

Westbury Area Board – 16 June 2012

Chairman's Announcement

Rural Facilities Survey 2012

The rural facilities survey maps the services and amenities available to rural communities within the Wiltshire Council area. The survey has been carried out since 1976, painting a picture of some 233 rural settlements in the county of Wiltshire across 35 years. This gives us a wealth of data to support local communities in rural parts of the county and allows us to track changes in facilities including education and childcare services, local health facilities, food shops, spiritual and leisure facilities and public transport. In recent years, the survey has also examined access to services such as broadband internet connections and mobile phone coverage. There has been a significant decline in a number of basic facilities since 1976. The number of settlements with primary schools has decreased by around 30%, while around two thirds of villages have lost their general food shop. Less than half of settlements in 2008 retained the Post Office they had in 1976. Public transport, however, has improved vastly over the period of the survey.

The most recent survey was carried out in 2008 and a report outlining the results and trends revealed can be seen on the intelligence network website¹ along with an update taking into account the changes to the Wiltshire County Community Area boundaries that occurred in April 2009.

The survey is repeated around every three years and the latest survey is scheduled to be carried out during Spring 2012. Over the coming weeks, the survey will be posted out to the parish clerks for the settlements included in the database and their input is critical to making the survey a success. The results will be analysed for all 20 of Wiltshire's Community Areas and the overview report published in the autumn. The results will also form part of the evidence base that will be used to refresh the Joint Strategic Assessment for Wiltshire.

For more information, please contact:

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¹ www.intelligencenetwork.org.uk/community