



People, places and promises

The Wiltshire Community Plan 2011 - 2026

Consultation draft



June 2010

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Have your say:

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For further information

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Message from the chairman of the Wiltshire Assembly



Welcome to the Wiltshire community plan consultation document. This plan focuses on **people, places and promises**, and sets out our clear vision, priorities and objectives that, together, we will work towards over the next 15 years. Our aim is to build on what we already have and make Wiltshire an even better place in which to live and work. But this can only be achieved if we all agree and sign up to the future direction and actively work together to make it happen.

One thing is for sure, nothing stands still and change is inevitable. The new coalition government has a radical agenda for transforming society through challenging people to take responsibility for themselves and their communities. In Wiltshire we want as many people and organisations as possible to share in shaping and influencing that change for the good of everyone.

We recognise there will be tensions between environmental, social and economic matters; that we will identify competing needs, not all of which can be met equally; and that there is often a gap between what we say we want and the sort of outcomes our behaviour leads to. Those are tensions that we will need to acknowledge and negotiate in our consultations. That is also why we need a plan which we all own to guide the actions of the many agencies and partnerships that work in the county.

This is your opportunity to have your say about what Wiltshire should be like in the future. What do you want Wiltshire to be like in 5-10-15 years time? The Wiltshire Assembly has been thinking about this for a while and their ideas are set out in this consultation plan, but they are keen to involve as many people as possible, take account of their views, and make a plan that is truly worthy of Wiltshire, its people and places.

Thank you in advance for your interest and contribution. Following consultation, the plan will be finalised by the end of the year and will be taken forward from 2011 onwards.

Whether you are representing an organisation, your family or yourself, your views are important to making this plan – and our promises to Wiltshire - a reality.

Best wishes

John

The Venerable John Wraw
Archdeacon of Wiltshire

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Introduction

People, places and promises is the theme of the new Wiltshire community plan. It sets out the long term vision and direction for the whole of Wiltshire to the year 2026.

The plan has been produced by the Wiltshire Assembly, building on the valuable work it has done over the last year. It also takes account of the wide ranging intelligence in the Joint Strategic Assessment (JSA) and the emerging radical agenda from the new coalition government. It is acknowledged that data may be amended as the JSA is developed.

The community plan is intentionally short and concise, which helps to promote clarity and understanding. It acts as an 'umbrella' for a hierarchy of plans which will both influence the community plan and be influenced by it. Over time they will be closely linked together.

Of particular importance is the Local Agreement for Wiltshire (LAW) which translates the community plan vision into a number of key ambitions and details the shorter term actions that will be taken by agencies and through partnerships.

The plan will be delivered by many agencies, partnerships and communities working together to achieve the objectives outlined in section three. It is vital to the success of the plan that it achieves wide ownership and is recognised as providing the future vision for Wiltshire.

Given the pace of change locally and nationally, the plan will be regularly reviewed and treated as a live document. The latest version will be held on the Wiltshire Assembly partnership website with changes highlighted.

Building stronger more resilient communities

Building stronger, more resilient communities is the established vision for Wiltshire. The recent change to government with its focus on the 'big society not

To help build and protect resilient communities the Wiltshire Assembly has identified three priorities:

- **Creating an economy that is fit for the future**
- **Reducing disadvantage and inequalities**
- **Tackling climate change**

Work will be targeted in these three areas and together they should help to achieve the vision. The challenge will be to achieve the objectives with fewer resources and more demands, in a rapidly changing society.

big government' further strengthens its continued relevance and importance. But what does it really mean? The vision is all about people and places, fostering a sense of belonging and being a part of a local community.

People living in places which have a strong sense of community tend to enjoy a better quality of life in terms of their happiness, health and well-being. Such communities have strong social networks and relationships; they will often enjoy vibrant and diverse voluntary and community participation. It means they can better solve problems and improve life for themselves without needing extensive external support and intervention.

At the other end of the scale, people living in places without a strong sense of community often experience a poorer quality of life. This can occur in communities suffering from poverty, disadvantage and inequalities. Their ability to work together to solve problems can be reduced and significant intervention is often necessary. This can create unsustainable dependency on public services and state benefits. It is in these communities that help is often needed in developing social networks to build self-reliance.

1 People and places: Setting the scene

Something for everyone

Wiltshire is a great place to live and work. It is a patchwork of traditional market towns, stunning countryside and heritage, where people are generally healthy and live longer, and they get on well together. Deprivation is generally low and our communities are safe environments in which to live. It is a place of opportunity where skills are put to good use and unemployment is low.

**It is certainly a place
to be proud of!**

We must be careful though that the benefits are not taken for granted. Many facets of our life in Wiltshire could be undermined by economic, social, and environmental changes occurring locally, nationally and even globally.

Distinct challenges Wiltshire faces include:

- pockets of 'hidden' deprivation in some urban and rural areas
- lower earnings and higher house prices
- highest CO2 emissions of any county in the South West
- increasing elderly population, putting added pressures on services
- high levels of out-commuting in some parts of the county
- a gap in educational attainment and lower aspirations of young people
- low satisfaction levels in public services

The community plan vision and priorities must tackle these challenges if we are to protect and enhance Wiltshire into the future.



What is Wiltshire like?

Wiltshire's economy, like many rural areas, is largely made up of micro¹ (86.7%) and small² (10.8%) businesses. There are also comparatively high levels of self-employment, particularly in the rural areas. This situation makes it easier for the local economy to respond quickly to changes in the market, but it does mean it tends to miss out on the greater investment, research and development and training that larger firms bring.

Its rural location also goes some way to explaining the very high car ownership levels and also why 24% of employed people commute to outside the county, often to higher paid professional and managerial jobs in Bath and Swindon in particular. This leads to a net loss of these skilled people to the Wiltshire economy and seems to lie behind the marked difference between levels of workplace earnings and the income of Wiltshire residents.

Wiltshire's employment

Wiltshire's largest employment sector comprises wholesale and retail businesses. This is also the sector with the largest numbers of separate work places, or 'business units'. However, there was no growth in business stock 1998-2008 in Wiltshire and we have fewer retail businesses in particular than the UK average. This sector is not a major contributor to Gross Value Added (GVA)³.

The second largest employment sector is real estate, renting and business activities. This sector significantly increased 1997-2007 and is now higher than the regional average, but not yet as high as it is nationally. This sector – financial and business services – is the largest contributor to GVA in Wiltshire (30.8% in 2007).

¹ Fewer than 10 employees with an annual turnover of £1.8 million or less

² Fewer than 50 employees with an annual turnover of £5.6 million or less

³ A measure of the extent to which an individual industry, sector or geographical area is efficient in adding economic value through the way it makes things or provides services.

Another large contributor to GVA (23.2%) in Wiltshire is government and other local services, such as public administration, health and social work, education and defence. Although Wiltshire still has higher than average employment in public administration and defence, it did lose a substantial amount of employment in this sector 1997-2007 and is expected to lose more by 2020.

The third major contributor to GVA (23.1%) is the distribution, transport and communications sector, including hotels and restaurants. Although Wiltshire has employment specialisation in hotels and restaurants, it is under-represented in transport and in storage and communications.

Wiltshire also has a higher percentage of employees in manufacturing than regionally and nationally, despite employment losses 1997-2007. More job losses are predicted by 2020.

This means that the Wiltshire economy is particularly dependent on public sector employment and on financial and business services, possibly with the emphasis more on business services within this sector. With the recession, and the public sector deficit, both these sectors will come under considerable pressure over the next few years.

Another factor that will affect the Wiltshire economy over the next 15 years is the relative lack of growth in the numbers of those of working age. Currently, Wiltshire has a high proportion of its workforce in the 50+ age group and over the next decade or so this group will move into retirement, leading to a rapid growth in the retired population and a loss of skills and experience that will be hard to replace.



Wiltshire's deprivation

As a county, Wiltshire is not a deprived area, although there are three small areas - two in Trowbridge and one in Salisbury - which are in the top 20% of deprived areas nationally.

We must also take into account the studies that have shown that the rural areas of the county have deprived people in almost every community, but that rural areas are less deprived than the larger towns, with the only exception being with respect to access to key services, in particular for older people. This latter situation is partly a result of the geographical isolation of some communities, but also of the decline in many rural services over the last 30 years.

Wiltshire's military

The military presence is a distinctive feature of Wiltshire. In total, around 7% of the total Wiltshire population are military personnel or their dependents. Because of the location of the military on Salisbury Plain, in some communities in this area the proportion rises to over 20%, for example Tidworth, Bulford, Durrington, Upavon, Larkhill, Warminster East, Lyneham, and Colerne.

The setting up of the Salisbury Plain super garrison will lead to an overall rise of 1,300 in personnel by 2012. On the other hand, the closure of RAF Lyneham could lead to a reduction in military personnel, although the future use of the site is still under discussion.

Wiltshire's house prices

Wiltshire is a desirable place to live and, as the high level of out-commuting shows, it is also within easy reach of a number of large employment centres in surrounding counties. This, combined with the fact that 37.8% of the housing stock is detached, leads to higher than average house prices.

In Wiltshire, the average house costs approximately 7.5 times the annual wage of its working residents and 8 times the average annual wage of its workplace employees. Wiltshire, along with Dorset and Bath and north east Somerset, has the biggest gap between



affordability for residents, and affordability for workplace employees. These are average figures, and, of course, young people and those on low wages will be the most affected.

There are currently over 10,000 people on the housing waiting list with different levels and urgency of need, current rates of affordable house building, although good, can't keep pace with this level of demand.

Wiltshire's population

Wiltshire's age structure has been somewhat younger than that of the south west, but the rapid rate at which our larger proportion of 50+ working age population will move into retirement over the next decade or so will lead to a rapid growth in the overall retired population, bringing us close to the regional average. The section of the retired population that is predicted to grow fastest is the 85+ group. This group is expected to grow by 60%, which is 4,300 individuals, over the next 15 years.

Although there is now greater emphasis on care being delivered in people's own homes, there will undoubtedly be a need for more residential care. Some estimates suggest that care-only beds will need to increase by 50-60% in Wiltshire by 2022. Wiltshire is also poorly provided with extra care housing, having no rented and little leasehold stock, but this situation is in the process of being addressed.

A key challenge for Wiltshire will be how to meet the need to recruit sufficient additional care workers to meet the care needs of the extra 35,000 older people who will live in Wiltshire within the next 15 years. Recruitment is already an issue.

Wiltshire's environment

Wiltshire's environment is arguably its strongest asset. The landscape is of national and global significance and includes a wealth of archaeological and architectural treasures, including the combined World Heritage sites of Stonehenge and Avebury, Salisbury Cathedral, and more recent industrial features such as the Box railway tunnel and the Kennet and Avon Canal.

There are nearly 20,000 archaeological sites ranging from the prehistoric through to Roman and medieval times and the civil war battlefield at Roundway Down. There are also approximately 14,000 listed buildings, 37 historic parks and gardens, three areas of outstanding natural beauty (AONBs) and more than 250 conservation areas. However, according to figures on the South West Observatory website, Wiltshire was the only county in the south west actually to increase its total CO2 emissions 2005-2007, the most significant increase being in west Wiltshire which had the highest per capita emissions - 27% of the county total.

In 2007, Wiltshire also had the highest industrial and commercial emissions of any county or unitary authority in the south west. The county per capita average for emissions in 2007 was 10.1 tonnes. This was 22%, or 2.2 tonnes, higher than the south west average. With government targets to reduce emissions by 80% by 2050, this represents a considerable challenge.



2 Our vision and priorities: the future direction for Wiltshire

Our vision

The vision for Wiltshire is to build stronger and more resilient communities, and greater localism lies at the heart of this. We want to encourage and support local communities to take the initiative to strengthen their ability to deal with local challenges and issues in creative ways which are individual to them.

Our communities give us a sense of well-being and belonging. Strong communities can cope with changing and challenging circumstances and they will often find their own solutions to many of the problems they face. These communities require less intervention from public services, which is not only good for people, but reduces the pressure on increasingly scarce public resources. This is particularly important given government's overriding priority to make substantial savings and reduce the national deficit.

Essential ingredients in fostering strong communities include:

People, who:

- participate in volunteering and are active in their community
- feel valued, healthy and able to achieve their potential - not disadvantaged
- have a high confidence and trust in public services
- are encouraged to adopt more sustainable lifestyles.

Places:

- with access to resources in the widest sense – people, community facilities and grants
- where businesses can make a mark and be competitive
- that work to protect and enhance the natural environment.

Agencies, that:

- work together with communities and encourage local decision making through devolved powers
- focus on providing support, rather than creating dependency.

Our priorities

To achieve this vision three key priorities have been agreed by the Wiltshire Assembly:

1. Creating an economy that is fit for the future:

Growth is often used as a key measure of the strength of the economy. Wiltshire is a rural county. This is our principle asset, but something that can also limit growth. Making the most of what Wiltshire has to offer through encouraging the right kinds of businesses here, improving skills to meet demand and supporting existing businesses are all priorities to ensure we have an economy that is strong, appropriate and competitive.

2. Reducing disadvantage and inequalities:

A society that works to narrow the inequalities gap is more likely to bring greater benefits to all its members, not just the most disadvantaged. Taking into account the needs of all Wiltshire people in how we plan for the future will improve home, work and school life for everyone.

3. Tackling climate change:

Environmental planning is now a major component in protecting the future of the planet. Action is essential at local level to reduce the carbon footprint of individuals, households and businesses by minimising energy use and maximising the use of renewable resources, while protecting the natural environment and wildlife.

This vision poses a significant challenge to everyone, but particularly to public agencies that also have to address a new government agenda, work with reduced resources, and meet rising customer expectations and demands. The need for greater public confidence and satisfaction with public services is also vital.

Ultimately, what matters is what works for people and communities. The challenge is to ensure everyone works together to provide the help and support needed to build and sustain strong and resilient communities.

3 The promises

What we want to achieve for Wiltshire:

To help Wiltshire's communities to be more resilient, partnership objectives have been agreed that bolster the priorities of:

- creating an economy that is fit for the future
- reducing disadvantage and inequality
- tackling climate change.

The objectives are listed below under the primary topic that it relates to. All the objectives, however, have been selected to support at least two, if not all three, of the priorities.

Further information on how each of the objectives will have an impact is included in the additional paper: **Appendix one – how the objectives work to achieve our priorities.**



Creating an economy that is fit for the future:

1. Strengthen the **connectivity** of the county by delivering excellent broadband access, effective mobile phone reception and the development of low carbon transport options, especially with respect to the main commuting corridors.
2. Develop a wide consensus on how Wiltshire responds in an optimal way to the UK's **financial difficulties** so that its impact is minimised and any changes contribute to a shared and publically supported vision for the future role and contribution of public services to local life.
3. Encourage the **restructure of the economy** so that it is less reliant on the public sector and on financial services, and generates a greater proportion of high value-added businesses and green jobs.
4. Forge much **stronger links with universities** that are to the mutual benefit of the university sector and the county.
5. Ensure that the establishment of the **super garrison** on Salisbury Plain and other changes concerning the armed forces bring positive benefits to the county and to military communities.
6. Define a **vision** for what sort of place Salisbury, Trowbridge and Chippenham should become, including agreeing their future scale and roles.
7. Ensure that the Wiltshire **workforce benefits** from better preparation of young people for the world of work and from the retention and attraction of graduates, as well as from older people continuing to work beyond retirement age.

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Reducing disadvantage and inequalities:

8. Ensure that Wiltshire is able to meet the needs of its rapidly **growing older population**. This will include planning to meet future health and social care workforce requirements; effective support to maintain self care and the care provided by relatives and friends; the creation of sufficient adapted housing, extra care accommodation and residential care and nursing home facilities to meet expected demand; and being more aware of older people living on very low incomes who are otherwise not supported by local public services.
9. Address, as far as is possible, the **lack of affordable housing** in Wiltshire by building more such housing, by bringing empty homes back into use, and through any other means that may become available.
10. **Reduce inequality** in the county by reducing the attainment gap in schools; better meeting the needs of gypsies and travellers; addressing child poverty; taking account of older people on low incomes; promoting literacy; putting in place a more integrated approach to addressing the needs of the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods; and ensuring that all people have access to key services.
11. Help people to take more **responsibility for their futures** and lead more independent lives by encouraging them to look after their own health through diet, exercise, sensible use of alcohol, giving up smoking and driving carefully, saving for their retirement and possible future care needs, actively developing their own learning and skills and reducing their carbon footprint.
12. Continue to support the **thriving voluntary and community sector** to address local needs through volunteering activity, strengthening infrastructure and building good working relationships with statutory organisations.

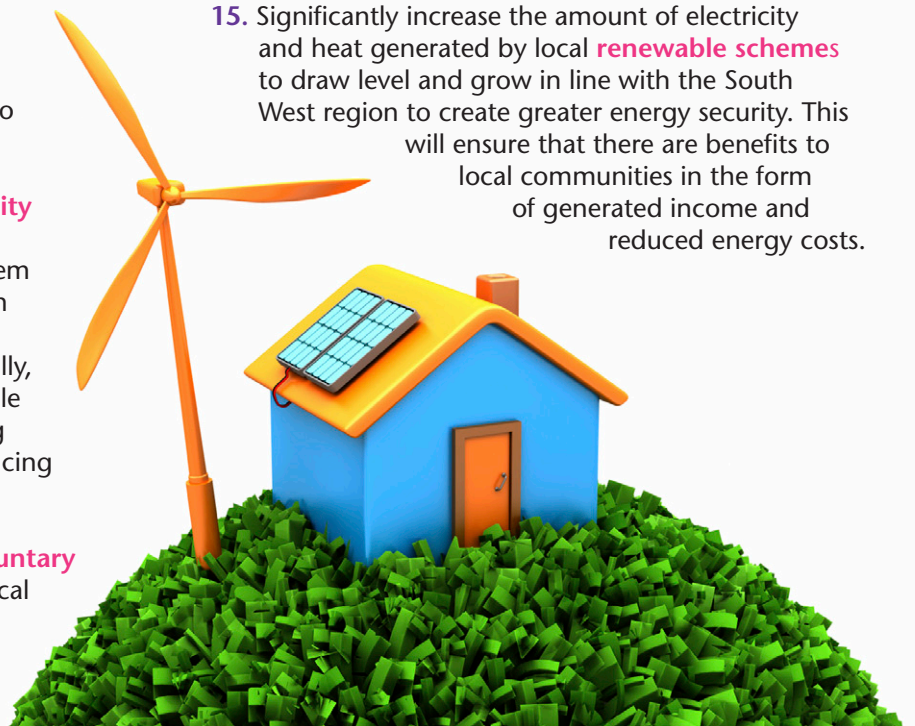


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Tackling climate change:

13. Strongly promote the refitting of all existing public buildings and private homes with **energy efficient** features to reduce their energy use dramatically.
14. Reduce the level and frequency of **out-commuting** to jobs outside the county through the generation of sufficient numbers and types of jobs and the creation of local work facilities to attract these people back to working locally.
15. Significantly increase the amount of electricity and heat generated by local **renewable schemes** to draw level and grow in line with the South West region to create greater energy security. This will ensure that there are benefits to local communities in the form of generated income and reduced energy costs.



16. Agree a way forward where all can contribute to achieving a major shift to **sustainable transport**, such as walking, cycling and the use of public transport for local trips, especially in the larger settlements of Trowbridge, Chippenham, and Salisbury.
17. Prepare for and protect the most vulnerable members of communities from the impacts of **unavoidable climate change**, such as heat waves and flooding, through appropriate adaptive responses.
18. Explore the extent to which Wiltshire needs to improve its own **food security** by focussing more production on local markets, reducing its dependence on oil-based fertilisers, building local food storage facilities and farming in a way which is sympathetic to Wiltshire's geology, biodiversity and predicted weather patterns.
19. Create a series of **living landscapes** across the county to help local people, communities and businesses to have opportunities for environmental learning, whilst also protecting wildlife from the changes to the climate, agriculture and industry.



Overarching:

20. Produce a **design framework** for the county which encourages the development of communities, not just houses. An important aspect of this will be for developers to ensure that new buildings fit their location and that the distinctiveness and history of the area is acknowledged and responded to.
21. Promote a **greater public understanding** and ownership of the difficult choices facing Wiltshire and foster a greater willingness to engage with public authorities in a shared approach to such decision-making.
22. Increase **public confidence** and trust in the police, NHS and council services and the local democratic process through encouraging greater involvement in community and stronger public engagement with the area boards and the community partnerships.

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