



Wales Centre for Public Policy
Canolfan Polisi Cyhoeddus Cymru

What Works in Tackling Rural Poverty

John Powell, Dan Keech, Matt Reed and Janet Dwyer

Countryside and Community Research Institute
University of Gloucestershire

March 2018



Our Mission

The Wales Centre for Public Policy was established in October 2017. Its mission to improve policy making and public services by supporting ministers and public services to access rigorous independent evidence about what works.

The Centre collaborates with leading researchers and other policy experts to synthesise and mobilise existing evidence and identify gaps where there is a need to generate new knowledge.

The Centre is independent of government but works closely with policy makers and practitioners to develop fresh thinking about how to address strategic challenges in health and social care, education, housing, the economy and other devolved responsibilities. It:

- Supports Welsh Government Ministers to identify, access and use authoritative evidence and independent expertise that can help inform and improve policy;
- Works with public services to access, generate, evaluate and apply evidence about what works in addressing key economic and societal challenges; and
- Draws on its work with Ministers and public services, to advance understanding of how evidence can inform and improve policy making and public services and contribute to theories of policy making and implementation.

Through secondments, PhD placements and its Research Apprenticeship programme, the Centre also helps to build capacity among researchers to engage in policy relevant research which has impact.

For further information please visit our website at www.wcpp.org.uk

Core Funders



Cardiff University was founded in 1883. Located in a thriving capital city, Cardiff is an ambitious and innovative university, which is intent on building strong international relationships while demonstrating its commitment to Wales.



Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) is part of UK Research and Innovation, a new organisation that brings together the UK's seven research councils, Innovate UK and Research England to maximise the contribution of each council and create the best environment for research and innovation to flourish.



Welsh Government is the devolved government of Wales, responsible for key areas of public life, including health, education, local government, and the environment.

Contents

Summary	4
Introduction	5
Housing Interventions	6
Transport Interventions	8
Access to Services	11
Fuel Poverty	15
The Rural Economy	17
Joined up Approaches to Tackling Rural Poverty	21
Policy Implications	22
References	24
Appendix 1 - Example of a programme for supporting needs and building wealth	26

Summary

- The Welsh Government has supported a wide range of programmes to address rural poverty and yet recent estimates suggest that almost a quarter of the rural population of Wales is living in poverty.
- Continuing pressure on the Welsh Government's budget combined with the potential loss of EU funding for rural programmes means that it is imperative that in future resources are targeted on the most cost-effective approaches to tackling rural poverty.
- This report analyses more than 50 interventions in twelve OECD countries that sought to address five key aspects of rural poverty - housing needs, access to services, public transport, fuel poverty, and rural economic development.
- There is very little information about the cost-effectiveness of these interventions, but they provide a range of examples that could be adapted and trialled in Wales.
- The evidence from these interventions shows that the complex inter-related causes of rural poverty make it important to build up social, environmental, and health capital in communities alongside measures to increase economic prosperity.
- The report recommends a three-pronged approach based on: (1) building economic, social, environmental and health capital, (2) supporting needs, and (3) strategic planning and action to ensure that interventions to alleviate rural poverty are coordinated.
- Place-based approaches can enable a joined-up approach tailored to local communities' needs and assets. They must go beyond welfare provision and health services and include coordinated action to improve housing provision and transport services, create employment opportunities, and build local assets.
- There are significant gaps in the current evidence about what works in tackling rural poverty. There would be benefits in a comprehensive analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in current service provision for rural communities in Wales. This should use qualitative and quantitative data to identify the impacts of current programmes, the nature and scale of unmet needs and linkages between different programmes and policies.
- It would also be useful to adapt and trial interventions that have been tried elsewhere to test whether they meet the needs of rural communities in Wales and provide the types of support which they require.

Introduction

The Welsh Government has supported a range of rural development programmes and yet recent estimates suggest that 23% of the population of rural Wales is living in poverty, a larger proportion than in any other part of the UK (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2016). In common with other administrations, it faces significant budget constraints and the potential loss of EU funds (Williams and Doyle, 2016). This makes it imperative to focus resources on approaches to tackling rural poverty that are cost-effective.

Researchers recognise that 'poverty' is a contested term and its causes are complex and multi-dimensional (Madanipour et al., 2015). This report adopts a broad definition which includes the ability to:

- Participate in mainstream society;
- Access services;
- Achieve reasonable living conditions; and
- Secure sufficient income to fulfil basic needs.

The underlying causes of these different, though inter-related, manifestations of poverty are similar in urban and rural areas, but rural communities can face particular challenges associated with distance from key services, limited job opportunities and low incomes, higher costs of living (sometimes referred to as the 'rural premium'), inadequate public transport, social isolation, and restricted housing stock.

This report provides an analysis of the evidence from more than 50 interventions in twelve OECD countries which sought to address these issues. The interventions were identified from a wide-ranging search of the academic literature, government documents, annual reports, and organisational websites. We focused on studies published from 2000 onwards that provide some form of evaluation or impact assessment. Most of these were based in English speaking countries, particularly the UK, Canada, USA, Australia and New Zealand, but we also found relevant studies in continental Europe, particularly Scandinavia.

Detailed descriptions of the interventions that we analysed are presented in separate reports on housing, transport, access to services, fuel poverty and the rural economy which are available from our website (www.wcpp.org.uk). This report provides an overview of the evidence relating to these initiatives, highlights some important cross-cutting themes and suggests some potential policy implications for Wales.

Housing Interventions

A lack of affordable housing is a major issue in many rural communities. A combination of limited housing stock, tourism and second home ownership can drive up property values and rents, locking local people out of the housing market. Our analysis identified two broad approaches to addressing this challenge:

- Community Land Trusts and Community Property Trusts - small-scale community-led bodies that provide new housing or refurbish existing buildings and make them available for sale or rent below market rates.
- Financial incentives for private sector investment - such as tax credits for investments in constructing affordable housing and government grants, or low interest loans for house builders. These measures can facilitate larger-scale developments and, when integrated with commercial sales, may be attractive to developers.

Table 1 shows the main features of the housing interventions that we identified. Their effectiveness needs to be evaluated over the long-term because of the time required to take housing developments from planning through to completion. The evidence suggests that whilst housing interventions can have high initial costs compared to some other interventions, they can also deliver a range of indirect impacts in addition to providing new homes. These include improving human and social capital, the development of new skills and provision of new employment opportunities, and improvements in the quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock.

Table 1. Interventions to address housing needs

Housing interventions	Type of intervention	Cost	Impact on those with housing needs	Time frame	Cross-cutting effects: support services	Cross-cutting effects: building wealth	Cross-cutting effects: environment
Community land trusts/property trusts	Small scale, local provision of affordable housing through creation of local community trusts	High	Enables people to access homes at below market value (either sale or rent)	Long-term	Increased population may enhance demand for local services. Potential link to financial support services (e.g. favourable mortgage arrangements)	Provides local employment; opportunities for skills development and training. CLT/CPT can build human and social capital within a community	Potential to require provision of high energy efficient and sustainable housing
	Enables access to private sector investment		Small numbers affected				Greater local control over development
Tax credits to build affordable housing	Enables investors to claim tax credits on investment in affordable housing projects. Enables access to private sector investment	Medium	Provision of affordable housing for sale/rent. Projects can be small or large scale	Long-term	Increased population may enhance demand for local services	Provides local employment; opportunities for skills development and training	Potential to require provision of high energy efficient and sustainable housing
Investment support for house building	Range of approaches that part-fund housing (through grants)	High	Enables people to access homes at below market value (either sale or rent)	Long-term	Increased population may enhance demand for local services. Potential link to financial support services (e.g. favourable mortgage arrangements)	Provides local employment; opportunities for skills development and training	Potential to require provision of high energy efficient and sustainable housing
	Enables access to private sector investment		Small numbers affected				Can build social capital through partnership work

Transport Interventions

Transport plays a pivotal role in alleviating rural poverty because it provides the link to a wide range of other vital services, as well as to employment opportunities and social activities. We identified three main types of interventions:

- Improvements in public transport;
- Community transport systems; and
- Subsidised private vehicles ownership.

Public transport in rural areas is usually dependent on subsidy and thus vulnerable to service cuts. Scheduled services use major communication corridors which do not serve the needs of those who live in remote settlements, and there is usually very little, if any, provision in the evenings or at weekends.

Integrated transport networks can provide a wider range of options involving a combination of scheduled, fixed route and more flexible services (for example buses that make detours from main routes to collect and drop-off passengers, and dial-a-ride services). There are a wide range of variations on the 'dial-a-ride' approach but most require pre-booking.

Community transport systems operate in similar ways to dial-a-ride approaches, although they may also provide regular runs (e.g. to shops and/or service centres/medical centres, local social events). However, they rely on volunteer drivers and administrators.

In relatively densely populated rural areas flexible schedules and dial-a-ride systems may be enough to meet needs, but in remote areas subsidising vehicle ownership may be the only option. A key weakness of public and community transport is often an inability to support rural residents to access specific employment opportunities, training, and childcare services. Interventions such as the 'Wheels to work' schemes, which provide loans of mopeds/scooters to young people to access training and/or work in England, are expensive to set up and maintain, and experience has shown they benefit only a small proportion of the population. On the other hand, there are successful schemes in the USA which provide cars to low income households for little more than the cost of the vehicle registration and a small fee. They rely on public donations of vehicles (linked in some cases to tax credits). The cost of these schemes depends on how they are established, and the level of financial incentives to encourage vehicle donation, but they can also have indirect benefits through providing jobs and skills training in rural areas. There may be benefits in piloting the concept in Wales to test its cost-effectiveness.

Table 2. Interventions to address transport needs

Transport interventions	Type of intervention	Cost	Impact on those with transport needs	Time frame	Cross-cutting effects: support services	Cross-cutting effects: building wealth	Cross-cutting effects: environment
Public transport	Scheduled fixed route public transport	High	High: Provides the only link to access employment and services for those close enough to access fixed schedule routes	Long-term	Provides access to local services	Limited effect unless links individuals directly with training/education/job opportunities	Potential to reduce emissions from private vehicles (in practice those with private vehicles do not use public transport)
	Scheduled flexible route public transport	High	Medium: Smaller numbers affected	Long-term	Provides access to local services		Minimizes emissions by only operating to pick up passengers when requested
	Dial-a-ride type services	Variable	Low: Smaller numbers affected/alternatives usually exist but may be critical for some in order to access health and other services	Short-Medium term	Provides access to local services – in particular health related services	Can enhance social capital for those accessing social and recreational activities in local centres	
Community transport		Variable Potentially high set-up costs	High: Smaller numbers affected	Short-Medium term	Provides access to local services – in particular health related services	Can enhance social capital for those accessing social and recreational activities in local centres, and among volunteers	

Transport interventions	Type of intervention	Cost	Impact on those with transport needs	Time frame	Cross-cutting effects: support services	Cross-cutting effects: building wealth	Cross-cutting effects: environment
Access to individual modes of transport (e.g. cars, vans, mopeds)	Car share schemes	Low	Low (back-up/limited use)	Short-term	Tend to be commuter focused, limited routes		Decreases environmental impact of individuals (e.g. fossil fuel consumption)
	Car clubs	High set-up costs	Low (back-up/occasional use)	Medium term	Tend to be accessed by higher income groups for occasional use (e.g. holiday)		Decreases environmental impact of individuals (e.g. fossil fuel consumption)
	Provision of vehicles for individual use	Low – High (variable depending on approach taken)	High: can have significant and long-term effects on beneficiary households	Long-term	Enables greater access to wider range of services	Creates jobs in vehicle repair and maintenance. Enables access to education, training, job opportunities, and recreational/ social activities Enhances potential to build human and social capital	Potentially increases environmental impact of individuals (e.g. emissions to air, fossil fuel consumption)

Access to Services

Accessing shops, health care, education, childcare, job centres, banks, and recreational activities can be time consuming and expensive for people living in rural communities. Some services can be delivered digitally, provided there is good broadband, and some countries (including the USA and Canada) have made significant progress in the provision of 'tele-medical' services. However, this does not remove altogether the need for face-to-face interaction or compensate entirely for more personal social interactions.

Our research identified three main categories of intervention to improve access to services:

- One stop shops/resource hubs;
- Community centres; and
- Support in the home.

One stop shops/resource hubs involve centralised and integrated delivery of multiple (usually government) services. They are not new, but recent developments in technology provide scope for new forms of blended service delivery. Co-location of service providers reduces travel times and costs for rural residents, but it requires effective partnership working and information sharing between agencies. Experience from various countries shows the importance of institutional arrangements in making one stop shops a success, and the need to provide welcoming spaces which give scope for privacy.

Community centres can house a range of services and may be particularly important to 'hard-to-reach' groups, reducing the stigma attached to accessing some services.

Support in the home involves training lay people to assist the public to access services – for example the Village Agents scheme in England. Set-up costs can be significant, and the approach requires good partnership working between agencies and well-trained agents. Benefits can be extensive including increased employment of local people and enhanced levels of trust.

Measures to improve access to services are associated with a wide range of benefits including social inclusion, reduced costs of service delivery, and in some instances economic benefits, for example helping benefit claimants to understand their entitlements. They often need to be combined with measures to improve transport provision and the blend of approaches needs to be tailored to local circumstances. For example, Village Agent-type schemes may be particularly effective in more sparsely populated areas, where other forms of service delivery are expensive, or service centres not easily accessible.

Table 3 identifies two alternative approaches to supporting/improving quality childcare, both of which would require central government support to establish and provide oversight, although it is likely that the latter could be achieved through existing service agencies.

Table 3. Interventions to improve access to services

Access to services interventions	Type of intervention	Cost	Impact on those needing access to services	Time frame	Cross-cutting effects: support services	Cross-cutting effects: building wealth	Cross-cutting effects: environment
One stop shops	Integrated government service delivery	Medium-High	Variable	Medium	Variable impact depending on range and effectiveness of linkages	Reduces travel costs	Reduces need to travel; lower carbon footprint
Resource hubs	Integrated service delivery	Medium-high	Variable	Medium	Variable impact depending on range and effectiveness of linkages	Reduces travel costs	Reduces need to travel; lower carbon footprint
Community centres	Provision of support, advice, and information	Medium	High	Long-term	Provides access to wide range of support services; access hard-to-reach sectors of society	Builds human and social capital	
Community/government service delivery	Internet delivery of services	Low	Low	Short	Links to wider range of services		Reduces need to travel; lower carbon footprint
Locally trained information providers (e.g. Village agents)	Localised face-to-face provision of advice and information	Low	High	Long-term	Provides links to other services Alerts other service providers to problems	Reduces social exclusion; develop economic capital through enhanced recovery of benefit entitlements	

Access to services interventions	Type of intervention	Cost	Impact on those needing access to services	Time frame	Cross-cutting effects: support services	Cross-cutting effects: building wealth	Cross-cutting effects: environment
Childcare	Childcare and business development training	Low-medium	High	Medium	Provides access to range of support services for those developing childcare businesses	Builds human and economic capital; provides access to funding to low-income households to set-up new business or expand	
	Shared service provision through membership in a delivery network	Low	Medium	Short	Access to information and administrative services at reasonable costs	Reduces costs for small-scale childcare businesses	
Healthcare as a portal to a wider range of service provision	Access to services and support	Low	High	Short	Access to wider range of services (co-located)	Improves health capital Reduces travel costs	Reduces travel and carbon footprint

Fuel Poverty

Almost a quarter of people in Wales live in fuel poverty (National Energy Action, 2017). Interventions include grant support (e.g. the UK winter fuel allowance) and large-scale government programmes to improve the thermal efficiency of the housing stock, thus reducing fuel consumption and bills. Low income households lack the means to invest in energy efficiency measures (such as installing new appliances, cavity wall insulation, and double glazing). Government investment in these measures is costly but brings long-term benefits in terms reduced fuel bills, reductions in fossil fuel consumption and improvements in health and well-being.

The evaluations we identified illustrate the importance of taking into account the social and health benefits of improved energy efficiency in housing in order to show the full return on investment (particularly in terms of reducing health care costs over the short and long terms). This suggests a stronger case for increased government investment than if studies focus exclusively on fuel bills.

Table 4. Interventions to address fuel poverty

Fuel Poverty interventions	Type of intervention	Cost	Impact on those in fuel poverty	Time frame	Cross-cutting effects: support services	Cross-cutting effects: building wealth	Cross-cutting effects: environment
Improving thermal efficiency of housing stock	Government investment; subsidy; or supplier obligation	High	Reduces fuel bills; warmer homes; fewer health problems; improved quality of life	Long-term (>10 years – varies with type of action)	Reduced health care costs; fewer GP and hospital visits; reduced expenditure on travel and medicine	Employment in renovation of the housing stock Increases value of housing stock	Reduces greenhouse gas (CO ₂) emissions; Contributes to climate change targets
Fuel banks	Partnership with food banks to provide finance to those who cannot pay fuel bills	Low	Support for those in crisis situations	Immediate/short-term	Possibly contributes to reduced health care costs		
Local energy clubs	Bulk buying of energy and use of smart metering to benefit from price differentials	Low-medium	Reduces energy costs	Short-term (depends on energy pricing approach)		Builds local human and social capital. Reduces energy costs/fuel bills	
Community renewable energy generation	Investment in small scale energy and/or heat generation	Medium	May not impact on those in fuel poverty	Long-term (25-30years)		Builds local human and social capital. May generate community income stream	Reduces greenhouse gas (CO ₂) emissions; Contributes to climate change targets

The Rural Economy

Improving conditions for business development and job creation is essential to long-term poverty alleviation. It is important that programmes are sufficiently flexible to enable communities to adapt them to reflect local resources, strengths and needs. Interventions must take account of existing levels of skills, investment opportunities, development and training needs, transport options, and access to support services (e.g. job centres and financial services).

Our analysis identified four main approaches:

- Area-wide strategic programming support;
- Loan funds;
- Angel investment; and
- Individual development accounts.

Area-wide strategic programming support can underpin regional and/or territorial development, and to help achieve a wider range of poverty alleviation and social inclusion goals. The Vermont Farm-to-Plate programme (Perry, 2014) is a good example. It brings a wide range of stakeholders together to agree to a common vision and programme for improving the agricultural and food sector in a rural part of the USA.

The LEADER programme delivered through Local Action Groups (LAGs) under the EU rural development programme offers a similar approach, although operating on a smaller scale. LEADER is designed to enable concentrated investment in specific local areas. In the UK, for the most part, the funds invested have been too small in relation to the size of the rural economy to have significant impact (Defra, 2016). In some EU member states, however, where LEADER budgets are much larger, it has had significant and strategic impacts.

Loan funds offer a means of maximising the value for money of investments made at individual or community level. A revolving fund recycles a single pot of money over time, benefitting a larger number of individuals or businesses. Examples include peer-to-peer lending (e.g. Slow Money, in Maine, USA, providing investment funding for micro- and small business development), and the England Rural Communities Renewable Energy Fund (RCEF) which provides small grants and larger loans to get renewable energy projects through the planning process. Work conducted by the CCRI as part of the mid-term evaluation of the Rural Development Programme in England (Powell and Courtney, 2013) found that a significant proportion of private sector grant beneficiaries were supportive of the concept of loans, as opposed to grant funding, to support commercial investments designed to stimulate rural growth and job creation.

Angel investment requires the establishment of organisations that will raise private sector funding to invest in the equity of new or expanding businesses and is proving to be a valuable approach in rural areas of the USA and Canada (Brightstar, 2015; Angel Network Program, 2017). It fills the gap between small-scale borrowing from friends and family and venture capital for small-scale business that cannot access commercial sector lending. High risk investments are made, requiring rigorous attention to business planning and management.

Individual development accounts (IDA) focus on development of the individual, or individual household, with the express purpose of lifting households out of poverty by rewarding saving with additional funds once a target is achieved. Several states in the USA have successfully operated IDA systems for many years. Benefits are reportedly multiple and enduring, including improvements in control of household budgeting, less debt, increased human capital and confidence in managing money, and building on the asset in which the funding was invested (Brigham and Fisher, 2011; Oregon Individual Development Account (IDA) Initiative, 2013). IDA approaches can be designed to ensure specific types of individual or household objectives are attained.

Table 5. Interventions to improve the rural economy

Rural economy interventions	Type of intervention	Cost	Impact on beneficiaries and/or the rural economy	Time frame	Cross-cutting effects: support services	Cross-cutting effects: building wealth	Cross-cutting effects: environment
Agriculture and food chain support	Area-wide economic development programme	High	High impact on local economy	Long-term	Integrates economic development across sectors through partnership work	Builds human and social capital through partnership work; develops business and entrepreneurial skills. Develops economic capital	
Loan funds	Non-traditional lender – business development loans to low income households	Medium	High For individuals accessing the loan	Medium-long term		Builds economic capital; develops entrepreneurial skills	
	Small scale peer-to-peer lending	Low	High For individuals accessing the loan	Short-medium term		Builds economic capital; develops entrepreneurial skills	
	Small-scale and short-term loans as alternative to payday lenders	Low	Medium Loan must be repaid	Short-term		Reduces interest payments on loans compared to payday lenders	
Angel investment	Small company and start-up investment funding	Medium	Medium On local economy	Long-term	Improved access to financial services	Builds economic capital; develops entrepreneurial skills	

Rural economy interventions	Type of intervention	Cost	Impact on beneficiaries and/or the rural economy	Time frame	Cross-cutting effects: support services	Cross-cutting effects: building wealth	Cross-cutting effects: environment
Individual development accounts	Match funding for low income households that save money	Medium	High For individuals that complete the programme	Short - Medium term	Improved access to financial support services	Builds human and economic capital	
Community renewable energy fund	Grants and loans for community investment in renewable energy generation	Low	Low on local economy - development is small scale Potentially high for community	Long-term (>25 years)		Builds human and social capital; potential to develop economic capital	Reduction in fossil fuel consumption (reduced greenhouse gas emissions)
LEADER programme	Grant funding for territorially focused economic and community development	High	Low on local economy - development is small scale; High for those receiving funding directly	Medium-term	Develops and/or strengthens local service availability and delivery	Builds human and social capital; some enhancement of economic capital and infrastructure	

Joined up Approaches to Tackling Rural Poverty

The interventions described in Tables 1 to 5 are focused on particular aspects of poverty alleviation. However, since the causes of rural poverty are complex and inter-related, it is important not to treat them in isolation. Instead, attempts to tackle rural poverty need to provide joined up approaches which address housing, transport and other needs in a coordinated fashion.

This means understanding how a wide range of 'assets' and 'wealth' can be harnessed to generate social and economic pathways out of poverty at the level of the individual, the community, and even the region. Employment opportunities are not on their own sufficient to address poverty (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2016). Arrow, et al. (2012) highlight the contribution which other assets, such as natural capital, technological change, and health capital, which are often overlooked, can play in enabling sustainable development. It is important to tailor interventions to individual and local needs and opportunities.

Policy Implications

Our analysis suggests three sets of policy implications relevant to Wales.

First, there are a number of important evidence gaps, with the result that it is hard to know what works, or what doesn't, and many interventions are context specific. While there is a relatively large literature on attempts to improve access to services in rural areas, there are major gaps beyond that:

- Evidence about interventions to strengthen the rural economy proved difficult to find, partly because definitions of what constitutes the rural economy vary between countries.
- There is relatively little evidence about interventions to tackle fuel poverty, which is not recognised as an issue in many countries.
- Similarly, not much has been published about programmes to improve rural transport. This may be because rural public transport barely exists in the USA, whilst in many European countries public transport systems in rural areas are more effective than those in the UK, and often linked to other activities for example postal deliveries.
- There is no reliable evidence about what determines whether successful interventions are transferable to other contexts. For this reason, approaches borrowed from elsewhere need to be adapted to local communities' needs and piloted to test their effectiveness before they are rolled out widely in Wales.
- There are very few reliable rigorous evaluations of the cost-effectiveness of interventions. Even in the case of large programmes backed by significant public spending, studies usually describe interventions rather than evaluating them. Internal evaluations (for example, evaluations of state operated individual development account programmes in the USA and rural transaction centres in Australia) appear to highlight positive aspects and downplay negative features of interventions. Programmes, schemes, and initiatives are often established with a fanfare of publicity but disappear without trace due to changes in governments or ideology, or are quietly forgotten once it is realised they will not deliver the promised objectives.

Second, Wales has a wide range of policies, strategies and programmes to address various aspects of rural poverty, but they are not always evidence-based or joined-up. There is a need for systematic analysis of needs and the gaps in current provision for rural communities. Quantitative data should be supplemented with qualitative analysis from stakeholder interviews and detailed process tracing techniques to identify the causes of success and failure in current programmes, as well as the nature and scale of needs that are not being met.

Third, the mix of interventions warrants attention, so that together they build human, social, health and economic capital. Interventions may address more than one problem and may deliver a range of benefits (direct and indirect). Improvements in thermal efficiency of housing, for example, have the potential to lift people out of fuel poverty, enhance the value of the housing stock, build 'health capital', reduce health care costs, and provide employment. Clearer recognition of the multiple benefits and linkages between activities will assist in identifying the optimal mix of interventions for an area. Several different types of intervention are needed:

- Short term actions to deal with crises, such as food and fuel banks to support those in immediate need.
- Supporting service providers to reduce time and costs for residents in rural areas to access services. Options include: some form of linked up and/or centralised delivery; utilising the health services as a portal to wider support services; or partnerships with different organisations for more community centred delivery.
- A mix of place-based and people-based actions for wealth creation. Building wealth in its widest sense incorporates investment in infrastructure, in economic activity, and in developing people and the community (i.e. capacity building). The wealth of an area depends on access to funding for economic development, access to a trained workforce with relevant skills, and the human and social capital to undertake new activity and risks. Rural areas are not homogeneous and investment mechanisms need flexibility so they can be adapted to different contexts (e.g. invest in developing local resources and in new service provision, such as childcare. This may increase capacity for employment in low income households as well as create new business opportunities. Or invest in provision of transport to enable people to access training and employment in nearby urban centres).

References

Angel Network Program (ANP) (2017) <http://www.nao-ontario.ca/angel-network-program-anp/>

Arrow, K., Dasgupta, P., Goulder, L., Mumford, K., and Oleson, K. (2012) **Sustainability and the measurement of wealth**. Environment and Development Economics, Vol.17, pp.317-353.

Brigham, C. and Fisher, P. (2011) Executive **Summary: The Social Benefits of Individual Development Accounts**. The Iowa Policy Project, www.iowaPolicyProject.org

Brightstar (2015) Job **creation through capital donation: Brightstar Wisconsin 2015 Annual Report**. <http://www.brightstarwi.org/> and <http://www.brightstarwi.org/files/2015%20Annual%20Report.pdf>

Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (2015) **State of Rural Canada Report**. <file:///C:/Users/s2100562/Downloads/SORC2015.pdf> ISBN 978-0-9948480-1-7 (pdf).

Defra (2016). **Ex-Post Evaluation of the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) 2007-2013**. ADAS UK Ltd in partnership with CCRI (University of Gloucestershire), Fera Science Ltd and Pareto Consulting. Unpublished report submitted to Defra 9 December 2016.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2016) **Prosperity without Poverty: A framework for Action in Wales**. Produced with support from the Bevan Foundation.

Madanipour, A., Shucksmith, M., and Talbot, H. (2015) **Concepts of poverty and social exclusion in Europe**. Local Economy, Vol. 30, no. 7, pp. 1-21.

National Energy Action (2017) **UK Fuel Poverty Monitor 2016 – 2017: A review of progress across the nations**. http://www.nea.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/FPM_2017.pdf

Oregon Individual Development Account (IDA) Initiative (2013) **Building Pathways to Prosperity: Fact sheet**. www.oregonidainitiative.org.

Palmer, G. (2017) **Poverty and social exclusion in rural East of England**. New Policy Institute. http://www.npi.org.uk/files/3413/7544/5798/poverty_in_the_rural_east.pdf
Accessed 9 March 2017

Perry, D. (2014) **Case study: Vermont Farm to Plate Network. Vermont organizations work to achieve collective impact and transform a food system.** Institute for Sustainable Communities www.iscvt.org

Powell, J. and Courtney, P. (2013) **An assessment of the Social Return on Investment of Axes 1 and 3 of the Rural Development Programme for England.** CCRI Report submitted to Defra.

Wilkinson, R., and Pickett, K. (2009) **The Spirit Level: why equality is better for everyone.** Penguin Books, London

Williams, E. and Doyle, R. (2016) **Existing Research and Evidence Gaps.** May 2016. Public Policy institute for Wales.

Appendix 1- Example of a programme mix for supporting needs and building wealth

Figure A1 below illustrates a generic approach to poverty alleviation based on interventions identified from the research underpinning this report. The approach consists of a mix of actions to meet current needs and to develop opportunities for the future through investment in economic, human, and social capital, underpinned by strategic planning and action. What is not apparent in the diagram is the potential for ‘tailoring’ of proposed interventions to fit conditions in a particular community, area or region. The interventions are described in more detail below.

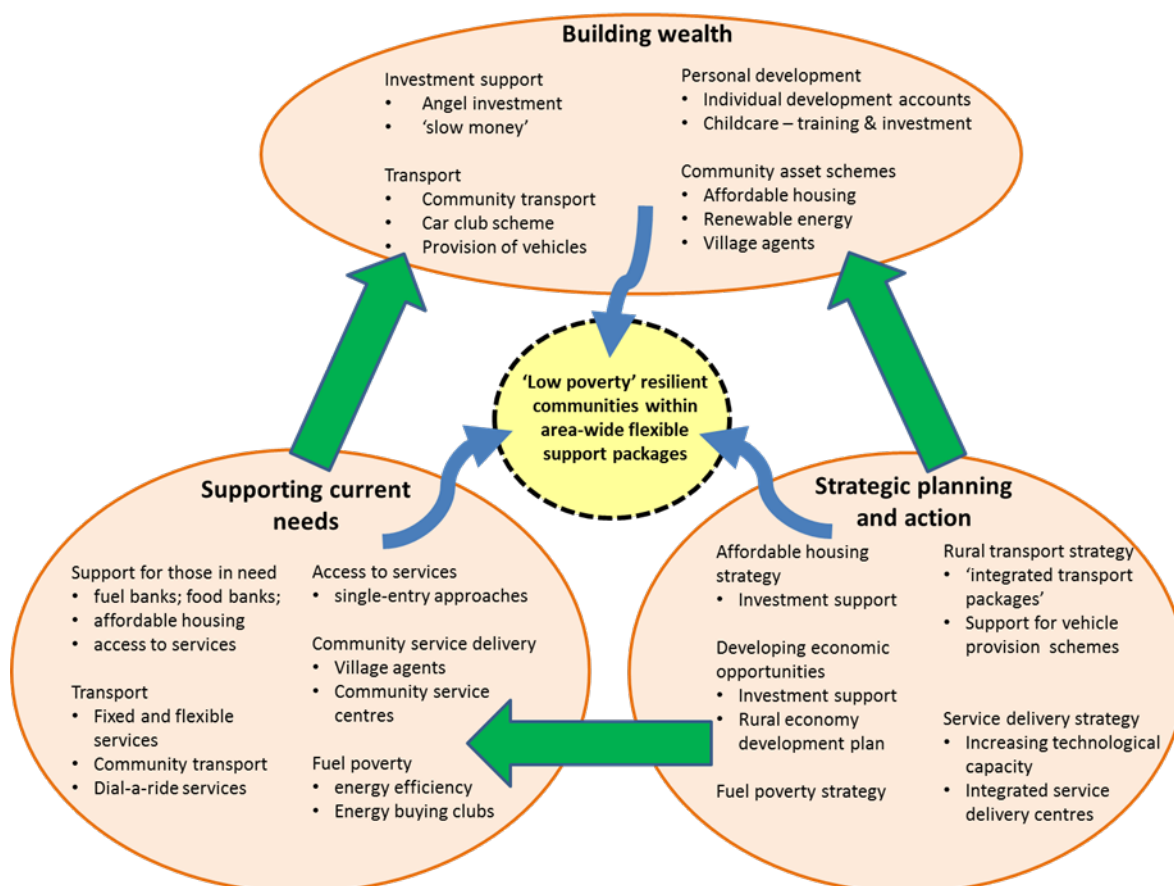


Figure A1: Example of a programme mix for supporting needs and building wealth

Building Wealth

Integrating actions that work elsewhere to deliver build capital (human, health, community, social, economic).

- Investment support for business development
 - Angel investment
 - 'Slow money' (e.g. peer-to-peer lending)
- Transport
 - Community transport schemes (build community/social capital)
 - Car club scheme
 - Provision of vehicles for those that want education/skills/jobs (target youth and those with children)
- Personal development
 - IDAs for those who want to develop individual capital or invest
 - Affordable childcare – training and investment support for those who want to develop own business
- Community asset schemes
 - Affordable housing
 - Renewable energy
 - Village agents (build social capital)

Supporting current needs

Partially met through welfare services

- Support for those in need/in crisis
 - Fuel banks;
 - Food banks;
 - Affordable housing
 - Access to services (e.g. debt counselling)
- Transport
 - Fixed and flexible scheduled services
 - Community transport service

- Dial-a-ride services
- Access to services
 - Single-entry approaches linking health and access to wider social support services
- Community based service delivery
 - Village agents to support service delivery/keep people in their homes
 - Community service centres (specific support to meet local needs)
- Fuel poverty
 - Energy efficiency schemes (insulation; boiler efficiency)
 - Energy buying clubs

Strategic programmes and action

- Affordable housing
 - Investment support (e.g. tax credits, financial incentives)
 - Affordable housing strategic plan
- Developing economic and employment opportunities
 - Investment support (e.g. tax credits, financial incentives)
 - Strategic rural economy development plan (e.g. enhancement of supply chain activity)
- Fuel poverty
 - Long-term community energy strategy based on “total solutions packages” for households in fuel poverty
- Rural transport
 - Rural transport strategy based on ‘integrated transport packages’ (scheduled, flexible, and dial-a-ride approaches)
 - Support to establish schemes that provide vehicles to individual households designed and delivered at the regional and sub/regional level (i.e. flexible and tailored delivery to meet community needs)
- Service delivery
 - Increasing technological capacity for service delivery (e.g. health)
 - Integrated service delivery centres

Author Details

John Powell is a Senior Research Fellow at the Countryside and Community Research Institute (CCRI), University of Gloucestershire.

Dan Keech is a Research Fellow at the Countryside and Community Research Institute (CCRI), University of Gloucestershire.

Matt Reed is a Senior Research Fellow at the Countryside and Community Research Institute (CCRI), University of Gloucestershire.

Janet Dwyer is a Professor of Rural Policy Fellow at the Countryside and Community Research Institute (CCRI), University of Gloucestershire.

For further information please contact:

Emyr Williams

Wales Centre for Public Policy

+44 (0) 29 2087 5345

info@wcpp.org.uk

OGL This report is licensed under the terms of the Open Government License