

Conclusion

“The counter-urbanisation of Curbridge is having a negative affect on its Social, Economic and Natural Environment.”

Counter-urbanisation is happening in Curbridge. This is shown by the questionnaire as a vast amount of people have moved to Curbridge in the last 10 years and as I identified at the beginning from the DEFRA website they have recognised this trend for about the past 20 years. In addition to this the land use maps shows that on the 1980 map of Curbridge there is a higher number of working farms, shops and smaller housing. In my land-use map from 2006 there is only 1 working farm and there is no current village shop. The only public business in Curbridge is the Lord Kitchener. The questionnaire also shows that most people who have moved to Curbridge moved because they liked the housing and also preferred the village, showing people are moving there for comfort more then for work and other reasons. Also the spearman's rank showed a trend with people who have lived in Curbridge for less time travel further to work. This links with other data which proves that the majority of people who have moved into Curbridge in recent years commute the longest distances to work. This move proves that counter-urbanisation is happening in Curbridge. This influx in people from outside the village could have a negative affect on the social aspect of the village. This may be because people will spend less time there because they commute so far to work, therefore they don't know others from the village.

Counter-urbanisation is having a negative affect on some people in Curbridge as since the rising numbers of people have been moving there, places like the village shop and village school, central to the social life in Curbridge, have closed down and have been turning in to housing. This means the younger people and some older people have to commute to a school in Witney or even further a field (Carterton, Burfield). The lack of a village shop to sell small items like milk and bread (convenience items) means people have to walk, drive or take the bus to Witney. For those who don't drive, this means walking over 30 minutes or taking the bus which can be unreliable (see questionnaire analysis). The picture gram also shows that only three people travel to work by bus, it could cost more to run the bus service through Curbridge then they make off the people using it. This could in turn mean a reduced time table to Curbridge making it even more difficult for certain people to travel. If you want a service to continue running then people need to be prepared to use it! Also as more newcomers move in to the area the less you tend to see of each other meaning the once close community of Curbridge might be broken by the new comers also the fact that many of them will not be working in the local area as 24 out of the 39 working people who completed the questionnaire work over 11 miles away, which might give them less time at home and in the community. This can be seen as in the last ten years 17 people out of those who did the questionnaire have moved to Curbridge and out of all the people that live in Curbridge only two works there which would be in the Lord Kitchener which is the only socially orientated business in Curbridge. Indeed many in the village talk of a divide within the village which they termed as the 'carrots' and the 'cabbages' Well Lane, where most of the original residents live are the cabbages. These people are still heavily involved in the social

aspects of the village. The carrots are along the Brize Norton Road (Where most of the gentrified barns are) these people are rarely involved in the social life of the village.

Counter-urbanisation is having a negative affect on the economic environment of Curbridge. The land use maps show that since 1980 the village shop has closed and two farms this shows there has been a negative affect on the business side of Curbridge's community. However as these farms and housing are being closed people are buying the land which in the last 10 years land value has risen extremely fast it means richer people are buying into Curbridge boosting the amount of money the village holds. However as most of the village businesses have closed the money is being spent else where. This means that less money is coming directly to the village affecting the economy. The house prices will also rise as most people living there or moving there are earning around £30,000+ this will mean they can afford larger housing and more property. This again has a negative affect on the economy as villagers with low income jobs will no longer be able to afford housing. This will push young adults out of the market and could have an impact on families as new parents may have to move away from the area meaning they no longer have their parents for support. This can put extra stress on new families as they will still need to bring in an income and possibly pay for child car in addition to this. These reasons could lead to a broken family therefore no support which may come with other problems.

Counter-urbanisation is having a negative affect on the environment however certain aspects are being improved due to it, the fact that people are moving out to find jobs else where because of the troubles counter-urbanisation can bring means some buildings are being left to stand uninhabited. This is having a negative affect on the environment in Curbridge; however these building are being brought by the new residents moving to the village. They then gentrify most of these properties meaning the buildings look more modern and presentable. This then has a knock on effect in that the buildings that once made the environment look worse have been regenerated and correct this negative look. This extra money that new people are bringing in to Curbridge also allows them to build a park and other sites which will encourage people to meet others. There is also a new proposal for a housing development of 800 new homes to be built in Curbridge. This will have a negative affect on the land as more of the natural land that people might move there for will be built on. There is also the environmental consequence of additional cars on the road. However this could also bring shops and other socially amenities to the area, so may address some of the issues highlighted above.

Counter-urbanisation has caused negative affects in Curbridge and there may be more to come. Pyehomes have a development proposal for the Curbridge area. They are planning on building at least 800 homes in Curbridge with new community use like halls and schools. Although this will come with some benefits it may also increase the problems that counter-urbanisation has already begun to cause in Curbridge like, increased house prices. The village may become busier. It may also bring over trade and competition. For instance a village shop would help however if the new plot builds a pub then the Lord Kitchener may lose money and may have to close. It may also

exacerbate some of the issues already raised above. Increasing alienation of the former residents of Curbridge and increased environmental problems due to increased traffic. It may also completely change the character of Curbridge from a small quaint village into a sprawling suburb of Witney. However the increase in people may also improve the local transport service as more people may be commuting to Witney and other places so the local council may have to improve this area.