

Rural England supporters meeting

26th April 2022

*Thank you for
attending and for
your continued
support.*



Our purpose and structure

Our **aim** is to contribute to the resilience of rural England, by informing better policy making.

We do this by:

- Building the rural evidence base
- Supporting information exchange
- Bringing stakeholders together
- Encouraging informed debate

Rural England CIC is an independent and not-for-profit organisation that is:

- Managed by its Directors
- Funded by its Supporters
- Advised by and networked through its Stakeholders

Research activity in 2021/22

- **Rural Net Zero Inquiry:** completed a review of net zero policies and their rural implications
 - **Analysis of UK Net Zero Strategy:** a review of the rural implications
 - **Rural Vulnerability Project:** completed research about Priority Services Register customers in rural areas (with CCRI)
 - **State of Rural Services 2021:** completed research focused on the impacts of the pandemic
- Parliamentary and general events held (12th January 2022) to launch new reports
 - Presentation given at a WHO seminar on rural proofing and health policies
 - Participated in Defra workshop on monitoring progress with the UK's 25 Year Environment Plan

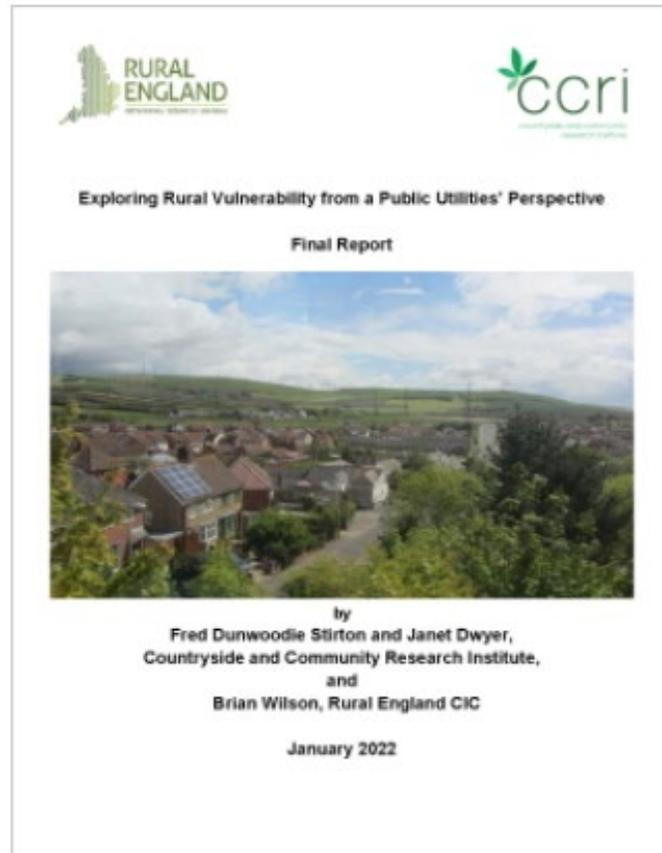
State of Rural Services 2021: the impact of the pandemic

	Service types:
Winners ↑	Online services
	Cashless payments
	Rural food shops/village stores
	Parks and outdoor spaces
	Market town centres
	Village or community halls
	Cafes and restaurants
Losers ↓	Rural bus services
	Theatres, cinemas and music venues
	Rural pubs

Lessons included:

- The ability of local services to address rural isolation and wellbeing
- The importance of physical infrastructure in rural areas, such as digital networks
- Many rural communities proving resilient in their pandemic response
- But the picture being mixed, with some places and some service types requiring support

Exploring Rural Vulnerability from a Public Utilities Perspective



- Many vulnerable customers have strategies to help them cope with utility loss or outages
- However, rurality can compound vulnerability, especially for those living in remote locations
- PSR awareness could be improved both among customers and local VCS bodies (to boost sign-up)
- Vulnerable customers want to address climate change but need support with energy transition

Planned research activity in 2022/23

Current research to complete:

- **Village / Community Agent schemes:** their potential to work with utility network operators
- **SORS follow up project:** core project to be scoped with our Stakeholders Group

Other likely projects:

- Further research with utility network operators on rural vulnerability or related issues
- Research about health and wellbeing benefits from the rural touring arts (subject to funding)

Any comments or questions ... ?



**RURAL
ENGLAND**

NETWORKING / RESEARCH / LEARNING