

Rural issues

fifteen facts

48% of Somerset's population is classified as rural

One in five women aged 65 and over living in rural areas have no access to a car or van

Only 16% of the rural population is aged between 16 and 34

Somerset house prices are 30% higher in rural villages than in urban areas

Nationally, the rate of homeless households in priority need is twice as high in urban areas as in rural areas

Emergency hospital admissions for those aged 75 or more are higher in rural areas than urban areas

Most Somerset residents and businesses are on track to have superfast broadband by 2020

Somerset currently has 17 Village Agents helping residents in half the county's parishes

Out of more than 32,000 areas in England, West Somerset has three of the six most deprived in terms of barriers to housing and services

Mean domestic electricity consumption per meter is 46% higher in rural villages than in urban areas

One in three people in Somerset's rural hamlets are self employed; over twice the national average

26,730 Somerset households are in fuel poverty, and the number is growing

Crime rates in rural villages are less than half those in urban areas, but are falling less sharply

Residents of the most rural parts of Somerset have higher educational qualifications than those in urban areas

66% of pupils living in rural villages achieved at least five GCSEs A*-C (including Maths and English) compared with 54% of those in urban areas

Somerset Rural Youth Project held ten focus groups with young people from each district who lived rurally. They had a lot to say about their lives in the countryside; some parts they love and others they find frustrating and difficult. Here are some comments from them:

The Cloud

"We use technology more in rural areas because we're more isolated"

"I can get a signal if I perch out the kitchen window"

"The only way I'll own my own house is through inheritance"

"Give some incentives – guarantee an interview for every volunteer applicant"

"I always budget for the basics – home, heat, food and cider"

"I use my 'phone to track my fitness"

"I'm not too worried about what I eat – I'm young enough to burn it off out here"

(Potholes) "They fill my journeys with woe when they should be filled with tarmac"

(Volunteering) "Some taster sessions would help – and transport"

"I can't get to the surgery in time before it closes – so I have to miss college"

"If you get into debt you want a life you can't afford"

"Living in the city must be depressing – you just get to look at buildings"

"The job comes first so I might have to get used to living somewhere else"

(Debt) "It can be hard to cope – I've seen my parents crying and crying"

"No one can see online bullying – people say things they wouldn't normally"





Ann Bown
Chair – Health and Wellbeing Board

SOMERSET: OUR COUNTY

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Somerset Public Summary 2014/15

Somerset’s Health and Wellbeing Board has produced its second Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). This is a ‘bite-sized’ summary of the information it contains and I hope you will find it interesting and thought-provoking. We have concentrated this JSNA on rural health and wellbeing and looked at the issues that are important to the 48% of us who live in the countryside. The voice of young people has been heard through work with the Somerset Rural Youth Project. They have told us a lot about their aspirations and what they need to make living rurally better for them.

As the new Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, I look forward to working with the people who contribute to the JSNA. We want to give the people who buy our health and social care services the important information they need to make the right decisions for all of us, right across the county.

www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/2015jsnasummary.html

The JSNA is required by Government so it’s a ‘must do’ for every Health and Wellbeing Board.

We would like to hear from you and what you think about the JSNA. Or, if you would like the JSNA summary in a different format, please also contact:

Jo Purvis
JSNA Project Manager
01823 357275
jpurvis@somerset.gov.uk

Mike Smith
Information Manager
01823 355589
mjsmith@somerset.gov.uk



WWW.SOMERSET.GOV.UK

