Paper

TP1: Climate Change
TP2: Housing
TP3: Settlement Strategy
TP4: Rural Issues (signposting paper)
TP5: Natural Environment/Biodiversity
TP6: Water Management/Flooding
TP7: Retail
TP8: Economy
TP9: Planning Obligations
TP10: Built and Historic Environment
TP11:Transport
TP12: Infrastructure
TP13: Green Infrastructure
TP14:Site Selection Process
TP15:Military Issues
TP16:Building Resilient Communities
TP17: Housing Requirement Technical Paper
TP18: Gypsy and Travellers

Core Strategy Topic Paper

Supporting Sustainable Communities

Executive Summary

Context

The creation and maintenance of attractive and livable communities, both urban and rural, is a central pillar of national planning policy. At a local level, a range of pressures is being exerted that are undermining the ability of communities to maintain appropriate balances of housing, employment, services and amenities. A balance of all these aspects contributes to securing long-term vitality and viability, a theme, which has emerged strongly from the Community Planning process. A wide range of stakeholders has highlighted the urgent need for a comprehensive approach to planning for the social, environmental and economic aspects of settlements. This must include provision of facilities, which help tom promote the welfare, quality of life and involvement of all sectors of society. Central to this is the need to deliver improved welfare, social cohesion and quality of life opportunities throughout the county and to help safeguard those, which are already performing an important function.

This topic paper has been prepared to inform the Local Development Framework process and will be used in the production of the Core Strategy and other core policy documents reflecting the need to provide detailed measures to ensure change is in tune with the needs of providing demonstrably sustainable forms of new development and provision of facilities.

National context

The key message that comes out of national guidance is that all have a part to play in delivering communities, which are attractive and nice places to live. Traditional boundaries between services such as between police and planning need to be broken down and all have a part to play. While much of this Core Strategy is focussed on what might be considered traditional planning issues such as where to put new houses and shops, it is clear that there are a wide range of issues which can affect our quality of life which we also need to see if planning can make a contribution to. These issues include:

- Defining "Sustainable Community"
- Social deprivation, The Indices of Deprivation 2007 (revised edition), DCLG
- Social deprivation
- Social Inclusion
- Motivations and Barriers to Citizen Governance, (DCLG 2006)
- Health and Welfare
- Access to Services
- Rural Facilities – Supporting the Post Office, shop and Library
- The Importance of Public houses
- Cultural Activities
- Transport & access to services
- Crime and Safety
- Sports, Leisure and recreation

The essence of Government guidance is that the planning system should be playing a key role in trying to ensure that all have a decent quality of life and inclusive role within society and that we should not confine ourselves to purely development led considerations.

Local context and issues

1. **There are masked pockets of deprivation**
   While, superficially Wiltshire is a well-off and prosperous area, this masks areas of real concern, especially based around areas of social inclusion and access to services. There are pockets of marginalisation and social exclusion both in our rural and urban areas. These are clear issues that the LDF should be seeking to help address.

Options to address this issue:

1. Shall we promote locational and criteria based policies to ensure geographically equal provision of community facilities for all Wiltshire's residents, with good transport links. Nurture through land allocations a central place theory based around community hubs?

2. We should consider framing polices that promote working with the relevant bodies to ensure any community funding achieved from planning gain is directed, where applicable, to addressing localised areas of deprivation especially in providing access to services social activities?

2. **There are problems of social exclusion**

The Resilient Communities Partnership (RCP) is one of eight thematic delivery partnerships which sit within Wiltshire's 'family of partnerships' under the Wiltshire Assembly. The family of partnerships forms Wiltshire's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and as such it is where statutory agencies, voluntary organisations and the business sector come together to debate and articulate the ambitions and vision for Wiltshire.
An analysis of current activity across the family of partnerships enabled the RCP to agree on the following four priorities:

1. Build a strong and vibrant voluntary and community sector
2. Tackle inequalities to create stronger and more inclusive communities
3. Support local involvement in decision-making and implementing priorities
4. Develop lively communities through participation in arts and culture

Options to address this issue:

1. Should we promote key settlements as main service providers and focus new development on them in a sustainable manner, to ensure the service centres chosen give all reasonable access to a range of important services within a relatively short trip?

2. Should we identify spatially those most deprived areas and focus redevelopment proposals and planning gain on them as a priority?

3. Welfare issues

A key issue to emerge under welfare is that the County does indeed have better than average statistics. However when trans-data analysis is taken into account, including issues raised on deprivation and social inclusion, a clear risk emerges that the statistics may well be masking some pockets of real welfare concern, especially in some of the more remote rural areas where access to services are difficult.

The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) is produced by the Public Health department at NHS Wiltshire in conjunction with the Corporate Policy and Research Team at Wiltshire Council and analysts from Wiltshire Police. It provides a summary of the current and future health and wellbeing needs of people in Wiltshire. It helps to ensure services are commissioned that are relevant, effective and sustainable.

Although Wiltshire is generally not a deprived area, the county has pockets of deprivation including three local areas that lie amongst the 20% most deprived in England. In addition, aspects of rural deprivation are difficult to quantify yet are of particular relevance in this county, in which proportionally more of the population live in a rural setting. In 2005-2007, there was a 15% difference in mortality rates between the fifth least deprived and the fifth most deprived wards in the county. This is low compared to other areas but, nevertheless, represents clear inequalities in health outcomes within the local population. Many major conditions are strongly correlated to deprivation as are the lifestyles that contribute to them. Among the interventions that are evidenced to reduce the life expectancy gap are smoking cessation; statin therapy, use of anti-hypertensives and early detection of cancer.

There are a range of wider determinants of health that impact on inequalities including rurality, transport deprivation, service deprivation and housing deprivation. The increased needs of particular groups such as families, young people, the elderly, disabled persons and carers, the military, prisons, black and minority ethnic groups and gypsies and travellers and the way these are met can also affect the inequality gap.

The national evidence base summarised above and especially the defined determinants of health, would suggest that locally we would expect high levels of health and well being which may mask an issue of rural marginalisation due to barriers to services and facilities.

The age structure of the Wiltshire population is projected to change in the coming years, with a notable increase in the proportion of the population aged over 65. This will have a significant impact on the health and social care needs of the population, including:

An increased burden of chronic diseases associated with old age is an associated rising demand on health services, including higher numbers of hospital admissions and a higher uptake of adult social care services across all client groups.

An ageing population will also have an impact on neurological, rheumatologic and orthopaedic conditions, dementia and falls. There are around 41,300 carers in Wiltshire with 77% of these of working age and 20.5% aged over 65. The number of people in Wiltshire in a carer role is expected to increase with a shift in the population structure to that of an ageing population.

Options to address this issue:

1. Should health facilities be concentrated in accessible locations where a number of health facilities are provided together in one location?

2. Should new development be expected to make a contribution towards the provision of healthcare facilities, for which they are adding to the demand?

3. Should all new development take account of use by those with disabilities?

4. Should the Local Development Framework take account of the ageing population by enabling the provision of new large-scale residential care facilities in Wiltshire or should the emphasis be on smaller scale provision for local needs dispersed around the County?

4. Providing Access to Services

Key findings relate to the spatial distribution of key services and how these are provided. It is clear that in some cases, such as the banking industry that technology may well provide solutions to these problems. However with regard to access to key series such a shops, pubs, halls and schools there is a clear and apparently inexorable trend towards agglomeration in the larger settlements to provide for wider catchments. The days of every small village having such facilities seem long gone. It is a changing world and planning policies must respond.

Options to address this issue:

1. Should we promote key settlements as main service providers and focus new development on them in a sustainable manner, to ensure the service centres chosen give all reasonable access to a range of important services within a relatively short trip?

5. Protecting Village Pubs, Post Offices and Shops.

The national trend for closure of public houses is reflected in Wiltshire. The key issue to emerge both nationally and locally is that pubs are under threat and it seems inevitable that this trend will continue unless we can produce two fold measures based on firstly improving their viability by striving for truly sustainable communities, encouraging diversification and by taking a hard line on change of use applications. However the latter will not work without the former.

Options to address this issue:

1. Should the Core Strategy aim to support vulnerable village shops, post offices and public houses?

2. Should we seek policies, which prevent change of use unless it has been convincingly proved that they are no longer viable as businesses?

6. Safeguarding and enhancing cultural activities.

As per the National framework set out above, it is clear that stakeholders have a wide understanding of "cultural activities" ranging from fishing on the local rivers, to religious worship and from pop music to conservation of our built heritage. Therefore there are certain principles that we should seek to address when framing planning policies, which address culture, these being:

- Making cultural events and places accessible to all
- Seeking contributions from planning obligations
- Planning for infrastructure that will support cultural activities
- Facilitating social inclusion
- Maintaining and enhancing built and natural heritage assets
- Ensuring new development is sympathetic to culturally valued environments
- Seeking public participation in decision-making.

Options to address this issue:

1. Should the Core Strategy aim to promote cultural facilities in key settlements as main service centres to ensure that all have reasonable access to a range of such facilities?

7. Transport and access to services

Evidence from Indices of Deprivation 2007 has identified the following key issues and trends:

- Barriers to Housing and Services domain, difficulties accessing services is a distinguishing feature of the county with Wylye & Langfords, Donheads and West Overton, Woodborough, Alton & Stanton St Bernard ranking within the top 100 of England (1 being the worst)

- Accessibility can vary significantly between different areas, at different times and for different people. While much of this difference is likely to be dependent on people's access to a car, it can also relate to those who have particular accessibility issues such as people on low incomes, older people, younger people, disabled people, women, people from ethnic communities etc.

- To be genuinely accessible, transport needs to get people to the services they require reliably and safely; it needs to be affordable for the customer and physically accessible.

- While clearly connected, transport and access are not the same thing. Access difficulties include lack of information, services being provided in ways which exclude some people, not owning your own home, lack of access to opportunity etc.

- Particular groups can experience access problems more acutely. There are often language and cultural barriers that hinder BME and migrant workers accessing services and the increasing use of the Internet can exclude some people.

It is clear from the IMD data that there are issues with transport and access to services across Wiltshire, which is partly due to its size and rurality.

Options to address this issue:

1. In order to help fight social exclusion and to reduce the need to travel by car, should the Core Strategy direct future development to locations accessible by public transport?

2. Do you agree that the Core Strategy should seek to encourage the use of public transport, walking and cycling as alternatives to car travel where practical?

3. Do you agree that the Core Strategy should include policies which try and help breakdown access barriers to services by requiring major developments to include access plans which include providing adequate public transport choices and cater for physical, language and cultural issues some of our citizens may have?

4. Do you think we should have a policy Require developers to pay towards public and community transport, walking and cycling improvements

8. Crime and Safety

Generally Wiltshire does not appear to be particularly deprived on the crime domain compared to the national picture and national statistics on crime show that the Wiltshire Police area continued to have the second lowest rate of recorded crime in England and Wales, and the lowest in the South West.

However, the average crime figures for Wiltshire mask some much higher levels of crime in small areas, particular urban areas. St Martin & Milford wards in Salisbury had highest rate of criminal damage, theft and handling offences and violent crime and the second highest rate of vehicle crime in Wiltshire.

National research found that crime is more likely to affect certain sections of the community. For example, unemployed people are three times as likely as average to be the victims of violent crime and lone parents are more than twice as likely as average to be burgled. Fear of crime is also greater for people with lower incomes.

People's Voice results show that in Wiltshire almost all residents feel safe walking alone, outside, during the day but this figure drops to about three-quarters after dark. Surveys of young people show similar results but also indicate that those living in Salisbury feel significantly less safe after dark than the Wiltshire average.

A recent survey found that, overall in Wiltshire, parents not taking responsibility for their children is the biggest anti-social behaviour (ASB) related issue.

There are tangible measures that the LDF should be taking in ordered to help contribute to reducing the fear of crime and especially tackling issues of anti-social behaviour. These fall into two categories, which may be broadly called prevention and cure.

Options to address this issue:

1. Do you agree that using appropriate design measures ("designing out crime") will be effective in reducing crime and the fear of crime? If you can think of any other measures that would help to reduce this, please describe them in the comments box.

2. Do you agree that the Core Strategy should allow planning gain money to be put towards preventative measures as prioritised in partnership with the police, such as CCTV, lighting and community policing?

9. Sport, Leisure and Recreation

This is a broad topic area which ranges from formal sports pitches through to informal use of the countryside and includes allotments, public open space and sports clubs. In line with government policy, the council have commissioned an open space survey of the area. The study includes natural and semi natural green space, amenity green space, sports pitches, green corridors and allotments. This is dealt with in detail in the Green Infrastructure topic paper.

Options to address this issue:

1. Should new development be expected to make a contribution towards the provision of sport, leisure and open space facilities, for which they are adding to the demand and should this also include commercial development likely to attract people to the county?

2. The identified shortfall and opportunities to enhance sports, leisure and open spaces, should be reflected through the polices of the LDF?

3. Should the LDF promote greater accessibility to dual use facilities such as school playing fields?

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1. INTRODUCTION

The creation and maintenance of attractive and livable communities, both urban and rural, is a central pillar of national planning policy. At a local level, a range of pressures are being exerted that are undermining the ability of communities to maintain appropriate balances of housing, employment, services and amenities. A balance of all these aspects contributes to securing long-term vitality and viability, a theme, which has emerged strongly from the Community Planning process. A wide range of stakeholders have highlighted the urgent need for a comprehensive approach to planning for the social, environmental and economic aspects of settlements. This must include provision of facilities, which help to promote the welfare, quality of life and involvement of all sectors of society. Central to this is the need to deliver improved welfare, social cohesion and quality of life opportunities throughout the area and to help safeguard those, which are already performing an important function.

This topic paper has been prepared to inform the Local Development Framework process and will be used in the production of the Core Strategy and other core policy documents reflecting the need to provide detailed measures to ensure change is in tune with the needs of providing demonstrably sustainable forms of new development and provision of facilities.

Some of the issues revolving around supporting communities may be considered quite nebulous and difficult to define. Those such as rural isolation, marginalisation and alienation. This paper will set out a clear trail of evidence and research data which justifies any assertions made and will aim to produce tangible and clearly argued measures to address the issues that emerge.

As well as addressing some of the tough issues around social inclusion, this paper will also focus on the provision of physical community infrastructure, such as open space, shops, pubs, banks, rural transport and clubs and societies

2. ISSUES FACING WILTSHIRE - THE NATIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT.

There are a series of key publications containing the analytical context for this paper and set the national picture. They have all been key sources of information to frame to objectives, which have emerged from this paper. This paper, while embracing the title of "Supporting Sustainable Communities" does encompass a fairly diverse range of sub-topics including researching how social exclusion, deprivation, access to open space, access to services and jobs, access to social facilities, quality of life and welfare can be promoted through the new planning system. The first step was to look at national research and assess the issues emerging at this level prior to taking a more detailed look at Wiltshire in particular.

There are number of key local and regional studies which follow on from the National evidence base as set out briefly above and these are essential as they bring a local, perspective to the particular issues facing Wiltshire. Learning the lessons from this local evidence base will ensure that rather than just parroting national findings we have a real view of how national factors are manifested locally and we can bring tailor made solutions to local challenges.

(a) Setting the Scene - Defining "Sustainable Community"

National trends are perhaps best encapsulated by the 2005 summit arranged by the then ODPM into Sustainable Communities. This gives a clear context to this topic as supporting communities is irrevocably bound up with the wider aim of delivering sustainable communities. See http://www.communities.gov.uk/summit. This event attended by a range of key stakeholders and practitioners of best practice summarised the overarching aims for delivering sustainable settlements as:

- Active, inclusive and safe
- Well run
- Environmentally sensitive
- Well designed and built
- Well connected
- Thriving
- Well served
- Fair for everyone

Now that we have broadly defined what represents a sustainable community there is a need to anlayse information from all available sources so that we can assess how the local situation in Wiltshire measures up and what issues emerge that our new policies should be trying to address. This paper will now look a number of key topics and look at evidence from a national, regional and local level to assess the state of our communities.

(b) Social Deprivation

Communities and Local Government commissioned the Social Disadvantage Research Centre (SDRC) at the Department of Social Policy and Social Work at the University of Oxford to update the Indices of Deprivation 2004 (ID 2004) for England. Following an extensive public consultation, an independent academic peer review and a significant programme of work, the new Indices of Deprivation 2007 were produced in late 2007. The new Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007 (IMD 2007) is a Lower layer Super Output Area (LSOA) level measure of multiple deprivation, and is made up of seven LSOA level domain indices. There are also two supplementary indices (Income Deprivation Affecting Children and Income Deprivation Affecting Older People). The primary indices are as set out in the following table:

Table 1: Domain Weights for the IMD 2007

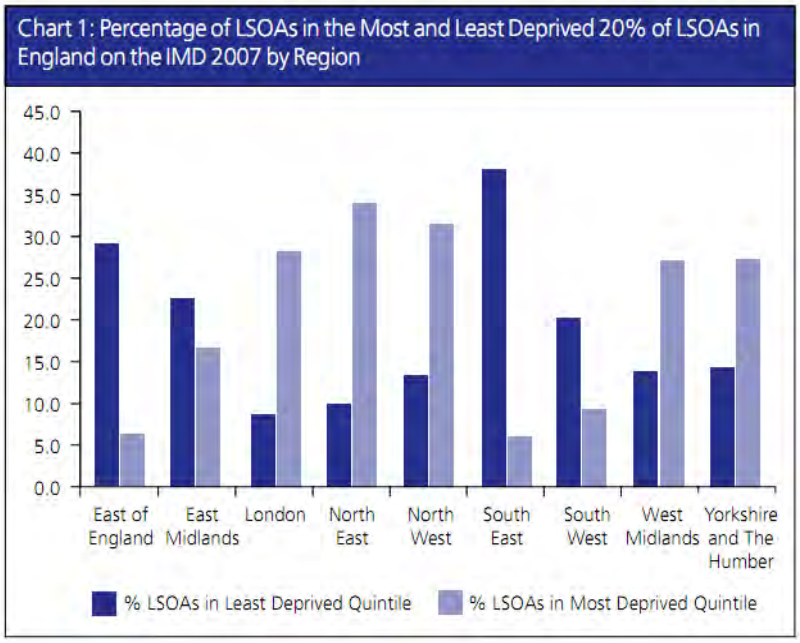
	Domain Weight
Income Deprivation Domain	22.5 %
Employment Deprivation Domain	22.5%
Health Deprivation and Disability Domain	13.5%
Education, Skills and Training Deprivation Domain	13.5%
Barriers to Housing and Services Domain	9.3%
Crime Domain	9.3%
Living Environment Deprivation Domain	9.3%

Table 2 - The English Indices of Deprivation 2007, ODPM

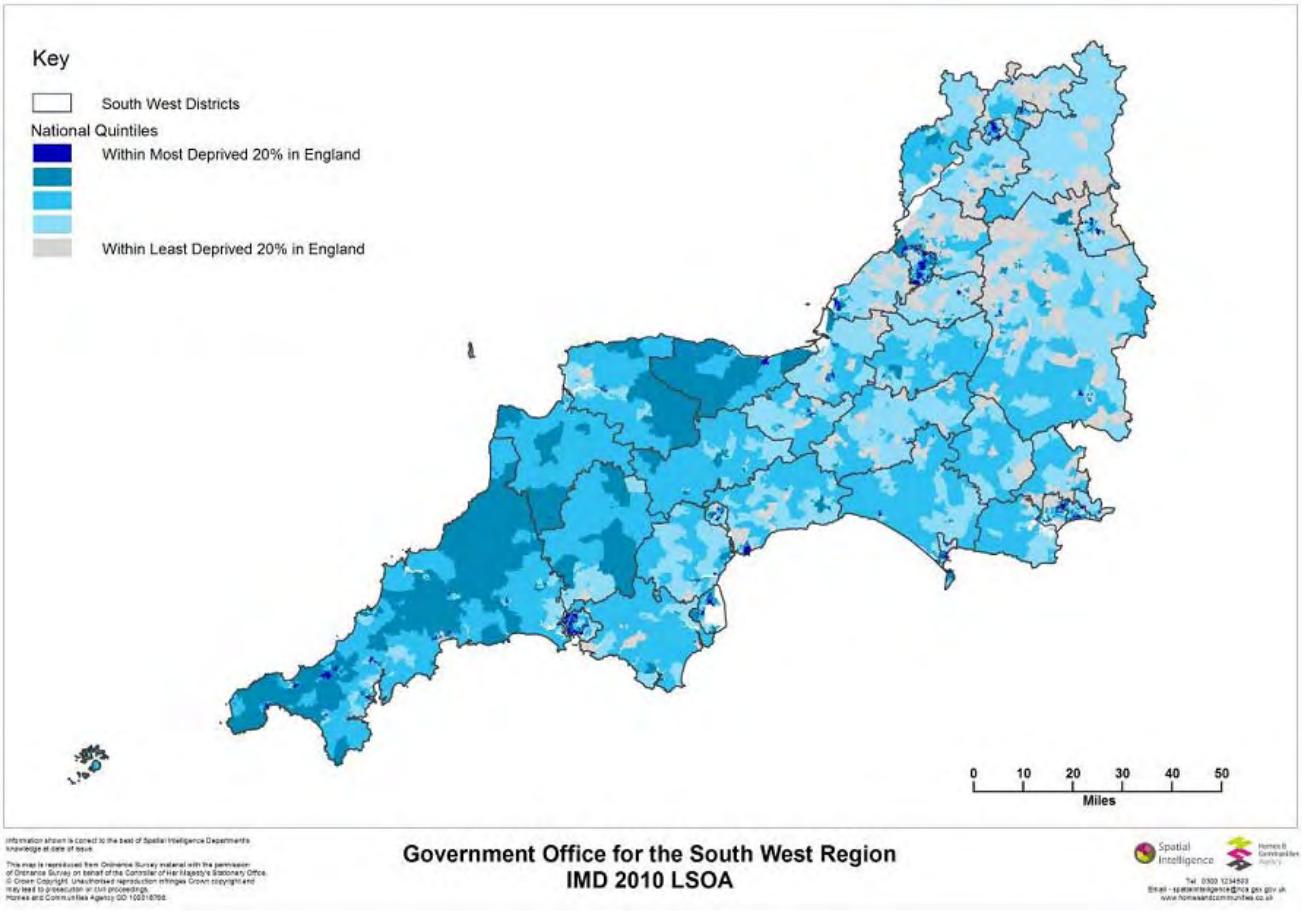
The Indices of Deprivation show that the South West is has the second lowest rates of deprivation other than the east in the country as is shown in the attached tables.

Table 2: Number of LSOAs in the most deprived 20% of LSOAs in England on the IMD 2007, by Government Office Region

	Number of LSOAs in 'most deprived 20% of LSOAs in England'	Number of LSOAs in the Region	% of LSOAs in each Region falling in 'most deprived 20% of LSOAs in England'
East	223	3,550	6.3
East Midlands	460	2,732	16.8
London	1,351	4,765	28.4
North East	566	1,656	34.2
North West	1,420	4,459	31.8
South East (excluding London)	318	5,319	6.0
South West	300	3,226	9.3
West Midlands	951	3,482	27.3
Yorkshire & the Humber	907	3,293	27.5
Total	**6,496**	**32,482**	**20.0**



What the tables fail to show are that while the general picture shows that deprivation is not a major issue in the south west, it does not take include minority and marginalised groups that might exists such as the rural elderly, socially marginalised or other such groups. While the overall picture is encouraging, this topic paper will focus from national generalities down to regional and local issues where those problems and issues specific to Wiltshire can be identified.

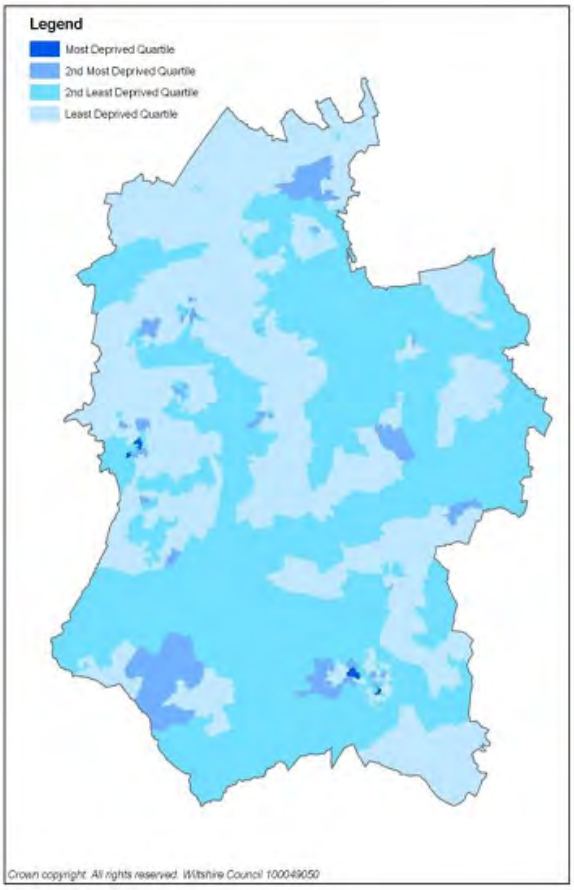


c) Social Deprivation in Wiltshire

The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007 is based on distinct dimensions (or 'domains') of deprivation, which can be recognised and measured separately. The overall IMD combines these separate domains to give an impression of the overall deprivation experienced in an area. They are:

Income deprivation: This includes a range of benefits-related factors including Income Support and Job Seekers' Allowance.
Employment deprivation: This includes factors relating to unemployment, incapacity benefit, severe disablement allowance and participants in the New Deal.
Health deprivation and disability: This identifies areas with relatively high rates of people who die prematurely, whose quality of life is impaired by poor health, or who are disabled.
Education, skills and training deprivation: Indicators fall into two sub domains: one relating to education deprivation for children and young people in the area and one relating to lack of skills and qualifications overall.
Barriers to housing and services: This includes 'geographical barriers', such as the distance from key services such as a GP and schools. It also includes household overcrowding, homelessness and access to owner occupation.
Crime: This measures the incidence of recorded crime for four major crime themes including burglary, theft, criminal damage and violence.
The living environment: This comprises both the quality of housing and the 'outdoor' living environment including air quality and road traffic accidents.

The Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2007 ranks local authorities and their constituent Super Output Areas (SOAs) in terms of deprivation. The index can also be broken down into its constituent domains such as income deprivation and employment deprivation. Wiltshire shows low levels of overall deprivation, but this hides pockets of high deprivation. In fact areas within both Salisbury and Trowbridge are within the 25% most deprived areas in the country. Figure 4.6 shows the geographical distribution of these areas of deprivation over the county as a whole.



This evidence is brought together comprehensively in the Wiltshire Council Annual Monitoring Report which is available at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

What it reveals is that Wiltshire does reflect national trends in that while the area is superficially well-off and has little in the way of immediately visible deprivation it does reveal that there are areas of real concern, especially those based around barriers to social inclusion and services based around many of the rural settlements.

This is a **key finding**. There are pockets of deprivation throughout the County and predominantly based around barriers to social inclusion and access to services and housing. This is a clear local priority for the Core Strategy to tackle.

(d) Social Inclusion

This is a key issue when considering how best to support communities. It is also often prone to misunderstanding and misperception. To define the subject the Social Exclusion Task Force, set up by the Cabinet Office have commissioned much useful research, in particular the Multidimensional Analysis of Social Exclusion, A Research Report for the Social Exclusion Task Force by the University of Bristol. This report makes a clear definition of social inclusion as follows:

> *Social exclusion is a complex and multi-dimensional process. It involves the lack or denial of resources, rights, goods and services, and the inability to participate in the normal relationships and activities, available to the majority of people in a society, whether in economic, social, cultural or political arenas. It affects both the quality of life of individuals and the equity and cohesion of society as a whole.*

This report goes on to identify 10 dimensions by which a member of society may come to feel excluded from society:

Resources: Material/economic resources
Access to public and private services
Social resources
Participation: Economic participation
Social participation
Culture, education and skills
Political and civic participation
Quality of life Health and well-being
Living environment
Crime, harm and criminalisation

When one poses the question, how can planning contribute to tackling issues of social exclusion, then the above definition as endorsed by the Cabinet Office presents a clear case. Planning has a key role in providing access to public and private services, social resources, cultural and educational facilities, public participation in decision making, the quality of the living environment and trying to reduce crime. Planning can and should not turn its back on the challenge of making a positive contribution to addressing this key issue.

In an area with relatively low overall social deprivation, the research makes it clear that general affluence can mask some real problems of social exclusion specifically in the more remote rural areas. The elderly, rural poor, immigrants, ethnic minorities, mobility impaired and many other groups, who live in the countryside may face a daily struggle to access services, gain social acceptance and participation in cultural activities, as well as feeling disenfranchised form the decision making processes.

The following publications and research have informed the need to address issues of social exclusion within the Core Strategy and all may be accessed via the Cabinet Office website.

www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Reaching Out: Progress on Social Exclusion – February 2007
Reaching Out: Regional conferences on social exclusion
Adults facing Chronic Exclusion Programme
Reaching Out: Progress on Social Exclusion

(e) Social Inclusion in Wiltshire

The Resilient Communities Partnership (RCP) is one of eight thematic delivery partnerships which sit within Wiltshire's 'family of partnerships' under the Wiltshire Assembly. The family of partnerships forms Wiltshire's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and as such it is where statutory agencies, voluntary organisations and the business sector come together to debate and articulate the ambitions and vision for Wiltshire.
An analysis of current activity across the family of partnerships enabled the RCP to agree on the following four priorities:

1. Build a strong and vibrant voluntary and community sector
2. Tackle inequalities to create stronger and more inclusive communities
3. Support local involvement in decision-making and implementing priorities
4. Develop lively communities through participation in arts and culture

http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/council/wiltshirefamilyofpartnershipsworkingtogether/wiltshirethematicdeliverypartnerships/resilientcommunitiespartnership.htm

(f) Motivations and Barriers to Citizen Governance, (DCLG 2006)

The relevance of this paper is the manner it focuses upon how the culture and ownership of communities is fostered from the routes up. 'Citizen governance' which is defined as the involvement of citizens in decision-making and scrutiny roles in public services, include acting as a school governor, lay member of police authorities, youth offender panels and members of patient and public involvement forums.

The key objective of the research was to provide information to inform policies aimed at supporting and sustaining more effective citizen governance. This is seen as especially important when framing issues and options for new planning policies as there is an imperative to ensure that policy and decision making at a local level are fostered, developed and strengthened wherever possible.

KEY FINDINGS
• Community does not have to be the area in which you live, it can be based around work, faith or interest groups – anywhere you feel a sense of belonging
• Participants who expressed a strong sense of attachment to their community were more likely to say that they have/would get involved in their community
• If people see their future in the local area, they are more inclined to get involved as part of a future investment
• Recently moving to an area can increase the likelihood of involvement as people want to establish themselves in the community, but it is equally likely that transient populations do not get involved
• Some people, however, think their communities are not worth the effort – particularly where they see their communities as in decline
• Others are worried about the potential negative repercussions of involvement from some sectors of the community and so keep themselves to themselves

Table 1 - Definition of Community from Motivations and Barriers to Citizen Governance, DCLG 2006)

Recommendations of the paper were as follows:

- The concept of citizen governance needs to be clarified
- Countering misconceptions in particular, there is a misconception that they are not open to 'ordinary people'.
- Presenting governance roles i.e. they need not be onerous
- Supporting those in Citizen Governance Roles

(g) Health and Welfare

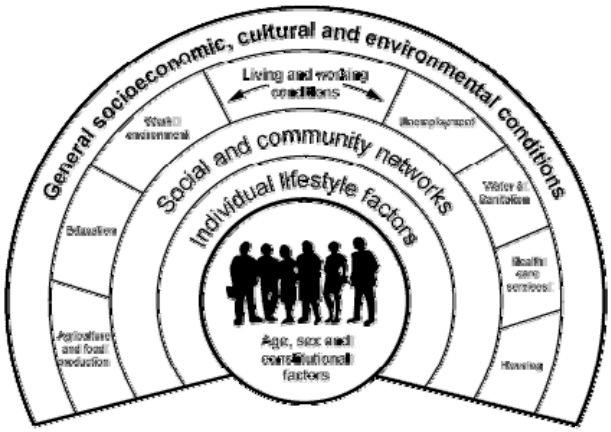
There is a body of research (including the papers highlighted at the foot of this section) which identify that health inequalities may be influenced by several different factors such as poverty, inadequate housing, transport, education and employment. These factors are described as the wider determinants of health.

The research also highlights the importance of improving the quality of reach of mainstream services to disadvantaged areas and populations and also highlights the importance of partnership working. A theme that emerges consistently from research into supporting communities and the need to frame policies accordingly.

The research states that traditionally a majority of health inequalities have been thought to be a mainly urban problem and, as a result, funding streams have usually gone only to those areas of deprivation in metropolitan and urban centres and have not been distributed to those in need in rural areas. The Government commissioned a report into health inequalities, which was carried out by Sir Donald Acheson. The report emphasised the importance of the social and economic environment as a factor in health inequalities but did not specifically explore rurality and rural inequality. The Wanless report highlighted the need for a far-reaching, long-term public health programme to improve the health of the whole of the population of England. This has been followed by a White Paper – Choosing Health, Making healthy choices easier which is a comprehensive guide for health professionals involved in supporting individuals to lead healthy lifestyles. These approaches, if implemented effectively, will help to reduce health inequalities and improve the health of individuals.

There are significant pockets of deprivation and disadvantage to be found in rural areas, which have remained hidden, as inequalities in rural areas manifest themselves differently to those mentioned above. This is largely due to the way in which deprivation has been measured in the past. Calculation of indicators that have been drawn up to measure need can be problematic when applied to rural areas, as they are usually standardised around urban values. Some of the indicators of deprivation for example have included car ownership as an indicator of wealth, which is known not to be appropriate in rural areas. The experience of deprivation for individuals in rural areas will be similar to the experiences of those living in inner cities but patterns of deprivation differ in rural areas. In rural areas individuals may also be classed as being deprived with or without a low income.

Fig 1. Determinants of health.



Dahlgren G, and Whitehead M in the Acheson Report (1998)

If the diagram is studied it is clear that planning policies have a role to play in contributing to health and welfare. For example firstly, focussing on the third ring in, it can try to deliver communities which foster a strong sense of community and social networks, through the provision and safeguarding of facilities such as village halls, sports facilities and village shops and pubs. Secondly when looking at the two outer rings, it is clear that planning has a key role in trying to support the living and working conditions of people in society.

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Department of Health (2003) **Tackling Health Inequalities: A Programme for Action** HMSO.

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Asthana S, Halliday J, Brigham P, Gibson A. (2001) **Rural Deprivation and Service Need: an Assessment of Indicators for Rural Service Planning.** SouthWest Public Health Observatory.
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Shucksmith M, Roberts D, Scott D, Chapman P, Conway E. (1997) **Disadvantage in rural areas.** Rural research report 29, Rural Development Commission: Salisbury.
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Martin D, Brigham P, Roderick P, Barnett S, Diamond I. (2000) **The (mis)representation of rural deprivation.** Environment and Planning A, Vol 32, 735-751.
Cloke P, Goodwin M, Milbourne P (1997) **Rural Wales: Community and Marginalization.** University of Wales Press, Cardiff.
Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2004) **English Indices of Deprivation.**
Countryside Agency (2003) **The State of the Countryside 2003** Countryside Agency Publications.

More information can be found at www.ruralhealthgoodpractice.org.uk

(h) Health and Welfare in Wiltshire

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

The JSNA is produced by the Public Health department at NHS Wiltshire in conjunction with the Corporate Policy and Research Team at Wiltshire Council and analysts from Wiltshire Police. It provides a summary of the current and future health and wellbeing needs of people in Wiltshire. It helps to ensure services are commissioned that are relevant, effective and sustainable.

The JSNA will inform the Commissioning Framework for Health and Wellbeing and provide an opportunity to look ahead three to five years so that:

- inequalities within our population are reduced
- services are shaped by local communities
- social inclusion is increased
- the above outcomes are maximised at minimum cost

The continued process of assessment and update will be used to identify priority areas for action for future refreshes of the Local Agreement for Wiltshire and future strategic directions and commissioning decisions for NHS Wiltshire, Wiltshire Council, the Police and other local agencies.

Although Wiltshire is generally not a deprived area, the county has pockets of deprivation including three local areas that lie amongst the 20% most deprived in England. In addition, aspects of rural deprivation are difficult to quantify yet are of particular relevance in this county, in which proportionally more of the population live in a rural setting. In 2005-2007, there was a 15% difference in mortality rates between the fifth least deprived and the fifth most deprived wards in the county. This is low compared to other areas but, nevertheless, represents clear inequalities in health outcomes within the local population. Many major conditions are strongly correlated to deprivation as are the lifestyles that contribute to them. Among the interventions that are evidenced to reduce the life expectancy gap are smoking cessation; statin therapy, use of anti-hypertensives and early detection of cancer.

There are a range of wider determinants of health that impact on inequalities including rurality, transport deprivation, service deprivation and housing deprivation. The increased needs of particular groups such as families, young people, the elderly, disabled persons and carers, the military, prisons, black and minority ethnic groups and gypsies and travellers and the way these are met can also affect the inequality gap.

The national evidence base summarised above and especially the defined determinants of health, would suggest that locally we would expect high levels of health and well being which may mask an issue of rural marginalisation due to barriers to services and facilities.

The age structure of the Wiltshire population is projected to change in the coming years, with a notable increase in the proportion of the population aged over 65. This will have a significant impact on the health and social care needs of the population, including:

An increased burden of chronic diseases associated with old age is an associated rising demand on health services, including higher numbers of hospital admissions and a higher uptake of adult social care services across all client groups.

An ageing population will also have an impact on neurological, rheumatologic and orthopaedic conditions, dementia and falls. There are around 41,300 carers in Wiltshire with 77% of these of working age and 20.5% aged over 65. The number of people in Wiltshire in a carer role is expected to increase with a shift in the population structure to that of an ageing population.

(i) Access to Services

A key requirement of dealing with issues of social exclusion and making a meaningful contribution to the quality of peoples lives is by ensuring that all in society have access to a range of public and private services, for example, schools, doctors, shops, pubs and leisure facilities.

The Rural White Paper "Our Countryside: The Future – A Fair Deal for Rural England", produced in 2000, has been the key policy driver for the rural agenda. It outlined the government's aim to "sustain the distinctive environment, economy and social fabric of the English Countryside for the benefit of all" and included a new Rural Services Standard setting out minimum standards and targets for access to and delivery of public services in rural areas.

A review of the Rural White Paper was produced by DEFRA during 2004 and consisted of three elements: a review of rural policy as set out in the paper; the development of an evidence base for rural policy and delivery; and an independent review by Lord Haskins. The review recognised that the Government needed to be more realistic about what it could deliver and emphasised the need to differentiate between the remote and more accessible rural areas. It also stated that Government couldn't be the "main guarantor for all services but should take steps to sustain a viable, cost effective infrastructure, provide fair access to key services and ensure a policy framework that encourages enterprise". This review reinforced Government's commitment to provide a minimum standard of service delivery for all; however, it also put particular emphasis on the need to focus on those individuals who need public services the most.

The conclusions from this review fed into a refreshed Rural Strategy 2004 that set out the key priorities and actions to deliver the Government's rural affairs agenda over the next few years. The Rural Strategy 2004 sets out three priorities for rural delivery: "Economic and Social Regeneration"; "Social Justice for All"; and "Enhancing the Value of our Countryside". The second priority sets out the need to tackle "rural social exclusion …providing fair access to services and opportunities for all rural people". Crucially, the Rural Strategy makes significant changes to delivery arrangements with greater devolution of responsibility and decision-making to the regional and local level.

The key research sponsored at a national level by the UK Government has highlighted the need to deliver the following:

General objectives

- investment in better public services – schools, health, transport and crime reduction and a rural service standard, reviewed annually.
- 3,000 new affordable homes every year in small settlements
- access to a wide range of day-to-day transactions through post offices,
- internet and local small businesses
- a bigger say in community planning

For rural businesses:

- Investment in market towns and more targeted help from Regional Development Agencies
- Better transport, ICT coverage, skills training and business advice
- Potential reduction in rate bills

For farmers:

- More money for agri-environment schemes; marketing grants, and tailored business advice to help modernise and improve agricultural, horticultural and forestry holdings
- Help with planning to enable farmers to use surplus farm buildings and, less
- Burdensome regulation generally
- Help with diversification, marketing and skill training
- Support for small and medium sized abattoirs

For everyone:

- Stronger protection for our most valued landscapes, and for wildlife and habitats.
- More access and a better rights of way network
- A living, working countryside maintained for the benefit of us all, wherever we live

See the following reports and research via the DEFRA website at www.defra.gov.uk

Rural White Paper (2000) 'Our Countryside: the future a fair deal for rural England'
Our Countryside: The Future - A Fair Deal for Rural England
Rural Services Review 2006
Evaluation of the Rural Services Review (2004)
Rural Services Standard

See also:

Setting a new standard in rural services for the 21st century? - Commission of Rural Economies
A Study of Rural Service Standards - Rural Innovation and Community Futures June 2006
How fair is access to services for rural communities in the North West? - Rural Innovation and Community Futures June 2006

(j) Access to Services in Wiltshire

The national picture highlighted how living in rural areas could limit access to services and that this applied to business and farmers as well as the general population. It highlights the need to work innovatively to try and keep access to services at an acceptable level. Furthermore much research has been done to specify what that reasonable level may be.

At the local level the key source data is the Rural Facilities Survey, 2008 which is carried out by the Council. This is a detailed analysis showing the spatial distribution of services in conjunction with population patterns. The principle findings of relevance and which give a local slant to the national findings are as follows:

- The level of facilities has changed greatly since the initiation of the Rural Facilities Survey in 1976. Some of these changes will be symptomatic of the economy at the time, but others reflect changes in the way in which services are provided.
- The way in which financial services are provided has changed within the survey period. The number of operational banks within the rural settlements was never great but these had vanished by 2001 Recently banking facilities have been made available through cash points, post offices, by telephone and online.
- The number of post offices has also declined steadily since 1976 and despite the fact that they are now able to provide some banking facility, the decline has continued. This will not be helped by the withdrawal of television licensing from the Post Office.
- In total, stationary financial services have been in decline and with the growth of the banking facilities that are always open and remotely available this seems set to continue.
- The way in which basic foods are supplied has also changed. The number of both rural general and specialist food shops has decreased over the survey period and the number of petrol filling stations serving a range of daily foods and mobile basic food services has stayed reasonably stable. This suggests the number of suppliers of basic foods has declined in total.
- However, there has been growth in certain sectors of basic food services. Farm shops have increased since the survey began recording them, although not at a rate to replace the loss of other basic food shops. There are also many reports detailing the dramatic rise in online shopping, and as

all the major supermarkets now offer online grocery shopping, some negative effect on rural services seems likely.

- In summary, it seems as though traditional food shops are in decline and are being supplemented primarily by the new and convenient services provided through the Internet.
- There have been losses of many of the services with a community focus, such as primary schools, libraries, places of worship and public houses. At the same time there has been growth in many of the more activity-based services such as public halls, recreation fields, play areas and sports and social clubs.
- Turning to transport services, the number of settlements with at least a daily public transport service has increased over the survey period, although there has been a decline in the number of settlements with a Level 1 service since 2001.
- Community transport service provision has also improved since the 2001 survey.
- Throughout these surveys there has been a strong link between the size of a settlement and the number of facilities it provides. 96% of large settlements have at least five of the 'community' facilities, whereas only 13% of the small settlements meet the same criterion.
- The short-term change since 2001 in the majority of cases has gone in the same direction as the long-term change since 1976. The exceptions to this are the numbers of places of worship, which have seen an increase recently as opposed to the general downward trend, and clinics and pharmacies have both seen a decrease recently unlike the general upward trend.
- The percentage change since 2001 has also largely been in line with the long-term difference in the majority of instances. However, the notable exceptions are in the case of commercial services, mobile services, and public halls. Both commercial and mobile services have seen a rise greatly in excess of the general long-term trend, although in both instances the long-term trend is high. Public halls have seen less of an increase since the previous survey than the long-term trend indicates.
- Overall, the number of rural facilities seems to be in decline, and it needs to be carefully monitored in the future to assess policy implications.

Key findings relate to the spatial distribution of key services and how these are provided. It is clear that in some cases, such as the banking industry that technology may well provide solutions to these problems. However with regard to access to key series such a shops, pubs, halls and schools there is a clear and apparently inexorable trend towards agglomeration in the larger settlements to provide for wider catchments. The days of every small village having such facilities seem long gone. It is a changing world and planning policies must respond.

(k) Rural Facilities - Supporting the Post Office, Shop, and Library

The current local policies acknowledge that key facilities and services in smaller settlements are vital to their viability and sustainability and therefore they need protecting. The County is unique in that it has a large number of smaller settlements located away from the main centres of Salisbury, Trowbridge and Chippenham and they therefore have a reliance on the local services and facilities in their settlement. Based on this importance, it is considered that the Core Strategy should contain a policy to maintain and improve the services and facilities in smaller settlements, including post offices, pubs and local shops. This policy is supported by both national guidance, which states that planning authorities should promote the retention and development of facilities and services, which play an important role in sustaining village communities.

Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 7 Sustainable development in rural areas sets out the Government's objectives for rural areas which includes raising the quality of life and the environment in rural areas through the promotion of thriving, inclusive and sustainable rural communities, ensuring people have decent places to live and by improving the quality and sustainability of local environments and neighborhoods. It states that the economic performance of rural areas should be improved by developing competitive, diverse and thriving rural enterprise that provides a range of jobs and underpins strong economies.

Advice in PPS7 states that local development documents should facilitate and promote sustainable patterns of development and sustainable communities in rural areas. This should include policies to sustain, enhance and, where appropriate, revitalise country towns and villages and for strong, diverse economic activity, whilst maintaining local character and a high quality environment. To ensure these policies are relevant and effective, local planning authorities should be aware of the circumstances, needs and priorities of the rural communities and businesses in their area, and of the interdependence between urban and rural areas.

PPS7 contains a specific section on community services and facilities. It states that people who live or work in rural areas should have reasonable access to a range of services and facilities. Local Planning Authorities should through their LDDs, facilitate and plan for accessible new services and facilities. Planning authorities should adopt a positive approach to planning proposals designed to improve the viability, accessibility or community value of existing services and facilities, e.g. village shops and post offices, rural petrol stations, village and church halls and rural public houses, that play an important role in sustaining village communities. Planning authorities should support the retention of these local facilities and should set out in LDDs the criteria they will apply in considering planning applications that will result in the loss of important village services (e.g. as a result of conversion to residential use).

(l) Rural Facilities - Supporting the Post Office, Shop, and Library in Wiltshire

The current Local Plans recognise the importance local facilities and services play within smaller settlements. It also recognises the importance of maintaining and improving the provision of these facilities for all sections of the community. They state that in view of the many changes that have taken place in consumer trends in retailing and entertainment it has been difficult for the traditional village facilities, such as the pub, the post office or the corner shop, to maintain their viability. However, where such facilities do still exist, they can contribute towards the sustainability of these settlements by offering an alternative to making longer car journeys for basic requirements as well as contributing to the social life of the people living there. Based on this the Local Plans contains policies to prevent the loss of such facilities except where it can be proven that the facility is unviable and unlikely to become viable in the foreseeable future. The applicant, in these cases will be expected to submit a statement of the efforts that have been made to make the business in question viable.

The key indicator of the pressure that these precious rural facilities are under is the Rural Facilities Survey 2008, which highlight the following trends in the area between 2005-2008

- The general year-on-year decline in the numbers of primary schools, general food shops, petrol stations and places of worship since 1976 continues in the 2005-8 data. Similarly, the year-on-year increase recorded in commercial and personal services from 1994 continues to 2008, as does the steady decline in the number of pubs and mobile library services.

- In the case of specialist shops (such as specialist food shops, tobacconists, newsagents and off-licences), and against a background of longer-term decline, the recent data point to a more marked fall. There has been a loss of nearly 34% between 2005 and the present survey, from 62 outlets to 41. In 2008 the Community Areas of Wootton Bassett, Bradford-on-Avon, Tidworth and Warminster all recorded the loss of the final specialist shop in the comparative dataset. However, against this general trend, Corsham, Amesbury and Trowbridge Community Areas saw an increase in their numbers of special shops, from a joint total of 9 in 2005 to 15 in 2008.

- The increase in mobile services continues, though at a far smaller rate than between any of the previous surveys. Taken with the sharp decline in special shops, this perhaps reflects the increasing importance of supermarkets and the more recent emergence of supermarket delivery services. In addition, the wider difficulties in the economy, with many small enterprises struggling to maintain trade and acquire financial backing, should not be ignored.

- 17 settlements recorded the loss of a linked Post Office between 2005 and 2008, although in two cases, the 2008 survey recorded an independent Post Office instead. In three of the remaining 15 cases, a non-standard delivery format replaced the Post Office, while for 12 there was a simple loss of service in that location. Out of these 15 settlements, seven lost a general food shop along with the linked Post Office. It appears that on the local level the often-voiced fears about the effects of Post Office closures on linked businesses are well founded.

- Recent trends in public transport provision in Wiltshire are complex. The general trend towards an increasing number of settlements receiving better than daily services continues, with more places than ever before having access to Level 1 or Level 2 journey-to-work services (202 services in 2005, compared to 209 in 2008). However, the number of settlements enjoying the highest level of service has been in decline since 2001. Having risen in 2005 from the 2001 level, the number of settlements with only a daily service has declined again in 2008. There has been a notable increase in the number of settlements with Level 2 journey-to-work in 2008.

- The number of recreation fields has fluctuated in recent years with a small decrease from 2005 to 2008, and the declines in outdoor special activity facilities that were first recorded from 2001 to 2005 continue to 2008. Against this, the general upward trend in sports pitches, both indoor and outdoor, continues in the most recent survey.

- The number of playgroups in the Wiltshire dataset declined slightly to 2008, and there was a small increase in the number of kids' play areas. There was a significant rise (25%) rise in the number of private nurseries.

- Since the peak in 1994, the number of village halls has been declining in each successive survey. The 2008 data show this trend continuing, with a 6.5% loss since 2005.

- The number of pharmacies in rural Wiltshire has fluctuated over the years. The slow downward trend that was first recorded in 1994 continues to 2008, with a 13% loss compared to 2005. The number of rural doctor's surgeries, in steady decline since 1997, also fell by 23% in the most recent survey. However, there was a nearly 30% increase in the number of health clinics between 2005 and 2008. Taking these services together, the total number of recorded health facilities has declined steadily from 91 in 1997 to 67 in 2008.

- The number of sports and social clubs, having increased exponentially since 1976, has been slowly decreasing since 2001. The latest data also show this trend, with a further loss of 3%.
- The number of branch libraries in rural Wiltshire has remained constant since 1986. Banks disappeared from rural Wiltshire in 2001, and as stated, look singularly unlikely to make a return in the near future.

- The evidence presented above from national and regional guidance and the Rural Facilities Survey shows that local facilities and services are a vitally part of smaller settlements of the area, but

despite this there has been a continued decline in the majority of these services. Overall, there has been a sharp decline in rural post offices and petrol filling stations, and a more gradual decline in libraries, health facilities and general stores (although mobile stores are increasing). Due to this there is a need to protect and encourage the development of rural services and facilities in the area to ensure that settlements can meet the needs of the people who live in them and become sustainable places.

- Based on the information presented above and the need to protect rural services and facilities, it is considered that a policy ensuring that settlements remain sustainable by retaining their local shops and services, be included in the Core Strategy. It will be an overarching policy, which covers the whole of the area, and any detailed policies linking to this main policy could be included in a more detailed development control policy document.

(m) The Importance of Public Houses

Fourteen pubs close for good every week - more than double previous estimates according to a shocking new survey by the Campaign for Real Ale (Camra). The Countryside Agency's survey, *Rural services in 2000*, shows that 52% of rural settlements have no pub and most rural community councils report a continuing decline in numbers of rural pubs.

There is now a body growing of evidence that public houses are accepted as making a key cultural and social contribution to many communities, while at the same time they are under constant threat of closure and conversion into private dwellings. There are a number of key studies, which should inform our consideration of these issues. In particular the paper published by the Countryside Agency in December 2001, entitled, The Pubs the Hub, highlighted the pressures which are leading to the loss of these facilities, especially in the rural areas where together with the church they are often the only venue for social interaction:

- A declining and ageing population;
- A decline in traditional rural occupations;
- Low incomes in rural areas;
- Changing social habits and lifestyles;
- Increasing customer expectations;
- Increasing regulatory demands, e.g. Disabled access and employment;
- Drink/drive legislation.

The threat to rural pubs and the need for them to diversify their businesses has been recognised by the Countryside Agency, working with a number of bodies including Business in the Community and in particular by its President, HRH The Prince of Wales, Post Office Limited, trade associations such as the British Beer and Pub Association (formerly the Brewers and Licensed Retailers Association) and many pub groups.

> "Rural communities, and this country's rural way of life, are facing unprecedented challenges ... the country pub, which has been at the heart of village life for centuries, is disappearing in many areas. By providing new services from the pub, such as a post office or a shop, not only keeps an essential service in the village or brings a new one in." **- HRH Prince Charles**.

The research emphasises that the role of the public house must be considered in a wider context, than the place you just drop in for a pint and a chat. There are many case studies where innovative schemes mean that pubs have evolved to provide the following services to the community

www.pubisthehub.org.uk
www.camra.org.uk

(n) Public Houses in Wiltshire

The national trend for closure of public houses is reflected in Wiltshire. The national trends as of 2010 published by the British Beer and Pub Association are as follows:

- Pub closures now running at 39 a week
- Closure rate down on 52 pubs a week closing in first half 2009
- Closure rate down 25 per cent on first half 2009
- Total of 2,365 pubs closed in 2009
- 24,000 jobs lost in sector in 2009

The evidence base to analyse this is the Rural Facilities Survey for Wiltshire. This research shows that there has been a fairly dramatic decline in the number of public houses in rural settlements from 304 in 1994 to 268 by 2005, which is a 12% decline in a relatively short time frame. Now some 35% of settlements have no pub and while this figure is above the national average, the trends do suggest a steady but inexorable decline.

There has been little evidence of the diversification into joint facilities as promoted nationally. Instead those remaining rural pubs have nearly all focussed on providing very high quality food and building a reputation locally. There are a small minority who are doing the same but based on the quality of their beer and traditional alehouse ambience.

The key issue to emerge both nationally and locally is that pubs are under threat and it seems inevitable that this trend will continue unless we can produce two fold measures based on firstly improving their viability by striving for truly sustainable communities, encouraging diversification and by taking a hard line on change of use applications. However the latter will not work without the former.

Based on the information presented above and the need to protect pubs, it is considered that a policy ensuring that settlements remain sustainable by retaining these facilities, be included in the Core Strategy. It will be an overarching policy, which covers the whole of the area, and any detailed policies linking to this main policy could be included in a more detailed supplementary planning document.

(o) Cultural Activities

Again many may consider that the issue of culture to be quite intangible and hence it is often relegated in importance as an issue that planning should address. The key national resources into the characteristic and needs of the cultural sector are to be found of the website of the Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) and of primary important is the report entitled "Culture and Creativity in 2007. With a Foreword by the then Prime Minister.

In short this paper highlights that over the past 10 years, the expectations we have of the cultural sector have changed along with everything else. Strategic public investment in culture has meant that our sectors have become more accessible. Free access to national museums, for example, has led to an 87 percent increase in visit numbers to the previously charging museums. Over the coming years, people will rightly have ever-higher expectations of the cultural and creative sectors. As new audiences continue to be built for every form of culture, so the expectation that high quality, challenging work will be available for all will rise too. To this extent, the cultural world has become a victim of its own success. The more it widens access to world-class work, the more expectations continue to rise. So in the future, parents will not only hope, but also expect, that their children will be able to take their creativity as far as their talent will take them.

There is a clear challenge for planning here to ensure that we are in tune with these nationally identified aspirations at a local level and to ensure that we adopt flexible policies which can help people meet their cultural goals.

A DCMS survey “Taking Part" in July 2006 found that during the last 12 months:

- 69 percent attended at least one type of historic environment site
- 66 percent attended at least one type of arts event
- 67 percent participated in at least one type of arts activity
- 48 percent attended a library at least once
- 42 percent attended a museum / gallery at least once

The challenge for planning is to help produce a cohesive community where there is an ever increasing demand for cultural activities and to frame polices which will both safeguard and allow new physical facilities such as libraries, galleries and theatres as the demand increases.

(p) Transport and access to services

Key national guidance is to be found from the Department for Transport and contained within Planning Policy Guidance 13 (PPG13) – Transport, which was issued in 2001 (ODPM, 2001) to update the previous policy and guidance note produced in 1994.

Over the past 40 years, traffic growth in the UK has been considerable. More households own cars, travel further and travel more often. Between 1985 and 1995, the total distance travelled per person per year has increased by 23% (DETR, 1997). These trends have led to a worsening of air pollution in urban areas, an increase of the overall proportion of greenhouse gases from transport sources and a decline in use of more sustainable alternative modes of travel, such as public transport, walking and cycling. PPG13 formed the government policy response to tackle these adverse trends from a planning perspective.

PPG13 identifies three over-arching objectives:

- Promote more sustainable transport choices for both people and freight
- Promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling; and,
- Reduce the need to travel, especially by car.

PPG13 identifies ways of achieving these objectives:

Planning policies
These include: Increasing the use of previously developed land; increasing housing densities; focusing more development in urban areas, towns and key service centres; focusing trip generating activities in urban areas and towns where there is a greater choice of transport modes, and increasing employment opportunities in rural areas in order to reduce the need for long-distance commuting to urban areas.

Managing travel demand
These include improving transport interchanges, the use of parking as a demand management tool, traffic management schemes to promote non-car modes and public transport, walking and cycling schemes.

PPG13 specifically mentions transport and accessibility and states, "a key planning objective is to ensure that jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services are accessible by public transport, walking, and cycling. This is important for all, but especially for those who do not have regular use of a car, and to promote social inclusion. In preparing their development plans, local authorities should give particular emphasis to accessibility in identifying the preferred areas and sites where such land uses should be located, to ensure they will offer realistic, safe and easy access by a range of transport modes, and not exclusively by car."

http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/138/PlanningPolicyGuidance13Transport_id1507138.pdf

The Department for Transport has a specific 'Mobility and Inclusion Unit', which promotes socially inclusive transport, examines the links between transport and social exclusion, analysis social inclusion issues and the transport needs of different social groups. Research by the Social Exclusion Unit (2006, 2000) has found that there is a clear connection between transport and social inclusion. The research has found that people can be excluded from the activities they wish to undertake:

- Spatially, because they cannot get there at all,
- Temporally, because they cannot get there at the appropriate time,
- Financially, because they cannot afford to get there, and
- Personally, because they lack the mental or physical equipment to handle the available means of mobility.

Research has also found that affordability, availability and accessibility are all key issue in this and should be considered carefully by local authorities.

http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/inclusion/

Evidence from Indices of Deprivation 2007 has identified the following key issues and trends:

- Barriers to Housing and Services domain, difficulties accessing services is a distinguishing feature of the county with Wylye & Langfords, Donheads and West Overton, Woodborough, Alton & Stanton St Bernard ranking within the top 100 of England (1 being the worst)

- Accessibility can vary significantly between different areas, at different times and for different people. While much of this difference is likely to be dependent on people's access to a car, it can also relate to those who have particular accessibility issues such as people on low incomes, older people, younger people, disabled people, women, people from ethnic communities etc.

- To be genuinely accessible, transport needs to get people to the services they require reliably and safely; it needs to be affordable for the customer and physically accessible.

- While clearly connected, transport and access are not the same thing. Access difficulties include lack of information, services being provided in ways which exclude some people, not owning your own home, lack of access to opportunity etc.

- Particular groups can experience access problems more acutely. There are often language and cultural barriers that hinder BME and migrant workers accessing services and the increasing use of the Internet can exclude some people.

It is clear from the IMD data that there are issues with transport and access to services across Wiltshire, which is partly due to its size and rurality.

(q) Crime and Safety

Key national guidance is to be found on Government websites, especially DCLG and the Home Office.

Of particluar relevance is the paper, "Improving Community Involvement in Community Safety" written by Sue Raike and John Hedge from Thames Valley Partnership, and Jean Chinery from the National Community Safety Network.

See http://www.communities.gov.uk/embedded_object.asp?id=1502557 for full report.

The report was commissioned by the Civil Renewal Unit as part of the Together We Can research programme. The study looks at the way police, local authorities and others that comprise the membership of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) work together to involve and engage their local communities in activities to reduce crime and disorder, improve publicy reassurance and promote safety. The report includes findings based on a survey of CSPs and draws out lessons from submitted case studies, interviews with key stakeholders and other evaluations. Recommendations to improve practice are suggested at a number of levels in the report and the reports also contains a resource list for practitioners and policy makers involved in community safety.

The findings of the report have some important advice for the local level, both related to Local Strategic Partnerships and neighbourhood renewal. These recommendations are as follows:

- Review local processes and frameworks for engaging local communities and look for opportunities to rationalise and improve co-ordination and performance management of this work (e.g. via Local Area Agreements).
- Agree with partners where to target resources most effectively.
- Audit the roles of staff involved in community development/capacity building locally and review training opportunities.
- Promote the involvement of local people in monitoring and setting targets.
- Ensure Local Strategic Partnership/Community Safety Partnership work is integrated with the findings of local neighbourhood, parish and area plans.
- Ensure there is a balance of enforcement versus preventative measures and a balance between short versus medium- and long-term measures.
- As part of any partnership review being undertaken, consider partnership governance and leadership arrangements, including the role of elected members in local partnership
- Arrangements.
- Challenge organisational barriers that are preventing the delivery of a better service.

Of particular relevance to the planning system is the paper *Safer Places* will be of interest to anyone involved in the planning and design of new development. Its main audience is likely to be the officers and councillors in local authorities who guide and control development. But the guide will also be relevant to those who promote development and advise on it, including the Police. See http://www.communities.gov.uk/embedded_object.asp?id=1144724 .

This is a primary source of guidance. However as we wish our Core Strategy to have a central and integral role to adressing societal challenges in a joined up way and hence the wider objectives of the community safety agenda have been included to place the policy considerations in proper context.

Safer Places focuses on seven attributes of sustainability that are particularly relevant to crime prevention. The attributes are general and descriptive. They are not prescriptive. They are not a set of rules to be applied to all situations. Instead, they should be considered as prompts to thinking about crime prevention and promoting community safety through the planning system. This guidance sets out some important criteria that a Local Planning Authority should consider when drafting policies, as follows:

- Identify the crime risks present in specific locations;
- Identify likely consequences of those crimes for the community and for institutions, companies and individuals, including especially vulnerable individuals and groups;
- Assess or take advice on priorities for crime reduction and other considerations;
- Establish the likely causes of crime in a given area; and
- Work out how they may be ameliorated or reduced through changes to the environment through the planning process.

When considering how to address the identified Crime and Safety issues at a local level we need to assess how policies can make their best contribution. For example can one policy adequately cover the whole of the area or are there particular issues and topics which need to be handled separately. If a general policy is robust enough to apply to the full range of place and development types, it should not be necessary to have additional policies. There will be occasions, however, where it may be necessary to produce policies that require something specific and particular to prevent crime or tackle disorder. Much will depend on the characteristics of the local situation and the change envisaged, or being promoted, through the LDF. These more specific policies will include topic specific and site or area-specific policies.

(r) Crime and Safety in Wiltshire

Generally Wiltshire does not appear to be particularly deprived on the crime domain compared to the national picture and national statistics on crime show that the Wiltshire Police area continued to have the second lowest rate of recorded crime in England and Wales, and the lowest in the South West. Latest figures for Wiltshire are shown below:

However, the average crime figures for Wiltshire mask some much higher levels of crime in small areas, particular urban areas. St Martin & Milford wards in Salisbury had highest rate of criminal damage, theft and handling offences and violent crime and the second highest rate of vehicle crime in Wiltshire.

National research found that crime is more likely to affect certain sections of the community. For example, unemployed people are three times as likely as average to be the victims of violent crime and lone parents are more than twice as likely as average to be burgled. Fear of crime is also greater for people with lower incomes.

People's Voice results show that in Wiltshire almost all residents feel safe walking alone, outside, during the day but this figure drops to about three-quarters after dark. Surveys of young people show similar results but also indicate that those living in Salisbury feel significantly less safe after dark than the Wiltshire average.

A recent survey found that, overall in Wiltshire, parents not taking responsibility for their children is the biggest anti-social behaviour (ASB) related issue.

There are tangible measures that the LDF should be taking in ordered to help contribute to reducing the fear of crime and especially tackling issues of anti-social behaviour. These fall into two categories, which may be broadly called prevention and cure.

Preventative measures include ensuring that people are provided with dignity and have a real stake in community via:

- Providing all with a decent home
- Ensuring that there are local employment opportunities
- Ensuring that issues of social inclusion, especially barriers to social and cultural activities are addressed
- Planning for education
- Using planning gain to provide youth facilities
- Providing a range of accessible and high quality leisure activities
- Holding meetings ('face the people') with the community to discuss facilities the perpetrators would like to see.

Working with the communities and providing facilities that can give youth a focus for their energy seems a really positive measure that planners can pursue. Constructive activities can offer young people diversion from involvement in anti-social behaviour at an early stage. Positive Futures (a national social inclusion programme using sport and leisure activities to engage with disadvantaged and socially marginalised young adults) have reported that;

- 76% of local partner agencies suggested that anti-social behaviour rates had fallen
- 68% of agencies suggested a fall in crime.

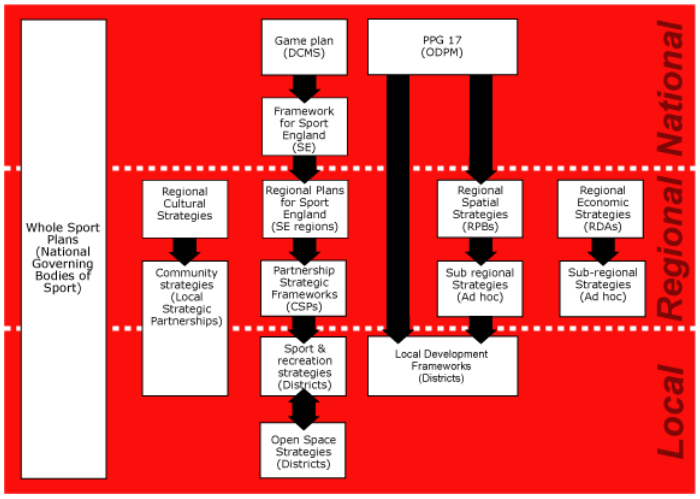
The measures that may be considered where anti-social behaviour is a present and ongoing problem may include the following:

- Working in partnership to introduce physical measures to places such as gates and walls which will discourage their abuse
- Working in conjunction with partners to install and operate CCTV
- Using planning gain to provide devolved police offices
- Where necessary, facilitating the installation of alarms on properties including listed buildings
- Use of enforcement powers to require untidy sites and unsightly storage to be removed.

At a local land use planning level the Council has attempted to make a contribution to reducing crime through the adoption of Creating Places, the South Wiltshire design guide which contains detailed advice on the principles of designing out crime and has been written in partnership with the Police Architectural Liaison Officer. See http://www.salisbury.gov.uk/planning/forward-planning/supplementary-planning-guidance/creating-places-design-guide.htm

(s) Sports, Leisure and Recreation

Many of the issues which emerge at a national level relating to the provision of sport and leisure facilities emerge from many of the key research documents already quoted in this paper. However they are co-ordinated and presented particularly well in the Sport England publication, Planning for Sport. This sets out an effective policy framework for providing facilities at the appropriate level.



PPG17 states that local authorities should undertake robust assessments of the existing and future needs of their communities for open space, sport and recreational facilities. These assessments should cover the distinctive needs of the population for open space and built sports and recreational facilities.

PPS9 emphasises how networks of natural habitats and provide important stepping-stones for the migration, dispersal and genetic exchange of species in the wider environment. Local authorities should aim to maintain networks by avoiding or repairing the fragmentation and isolation of natural habitats through policies in plans. Such networks should be protected from development, and, where possible, strengthened by or integrated within it. This may be done as part of a wider strategy for the protection and extension of open space and access routes such as canals and rivers, including those within urban areas.

The national guidance in essence sets out the following guidance for planning authorities regarding developing new areas of open space, sports and recreational facilities,

- Promote accessibility from walking, cycling and transport links
- Locate sites that will contribute to town centre viability and vitality
- Avoid loss of amenity to residents
- Improve the quality of the public realm through good design
- Look to produce areas of open spaces in industrial or commercial areas
- Improve the quality of existing facilities
- Consider the safety of the people using them, i.e. children
- Meet the regeneration needs of areas, therefore keeping greenfield sites untouched
- Consider the scope for using any surplus land for open space, sport or recreational use, weighing this against alternative uses
- Assess the impact of new facilities on social inclusion
- Consider the recreational needs of visitors and tourists.

Open spaces, sport and recreation all underpin people's quality of life. Well-designed and implemented planning policies for open space, sport and recreation are therefore fundamental to delivering broader Government objectives. These include:

- Supporting an urban renaissance
- Supporting a rural renewal
- Promotion of social inclusion and community
- Health and well being
- Promoting more sustainable development

Sport England sees the planning system as an opportunity to deliver its own aspirations in sport and recreation, whilst contributing to the goals of partners in public, private and voluntary sectors. It is seeking a planned approach towards the provision of facilities to reach sustainable development goals. These are:

- Taking a broader view of the role of spatial planning as an enabling function which goes beyond the setting and delivery of land-use policy
- Identifying opportunities for delivering an enhanced quality of life for communities, in the short, medium and long term
- recognizing and taking full advantage of the unique ability of sport and active recreation to contribute to a wide array of policy and community aspirations

- The development of partnership working stimulated by, and perhaps centered on, sport and active recreation as a common interest
- Using sport and recreation as one of the building blocks of planning and delivery of sustainable communities.

Sports and Recreation provision in Wiltshire is covered in the Green Infrastructure topic paper.

(t) Digital Inclusion

Broadband connectivity

Broadband coverage and performance in Wiltshire is poor particularly when compared with more urban councils. There are significant cost challenges for the telecoms market to provide higher speed broadband connectivity. Often the smaller towns and villages are not commercially viable for short term improvement over the next five years. Approximately 59% of premises across Wiltshire will not benefit from superfast broadband as they are in areas where it is uneconomical for the telecoms industry to invest. Without some form of direct public and community intervention they will continue to receive an inadequate service.

Detailed research is underway to map broadband coverage and performance and this will be combined with other information on potential demand and socio-economic factors to pinpoint the localities where additional investment is needed. The council will use this intelligence to develop a proposal to invest in broadband and enter into a contract with the telecoms industry to upgrade the infrastructure in these areas. In this way, the council can ensure that it targets resources so that the majority of communities in Wiltshire are able to access super fast broadband services by 2015.

It will work closely with communities and all partners such as area boards, economic communities and social enterprises.

Some key facts and issues include:

- 5% of households in Wiltshire cannot receive broadband speeds of at least 2mbps. High broadband speeds are really only readily available in the larger towns .
- Small and medium sized businesses are likely to be more successful and grow more quickly if they have good internet access and presence. In fact a number of surveys have shown that many small businesses report that they would not exist without the internet.
- The lack of computer and internet access can contribute to social disadvantage, especially for the unemployed, elderly, and those with disabilities.

Public on-line services

The council's website is well positioned to be developed further to improve the range and scope of services that can be accessed on-line. The focus will be on making the top 20 most requested services fully transactional, providing real time information, and in tailoring information and services to where users live. This will have many benefits for both the council and users including cost efficiencies, and choice and ease of access at any time of day or night.

The website will also be used to promote this project, outlining progress and how to get involved. It will be interactive and include broadband speed calculators, surveys and digital literacy support available.

Broadband usage and demand

The use of technology can have huge social and economic benefits. However, a large number of people, approximately 65,000 in Wiltshire, especially in certain groups, do not use the internet due to a variety of reasons which may include cost, limited awareness of its benefits, or a lack of knowledge in how to use the technology.

Area boards, schools, libraries, volunteer groups and local communities will be critical partners to help engage with people wishing to gain digital literacy skills. This will link closely to the improvements to connectivity.

Some key facts and issues include:

- Around 60% of all people in the UK access the internet every day. But 19% of the population has never used the internet. In Wiltshire this equates to about 68,000 people. These people are increasingly disadvantaged. For example, it is estimated that people who do not use the internet miss out on £560 savings per year in shopping and paying bills online
- Most new jobs require digital skills.
- Access to computers at home can improve children's learning and makes it easier for parents to get involved in their child's education.

Links to the national agenda and other council projects

Digital inclusion and improving access to broadband is a national and local priority forming a part of the coalition government programme, the Wiltshire Community Plan, and the Wiltshire Council Business Plan 2011-15.

The government has set national digital connectivity targets and is channelling its work and investment through Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK). It supports many government initiatives including for example, supporting the goal to ensure the country has the best Superfast Broadband in Europe by the end of this parliament (2015) and also; to ensure delivery of standard broadband to virtually all communities in the UK within the lifetime of this parliament (2015). The digital inclusion project also has strong links to the achievement of the big society, improvements to public sector efficiency, and open government with the publication of more on-line information.

Locally the digital inclusion project helps to support the achievement of many other initiatives both within the council and in our work with other partner agencies.

- Considerable work is ongoing to protect and promote business development and investment in Wiltshire. The need for good broadband connectivity is becoming increasingly important for business success.
- The customer focus programme aims to change the way customers access our services, with the default that 'we go to the customer' and not 'the customer comes to us'. This means having appointments in people's homes and other community settings plus the use of virtual face to face facilities in each community area. Superfast broadband will be a prerequisite to make this work allowing access to centrally held information and data.
- The campus and operational delivery programme will reduce the number of council offices and other buildings across Wiltshire. It means more staff will work remotely from home and in other community settings which will require fast and reliable broadband access.
- Protecting and safeguarding vulnerable adults is another area of investment for the council. This will be achieved through increasing services that help people to live independently in their own homes. The use of telecare and internet based technology will be a vital tool in this work, with active monitoring of patient conditions and virtual face to face consultations. However, it all relies on having a good broadband infrastructure in place, especially in rural areas.
- The Local development Framework and the production of the new Wiltshire Core Strategy will seek to ensure all new developments include broadband connectivity.

A range of energy efficiency projects are underway to reduce carbon emissions from homes and businesses. Technology and access to the internet is helping to do this, reducing commuting and the need to travel and in new internet based products such as smart meters which help to monitor and reduce home energy usage.

(u) Digital Inclusion for Wiltshire

Communication, Collaboration and Success

Wiltshire Council is investing in digital inclusion and access to super-fast broadband to support homes and business throughout the county.

Currently not all parts of Wiltshire have the same access to broadband. This is due to the fact that Wiltshire is a large rural county and it is uneconomic in some areas to supply broadband and the next generation superfast broadband to homes and businesses. Around 5% of all households currently receive a poor service with very slow broadband speeds and over half of all premises are unlikely to receive superfast broadband by 2015. It means if nothing is done a significant number of residents and businesses will find it increasingly difficult to take advantage of the internet and the wide range of on-line services available.

The council has recognised the importance of broadband access and has decided to invest £16m in improving access to digital services in areas which would otherwise miss out. This investment along with government grant and additional investment from the telecoms industry will generate over £30m of funds. It is intended this will go a long way towards eliminating the so called 'digital divide' across communities. The council has set a target of 85% and possibly rising to 95% (pending government funding) of all premises to have superfast broadband availability by 2015.

But supporting superfast broadband access is only one part of the Council's wider digital inclusion project.

In 2010, over 30 million or 60% of all adults in the UK accessed the internet nearly every day and yet nearly 20% of the population have never used the internet. Being on-line and using technology is becoming an increasingly regular and important factor, for work, learning or recreational use. Good digital literacy skills and access to technology allows us to benefit in many different ways such as saving money through on-line shopping and paying bills. Access to the internet allows businesses to develop the use of on-line communications, publicity and sales and can be particularly important in rural locations.

Objectives

The digital inclusion project has three objectives which together form a strong basis to support a wide range of other initiatives especially in promoting economic growth, tackling social disadvantage, and in achieving a low carbon society.

They are:

1. To improve access to broadband for citizens and businesses in Wiltshire.

All premises within Wiltshire to have access to a minimum broadband service of 2Mbps achieving the Government's goal to ensure delivery of Standard Broadband to virtually all communities in the UK. A minimum of 85%, (possibly 95%) of premises will be able to access the higher performing next generation superfast broadband access by 2015.

This will achieve:

- Much faster internet access which will improve peoples 'experience' of the technology and increase their opportunities to participate in social networking, using streamed media, video conferencing, online banking and shopping, local government services etc. This has many knock-on effects and benefits which could include for example, reducing people's social isolation, providing telecare and telehealth for the elderly, saving money, minimising the need to travel, or increasing property values.
- For businesses it allows increased use of on-line tools, improves communication and marketing to customers, and greater flexibility in working location. It can help business viability especially for small-medium sized firms and overcome the disadvantage of being located in more remote rural areas.
- The Council will also benefit, as it will allow its staff to work more effectively from home or community based locations, reducing the need for costly central office premises.

2. To increase the uptake and usage of council on-line services.

The council's website presence will be developed further to improve its capability to offer a wider range of interactive on-line services. Promotion will also be undertaken to increase demand and take up of our on-line services.

This will achieve:

- Improved delivery of local services and communication with residents, which will provide 24-7 access. The demand for on-line council services will be increased, allowing staff to spend more time on more complex issues and cases requiring their expertise. It will offer the potential to make efficiency savings eg in transactional services and could increase the income received by the council.
- Support for the uptake of free web based productivity and communication resources to allow new or unconfident users to have access to a digital "toolbox" of resources.
- Improving the information available to the public about the range of connectivity services available across Wiltshire that would help to make better informed choices.

3. To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to become digitally literate and confident users of technology.

Communities will be supported through the use of volunteers to provide hands on support for digital literacy. Small and medium businesses will also be supported through economic partnerships to make the best use of technology including on-line purchasing and communications.

This will achieve:

- More adults being able to use technology and the internet, with fewer feeling 'digitally excluded', especially amongst the elderly and those on low incomes. It can also help people in getting jobs, as most employers now require digital skills.
- More demand for internet access and services, especially superfast broadband connectivity.
- To ensure that every adult has the opportunity to become digitally literate and confident users of technology. (Phased in conjunction with the superfast broadband rollout in each area)
- A volunteer programme will be established (schools, local community groups and business) that will offer a menu of support and also work with Area Boards to identify specific needs and opportunities for support linked to opportunities arising from localism projects and to the customer focus programme. (Phased in conjunction with the superfast broadband rollout in each area)
- Support from business to provide skills around day-to-day use of technology e.g. "how to do on-line banking", "how to do the weekly shop on-line" will be supported through partnership with local business and Race On-Line 2012 to provide digital literacy support at the workplace.

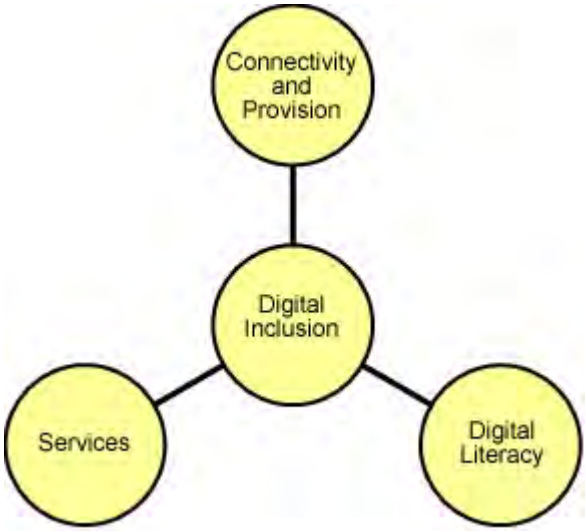
How will the areas be selected and prioritise for support? Firstly, to ensure that the telecoms market is not distorted in Wiltshire, funding to improve the infrastructure can only be provided in areas where it's not economically viable for the industry to fund any upgrades, i.e. where superfast broadband is not planned for rollout. A range of data for all these communities within Wiltshire will be collected, for example the number of businesses, number of household, employment and housing opportunities.

Timescales

The project aims and funding was approved by full council as part of the business plan and financial plan in February 2011 and is one of the council's key areas for investment.

Support for digital literacy will start in pilot phase this summer. A procurement will be during 2011-12 so to allow rollout from April 2012 of superfast broadband

The digital Inclusion project's three objectives are complementary and togther form a stong basis to support growth in the economy, social inclusion and educational outcomes.


Connectivity and Provision
Digital Inclusion
Services
Digital Literacy

3. THE NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK ON THE NEED TO DEVELOP POLICIES ON THE PROVISION OF SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

The need for this topic to be included within the emerging Local Development Framework has emerged clearly from an analysis of national and regional planning policy and an appraisal of the growing body of specialist literature and guidance given to local planning authorities. Furthermore original work that has formed part of the base of evidence which will inform the Local Development Framework process has highlighted that there is a need for a new and effective set of policies to help meet our objectives.

Relevant International, National and Regional Policy
The need to achieve sustainable development is a cornerstone of the whole planning system and the following policies are of particular relevance to delivering community and cultural opportunities.

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing
Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment
Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres
Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas
Planning Policy Statement 9: Planning for Biodiversity
Planning Policy Statement 11: Regional Spatial Strategies
Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Development Frameworks
Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable energy. Includes the companion guide
Planning Policy Statement 23: Planning and Pollution Control

Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport
Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Other Sources of Guidance

- *Strong and Prosperous Communities* - The Local Government White Paper, Date published**:** 26 October 2006
- *Planning Together* - Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and Spatial Planning: a practical guide, January 2007, Department for Communities and Local Government
- *Preparing community strategies: government guidance to local authorities,* DCLG, 2006
- *Cultural Strategy*, Salisbury District Council, 2002 - 2007.
- *Wiltshire Cultural Strategy 2004*
- *Community Development Policy (Building Strong Communities)*' Salisbury District Council
- *Making a Difference Together* - Community Strategy for Salisbury and South Wiltshire 2005-2009
- *Supporting People Strategy,* Wiltshire & Swindon Supporting People Team
- *Salisbury District Council Children and Young People's Strategy 2005 to 2008*
- *The Wiltshire Compact.*
- *Community Plans*
- *By Design*. DETR & CABE (2000)
- *Planning tomorrow's countryside*. The Countryside Agency (2000) ISBN 0 86170 648 X
- *Power of Place; The future of the historic environment*. English Heritage (2000)
- *Urban Design Compendium*. Ep & Housing Corporation (2000)
- *Design Review* - CABE (2002)
- *Better Civic Buildings and Spaces* - CABE (2002)
- *Better public Buildings* - CABE (2001)
- *Building in Context* - CABE & English Heritage (2002)
- *www.socialexclusion.gov.uk*
- *www*.respect.gov.uk
- *Place Matters*, DCLG, 31 January 2007
- Green Flag award, "The Guidance Manual"
- South West Biodiversity Action Plan[i]
- State of the environment in the South West[ii]
- AONB Management Plan
- Association of Local Government Ecologists: "Framework for Biodiversity"[iii]

4. Main Themes emerging in Relation to this Topic Paper - What can be done to promote welfare, social cohesion and quality of life?

National Policy has been scrutinised together with the source documents which also comprise the evidence base and the following main themes have emerged. There are a number of ways in which the Core Strategy can be used o help both deliver new opportunities and safeguard existing facilities. In particular the following areas should be considered at the outset of designing any new development:

(a) Addressing Diversity and Equality

A core theme of this topic paper will be to highlight the need to address social inequalities, consider the needs and problems of the communities and how they relate to land use and development. It will identify the requirement to recognise the needs and broader interests of the community to secure a better quality of life for the community as a whole. It will promote communities, which are inclusive and provide a range of community facilities and cultural opportunities tailored to the special needs of particular sectors of the community. This is particularly pertinent to the provision of community and cultural facilities, as one must take care to either base policies on assumptions or indeed a broad consensus, as this runs the risk of ignoring the specific cultural needs of minority groups.

(b) Defining the scope of Welfare, Quality of Life and Social Inclusion

It is important that the Core Strategy is explicit is defining what is meant by a community and cultural facility. This may range from large facilities such as the City Hall in Salisbury, to smaller but equally important facilities in rural areas such as mobile library services.

However, it would be a mistake to confine the scope of such facilities to those run by public bodies, as there are many small businesses, which while supported by the market economy perform an invaluable community and cultural function within settlements. The village shop and public houses are such examples, which are at the heart of much community and cultural activity within our settlements. Policies should properly seek their ongoing contribution wherever possible.

Community and cultural facilities may be categorized as:

- Health - promoting health and reducing health inequalities
- Community Safety - providing a safe community
- Access for all.
- Social cohesion - affording all participants a stake and opportunities within their community
- Providing decent homes for all
- Education - to provide access for all to high quality learning
- Play - to provide access to arts, sports, play and leisure activities.
- Community planning - letting all have a say in the decisions which affect them

(c) Providing Access to and safeguarding Services

We should endeavour to provide improved access for all to welfare, quality of life and social inclusion, by ensuring that new development is located where everyone can access services or facilities on foot, bicycle, wheelchair or public transport, rather than car, while recognising that this may be more difficult in rural areas

Our policies should contain clear, comprehensive and inclusive access policies in terms of both location and external physical access to community and cultural facilities. They should break down unnecessary barriers. In the rural areas there may be a need to locate new facilities in sub-regional centres, which serve a local hinterland, so that at the very least there is access to a range of facilities for all of the community within reasonable reach.

(d) Providing high quality of Welfare, Quality of Life and Social Inclusion - Fighting Rural Marginalisation

To promote a healthy and inclusive living environment, good quality, carefully sited accessible development within existing towns and villages should be allowed where it benefits the local economy and/or community;

maintains or enhances the local environment and does not conflict with other planning policies. To ensure that sectors of our population do not become marginalised there will need to be polices which will allow some limited growth in the more remote rural areas where the benefit to the populations quality of life can be clearly seen.

To build on this principle, the Core Strategy will make provision to allow some limited development in, or next to, rural settlements that are not designated as local service centres, in order to meet community and cultural needs and to maintain the vitality of these communities. In particular authorities should be supportive of small-scale development of this nature where it provides the most sustainable option in villages that are remote from and have poor public transport links with, service centres.

We believe that people who live or work in the County should have reasonable access to a range of community and cultural facilities. Hence we will:

(i) Facilitate and plan for accessible new community facilities, particularly where; - planning permission is granted for new developments in country towns or other local service centres; or – settlements, or the population of their rural catchments, are expanding; or - there is an identified need for new expanded facilities to strengthen the role of a particular local service centre.

(ii) Where possible, ensure that new development in identified service centres is supported through improvements to community and cultural facilities, provided in partnership with the developer where appropriate;

(iii) Identify suitable buildings and development sites for community services and facilities to meet the needs of the whole community, including disabled users and hard to reach groups

(iv) Support mixed and multi-purpose uses, incorporating community and cultural opportunities, that maintain community vitality, welfare and quality of life; and

(v) Support the provision of small-scale, local facilities (e.g. childcare facilities) to meet community needs outside identified local service centres, particularly where they would benefit those rural residents who would find it difficult to use more distant service centres.

(vi) Seek measures to support businesses, which make a vital contribution to local community and cultural life such as public houses and village shops, by encouraging viable sustainable communities and resisting change of use where the case for the non-viability of the business has not been proven.

These local facilities should be located within or adjacent to existing villages and settlements where access can be gained by walking, cycling and (where available) public transport.

(e) Providing high quality of Welfare, Quality of Life and Social Inclusion in Urban Areas

We will frame planning policies, which seek to provide a diverse, and enriching range of community and cultural activities within our major settlements, as well as protecting existing facilities.

As with the rural areas this will take the form of working with the community to identify need, including that of minority and hard to reach groups and facilitating delivery through the controlled growth and use of planning obligations. This will include working with private, for-profit enterprises such as the cinemas and theatres, which make a contribution to the quality of life. Such uses will be protected from a change of use and fostered through the allocation of new housing contributing to their economic viability.

(e) Promoting High Quality Community Health and Welfare

We will continue to work with the providers of primary and secondary healthcare, to plan for the future and to meet their future land use requirements. Where a shortfall of health care facilities are identified, we will endeavor to fill the gap through the sensitive introduction of new development, with provision the health facilities as one of the requirements of building. That is we will incentives the market to deliver these facilities where there is clearly a justification.

(f) Social Inclusion

We will seek to make a significant contribution to delivering cohesive communities, which may be characterised as one where:

- There is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities
- The diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively value
- Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities
- Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighborhoods.

The options for helping deliver this objectives will be fully explored with partner agencies such as the Strategic Partnership and of course the communities themselves, but initial opportunities would include working with communities in planning for real exercises, reaching out to minority groups to establish their aspirations for new facilities and the prudent use of planning gain to deliver the requirements identified.

(g)Quality of Life

The quality of life is not a topic, which can be addressed discreetly within a single topic paper; it underpins all the Local Development Framework is seeking to achieve. It of course go far beyond the realms of a single local planning document. However, what must be considered is how the planning process can make a contribution. Quality of life can also be defined in many ways, but is perhaps best expressed a combination of the following factors:

- Active, inclusive and safe – fair, tolerant and cohesive with a strong local culture and shared community activities
- Well run – with effective and inclusive participation, representation and leadership
- Environmentally sensitive – providing places for people to live that are considerate environment
- Well designed and built – featuring a quality built and natural environment
- Well connected – with good transport services and communication linking people schools, health and other services
- Thriving – with a flourishing and diverse local economy
- Well served – with public, private, community and voluntary services that are appropriate people's needs and accessible to all
- Fair for everyone – including those in other communities, now and in the future.

(h)Safeguarding of Existing Facilities

We will develop policies which will seek to protect existing facilities which make a contribution to welfare, social inclusion and quality of life throughout the County

(i) Developer Contributions

This document and the proposed CiL charging schedule will set out the Councils requirement for developers to make a contribution towards social infrastructure required as a result of their development. This will be based on demonstrable areas of need and be applied in a fair and reasonable manner. However the underpinning principle is that developers will be expected to make a contribution to compensate for the social impacts of their proposed scheme.

(j) Designing for the future re-use of the building

Simply designing a new building that will need to be demolished at the end of its functional life and then replaced by a new one is not a sustainable solution. Community faculties should be designed to be flexible and capable of different uses. Historic building may be successfully converted to a community use such as

from a church to Arts Centre in Salisbury and St Peters Church in Marlborough to a café and craft centre. This can represent a sustainable and attractive means of providing new community and cultural space.

The following areas should be considered when designing a new community building:

- Use of non-load bearing partitions to allow for easier internal adaptation in the future
- Ceiling heights that are sufficient to incorporate changes in room use
- Redundant buildings should be considered as a valuable resource and should be re-used where possible.

(k) The Night-time Economy

We will prepare policies to help manage the evening and night time economy in appropriate centres. These policies will encourage a range of complementary evening and night time economy uses which appeal to a wide range of age and social groups. These are seen as an important part of the community and cultural offer of Wiltshire and are the subject of a separate LDF topic paper.

(l) Monitoring, Assessment and Review

There is a local need to put into place SMART targets and a monitoring regime to allow an accurate assessment to be made in relation to how successful emerging policies are making a positive contribution to peoples welfare, quality of life and inclusion with society.

5. LINKING IT TOGETHER – WHAT DO OTHER LOCAL STRATEGIES SAY?

'People, places and promises' is the proposed new Wiltshire Community Plan to take the place of the existing sustainable community strategy

The plan will guide the actions of the many public and voluntary agencies and partnerships that work in the county to work towards making Wiltshire an even better place to live and work over the next 15 years. The Wiltshire Assembly has already agreed the vision of building stronger more resilient communities and the priorities for achieving this - creating an economy that is fit for the future, reducing disadvantage and inequality, and tackling climate change - but the current climate now makes this more vital than ever. The key challenges that the Strategy is trying to address are shown below.

Distinct challenges which Wiltshire faces include:

- Government spending cuts and a changing role for many statutory bodies and the voluntary and community sector
- pockets of 'hidden' deprivation in towns and across rural areas
- lower workplace earnings and higher house prices
- highest CO_2 emissions and lowest level of renewable electricity and heat production of any county in the South West
- increasing elderly population
- loss of experience and skills in the labour market due to high levels of outcommuting and the numbers of people retiring
- health inequalities and ill health in disadvantaged areas and too many deaths from cardiovascular disease and cancer
- an educational gap in attainment and lower aspirations of some young people
- generally low satisfaction levels with public services.

This plan emphasises that we must tackle these and other challenges if we are to protect and enhance Wiltshire into the future.

As part of the research carried out to support the preparation and evidence base of the core strategy, the paper 'Wiltshire Town & Country Themes - An analysis of community needs and aspirations from Community Area Plans Parish Plans & Village Design Statements', has collated all the information from all the various strategies in existence in Wiltshire. It is clear, that from each tier of documents that similar themes emerge, including.

- Poor public transport and issues of highway safety
- Lack of facilities for young people and children
- Vitality of centres and village shops
- Access to health services, rather than the quality of the provision
- Improved ICT / broadband

More information on this high level summary can be found in appendix 1.

6. LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

a) How do our existing policies perform?

The following policies from within the existing Local Plans address a wide range of issues related to community and cultural activities. While many have proved effective, they will need to be thoroughly reviewed as part of the LDF process. Below are a selection of policies throughout Wiltshire from the adopted local plans that attempt to deal with the issues of sustainable rural communities. They have been saved until an appropriate point with the review.

SALISBURY LOCAL PLAN	KENNET LOCAL PLAN	WEST WILTS LOCAL PLAN	NORTH WILTS LOCAL PLAN
PS3 PROTECTION OF VILLAGE SHOPS AND PUBS	POLICY ED28 ADDITIONAL SHOPPING FACILITIES IN RURAL AREAS POLICY ED29 RETENTION OF SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY USES	SP7 VILLAGE SHOPS	R6 EXISTING LOCAL SHOPS AND SERVICES
S9 LOCAL SHOPS	POLICY ED23 VITALITY OF SERVICE CENTRES	SP6 LOCAL SHOPPING IN TOWNS AND VILLAGES	R5 LOCAL SHOPS AND SERVICES
		CF2 RE-USE OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES CF3 VILLAGES AND RURAL AREAS	
R1A NEW OUTDOOR FACILITIES. R1B NEW INDOOR FACILITIES R2 NEW RECREATION PROVISION R5 PROTECTION OF RECREATIONAL FACILITES	POLICY HC34 & 35 RECREATION PROVISION ON SMALL AND LARGE HOUSING SITES	POLICY LP 2 PROPOSALS THAT INVOLVE THE LOSS OF OPEN SPACE OR SPORT AND RECREATION PROVISION POLICY LP5 NEW SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES	CF2 LEISURE FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACE CF3 PROVISION OF OPEN SPACE
PS1 PROVISION OF NEW COMMUNITY FACILITIES	POLICY HC42 ADDITIONAL SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY NEEDS		
S11 FARM SHOPS	POLICY ED16 FARM SHOPS		

The trends identified from both the national and local evidence base do suggest that the following concerns continue and that there will be the need for a far more sophisticated suite of polices required to address the challenges ahead:

- Overall wealth masking rural marginalisation
- Ongoing barriers to housing and services
- The decline of rural facilities such as pubs and shops
- The need to fight hidden social exclusion
- Defining what is meant by reasonable access to services
- Provision of public transport

b) What are others doing to tackle similar problems?

There are a diverse range of approaches to addressing the key social and community support issues that this topic paper attempts to pull together. At one end of the spectrum the issues are being completely dispersed throughout the Core Strategy Issues paper and incorporated where appropriate under more traditionally land use planning focussed themes, such as housing, flooding, recreation, employment and so on. Therefore while the issues are addressed, they are done so in a manner, which seems to limit their prominence and importance.

At the other end of the spectrum some authorities such as Suffolk Coastal have produced a separate Core Strategy topic paper solely on the subject of Community Wellbeing. This clearly marks out such issues as being considered of key importance in that particular area. However such an approach does run the risk of separating the issues from its context and perhaps missing opportunities for joined up consideration and problem solving.

The majority of Authorities have chosen something of a halfway-house between the two above-mentioned extremes, where the issues are given a discreet section or sections within an overall Core Strategy Issues and Options paper and cross-referenced to other emerging policy areas. Recommended case studies include Bristol, Chichester, Halton and Plymouth, who all make good use of this approach.

With regard to the outputs from these pieces of work, they are very much consistent with the analysis of national guidance emerging from this topic paper. All to a greater and lesser extent have strategic spatial objectives, which seek to deliver communities, which have the following characteristics:

- Healthy and socially inclusive
- Safe and secure environments
- Deprivation to be tackled
- Accessible and inclusive health and social care services
- High quality leisure, sport and recreation facilities
- High quality and accessible parks, green and open space and recreation opportunities
- Attractive and well-managed environments
- Jobs, services and facilities within a reasonable walking/cycling distance
- Safeguard and enhance cultural assets and opportunities
- Encourage local governance

There are a number of risks to be identified by benchmarking with the work of other authorities. In particular many do seem to be repeating nationally identified issues and trends, without applying them to the local situation on the ground. It is not productive to, for example, seek the strategic goal of addressing social exclusion if the situation in the local area has not been identified. This runs the risk of the fine strategic goals becoming mere platitudes with no local action or purpose behind them. In particular the benchmarking teaches us that when considering planning policies to address these issues we must ask ourselves the following questions:

1. Does the policy reflect not duplicate national guidance?

2. Is the policy applicable to all development proposals, or should the policy specify possible solutions to particular problems and consider different land uses?

3. Should the policy highlight conflicting priorities that planning for community support might encounter, and encourage alternative responses?

4. Does the policy contribute to wider objectives of good urban design?

5. Does the policy specify whether certain community support measures should only be considered on certain types/sizes of development?

7. KEY ISSUES AND SPATIAL PATTERNS

There are a series of key messages that emerge from an analysis of local issues within the framework of the local and national evidence base. These are as follows:

Masked Pockets of Deprivation
While, superficially Wiltshire is a well-off and prosperous area, this masks areas of real concern, especially based around areas of social inclusion and access to services. There are pockets of marginalisation and social exclusion both in our rural and urban areas. These are clear issues that the LDF should be seeking to help address.

Welfare Issues
A key issue to emerge under welfare is that the area does indeed have better than average statistics. However when trans-data analysis is taken into account, including issues raised on deprivation and social inclusion, a clear risk emerges that the statistics may well be masking some pockets of real welfare concern, especially in some of the more remote rural areas where access to services are difficult. This is backed up by local research and consultation which indicates the following:

- Local Wiltshire studies on rural material deprivation indicate that there are small geographical pockets of deprivation, both within Salisbury, Trowbridge and in the rural areas.
- Transportation issues are a problem for many people in rural areas when they wish to access health services.
- Over 14,400 people in Wiltshire claim health related benefits or are disabled (5%of the population) which indicates that there is a large population with a range of health problems and other disabilities that effect their ability to take care of themselves and participate in the job market.
- Access to General Practitioners and particularly dentists is a national issue but can disproportionately affect certain groups of the community who have low incomes, mobility issues or transport related problems.
- Many of the deprivation issues relate to specific health issues concerning groups such as the elderly, travellers and teenage parents.

Source
http://www.intelligencenetwork.org.uk/EasySiteWeb/getresource.axd?AssetID=47492&type=full&servicetype=Attachment

Providing Access to Services and safeguarding local facilities including shops and post offices

Key findings relate to the spatial distribution of key services and how these are provided. It is clear that in some cases, such as the banking industry that technology may well provide solutions to these problems. However with regard to access to key series such a shops, pubs, halls and schools there is a clear and apparently inexorable trend towards agglomeration in the larger settlements to provide for wider catchments. The days of every small village having such facilities seem long gone. It is a changing world and planning policies must respond.

Public Houses
The national trend for closure of public houses is reflected in Wiltshire. The key issue to emerge both nationally and locally is that pubs are under threat and it seems inevitable that this trend will continue unless we can produce two fold measures based on firstly improving their viability by striving for truly sustainable communities, encouraging diversification and by taking a hard line on change of use applications. However the latter will not work without the former.

Safeguarding and enhancing the Cultural Offer.
As per the National framework set out above, it is clear that stakeholders have a wide understanding of "cultural activities" ranging from fishing on the local rivers, to religious worship and from pop music to conservation of our built heritage. Therefore there are certain principles that we should seek to address when framing planning policies, which address culture, these being:

- Making cultural events and places accessible to all
- Seeking contributions from planning obligations
- Planning for infrastructure that will support cultural activities
- Facilitating social inclusion
- Maintaining and enhancing built and natural heritage assets
- Ensuring new development is sympathetic to culturally valued environments
- Seeking public participation in decision-making.

Transport and access to services
Evidence from Indices of Deprivation 2007 has identified the following key issues and trends:

- Barriers to Housing and Services domain, difficulties accessing services is a distinguishing feature of the county with Wylye & Langfords, Donheads and West Overton, Woodborough, Alton & Stanton St Bernard ranking within the top 100 of England (1 being the worst)

- Accessibility can vary significantly between different areas, at different times and for different people. While much of this difference is likely to be dependent on people's access to a car, it can also relate to those who have particular accessibility issues such as people on low incomes, older people, younger people, disabled people, women, people from ethnic communities etc.

- To be genuinely accessible, transport needs to get people to the services they require reliably and safely; it needs to be affordable for the customer and physically accessible.

- While clearly connected, transport and access are not the same thing. Access difficulties include lack of information, services being provided in ways which exclude some people, not owning your own home, lack of access to opportunity etc.

- Particular groups can experience access problems more acutely. There are often language and cultural barriers that hinder BME and migrant workers accessing services and the increasing use of the Internet can exclude some people.

Crime and Safety
Analysis shows that while overall all crime is the second lowest in England and Wales that again this masks some of the local issues. In particular there are the following issues, which have emerged from a detailed look at the local evidence.

- Reducing crime is a priority emerging in all of the area Community Plans. Although crime rates are relatively low, the community clearly perceive that their places should be safer
- There are pockets of anti-social behaviour, which are the worst in the County.
- There are pockets where criminal damage, theft and handling offences and violent crime are the highest in south Wiltshire.

8. OPTIONS

Based on the issues identified and the policy framework in place, this section draws together options. The tables below represent a long list of options from which the most realistic are identified in the final row.

Option No.	Nature of the Option	Key Drivers	Positive Impacts	Negative Impacts	Viability of proceeding with the option?	How will success be measured	Where is the option best pursued?
1. **Masked Pockets of Deprivation**	Working with other bodies to ensure any funding achieved from commuted payments is directed, where applicable, to address localised areas of deprivation especially in providing access to services social activities.	There are pockets of marginalization and social exclusion both in our rural and urban areas.	Is a means of raising money to help to marginalised in our society. Can harness private sector finance therefore need not impact on the public finances. Can be focussed on tangible measures such as providing social and cultural infrastructure.	May be difficult to match the spatial occurrence of deprivation with new development pressures, making requests for developer contributions difficult.	Excellent. New development should be making a meaningful contribution to the social and cultural wellbeing of the communities it affects.	Deprivation Indices and Community Plan survey work.	As a strategic aspiration within the Core Strategy and buttressed by a tangible policy within the Planning Obligations SPD / CiL charging Schedule.
2 **Masked Pockets of Deprivation**	Promote locational and criteria based policies to ensure geographically equal provision of community facilities for all Wiltshire residents, with good transport links. Nurture through land allocations a central place theory based around community hubs.	As above	Would reflect national and regional guidance in reinforcing the sustainability of key local service centres which provide vital services to their rural catchment	There may be a concern within the service centres that the settlements do not need or want further growth to support service provision. The provision of service centres is reliant on providing adequate transport links for all, not just car owners.	Excellent. Accords with all tiers of policy and continues the focus of the existing structure and Local Plans	Deprivation Indices, Rural Facilities Survey, Annual Monitoring Report and Community Plan survey work.	As a strategic objective within the Core Strategy and implemented through policies within the Site Specific Allocations DPD.

3 **Masked Pockets of Deprivation**	Accept that the key indicators suggest that this is a thriving area, and accept that some isolation is inevitable in such a large rural area	As above	Would benefit the majority	Would ignore the greatest areas of need in the Area. Would take no account of areas of real problems which are masked by the overall health and wealth of the area	None We would not be meeting our obligations to our most deserving citizens	N/A	It is not
4 **Areas of Social Exclusion**	To promote key settlements as main service providers and focus new development upon them in a sustainable manner To ensure the service centres chosen give all reasonable access to a range of important services within a relatively short trip.	The IMD has revealed pockets of social exclusion masked by the overall healthy picture of the County	Would support existing market towns and large villages and their role as service providers. The spatial distribution would afford all a range of services within a relatively short trip. Would represent the most sustainable course of action	There may be a concern within the service centres that the settlements do not need or want further growth to support service provision. The provision of service centres is reliant on providing adequate transport links for all, not just car owners.	Excellent. Accords with all tiers of policy and continues the focus of the existing Structure and Local Plans	Deprivation Indices and next Social Inclusion Reviews	Through a strategic objective within the core strategy and then through the Site Specific Allocations DPD.
5 Areas of Social Exclusion	Identify spatially those most deprived areas and focus redevelopment proposals and planning gain on them as a priority	The IMD has revealed pockets of social exclusion masked by the overall healthy picture of the County	By identifying these areas we can focus new development or the planning gain from it on seeking to improve the situation of the minority	The location, especially in some isolated rural areas do not lend themselves to sustainable development and make it difficult to justify the use of planning gain remote from the development centres.	Should be considered where possible. Especially the use of planning gain to provide new social facilities or to improve access to them	Deprivation Indices and next Social Inclusion Reviews	Through a strategic objective within the core strategy and then through the Site Specific Allocations DPD.

6 **Areas of Social Exclusion**	Attempt to provide vital community facilities within each settlement, irrespective of size by allocating new mixed use developments.	As above	Would provide the best access to all by providing truly local facilities	The level of development required to deliver the requisite community facilities would swamp many villages and destroy their character. Extremely doubtful if the market would deliver on this scale. It would not represent sustainable pattern of developmental and would not accord with national and regional policy	Poor. It would be all but impossible to justify as it is at odds with national and regional government. It would be unlikely to be viable and would destroy the special character of many of our villages	N/A	It is not
7. Areas of Social Exclusion	Planning for new developments needs to demonstrate how they have taken account of those with characteristics which may inhibit their ability to fully partake in society such as the mobility impaired, hard of hearing, visually impaired, immigrants with limited English, stroke victims and so on	Access to services should not be confined the physical location of services and provision of good transport linkages, it should encompass all barriers to social inclusion such as ability to communicate or understand.	This would help address social inclusion and accessibility in a comprehensive fashion and would help tackle the root causes of social isolation	We must be sure that such issues can be legitimately pursued through the planning system.	Very good. There is a need for developers to prove that their new building is accessible in the widest sense of the word.	Customer feedback and social exclusion studies.	Through the Core Strategy.

8 Welfare Issues	Should health facilities be concentrated in accessible locations where a number of health facilities are provided together in one location?	Our evidence shows there are problems with access to services so we have to strike a balance between dispersing healthcare provision and ensuring it is an appropriate, sustainable location.	To deliver the appropriate facilities at the most appropriate level.	There may need to be some rationalisation of existing services in order to consolidate provision in key settlements.	Excellent. Accords with all tiers of policy and continues the focus of the existing Local Plan	Health and welfare indicators including members drawing disability benefits, Rural Facilities Studies, Social Exclusion Study, Census, customer feedback surveys.	
9 Welfare Issues	Should new development be expected to make a contribution towards the provision of healthcare facilities, for which they are adding to the demand?	Some forms of new development create the need for additional facilities including healthcare.	Facilities are provided to the community to meet their needs.	Developer contributions are a complicated matter and need to be considered carefully	Fair – a clear understanding of the extent that developer contributions can be collected needs to be gained to formulate policies	The amount of contributions collected	Through the Core Strategy.
10 Welfare Issues	Should the Local Development Framework take account of the ageing population by enabling the provision of new large-scale residential care facilities in the County or should the emphasis be on smaller scale provision for local needs dispersed around the County?	The need to provide healthcare to the aging population	Meet the need for healthcare facilities. Provide facilities in locations around the county	Large scale – dominant forms of development not dispersed. Small scale – Development in smaller centres.	Fair. There is a choice – either one will meet the need.	Number of facilities provided to meet the need.	Through the Core Strategy.
11 Welfare Issues	Should all new development take account of use by those with disabilities or barriers to inclusion?	The need to provide inclusive development	Meeting the needs of all people and allowing access for all.	None identified	Good – this options is supported by government aims and inclusive policies	The number of developments providing access to those with disabilities and barriers to inclusion	Through the Core Strategy.

12 Access to Services	Should we promote key settlements as main service providers and focus new development upon them in a sustainable manner, to ensure the service centres chosen give all reasonable access to a range of important services within a relatively short trip?	Evidence shows that there is a continued need for access to services to meet the needs of a variety of people.	Access to key services and facilities in larger centres providing more sustainable centres and improved links to the wider area.	Some smaller centres receive limited development, although they will be connected to larger service areas.	Good. Accords with all tiers of planning policy and the aims of sustainable development.	The level of access to services within the area and trip time to reach key services.	Through the Core Strategy.
13 Access to Services	Attempt to provide vital community facilities within each settlement, irrespective of size by allocating new mixed use developments.	As above	Would provide the best access to all by providing truly local facilities	The level of development required to deliver the requisite community facilities would swamp many villages and destroy their character. Extremely doubtful if the market would deliver on this scale. It would not represent sustainable pattern of developmental and would not accord with national and regional policy	Poor. It would be all but impossible to justify as it is at odds with national and regional government. It would be unlikely to be viable and would destroy the special character of many of our villages	N/A	It is not

14. Protecting local shops, pubs and post offices	Should the Local Development Framework aim to support vulnerable village shops, post offices and public houses?	The evidence base shows that these facilities are highly valued by the community and that they are under pressure of closure.	Would seek to ensure best possible access to services and break down barriers to social inclusion, which in Wiltshire explicitly include access to facilities.	None perceived	Excellent and essential to safeguard important facilities throughout the county.	Rural facilities survey.	Core Strategy policy and dedicated SPD
15. Protecting local shops, pubs and post offices	Should we seek policies, which prevent change of use unless it has been convincingly proved that they are no longer viable as businesses?	As above	As above	None	As above	As above	Detailed criteria based policy within the Core Strategy
16 Protecting local shops, pubs and post offices	Distribution of what are basically commercial operations should be left unfettered to the free market to determine.	Interventionist polices and social engineering were discredited in the 1960's. The principal of 'use it or lose it' is a fair one.	Distribution of commercially driven services would follow consumer demand.	Although market forces would deliver a pattern of viable services, there are areas of need, especially in the more remote rural areas where such facilities are a lifeline, but have smaller margins. This in turn may mean that the residential value of the property is more attractive to the owner than the commercial operation	All tiers of guidance and analysis of the evidence base make it explicit that these facilities perform a vital function, especially in the rural areas and hence local planning polices should seek to retain them. Hence doing nothing is not a viable option.	Rural facilities survey.	It is not

17. **Safeguarding and enhancing cultural activities.**	Should the Local Development Framework aim to promote cultural facilities in key settlements as main service centres to ensure that all have reasonable access to a range of such facilities?	IMD has revealed pockets of social exclusion masked by the overall healthy picture of the Area	Would support existing market towns and large villages and their role as service providers. The spatial distribution would afford all a range of cultural opportunities within a relatively short trip. Would represent the most sustainable course of action	There may be a concern within the service centres that the settlements do not need or want further growth to support service provision. The provision of service centres is reliant on providing adequate transport links for all, not just car owners.	Excellent. Accords with all tiers of policy and continues the focus of the existing Structure and Local Plans	Social Inclusion Reviews, Best Value Household Survey, Community Plans and Rural Facilities Survey	Through the Core Strategy.
18. **Safeguarding and enhancing cultural activities.**	Developers should be expected to make contribution to providing cultural opportunities for which their building will help create a demand?	There is a need to ensure that major new development makes a contribution to the social infrastructure for which it is creating additional demand	Carefully located new development can make a meaningful contribution to the cultural offer of the area and can help tackle pockets of social exclusion	There may be a concern within the service centres that the settlements do not need or want further growth to support service provision. The provision of service centres is reliant on providing adequate transport links for all, not just car owners.	Excellent. New developments should be expected to make a contribution to the social infrastructure on which they are placing an additional burden	Social Inclusion Reviews, Best Value Household Survey, Community Plans and Rural Facilities Survey	Through the Core Strategy and the CiL charging schedule

19 Transport and access to services	In order to help fight social exclusion and to reduce the need to travel by car, should the Local Development Framework direct future development to locations accessible by public transport?	National and regional policy are focussed on attempt to provide a vital community facilities service centres which are main towns and villages which can serve their hinterland	Would support existing market towns and large villages and their role as service providers. The spatial distribution would afford all a range of cultural opportunities within a relatively short trip.	Evidence shows the main areas of social exclusion are based around access the services. In the rural area, travel to main service centres is often reliant on the private motorcar.	Excellent, but the issues of public transport within the rural areas must be addressed	Social Inclusion Reviews, Best Value Household Survey, Community Plans and Rural Facilities Survey	Through a strategic objective and policy within the core strategy.
20. Transport and access to services	Do you agree that the Local Development Framework should seek to encourage the use of public transport, walking and cycling as alternatives to car travel where practical?	Sustainability	Providing meaningful choices can help reduce reliance on the private motorcar	In a large rural area it is difficult to offer meaningful alternatives in every case	Excellent, underpinning principle of national, regional and local policy	Social Inclusion Reviews, Best Value Household Survey, Community Plans and Rural Facilities Survey	Through a strategic objective and policy within the core strategy.
21. Transport and access to services	Do you agree that the LDF should include policies which try and help breakdown access barriers to services by requiring major developments to include access plans which include providing adequate public transport choices and cater for physical, language and cultural issues some of our citizens may have?	The IMD has revealed pockets of social exclusion masked by the overall healthy picture of the County.	Would seek to ensure best possible access to services and break down barriers to social inclusion, which in Salisbury explicitly include access to facilities.	In a large rural area it is difficult to offer meaningful alternatives in every case	Excellent, underpinning principle of national, regional and local policy and is a cross cutting objective	Social Inclusion Reviews, Community Plans and Rural Facilities Survey	Through a strategic objective and policy within the core strategy.

22. Transport and access to services	Do you think we should have a policy require developers to pay towards public and community transport, walking and cycling improvements	The IMD has revealed pockets of social exclusion masked by the overall healthy picture of the County	Would seek to ensure best possible access to services and break down barriers to social inclusion, which in Wiltshire explicitly include access to facilities.	The legitimacy of this approach would have to be tested	Good if legitimacy is confirmed	Social Inclusion Reviews, Community Plans and Rural Facilities Survey	Through a strategic objective and policy within the core strategy.
23 Crime and Community Safety	Do you agree that using appropriate design measures ("designing out crime") will be effective in reducing crime and the fear of crime?	The community plans clearly show that the fear of came is a major priority across our entire County.	Careful planning of new development can greatly reduce the opportunities for crime	It is difficult to retrofit to existing communities	Excellent	Crime statistics and Community Planning surveys	Through the Core Strategy.
24. Crime and Community Safety	Do you agree that the LDF should allow planning gain money to be put towards preventative measures as prioritized in partnership with the police, such as CCTV, lighting and community policing?	The community plans clearly show that the fear of crime is a major priority across our entire County	Can be used to contribute solutions to existing communities.	Legitimacy of the approach needs to be tested.	Good	Crime statistics and Community Planning surveys	Strategic objective in Core Strategy and then Wiltshire wide design guidance SPD
25. Crime and Community Safety	We should accept that crime rates are below the national average and prioritise on other issues accordingly. This issue needs to be placed into perspective	The community plans show that crime is a top priority for the community and hence there is no room for complacency is trying to address their concerns	Would allow diversion of resources onto other priorities	Would not address a key message we are receiving from our communities.	Poor.	As above	It should not

26. Sports, Leisure and Recreation	Should new development be expected to make a contribution towards the provision of sport, leisure and open space facilities, for which they are adding to the demand and should this also include commercial development likely to attract people to the County?	The evidence base shows a general shortfall of facilities, both qualitative and quantitative across the county.	Would allow the shortfalls to be addressed	None	Excellent	Facilities Survey and Open Space Survey	Saved local plan policies until Green Infrastructure SPD
27. Sports, Leisure and Recreation	The identified shortfall and opportunities to enhance sports, leisure and open spaces, should be reflected through the polices of the LDF?	The evidence base shows a general shortfall of facilities, both qualitative and quantitative across the County.	Would allow the shortfalls to be addressed	None	Excellent	Facilities Survey and Open Space Survey	Saved local plan policies until Green Infrastructure SPD
28. Sports, Leisure and Recreation	Should the LDF promote greater accessibility to dual use facilities such as school playing fields?	The Social Inclusion Review for the Area has revealed pockets of social exclusion based particularly around barriers to services and facilities	Would seek to ensure best possible access to services and break down barriers to social inclusion, which in Wiltshire explicitly include access to facilities.	Could a conflict of demand be generated and could school security be compromised	Good, but logistics need to be addressed in partnership with the schools.	Open Space Survey and rural facilities study	Saved local plan policies until Green Infrastructure SPD
29. Digital Inclusion	Should the LDF promote greater accessibility broadband and IT	Research undertaken by the council has revealed that the County has a poor broadband coverage, and that there are many people that don't access the internet.	Would seek to ensure best possible access to digital services	None	Excellent	Broadband coverage and usage	Through a strategic objective and policy within the core strategy.

Appendix 1

Conclusions from the paper 'Wiltshire Town & Country Themes - An analysis of community needs and aspirations from Community Area Plans Parish Plans & Village Design Statements'

Community Area Plans: Sub Conclusion

2.2 The 22 Community Area Plans represent community based planning covering 100% of the area of the County. The three most prominent topics within the Community Area Plans reviewed were;

Transport

- Poor access to public transport, high cost and co-ordination of services to local needs
- High rural traffic levels and congestion due to need to travel for most goods and services. No intention of changing from dependence on the private car however, even if public transport improved, but desire for ease of use to be improved as well as necessity for use to be reduced through improving self containment.

Community

- Lack of entertainment and recreation resulting in low level youth crime and boredom

Vitality of Centres.

- Lack of retail critical mass making centres unviable for complete local or 'one trip does it all' shopping.
- Degraded urban environment discouraging investment and lowering morale – again encouraging travel.

The above issues are clearly linked and should be understood as such. People value the local identity of where they live, but find many of their towns and villages have become impracticable for modern life without dependence on the car due to a lack of local facilities. The extent of travel that this generates creates its own problems; congestion, traffic accidents and a diminished quality of life.

2.3 Other topics that were seen as important were:

- Health Provision of permanent local or mobile services
- ICT Better access and quality of service for broadband, Wi-Fi and mobile phone
- Education. Main concerns with lifelong learning / employment related access rather than schools
- Environment. Balancing human needs with ecologically viable habitats was a central theme as was better access to recycling facilities.
- Economy. Local employment, potentially in tourism was something the community felt should be encouraged
- Flooding. The defence of properties at risk was mentioned
- Military. A very small response indicated that the re-balancing of some communities was sought
- Utilities. A very small response indicated concern at sewerage infrastructure, especially in relation to new development.

The underlying feeling was that the potential quality of life in many centres in Wiltshire was good; however what people were asking for was the minimum of infrastructure to sustain and where necessary improve it to modern levels.

2.4 Undoubtedly, some of the above comments reflect Wiltshire's dispersed settlement pattern, which is comprised in the main of small and medium sized centres. Using a traditional market led economic model, few of these have the critical mass necessary to retain a comprehensive range of services and facilities in the face of 'rationalised' state facilities and the viability needs of market investors. The result is a situation where no one settlement has all that a community needs to survive in terms of shop, banks and post offices, medical and education facilities, entertainment and the like. Inevitably this encourages travel, something that in the absence of a comprehensive and affordable public transport system is achieved mainly by private car. In turn this creates issues of congestion and wear and tear on the road infrastructure.

2.5 The concentration on local, neighbourhood issues; things that directly impact one's ability to live in an area and enjoyment of it, may also reflect the nature of the plans. Community Area Plans are, by their nature, local in focus and generally concern themselves with issues of importance to people already living there. This is in contrast to the more strategic focus of 'Wiltshire 2026'.

2.6 Frequency of mention scores for politically heavy-weight issues (such as health and education) are surprisingly low, especially that for education, which rated less mention than the provision of ICT such as broadband. However, Wiltshire is a relatively healthy county and has an education system that scores highly on independent measures of success. A lower frequency may therefore represent a degree of success in these services serving the population. Main concerns with both health and education were with access – a transport related issue, and education issues related mainly to lifelong learning rather than schools and colleges.

2.7 The tone of the comments is noticeably milder than that of the 2009 consultation responses to Wiltshire 2026. In part this may because the Community Area Plans are finished documents taking a positive and pro-active stance. Wiltshire 2026 provided a platform for a wide range of grievances and problems to be aired and this is undoubtedly reflected in the more forceful tone. However this does not seem to be an adequate explanation for the striking difference that exists.

2.8 The average start date for public consultations for all Community Plans was 2003, a considerable period of time before the much later Wiltshire 2026 exercise. Given this period of time, two alternative possibilities present themselves. On balance, it is possible that:

- People's experience may be that infrastructure failings are getting worse, and / or
- Their aspirations may be increasing.

There is no way of confirming either of these possibilities without further research. However, population pressure has certainly been increasing. Between the earlier consultations in 2003, and Wiltshire 2026 in 2009, the County population grew by some 16,100 (Census projections). The over-riding issue with which the public were concerned in Wiltshire 2026 was infrastructure. It seems unlikely that this would be such a dominant issue without some change; some motivational impetus, either objective or subjective in nature, to push the matter up the agenda.

2.9 In summary, the Community Area Plans reveal aspirations for infrastructure aimed at maintaining and sustaining a high quality of modern life within a dispersed and essentially ancient settlement pattern. This has implications for transport (both facilitating easy movement and counteracting the undesirable consequences of this) and also for the local provision of services and facilities.

2.10 While aspirations will always tend to run ahead of resources, what people are essentially seeking are the maintenance of the essential organs of social and material life; the essential physical infrastructure components of community. They want to get on with running and managing their communities themselves so far as they are able, but are simply asking for the physical means to do so.

2.11 People understand full well and support the desirability of creating more self-sustaining settlements that have sufficient critical mass to be more than disaggregated dormitories and workplaces. They know this will reduce the need to travel and have significant personal and environmental benefits.

3.1 Parish Plans: Sub Conclusion

3.2 A total of 243 parishes were contacted via e mail, drawn from the Council's database Further research was undertaken using an internet search using the 243 village names. Community First were also contacted and supplied a list of Parish Plans for Wiltshire which included several that had only been published as hard copy. In total thirty nine (39) parishes were found to have conventionally or electronically published Parish Plans, or 16% of the total.

3.3 Generally speaking the broad range of issues identified in Parish Plans is similar to that revealed by the fore-going analysis of Community Area Plans. In particular transport and community issues dominate both. However, the focus continues to 'telescope down' to an even more local and essentially rural level. One result is that, whereas the majority of concerns at Community Area level centred on issues related to the health and vitality of *centres* and the difficulties of connecting these with public and private transport, the Parish Plans were as concerned with the quality of their natural and social environments.

3.4 The shift in focus (which sees health, education and structural urban issues decline in perceived importance in favour of rural and social ones) is perfectly logical; rural settlements are small and environmental issues such as the fate of the local pond or wood are bound to loom large. Most people know their neighbours. Additionally, health and education are generally perceived to be services delivered at a more strategic level and hence of less relevance to a specifically parish plan. One gets the strong impression that their creators saw Parish Plans as practical vehicles for positive change rather than mechanisms to express more political concerns.

3.5 The general tone of responses and comments also continues to soften, from Wiltshire 2026 (which had a critical element to the responses), through the Community Area Plans to these Parish documents. The communities reflected in the latter seemed to be the most content and happy with their local circumstances. This might represent the perceived pleasures of rural life, and to an extent may be genuine. However it may also reflect something of a self selecting sample. Whereas every Community Area, affluent or less affluent, has a plan, only some 16 **%** of Wiltshire's parishes have a Parish Plan. Given the resources required, it would not be surprising to expect the majority of plans to derive from the more affluent and indeed larger parishes. A rather unscientific glance through the list based on nothing more than local knowledge suggests that this may indeed be the case.

3.6 The most mentioned three issues at parish level were:

Transport

Still the most mentioned item, but a different focus from Community Plans, with safety and not public transport the major concern. While public transport improvements were sought, most plans accepted that use of the private car was inevitable and simply wanted this facilitated through better maintenance, junction, safety and other improvements including parking. People wanted to do their travelling by car, but to be travelling less. This aspiration has already been achieved in other European countries. In Germany, for example, car ownership is higher than in Britain, but car use is less.

Community.

Parishes, like Community Areas, felt that the community-based issues of leisure and recreation were important. Both were concerned about crime, but parishes were less so. There was a feeling that low-level anti-social behaviour could be addressed through the provision of better youth facilities as much as enforcement.

Environment.

Better recycling facilities were sought by both Community Areas and Parishes, and both were concerned about wildlife habitats, green space and green infrastructure. However, a major concern for Parishes, not expressed much at Community Area level, were the problems of dog mess and litter. Rural areas are almost certain to be subject to more dog walking, so this is not surprising. Fly tipping at the edge of villages was also seen as a problem. At the same time, there is a possibility that smaller communities will feel a greater sense of protective ownership over their own space.

A number of parishes expressed an interest in establishing community renewable energy schemes. Several expressed concern at localised flooding – mainly caused by poor road and field drainage infrastructure.

3.7 The above three issues were closely followed by:

Centre/vitality

There was evidently a lot of affection by residents for the places where they lived. While a perceived need to regenerate the urban fabric of them was more pronounced in the Community Area Plans; it nevertheless received a substantial amount of attention in the Parish Plans also. Nevertheless, in both Parishes and Community Areas, there was clear recognition that rural communities needed more than the mere physical beauty of a village, town or country setting to sustain them as living, thriving social communities.

Issues raised under this heading included both essentially 'retail' ones and those relating to physical regeneration. However, the infrastructure required could be defined as 'the facilities to enable modern life to function on a weekly basis without absolute need for the car.' That is, for a town or village to contain the minimum of facilities to enable people to meet all their social, recreational and domestic needs during the working week without the absolute necessity of travelling by car (it being accepted that some external travel would be necessary or desirable, for example on a weekly basis).

3.8 Desired facilities included:

- Retail facilities – general stores / supermarkets, hardware stores. Local availability and choice were prized.
- Social facilities – recreation and sports, pubs, restaurants, premises for clubs and meetings
- Health, education and domestic facilities – GP / School / Petrol station and garage / Post Office, hair dressers

These facilities were seen as much more than just physical infrastructure. It was something that improved the vitality of a centre and in so doing enabled a more relaxed lifestyle that reduced the need to travel – the latter being clearly regarded as unpleasant and a necessary evil by many.

For many of Wiltshire's villages and towns depicted in both Community Area Plans and Parish Plans, these Physical facilities were merely the matrix that sustained community life through enabling and encouraging face-to face interaction. For example, a number of plans noted that the village shop, as well as being a valuable source of domestic supplies, was used as a source of information on local issues and events more than the parish newsletter or magazine. These social nodes had therefore a key role in spreading information, creating social bonds, forming opinion and ultimately in taking action.

- Health.
  Concerns in both Community Area and Parish Plans were focussed mainly on access rather than quality; 'access' being in terms of both proximity to services and opening hours. There was frustration that public transport links with health services were often poor and expensive. The main single health based concern was with a lack of local dentistry facilities, especially an NHS service.

  Within local communities there was a feeling that infrastructure to facilitate older and disabled people living in their communities needed to be improved (for example, access to buildings; road crossings, suitably adapted accommodation and mobile / visiting specialist services).

- Education.

In both sets of Plans, there was almost no criticism of the education service in Wiltshire, the main concern being improving local access to adult (and to a much lesser degree pre- school) education).

3.9 Other issues were:

ICT Both Parish and Community Area Plans sought to improve broadband speed and coverage, and to upgraded mobile network quality. There was some demand for public access points – such as internet cafes.

Economy Parish plans tended to have an ambivalent attitude towards employment related issues. There was, perhaps surprisingly, greater demand in the Parish Plans for land and facilities to support local employment development than in the Community Area Plans. However, some parishes were concerned about traffic levels that might be generated as a result.

Utilities Some parishes had concerns with the need to extend and improve water (especially sewerage), gas and electricity networks. Some rural areas had experienced difficulty in obtaining reliable energy supplies (whether by failed oil deliveries or electricity outages).

3.10 There are several clear impressions that reading through all 39 published Parish Plans give.

1. Most communities feel that their quality of life is essentially good, but that some key infrastructure elements needed to sustain community life have either eroded over time, are under threat or simply need modernising and upgrading to make them fit for 21st century living.

2. Rather than simply expecting external agencies to take over and deliver what is required however, most parishes are proud to be, or aspire to be, independent communities. Their desire is to have sufficiently localised facilities to make a good lifestyle possible principally by reducing the need to travel. Physical improvement of facilities is however invariably considered to be as much part of facilitating communication, cementing social ties and building community cohesion as it is about convenient access to goods and services.

3. There is strong evidence that communities at the parish level across Wiltshire are willing and able to take action to solve everyday problems and simply want the advice, assistance or funding to be able to do so. They feel that their local knowledge, combined with well judged external input is a good combination that has not been fully exploited in the past. This is something that chimes well with the Localism agenda.

4. While the main foci of Parish plans is practical and social, there is also considerable concern for environmental and green issues in terms of:

    - Reducing waste and recycling
    - Caring for countryside and wildlife
    - Generating renewable energy

5. Economic issues are also seen as important by some parishes, although attitudes towards fostering local employment are ambivalent; desired as a means of reducing travel and saving time, but feared on account of potential negative local impacts including traffic generation.

4.1 Village Design Statements: Sub Conclusion

4.2 There is overall similarity between the overall picture revealed by Village Design Statements (VDSs) and Parish Plans (PPs). Differences are principally down to the different scope of the two documents; in particular VDSs are focussed more on matter of design and appearance, whereas

Parish Plans are generally more concerned with functionality. Neither is an infrastructure plan per se, but VDSs are, understandably more remote from this than PPs and consequently have less to say.

4.3 Bearing in mind the above, it comes as no surprise that issues change places in terms of their prominence between the PP and VDS data. In both sets of documents, 'Transport' remains a key issue. However, 'Community' slips further down the list in VDSs, and 'Environment' rises sharply. 'Education' and 'Health,' both with slight or nonexistent design implications, also reduce is prominence in VDSs. Such differences relate more to the nature of the documents than to any actual difference in the central infrastructure message coming back from the communities.

4.4 Generally speaking the picture is similar. The towns and villages with VDSs feel that their way of life is essentially good, but that some key infrastructure elements needed to sustain community life have either eroded over time, are under threat or need modernising to make them fit for 21st century living. Rather than expecting external agencies to take over and deliver what is required however, most villages prefer to be independent communities. Their desire is to have help and advice in delivering sufficiently localised facilities to make a continued good lifestyle possible.

4.5 In terms of issues:

- Transport
  Transport issues will inevitably be key in a county with a dispersed settlement patterns and lack of major urban centre. What people told us was similar to the message from both PPs and the Community Area Plans.

  Safety is an important concern, especially in terms of the vulnerability of pedestrians and cyclists travelling along country roads and lanes within settlements, although crossings of major roads were also seen as hazardous, as were some junctions. Speed was the principle issue however, with calls for 20 and even 10mph limits within some parts of some villages.

  Respondents are wedded to car use, principally out of necessity in terms of both lack of suitable public transport alternatives, but more particularly a lack of a broad enough range of local facilities to sustain modern living. It is doubtful whether even very significant public transport improvements would change this fundamental attitude and pattern. However, respondents regard travelling as an essentially negative experience in terms of time wasted and physical difficulties like congestion. The villages want car travel to be facilitated by better maintenance and on occasion by engineering solutions such as junction improvements and bypasses. Nevertheless overall, there is a desire to reduce the need to travel chiefly by providing sufficient local facilities of all types to make this unnecessary. The provision of sufficient local infrastructure is therefore central in achieving this aim.

  A substantial response indicating a need for improved parking seems at first a surprising result for an essentially rural study. However this relates to peak parking demand at key village facilities, especially schools, and the impact this can have on narrow rural roads.

- Environment
  The need to preserve and enhance the rural environment was a strong theme, both in terms of biodiversity and of human access and appreciation. A thriving natural countryside was seen as closely related to human quality of life. Green infrastructure implications included nature reserves, ponds and improved yet regulated access such as pathways. Some modern infrastructure was felt to impact negatively on the environment and there was a desire for this to be mitigated, for example by better controlling wastes and litter, and by reducing both noise, and particularly, light pollution.

  A concern with flooding related mainly to localised storm flooding of roads, something that required better maintenance of rivers and streams as well as road and related drains.

- Centre / Vitality
  There was a feeling that modern life had frequently impacted negatively on the rural scene and that there was a need to ensure that necessary functional infrastructure should not adversely affect an area aesthetically. In particular cables should be undergrounded and lost

character features restored. Street furniture should be of good quality and where necessary regeneration projects should be undertaken to remove eyesores or improve access to / enhance features. Local people were felt to have good design understanding based on a long term view of how places are changing stemming from actual experience and an awareness of rural traditions.

- Community

Community concerns were similar to those voiced in PPs. Improvement of recreational and leisure facilities and a mild concern with crime.

- Economy

Surprisingly, VDSs showed a generally positive response to local employment, with a call for more premises and land being available. However, concerns regarding potential negative impacts, especially traffic generation were also present.

- ICT / Utilities

There was a feeling that sustainability would be improved by upgrading ICT infrastructure, in terms of Broadband, TV and mobile services, thereby enabling a reduction in the need to travel. Some existing infrastructure (water, sewerage, gas and electricity) was felt to be inadequate or under strain and not capable of bearing development pressure or delivering sustainable development without improvement and extension.

- Health and Education

These topics produced a minimal response. However the role of schools in cementing together a community was expressed, especially in providing a place to meet and facilitating communication. There was a wish for this role to be extended to the entire community through increased lifelong learning opportunities.

4.6 There is strong evidence that communities at the village level across Wiltshire care very much about the community where they live, the way of life it affords, its appearance and wider environment and the social and physical infrastructure needed to make it work acceptably. Local people are willing and able to take action to solve everyday problems and frequently want the advice, assistance or funding to be able to do so. They feel that their local knowledge, combined with well judged external input is a good combination that has not been fully exploited in the past. This is something that chimes well with the Localism agenda.

[i] http://www.swbiodiversity.org.uk/Regional/swbappage.htm
[ii] http://www.swenvo.org.uk/publications/SOE_2006_FINAL.pdf
[iii] http://www.alge.org.uk/publications/files/index.php

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For further information please visit the following website:

http://consult.wiltshire.gov.uk/portal