

OSCOM

RURAL SUSTAINABILITY

19 APRIL 2023

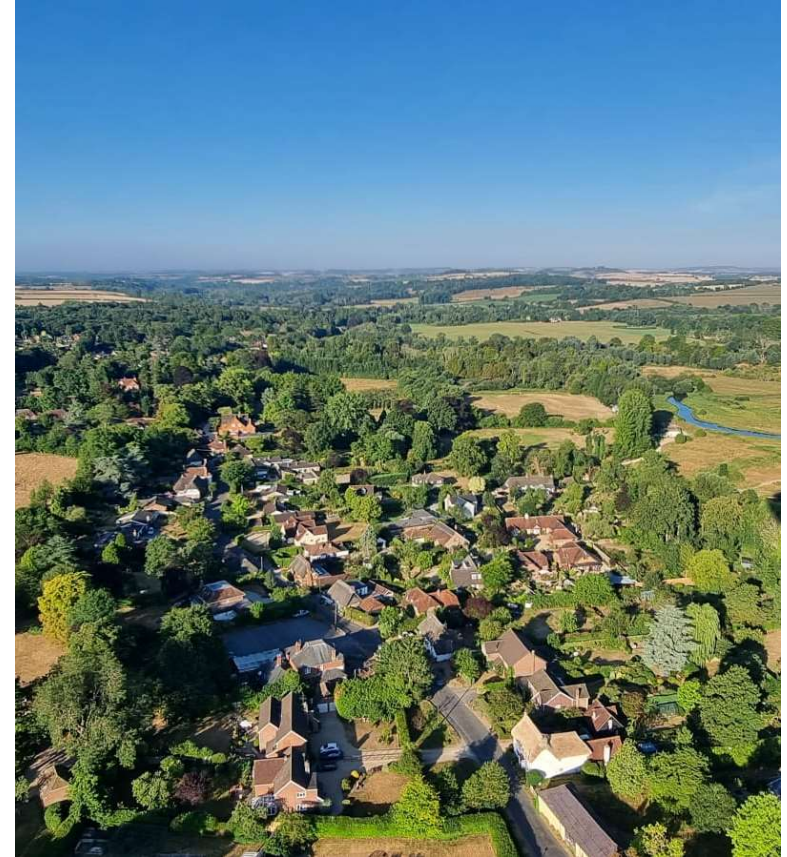
Page 1

Cllr Alison Johnston
Portfolio Holder for Climate Emergency and Countryside

Test Valley Borough Council - Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 19 April 2023

Rural sustainability

- Demographics
- Rural Economy
- Housing Needs
- Neighbourhood Planning
- Supporting Communities
- New Corporate Plan and Corporate Action Plan



Demographics

Population

- Around 38,000 people live in rural areas in Test Valley, representing 28% of the borough's population.
- Of the borough's rural population, around one in four people are retired (above average), and almost twenty percent of the borough's rural residents are under eighteen.

Housing

- The vast majority of people in rural areas own their own homes (72%, higher than the national figure of 63%), either outright or with a mortgage.
- Data suggests that proportion of homes without central heating, with poor insulation, or requiring modernisation or repair much higher than England average.

Demographics

Heating

- The fuel people use to heat their homes in rural areas is substantially different from elsewhere.
- At the 2011 Census, just 29% of households used mains gas. This is substantially lower than the borough figure (65%), regional figure (75%) and the national figure for England (74%).
- In comparison, around a third of households (35%) use oil to heat their homes, this compared to 3.2% of all households in England. A further 6% using tank or bottled gas, far higher than the national average of 1%.
- Doesn't reflect that many households have a wood burner as secondary source of heating.

Demographics

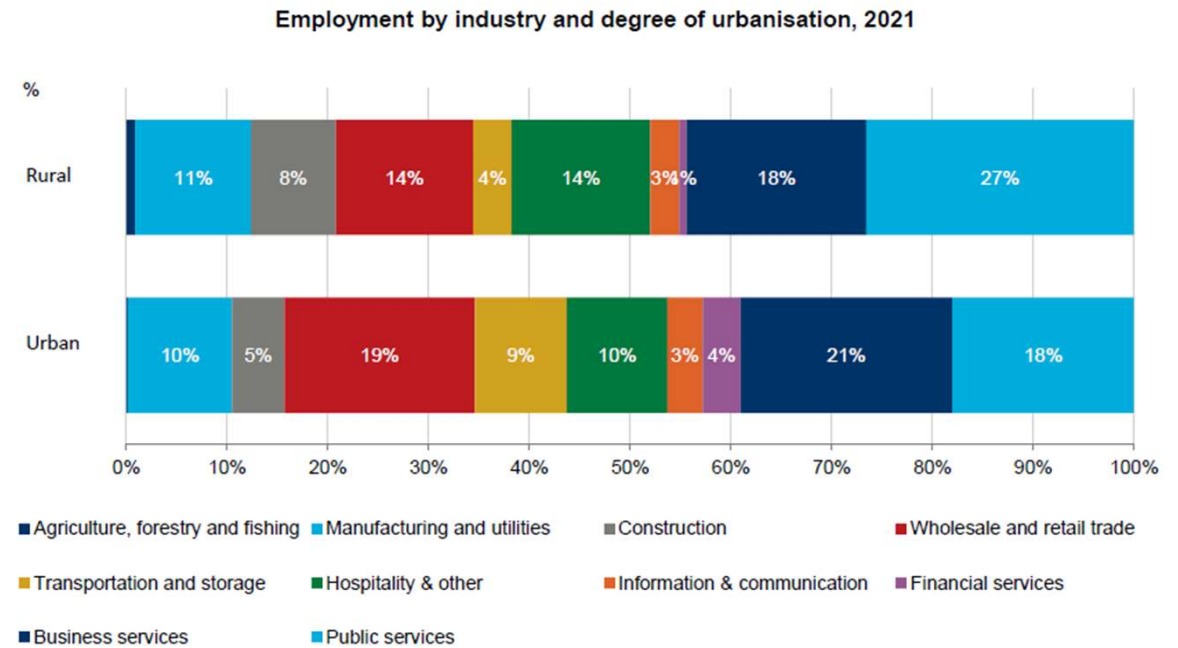
Car ownership and accessing services

- Rural communities typically need to travel a greater distance to services such as a post office, shops, schools and GP surgeries
- 1 in 3 residents in rural Test Valley highlighted transport as an area that they felt could be changed to improve their life in Test Valley. These respondents included references to highways and public transport, as well as the importance of connectivity to them.
- Car ownership is significantly higher in rural Test Valley than elsewhere.

Rural Economy

Test Valley's rural economy is characterised by a higher share of public services jobs (27%) and hospitality services, such as hotels and restaurants.

Employment by degree of urbanisation

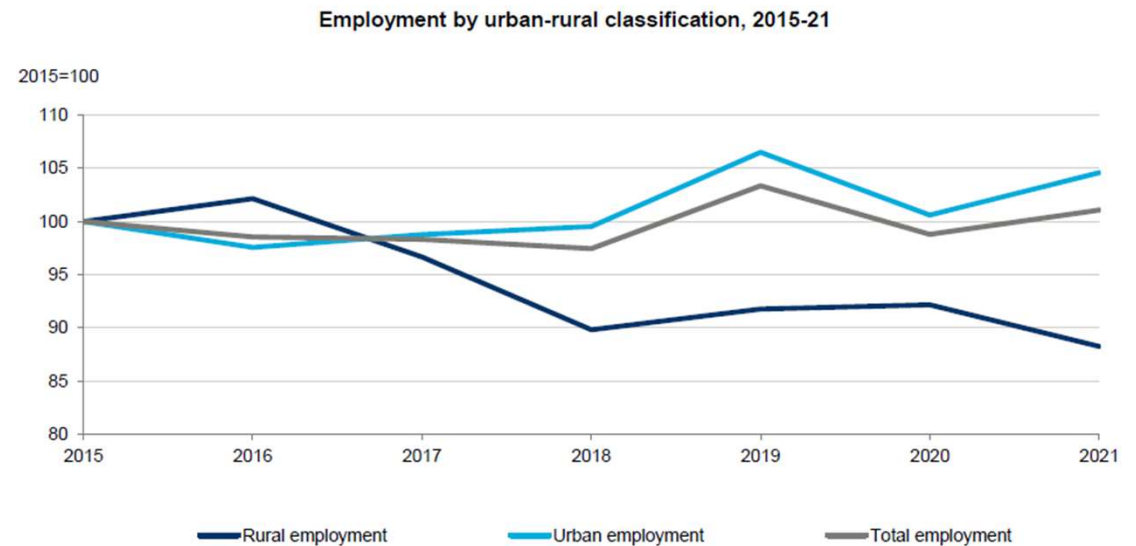


Source: ONS

Rural Economy

- In 2021, 19% of jobs were located in rural areas.
- Rural employment has been falling in the period 2015-21

Employment by degree of urbanisation



Source: ONS

What We Are doing

- UK Shared Prosperity Fund
 - Community Energy
 - Net Zero Business Support Service
- Rural Prosperity Fund
 - Grants to Rural Businesses and Communities

Housing Needs

- Over the last 5 financial years, there have only been 10 new affordable homes built in rural areas (i.e. areas with a population of less than 3,000).
- 482 applicants registered for affordable/social rented housing across the rural areas of Test Valley, representing 17.6% of the total need across the borough.



Over Wallop



Ampfield

Housing Needs

- Strategic Housing Market Assessment estimates annual need for affordable / social rented housing of 105 in northern rural Test Valley and 49 in southern rural Test Valley (out of a borough need of 437)
- The SHMA estimates that the household income required in order to buy or privately rent as:

| | Buy | Private Rent |
|----------------------------|------------|---------------------|
| Northern Rural Test Valley | £56,000 | £37,800 |
| Southern Rural Test Valley | £86,000 | £48,600 |

Houghton Lodge Farm



Neighbourhood Planning

Support from:

- Dedicated Neighbourhood Planning Officer
- Neighbourhood Planning web page
- Community Planning Toolkit

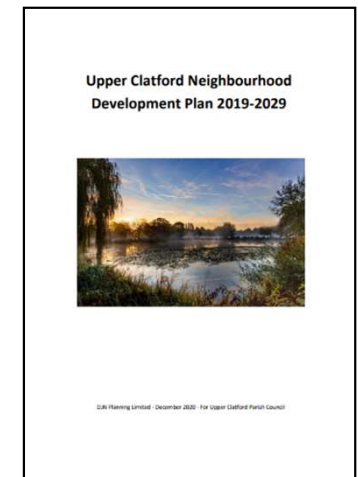
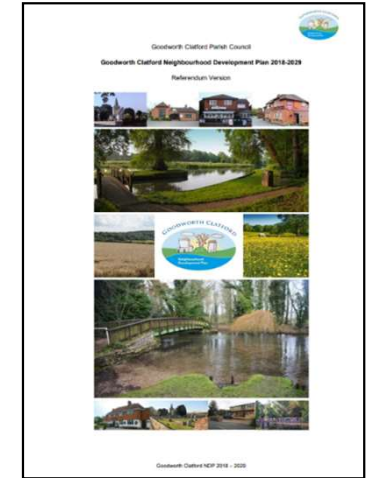
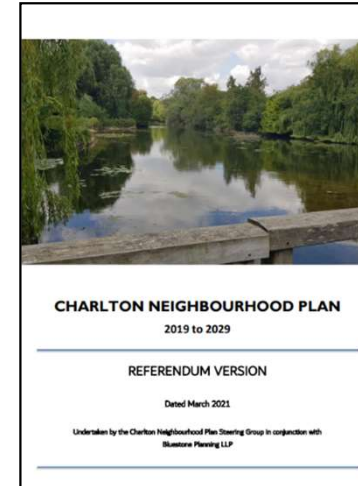


Progress in Test Valley

- 19 areas designated as Neighbourhood Planning Areas
- 7 Made plans
- One Plan at examination
- Further 8 plans are in progress
- At present all of the plans Made or underway are in rural parishes

Made Plans in Test Valley

- Charlton
- Chilbolton
- Goodworth Clatford
- Houghton
- Thruxton
- Upper Clatford
- West Dean and West Tytherley



Supporting Communities

Community Engagement Officers

- Support councillors to engage with communities to identify assets and priorities.
- Support access to grant funding
- Support community networks and voluntary groups



Supporting Communities

- Since 2019 the CAF grant has awarded £576,433.60 to 39 rural community projects which provide new or enhance existing community assets and facilities



- CIL funding has awarded £1,587,456 to 14 rural community infrastructure projects in the same period.

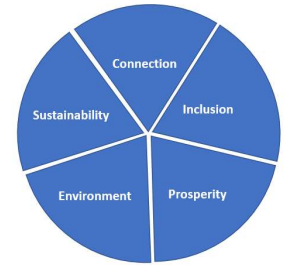
Supporting Communities

Community Resilience

- Floods of 2014 were a catalyst for many
- Developed in to a coordinated network of resilient communities and establishment of Community Resilience Forum
- Overwhelming response to pandemic and more recently cost of living
- TV approach commended by Southern Policy Centre



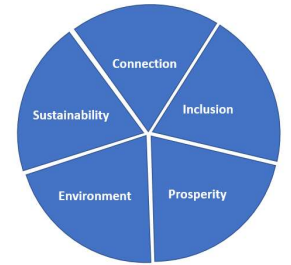
Villages and Rural Communities



Over the next four years and beyond we will....

- Work with village and rural communities to identify and plan for their future priorities. Building upon their own strengths, connections, and sense of pride for the place that they live. We will offer bespoke packages of community planning support and will help communities to unlock resources to deliver on their local priorities where there is a clear evidence of need.
- Support villages and rural communities to plan for their future development and housing needs to ensure long-term sustainability of their communities. Developing an inclusive approach so that the needs of all are understood through neighbourhood plans and the onward development of our Local Plan.
- Work with local people and partners to build better connectedness and resilience which enables people to live well and to mitigate the impacts of rural isolation. We will work with rural communities and with partners to build upon volunteering capacity, improve access to services and support communities to develop their local networks and resilience.

Villages and Rural Communities



Over the next four years and beyond we will....

- Champion the needs of our village and rural communities within the wider region to ensure that opportunities for future investment in infrastructure, connectivity and economic development reflect the unique and important role that rural communities play. Proactively supporting rural economic development to deliver prosperity and enabling communities to thrive by supporting rural businesses, skills development and helping to unlock future investment.
- Explore opportunities to work with villages and rural communities on important environmental projects such as habitat restoration as well as enabling access to spaces for recreation which is important for people's wellbeing.

2023 - 2027

- Rural lens of new Corporate Action Plan
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural Prosperity Fund projects
- Refresh of Community Planning Toolkit
- Championing community-led, place-based approach with statutory partners

OSCOM

RURAL SUSTAINABILITY

19 APRIL 2023

Page 20

Cllr Alison Johnston
Portfolio Holder for Climate Emergency and Countryside

Test Valley Borough Council - Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 19 April 2023