

## **RURAL ENGLAND – ONGOING AND PIPELINE PROJECTS (AS AT JUNE 2022)**

This note outlines Rural England's ongoing and pipeline (or potential) research projects, as things stand on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022. So far during 2022 we have: launched two research reports on the State of Rural Services 2021 and Rural Vulnerability from a Utilities Perspective; and have commenced a new project about Village/ Community Agent Schemes. We are also in the process of confirming the topic for our main 2022/23 research project.

**Project: Scope for Village/Community Agent Schemes to Support Utility PSR Sign-up**

Client: Cadent Gas, Southern Water, Western Power Distribution and Wales & West Utilities

Description: to clarify the geographies of Village or Community Agents Schemes (or similar schemes) and to explore their capacity to assist with the promotion of or sign-up to the Priority Services Register managed by utility network operators.

Research by: Rural England CIC

Status: Project commenced in March. Potential Schemes identified, web search almost complete, interview schedule produced and interviews half complete. The aim is for a draft report in July.

Likelihood of proceeding: ongoing

**Project: Follow up to State of Rural Services 2021 (main 2022/23 project)**

Client: Rural England CIC

Description: Directors have considered topic options for the project with the new RE Research Director. A recommendation is going to the Stakeholders Group for comment (see separate paper). Subject to that, it is hoped to draft and agree a brief over the summer period. Timescales for completing this project have yet to be agreed, but it is likely to be in the earlier part of 2023.

Research by: Rural England CIC (with University of Leicester support)

Status: Project focus to be confirmed and a brief drafted. This to be the main Rural England research output from 2022/23.

Likelihood of proceeding: 10 / 10

**Project: Impact of Rural Touring Arts on Loneliness, Isolation and Wellbeing**

Client: National Rural Touring Forum

Description: NRTF approached us to research and develop guidance that rural touring arts schemes can use to measure their impact in terms of loneliness, isolation and wellbeing (including for social prescribing purposes).

Research by: As NRTF recognise, this would likely need some input to deliver from a Rural England associate (to be decided).

Status: NRTF agreed the brief in 2021. They have now applied to Arts Council England for funding. As far as known the ACE response is still awaited.

Likelihood of proceeding: 5 / 10

**Project: Follow Up to Rural Vulnerability Research project**

Client: Cadent Gas, Southern Water, Western Power Distribution and Wales & West Utilities

Description: A follow up project on a topic to be agreed with the four commissioning bodies. This to follow the earlier Rural Vulnerability project (carried out with CCRI) and that above on Village/Community Agent Schemes. Possible topics include aspects of rural vulnerability, PSR operation, fuel poverty and energy transition.

Research by: likely to be RE oversight, with an associate delivering

Status: Topic still to be agreed with commissioning bodies  
Likelihood of proceeding: 9 / 10

BW, June 2022