

Appendix 3 - Community Impact Assessment

Issue no. 1.0

Introduction

Gt Gidding (Church of England) VC Primary School is located in the village of Great Gidding, in northwest Cambridgeshire.



Gt Gidding is in the district of Huntingdonshire and is surrounded by the small settlements of Little Gidding, Steeple Gidding, Winwick, Hamerton and Luddington in the Brook. The closest larger settlement is the village of Sawtry, 4.9 miles away.



Covering 352.3 square miles, Huntingdonshire is a large district in Cambridgeshire and is classified as 'rural 80' meaning that at least 80% of its population live in rural settlements. Approximately 80% of the population live in large market towns and rural towns. The rest live in rural villages and hamlets.

Impact on pupils

The closure proposal would directly affect pupils currently in Reception to Year 5 at Gt Gidding Primary School. It is apparent from the information provided that, were Gt Gidding to close, sufficient places in the surrounding area schools could be created to accommodate the estimated 34 (as at January 2023) Reception to Year 5 pupils who would be displaced from the school at the end of the academic year. Year 6 pupils currently at Gt Gidding would not be directly impacted as they will move on to secondary school in the new academic year.

Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) may be disproportionately impacted due to the nature of their individual needs and/or the complexity of transitioning SEN support arrangements or support in place via an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Potential Impact:

The main changes for pupils in Reception to Year 5 would be:

- A new school
- A new routine
- A new route to school
- A new uniform
- New teachers and support staff
- A new learning environment
- Changed friendship groups

It is possible that the impact of the above will be greater for children with SEND.

Responses to the Stage 1 consultation indicated that parents and carers were concerned about the impact on the social relationships, mental health and wellbeing of pupils.

They have also raised concerns about the cost of purchasing new uniform and transport to their child's new school if their choice of school does not entitle them to transport assistance under the Council's transport policy

Mitigating Factors:

It is proposed that a change to the catchment area, from the 2023/24 academic year, be made to incorporate the Gt Gidding catchment area into the Sawtry catchment area. This would ensure that should Gt Gidding close, children living in the school's catchment area would have access to other local schools.

Every pupil would be guaranteed the offer of a place at an alternative primary school in their local area. Which school is offered will depend on the home catchment location of each child. It is noted that 3 children live outside of Cambridgeshire (2 in Peterborough and 1 in Northamptonshire). Liaison with the local admissions authority regarding these children is taking place. Schools likely to receive displaced children include:

- Sawtry Community Infant School
- Sawtry Junior Academy
- Holme Church of England Primary School
- Fourfields Community Primary School
- Stilton Church of England Primary School
- Yaxley Community Infant School
- William de Yaxley Church of England Junior School
- Alconbury Church of England Primary School

The local authority would be responsible for overseeing the process of closing the school and would work closely with the school to implement closure, including supporting pupils during their final months at Gt Gidding and in their transition to a new school. Parents and carers of children at the school would be able to express a preference for a place at an alternative school. Parents

and carers would be asked to complete an admissions application form and to name up to three schools they would prefer their child/ren to attend. Parents and carers would be offered a school place either at one of their preferred schools named on the application form or, if this is not possible, at the nearest school to the child's home where a place is available. The local authority would try to meet parents and carers preferences wherever possible but cannot guarantee to do so. The allocation of places would be made in line with the School Admissions Code and the admissions policies for the schools involved. Further information is available on the Cambridgeshire County Council website at:

[Apply for a school place - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)

The local authority would take all practicable steps to ease the transition for all pupils, including vulnerable groups. It would work with the receiving schools to arrange transition days for pupils to meet their new teachers and to familiarise themselves with their new environments.

There are currently no children on roll at the school who have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). There are children in receipt of Special Educational Needs (SEN) support. If the school were to close the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) District Team would work with school staff to carry out child centred planning for children in receipt of SEN support. This will ensure that pupil and parent/carer voices are heard and would be used to build a robust and successful transition plan. The local authority SEND District Team would identify provision required to meet the needs of children receiving SEN support and would ensure that link SEND practitioners are identified within receiving schools so that information is appropriately shared regarding the children they would receive. Support would be available to Special Education Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) at receiving schools to incorporate the provision required as part of the school's graduated response.

Should any child receive an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) during the remainder of the current academic year, they and their family would be supported to identify, and transition to a new school through the well-established EHCP processes should the school close.

Local Authority support will be made available through the Strategic SEND Support Team who will provide support for pupils using a pastoral emotional health and wellbeing approach. The package of support made available will be bespoke to the needs of pupils at Gt Gidding and delivered by a Strategic SEND Support Specialist Teacher.

Some of the schools identified mention on their websites that second hand uniforms are available at a very low cost.

Recommendation:

That, in addition to the mitigations outlined above, the receiving schools would be asked to identify buddies for the incoming pupils to help further ease transition by ensuring there is a familiar face and an introduction to new friendship groups.

If Committee were to decide to move to Stage 4 of the statutory process and close the school, officers would propose that the Committee considers an exceptional case for the parents/carers of pupils who were on roll at the school on 17 January 2023 and subsequently displaced to other schools, to receive support with transport to the school nearest to their home address or the nearest faith school to their home address, and with uniform costs. Officers would present more information in support of this if the Committee were to meet in April.

Impact on parents and families

There are/have been events both inside and outside of school hours organised by the school. These include but are not limited to:

- Summer and Christmas Fayres (though the last of these was in 2019)
- Harvest Festival during which the whole school go to church and family members are invited to attend
- Book week events during which parents are invited to an assembly
- Christingle church service followed by a Christmas Mingle
- Discos and quizzes have been held in the past but are not regular events

A dance club and a PE club are offered after school one day per week for approximately 1 hour. Previously, 2 PE related clubs and an art club were offered.

Gt Gidding used to provide wrap around care before school, after school or during the holidays but no longer does so due to lack of interest making it unviable.

There is no Early Years provision on site at the school or elsewhere in the village.

Potential Impact:

If the proposals go ahead, these events would cease.

Mitigating Factors:

Schools in the local area have a greater offer. They provide events and clubs, but many also provide wrap around care for pupils. The offer available is summarised below and further detail can be found by contacting schools directly.

☐ Sawtry Community Infant school

Sawtry Community Infant School runs a number of lunch time and after school clubs for pupils including music, gymnastics, computing, multi-sports, dance, choir and dodgeball.

The Friends of Sawtry Infant School Association runs fundraising events including a Christmas shopping event, discos, mini competitions, and a summer fayre.

There is a preschool, Buttons and Bows, running from the school site.

Wrap around care is provided on site, by Kidzone, to both Sawtry Infants School and Sawtry Junior School pupils.

☐ Sawtry Junior Academy

Sawtry Junior Academy offers a wide range of after school enrichment activities, including a wide range of clubs, a lunch time homework club, and music lessons for piano, recorder, violin, drums and guitar.

The Sawtry Junior Parents Association runs fundraising events for the school, including discos, film nights, Christmas and Summer Fayres.

Wrap around care is available at the nearby Sawtry Infants School site.

☐ Fourfields Community Primary School

Fourfields Primary School offers a wide range of after school enrichment activities. There are after school clubs run by school staff offering choir, cooking, football, cross country, reading, Korean, history, forest fun. There is a lunch time pokemon card swapping club. There are also after school clubs run by external providers on school site including Taekwondo, drama, boxercise and football.

The school runs events for parents, including parent coffee afternoons and a support group for parents of children with special educational needs (SEN).

Yaxley Out of School Club offers wrap around care for the children at the school.

□ Alconbury CofE Primary School

Alconbury's local vicar leads Collective Worship weekly. Other clergy from the local Baptist and Methodist churches who are friends of the school lead worship each half term.

The school runs a range of clubs, further details of which can be obtained from the school office.

Alconberries Before and After School Club offers wrap around care.

□ Holme CofE Primary School

Holme CofE Primary School offers wrap around care via an After School Club.

The school runs clubs offering football for girls run by Peterborough United Football Club, Lego, Zumba, singing, netball and futsal.

Friends of Holme School facilitate the sale of pre-loved school uniform and Christmas jumpers and run the 100 club, a lottery which involves parents and other relatives being able to buy a number for a monthly draw.

□ Yaxley Community Infant School

Wrap around care is provided for Yaxley Infants, by Energy Kidz, at William de Yaxley Junior School.

The school can provide information on clubs and events if requested.

□ William de Yaxley CofE Junior School

Wrap around care is provided on site at William de Yaxley Junior School by Energy Kidz. Easter holiday club provision is also available on site.

Pupils take part in collective worship and there is a worship council, voted for by peers.

The school has a lunch time Eco Club and offers in school music lessons, delivered by JMP Music, for the following: Piano/keyboard, guitar, ukulele, drums, singing, violin, recorder and trumpet. Lessons for clarinet, saxophone and flute are also available online.

□ Stilton CofE Primary School

Collective worship at Stilton CofE Primary School takes place daily and there is a termly schedule of times when parents/carers can attend the school to join collective worship.

Various extracurricular activities are available for children at the school including choir, gardening club, French, music, Lego club, DT, street dance, and music lessons in singing, keyboard, drums, guitar and ukulele.

The Haven Out of School Club runs wrap around care from the site.

□ Folksworth CofE Primary School

Folksworth CofE Primary School holds collective worship. The school has links with its local churches in the surrounding catchment villages of Folksworth, Stilton, Elton, Haddon, Morborne. These villages and churches fall within the Diocese of Ely. The Vicar-in-charge of The Stilton Group of Parishes, Richard Gibbs, is the local Vicar and visits the school regularly.

After school clubs are available at the school. They are run by Youth Dream and the current offer includes multi sports, handball/dodgeball, yoga, netball, Minecraft, SATs booster, and bible story Lego.

Friends of Stilton School meet regularly to organise events and initiatives that support fundraising for the school.

□ Brington CofE Primary School

St Leonard's Pre-school is located next door to Brington CofE Primary School. As well as offering Early Years provision the site hosts the out of school club which, although a separate

entity, is run by the same charitable trust. Wrap around care is available 7:30 – 18:00, 50 weeks of the year.

Collective worship is a feature of the school and a pupil worship committee meets at least once every half term.

The school can provide information on clubs and events if requested.

Recommendation:

None

Impact of proposal on the wider community

Concern was expressed that, should the school close, amenities may be affected. Specifically, concerns were expressed about the impact on the village shop, the village pub and the village hall in respect of lost trade and lost bookings for events such as children's parties and the potential impact on the local Church and Church community due to the loss of services attended by school.

Potential Impact:

If the school were to close there may be a reduction in trade at the local shop and pub, and in bookings at the village hall. The local community would no longer be able to attend church events facilitated for and attended by the school. As a result, local amenities may be lost and there may be a resulting impact on people moving into the village/house prices.

Schools act as employers and consumers in the local area. Parents of pupils attending the school may be more likely to spend locally. Sell et al (1996) studied the socio-economic impacts of school closures on North Dakota communities. They found a perceived decline in retail sales and the number of businesses in both communities where schools had closed and communities where schools had gained students due to the consolidation of schools. Those from communities where schools had closed were more likely to think this decline was due to the school closure. However, there was a lack of data to support their belief [1] [2]. A high proportion of pupils at the school do not live in Gt Gidding so the school has had the effect of bringing in potential customers from outside the village.

Great Gidding Church of St Michael is led by a visible, popular and active lay and ordained church team. As a typical and important rural church, it has 2 'minister led' services a month on Sundays, and one early morning midweek communion. In addition, individuals regularly use the church as a spiritual haven at any part of the day. The closure of the school will naturally likely impact on participation in such activities, particularly in relation to those individuals and families whose presence in the community is a consequence of being at, or having children in, the school. In short, the school closure will reduce the wider impact of the church's Ministry, and the reciprocal resourcing of it.

For Christmas, Harvest, Remembrance Day and for choral evensongs (2 or 3 a year, with visiting choir), the congregation increases considerably as a consequence of school participation. The school come into church every month for a service, and are a welcome and important part of the congregation. Due to their regular attendance, the staff and pupils have made a 'qualifying connection' to be married in the church, should they wish. The school has 3 services in the year when parents also come.

Without the school, participation could be significantly impacted, not least in terms of children, young people and families. The community will need to further support the excellent Parochial Church Council in continuing to make the church available to the community, whether that be for festival times, regular worship for those who seek it, a spiritual safe-space, or general use for social benefit

purposes. The Grade 1 listed building is increasingly in need of support, and funding. The closure of the school then, like any major village service, will thus further put pressure on the long term sustainability of such essential spiritual provision, for those of faith and for anyone seeking pastoral care and support.

Mitigating Factors:

The Giddings Parish Council provide information on its website about a range of groups and events in the wider parish area that could be accessed by the local community. Events have included:

- The Great Gidding Wassail held in Jubilee Wood
- Festive wine tasting
- Luddington Open Studios, where Luddington in Brook ladies were serving homemade cakes and teas
- Hamerton Village Harvest Supper
- Harvest Festival and Service of Prayer and Reflection remembering Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at St Michael's Church.
- Winwick Fete
- Summer wine tasting
- Coffee mornings at the village hall.

The economic benefits that a school brings to a community must be considered beneficial side effects to the main duty of a school which is to provide a quality education to its pupils. Numbers on roll, budget deficits and academic standards must be the major considerations in any decision on the future of a school and, while a community may be impacted by a decision to close a school; this cannot be an overriding factor. If the school closed, the local shop and pub would be unable to rely on passing trade from the school community and their families. This is already the case for 13 weeks of the year during school holidays. It is also likely, that as the majority of pupils attending the school live outside of the catchment area, they would therefore be more likely to use facilities and be part of the community where they lived rather than where they attend school. It would be for the local community to consider how to support local retail facilities.

Concern was raised during the consultation that there is potential for reduced bookings at the village hall for events such as children's parties. Most of the children on roll at Gt Gidding do not live in the catchment. It is likely that events for these children have been held in venues local to their home rather than to their school. The families of children on roll who do reside in Gt Gidding are likely to continue to use the village hall as previously. Research conducted by the Parish Council Clerk shows that there have been only 2 children's parties at the village hall since the end of COVID-19 lockdowns in March 2021. Both bookings were for village residents. There was an children's party enquiry from a resident outside of Gt Gidding but the booking could not be facilitated due to it coinciding with another booked event. The school directly made use of the village hall over a 2-day period in July 2022 for end of term event rehearsals. The hall was made available for use of the school with no charge.

Gt Gidding and Abbots Ripton are the smallest settlements in Cambridgeshire with a primary school. The Abbots Ripton school catchment has a different demographic to Gt Gidding with over 44 age 4-11 children living in catchment, compared to only 19 in the Gt Gidding catchment. A demographic comparison of Gt Gidding and similar Cambridgeshire villages without schools or where schools previously closed indicates that populations remain stable.

Recommendation:

None

Access to provision of same school designation

Gt Gidding is a denominational school (Church of England). Currently there are 19 church of England primary schools providing a total of 3747 denominational places in Huntingdonshire. Should Gt

Gidding close the number of denominational primary schools would reduce to 18 and the total number of places to 3649. Whilst there are other denominational schools in the area surrounding Gt Gidding, places being available at those schools cannot be guaranteed and transport may not be provided for parental choice placements, in accordance with CCCs transport policy.

Potential Impact:

Some pupils currently in Reception to Year 5 at Gt Gidding might be offered places at non-denominational schools.

Mitigating Factors:

All non-denominational state funded schools in England have to provide collective worship of a '*broadly Christian character*'. Equally, denominational schools are not exclusive to worshipping families.

Aside from Gt Gidding, there are four denominational schools within 6 miles of Gt Gidding (as the crow flies). These are listed alongside their distance from Gt Gidding, their published admission number (PAN) and the number of classes they currently operate.

- Gt Gidding CofE Primary School (0m; PAN 14; 3 classes)
- Folksworth CofE Primary School (4.5m; PAN 15; 4 classes)
- Stilton CofE Primary Academy (4.7m; PAN 30; 6 classes)
- Brington CofE Primary School (5.1m; PAN 17; 4 classes)
- Holme CofE Primary Academy (5.5m; PAN 17; 5 classes)

The LA will endeavour to meet parental preferences for alternative school places but cannot guarantee to do so.

Recommendation:

CCC Officers offered to meet with parents one to one. With parents that took up this offer, we discussed likely preferences for alternative school placement should Gt Gidding close. Based upon this information, officers are exploring options with implicated schools which would allow for as many preferences to be met as possible.

Should a decision be made to close the school, a discrete admissions round will be opened for parents of children in Reception to Year 5 at Gt Gidding CofE Primary School. Parents will be able to express three preferences for alternative schools, and effort will be made to accommodate children in denominational schools should they so wish.

If Committee were to decide to move to Stage 4 of the statutory process and close the school, officers would propose that the Committee considers an exceptional case for the parents/carers of pupils who were on roll at the school on 17 January 2023 and subsequently displaced to other schools, to receive support with transport to the school nearest to their home address or the nearest faith school to their home address. Officers would present more information in support of this if the Committee were to meet in April.

Impact on neighbouring schools

If the school were to close, every pupil in Reception to Year 5 at Gt Gidding would be offered a place at an alternative school, many of which are likely to be nearer to their home address. Pupil numbers at Gt Gidding are subject to change between now and the end of the academic year. For the purpose of consistency, this section will consider the impact of 39 pupils potentially being displaced, as per the October 2023 forecast pupil numbers.

Potential Impact:

The table below shows the actual number of pupils on roll during the October 2022 school census. The information shows that there were 1733 pupils on roll across nine schools within 7.5m (as the crow

flies) of Gt Gidding, with 1849 places available if all schools were operating up to their published admission number (PAN). This results in 116 (6.3%) surplus places across these schools.

Pupil numbers and places available within 7.5m of Gt Gidding (October 2022)

Data source: October 2022 school census

Capacity	PAN	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total	Capacity	Deficit (-) / Surplus (+)
Sawtry Infant School	60	62	61	60					183	180	-3
Sawtry Junior Academy	65				57	55	83	73	268	260	-8
Folksworth CE Primary	15	14	9	12	17	16	11	16	95	105	10
Stilton CE Primary Academy	30	28	14	18	17	27	25	26	155	210	55
Brington CE Primary	17	16	15	15	17	12	19	15	109	119	10
Holme CE Primary	17	22	18	15	16	15	17	15	118	119	1
Yaxley Infants School	60	53	40	39					132	180	48
William de Yaxley CE Junior School	64				53	57	59	58	227	256	29
Fourfields Primary	60	58	60	60	89	60	60	59	446	420	-26
Combined total on roll		253	217	219	266	242	274	262	1733		
Capacity (if operating to PAN)		259	259	259	268	268	268	268		1849	
Deficit (-) / Surplus (+)		6	42	40	2	26	-6	6			116

This information has been used to forecast the number of places required across the same schools for the following academic year (2023/24) – See Table below. The forecast takes account of birth rates, trends in actual numbers, and planned housing development. For example, for Sawtry Infant School there were 62 children on roll in September 2022, but due to birth rate and housing development within the village, this figure is expected to increase to 82 children entering reception in September 2023.

These forecasts have been used to assess the capacity of schools in the area to accommodate displaced pupils from Gt Gidding in September 2023 should it close on 31 August 2023.

Provisional pupil numbers within 7.5 miles of Gt Gidding (forecast for October 2023)

Data source: Pupil forecasts October 2022

Capacity	PAN	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total	Capacity	Deficit (-) / Surplus (+)
Sawtry Infant School	60	82	57	60					199	180	-19
Sawtry Junior Academy	65				59	60	56	83	258	260	2
Folksworth CE Primary	15	9	15	8	13	16	15	11	87	105	18
Stilton CE Primary Academy	30	11	29	14	13	13	26	23	129	210	81
Brington CE Primary	17	13	17	18	16	21	19	20	124	119	-5
Holme CE Primary	17	13	17	17	16	16	16	17	112	119	7
Yaxley Infants School	60	52	53	45					150	180	30
William de Yaxley CE Junior School	64				43	50	53	60	206	256	50
Fourfields Primary	60	55	61	60	59	89	58	59	441	420	-21
Combined total on roll		235	249	222	219	265	243	273	1706		
Capacity (if operating to PAN)		259	259	259	268	268	268	268		1849	
Deficit (-) / Surplus (+)		24	10	37	49	3	25	-5			143

Pupil numbers across the nine schools are forecast to decrease by 27 to 1,706 in October 2023, with surplus places increasing from 6.3% to 7.7%.

If Gt Gidding's forecast of 39 pupils on roll for 2023/24 were to be absorbed by the nine schools, there would be 1,745 pupils and a remaining surplus of 104 places, or 5.6%.

It is acknowledged that William de Yaxley CE Junior School is currently RI which may influence parental choice. Even without this school, there are sufficient places amongst the remaining 8 schools to accommodate displaced pupils, with a remaining surplus of 54 or 3.4%.

Schools operate most efficiently and effectively when full or nearly full. To this end the local authority seeks to keep the number of surplus places (the number of places in schools that are unfilled) to a minimum. However, it is generally accepted that not all unfilled places in a school are surplus places, but that a small margin of surplus capacity is often allowed to facilitate parental preference, to take account of the fact that schools with available places may not always be in the part of a planning area where the demand is, and to allow for a degree of error in the forecasts. A school is generally considered to be full when it has less than 5% of its places unfilled. This is in line with the National Audit Office report on Capital Funding for new school places published in 2013, where it states:

“It is considered that on average 5 per cent was the bare minimum needed for authorities to meet their statutory duty with operational flexibility, while enabling parents to have some choice of schools”.

In this case, an overall capacity of 5.6% leaves surplus at the bare minimum and the capacity is not evenly spread across all year groups.

The closure proposal would directly affect pupils currently in Reception to Year 5 at Gt Gidding. Year 6 pupils currently at Gt Gidding would not be directly impacted as they will move on to secondary school in the new academic year. Although overall it appears that there are sufficient school places, it is apparent from the information provided that, were Gt Gidding to close, and no further action be taken, there would be insufficient places in the surrounding area in some year groups.

Some local schools may benefit from the proposal by reducing surplus places and providing more certainty about pupil numbers. The proposal should create a more sustainable network of schools in the local area thereby reducing the risk of more schools becoming unviable.

Mitigating Factors:

N/A. In the longer term a new school planned to open in Sawtry in September 2024 to make provision for children arising from new developments in Sawtry will also mitigate the impact of displaced pupils wanting to take up a place in a Sawtry school.

Recommendations:

CCC Officers will seek to establish parental preference, where possible, prior to the decision regarding closure of Gt Gidding CofE VC Primary School. This is not because the decision is being pre-empted, but rather to ensure that, should a decision to close be made, the appropriate planning is in place to accommodate displaced children.

CCC Officers, together with the implicated schools, will explore options to create additional capacity in the area. Options include increasing the number of classes through use of vacant classroom space within schools and the reorganisation of class structures to ensure capacity is available across the year groups

Impact on pupil travel arrangements

Transport to alternative schools, in particular alternative denominational schools, was raised as an issue.

Potential Impact:

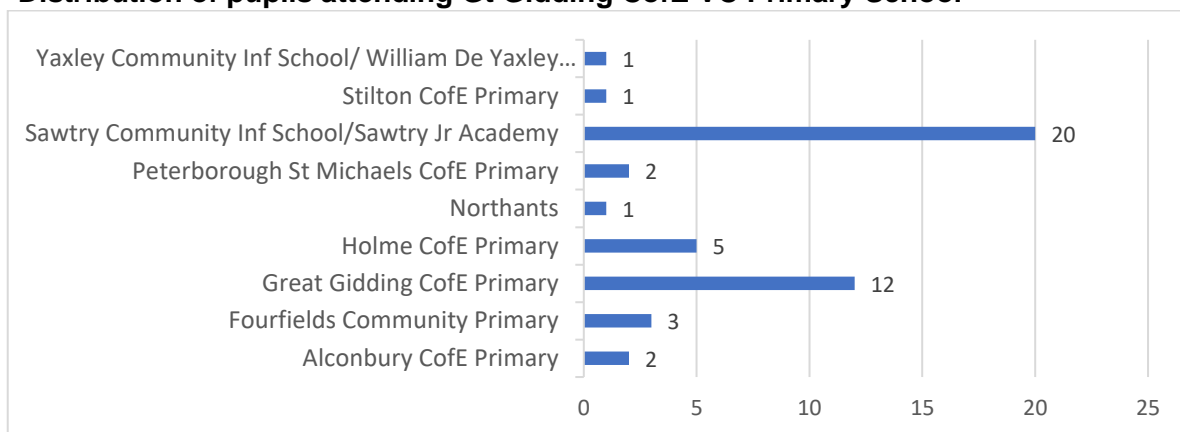
Some families may be impacted by additional travel costs and travel time. The closure of the school may impact members of the community who will have to go beyond the local village to

engage with teachers and use community facilities. There may be a resulting impact on traffic and the environment of children having to travel by car to an alternative school.

Mitigating Factors:

The majority of pupils currently attending Gt Gidding are from outside its catchment area. As at the October 2022 annual pupil census, there were 47 pupils on roll at Gt Gidding. Only 12 (25.5%) of those pupils lived in the Gt Gidding catchment. The remaining 35 pupils (74.5%) traveled to Gt Gidding from other catchments. The largest proportion of pupils attended from the Sawtry catchment. This is illustrated in the chart below.

Distribution of pupils attending Gt Gidding CofE VC Primary School



Source: Pupil led annual school census (PLASC) October 2022

From this information it is evident that the majority of pupils attending Gt Gidding already face journeys to and from school each day. It is highly likely that journey times, and therefore the impact on traffic congestion and the environment, could be reduced in the event that Gt Gidding were to close as the majority of displaced pupils would have the opportunity to attend schools nearer to their home address.

Of the 12 children on roll in October 2022 who reside in Gt Gidding's catchment 2 are in Yr 6 and will transfer to secondary phase in Sept 2023. For the remaining 10 children, if Gt Gidding were to close, alternative schools are not far from the village and would be in travelling distance for community activities - between 3.1 and 7.3 miles away from Gt Gidding as shown in the table below. For the majority of pupils and families these schools could be nearer to their home address.

Distance from Gt Gidding CofE VC Primary School to alternative schools in the local area

School	Distances in miles (as the crow flies)
Sawtry Infants School	3.1
Sawtry Junior Academy	3.1
Folksworth CofE VC Primary School	4.5
Stilton CofE Primary Academy	4.7
Brington CofE Primary School	5.1
Holme CofE Primary School	5.5
Yaxley Community Infant School	7.1
William de Yaxley CofE Junior Academy	7.2
Fourfields Primary School	7.3

Analysis shows that of the 37 Reception to Year 5 pupils likely to be affected by the proposal, approximately 73% live nearer, or the same distance, to an alternative school, with approximately 27% living further away. Free home to school transport would be provided for eligible pupils who meet the criteria set out in the link below.

[Pre-16 transport \(mainstream\) - Cambridgeshire County Council](#)

From the information currently available, the local authority considers that 10 pupils would be eligible for free home to school transport to their nearest alternative school. This is offset by 8 children who currently receive free transport to Gt Gidding, and who may no longer be eligible. Hence, the additional cost to the local authority would be small. The local authority acknowledges that pupils living in the Gt Gidding catchment and attending the school will face longer journeys to and from an alternative school each day. However, for the majority their nearest alternative school is within statutory walking distance.

It is envisaged that displaced pupils would continue to be transported to and from school under arrangements made by their parents and carers. Given the majority of pupils would be able to attend a school nearer to their home address it is unlikely there would be an increase in car usage. To the contrary, it would be hoped that car usage would reduce thereby having a positive impact on the environment.

Though it is recognised that some families may choose to travel further to an alternative denominational school, there are sufficient denominational schools within a reasonable distance and so this impact is likely to be small.

Recommendation:

Should a decision be made to move to stage 2: publish a statutory notice of formal proposal for closure, information regarding parental preference for alternatives schools will be used to review the impact on travel arrangements.

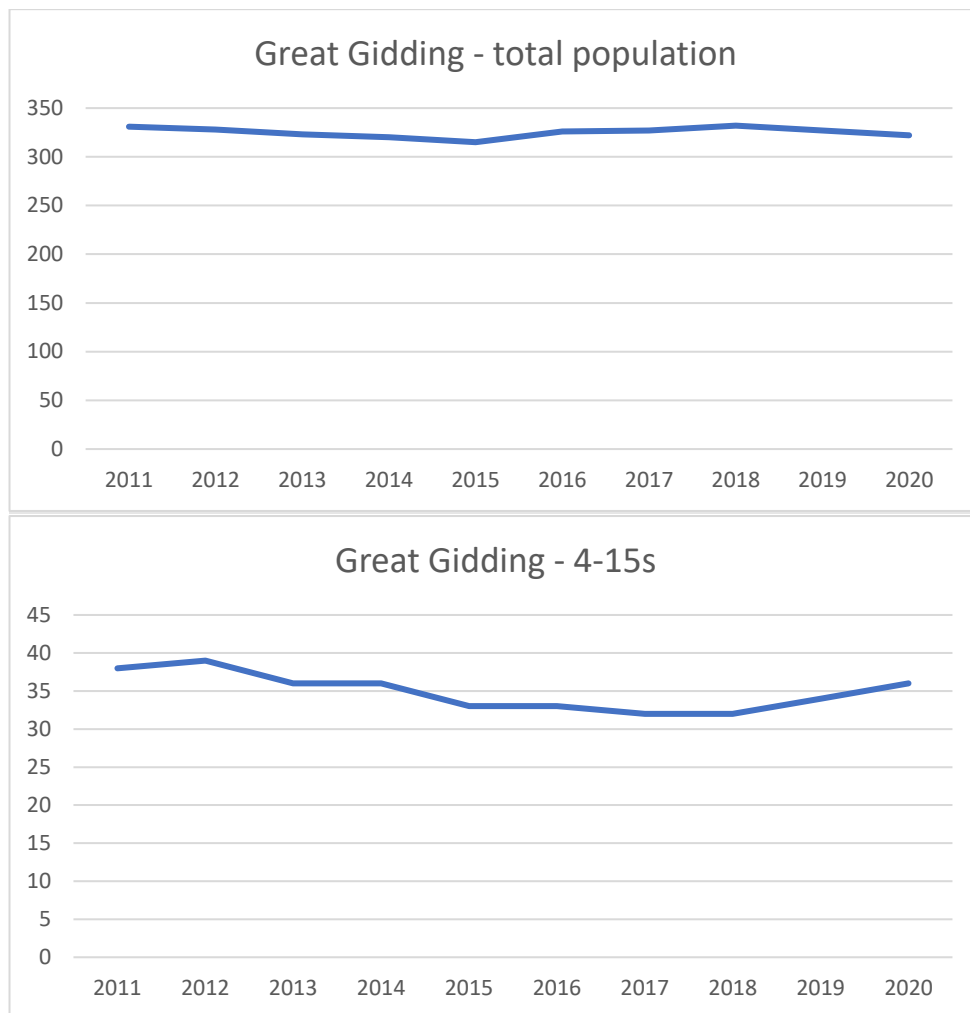
Impact on community demographics

Concern was expressed that, should the proposed closure be implemented, the demography of the village would change, with less families choosing to live in the area.

The total population of Gt Gidding has remained stable at 300 - 350 between 2011 and 2020. There is a very low rate of housing development in the Gt Gidding area and so development does not have a significant impact on the number of primary age children, or indeed the total population. Population stability is indicated in both the table and the graph below.

Gt Gidding total population 2011 - 2020

Age	Census 2011	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total population	335	331	328	323	320	315	326	327	332	327	322
PLASC count age 4-15		29	30	27	27	24	24	23	23	25	27



Abbots Ripton is the only settlement in Cambridgeshire that is smaller than Gt Gidding and has a primary school. A population comparison of Gt Gidding with Abbots Ripton and six other Cambridgeshire small settlements shows that populations remain stable, regardless of there being a school. This indicates that a school is not necessary for a settlement to retain population stability. Further detail of this comparison can be found at the end of this document in appendix A.

Potential Impact:

The closure of the school could have the effect of making the village less attractive to families with school age children and so attracting an older population.

Mitigating Factors:

The local authority must continue to discharge its statutory duty in terms of ensuring there are sufficient school places to meet demand and that all schools are well placed to deliver high quality education that meets the needs of their local community and makes best use of public funding.

It is not the school's or the local authority's role to seek to encourage families with young children to move to the village. The LA is not allowed to promote any school, and indeed the resources required to attempt to do so would be prohibitive and likely to be of little effect.

Recommendations:

None

Summary and conclusions of the potential impact on the community

The community impact assessment has identified a number of possible areas where the proposal could have some negative impact on a small number of local families and the local community, but also some mitigating factors which limit the impacts.

Issue	Potential Impact	Mitigating Factors	Conclusions
Impact on pupils	Coping with change to a new school environment. This impact may be greater for children with SEND.	The local authority and schools would work to minimise disruption of transition. Additional transition support will be available for children with SEND.	Initially negative; later potentially positive in terms of widening peer groups and accessing different facilities. Overall: Neutral
Impact on parents and families	Loss of clubs and events.	All the alternative schools provide a range of clubs and events.	Neutral
Impact on wider community	Reduced bookings in community venue.	Gt Gidding village hall hosts events not linked to the school and is likely to continue to do so. The impact of bookings for children is unlikely to be significant as the number of children residing in Gt Gidding is unlikely to significantly change.	Potentially negative.
	Local shop losing trade	None	Potentially negative
	Reduced access to, and use of, the church for children, families. Reduction in the church community and the resulting impact on sustainability.	Community support will aid the Parochial Church Council in continuing to make the church available to the community, whether that be for festival times, regular worship for those who seek it, a spiritual safe-space, or general use for social benefit purposes.	Potentially negative
Access to same school designation	A number of pupils could be offered places at non-denominational schools.	There are other denominational schools in the area. Parents can express preference for a	Neutral

		denominational school.	
Impact on neighbouring schools	Neighbouring schools would offer places to pupils currently at Gt Gidding.	Work will take place to increase capacity and ensure sufficient places at surrounding schools to take all the pupils from Gt Gidding.	Neutral
Impact on pupil travel arrangements	Some families may experience increased costs and travel time to school; others may experience reduced costs and travel time to school.	For the majority of pupils there are alternative schools nearer to their home address. Some pupils living in the Gt Gidding catchment might face longer journeys to and from an alternative school each day. However for many their nearest alternative school is within statutory walking distance. Free home to school transport would be available for eligible pupils in line with the Council's statutory duties and its published policy.	Potentially negative for pupils living in the Gt Gidding catchment who might face longer journeys to and from school each day. Approximate times for travel each way, to and from school in Sawtry are below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gt Gidding, 10 mins • Little Gidding, 9 mins • Steeple Gidding, 9 mins • Winwick 12 mins • Hamerton 10 mins • All villages – 21 mins
Impact on community demographics	Closure of the school may impact the balance of community.	The birth rate in the village is low and projected to remain so. Very few pupils arising are from new housing. The majority of new homes are likely to be in school admissions areas served by other schools. Assessment of settlements similar to Gt Gidding indicates population stability regardless of there being a school.	Neutral

In any small community, the loss of one institution or business will be felt proportionately more than in a larger community and the closure of a school in a village community will undoubtedly impact. Good schools engage parents in their children's education and reach out to the wider community for support, as well as providing community facilities. However, these must be considered beneficial side-effects to the main duty of a school which is to provide a quality education to its pupils. Numbers on roll, budget deficits and quality of education must be the considerations in any decision on the future of a school and, while a community may be impacted by a decision to close this cannot be the overriding factor.

The DfE guidance refers to the fact that some schools may be a focal point for family and community activity, providing extended services for a range of users, and their closure may have wider social consequences. However, Gt Gidding school does not currently run community events or wrap around care for pupils and so this impact will be limited.

References

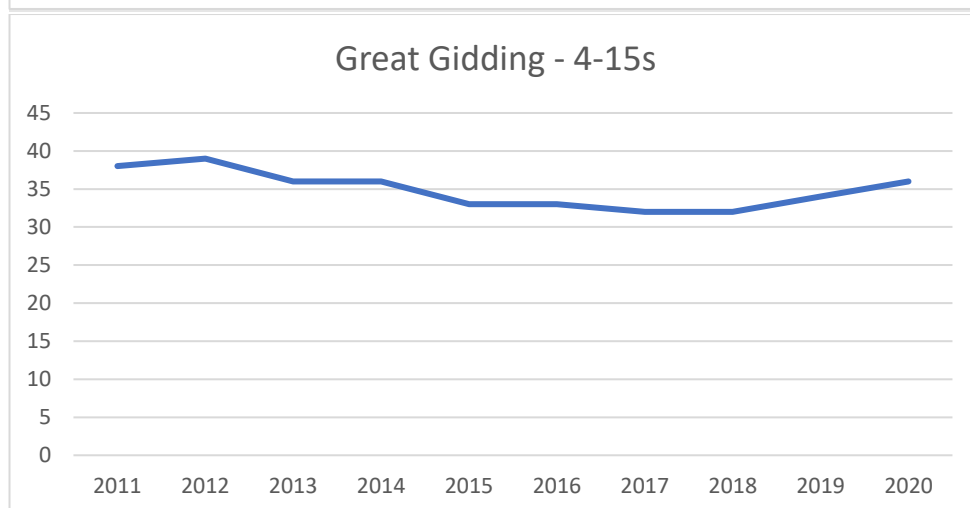
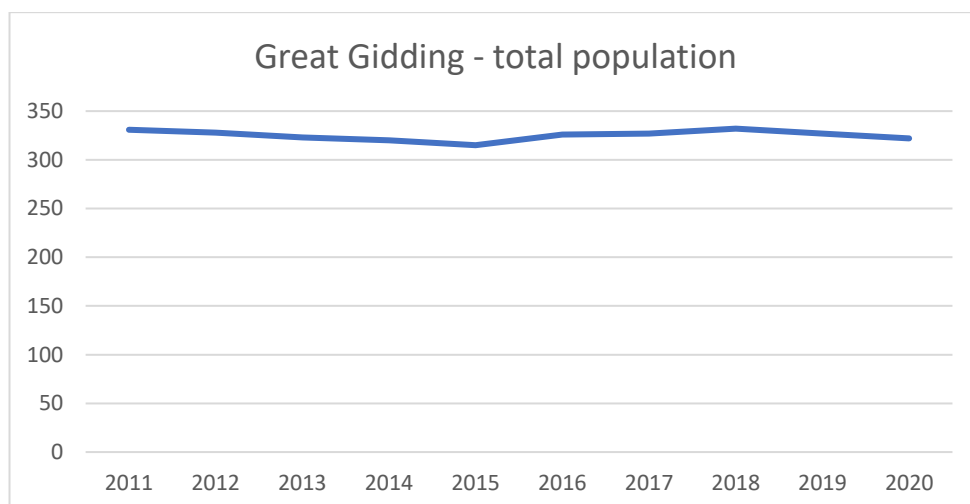
- [1] Sell, R., Leistritz, L. and Thompson, J. (1996) "Socio-economic impacts of schools consolidation on host and vacated communities". *Agriculture Economic Report* No. 347
- [2] Sustainable Education Review, The Impacts of School Closures Analysis Report, The Moray Council November 2014

Appendix A

Cambridgeshire Small Settlement Population Comparison

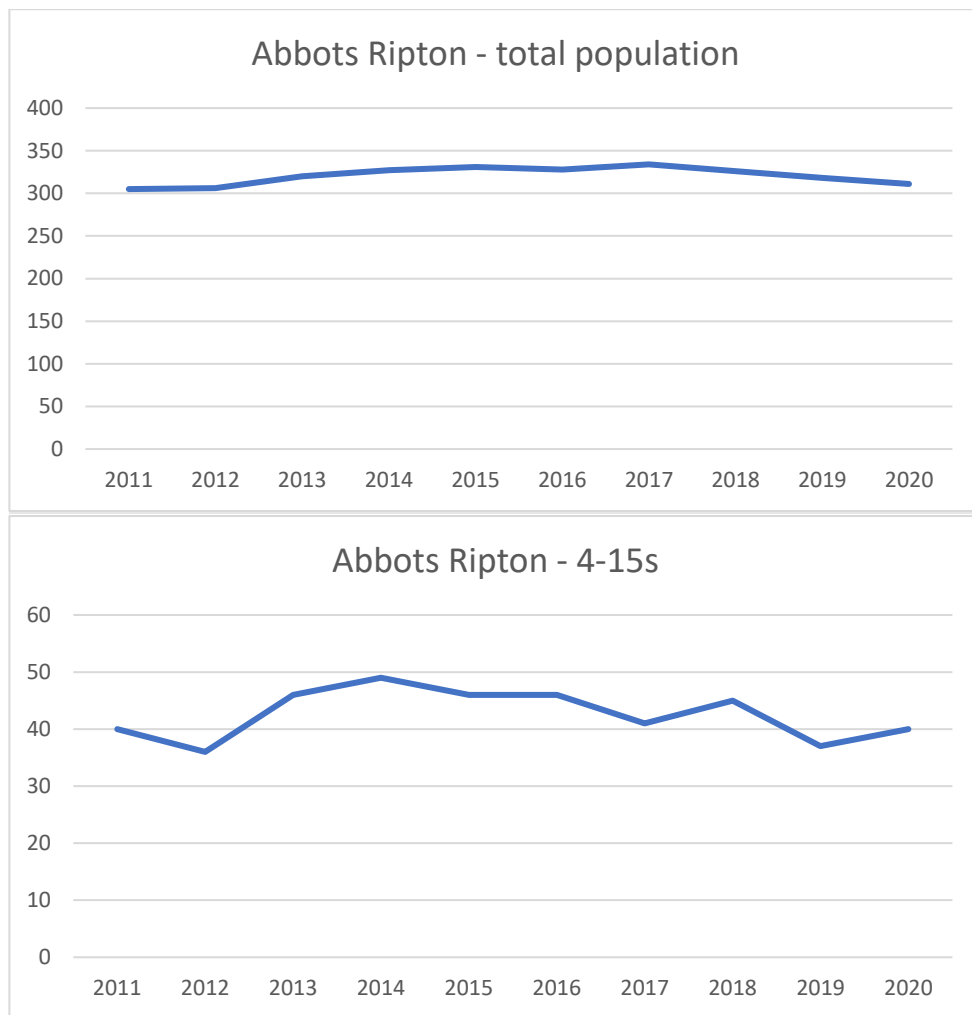
Gt Gidding total population 2011 - 2020

Age	Census 2011	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total population	335	331	328	323	320	315	326	327	332	327	322
PLASC count age 4-15		29	30	27	27	24	24	23	23	25	27



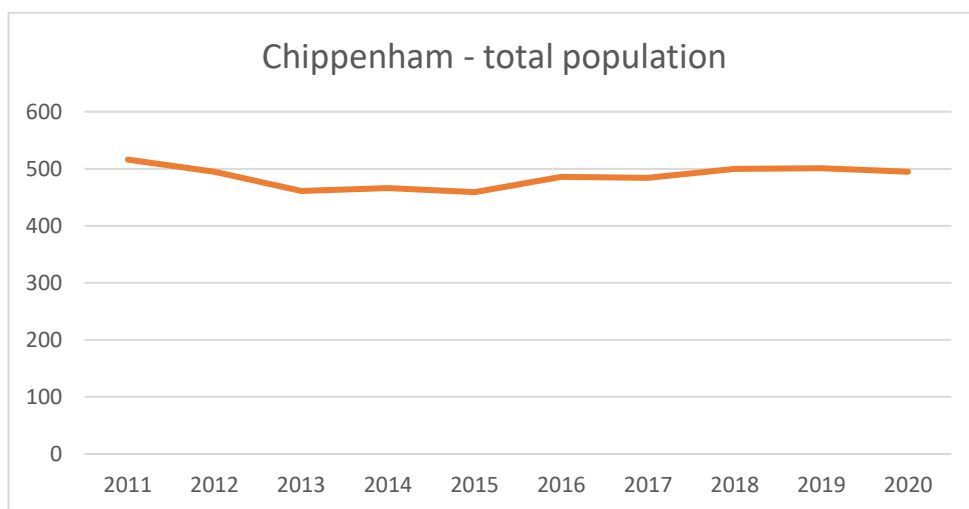
Abbots Ripton total population 2011 – 2020 (This is the only Cambridgeshire settlement smaller than Gt Gidding with a school)

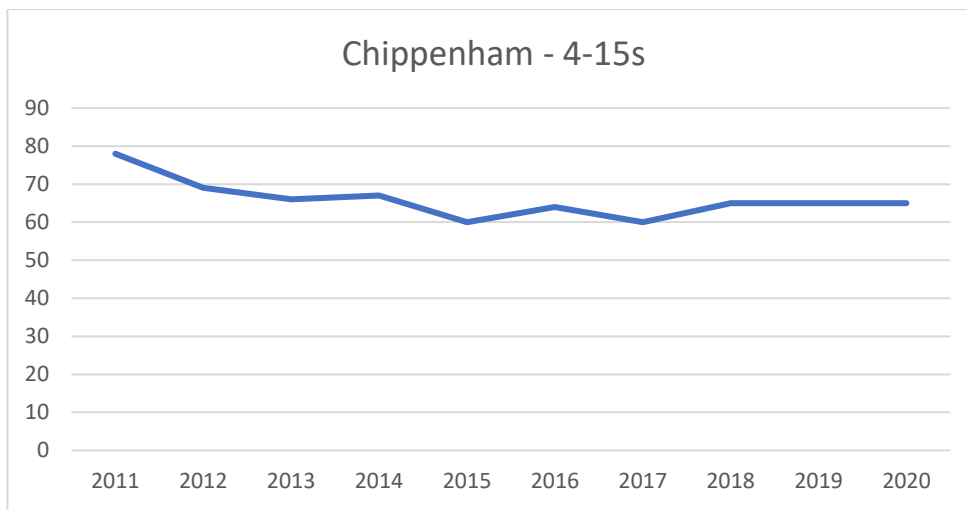
Age	Census 2011	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total population	305	305	306	320	327	331	328	334	326	318	311
PLASC count age 4-15		27	23	33	36	33	33	28	32	24	27



Chippenham total population 2011 - 2020

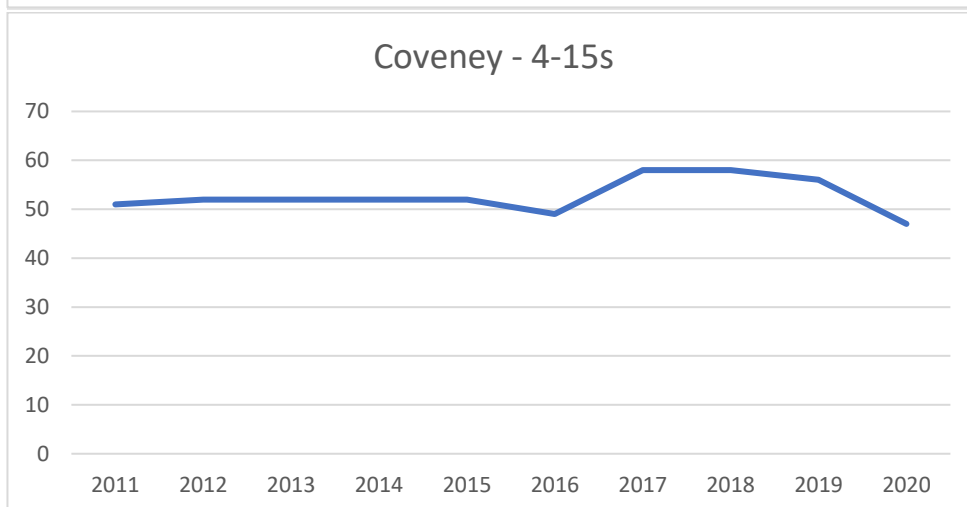
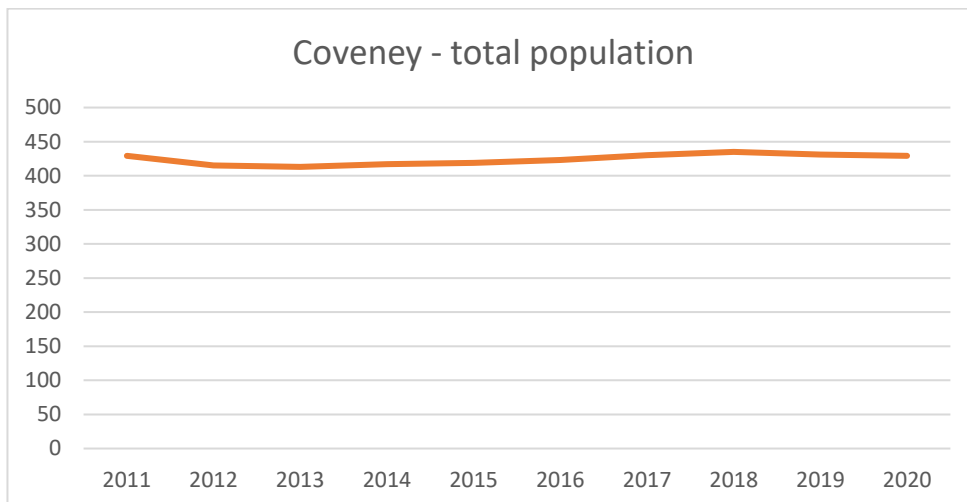
Age	Census 2011	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total population	517	516	495	461	466	459	486	484	500	501	495
PLASC count age 4-15		44	39	37	38	34	36	34	39	39	39





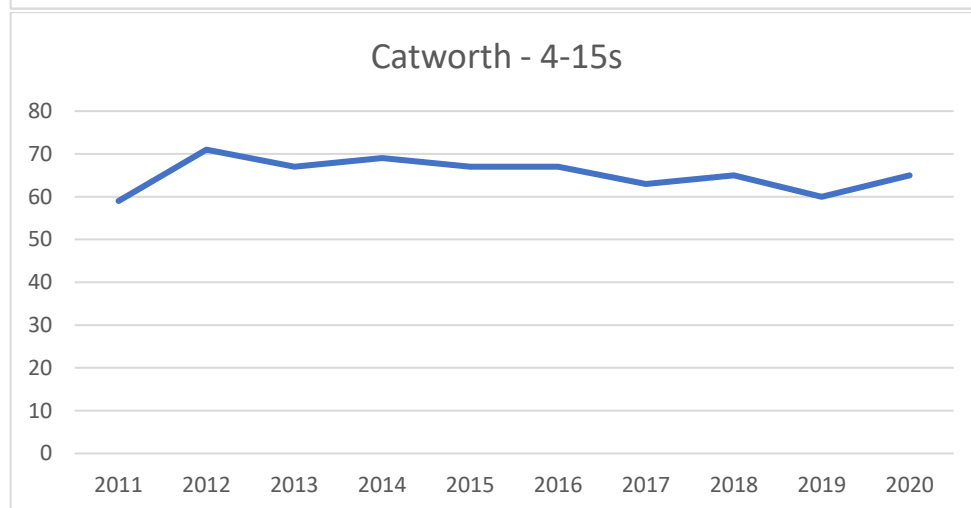
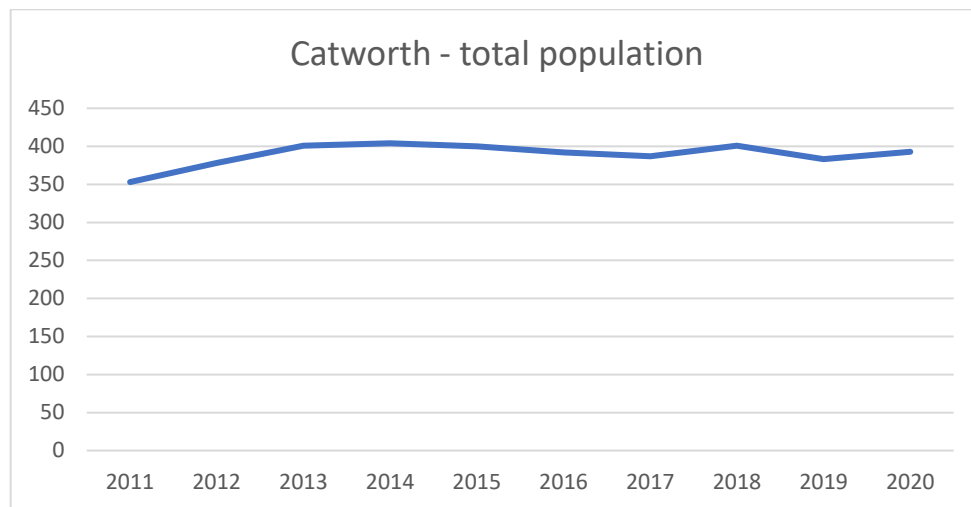
Coveney total population 2011 - 2020

Age	Census 2011	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total population	517	516	495	461	466	459	486	484	500	501	495
PLASC count age 4-15		44	39	37	38	34	36	34	39	39	39



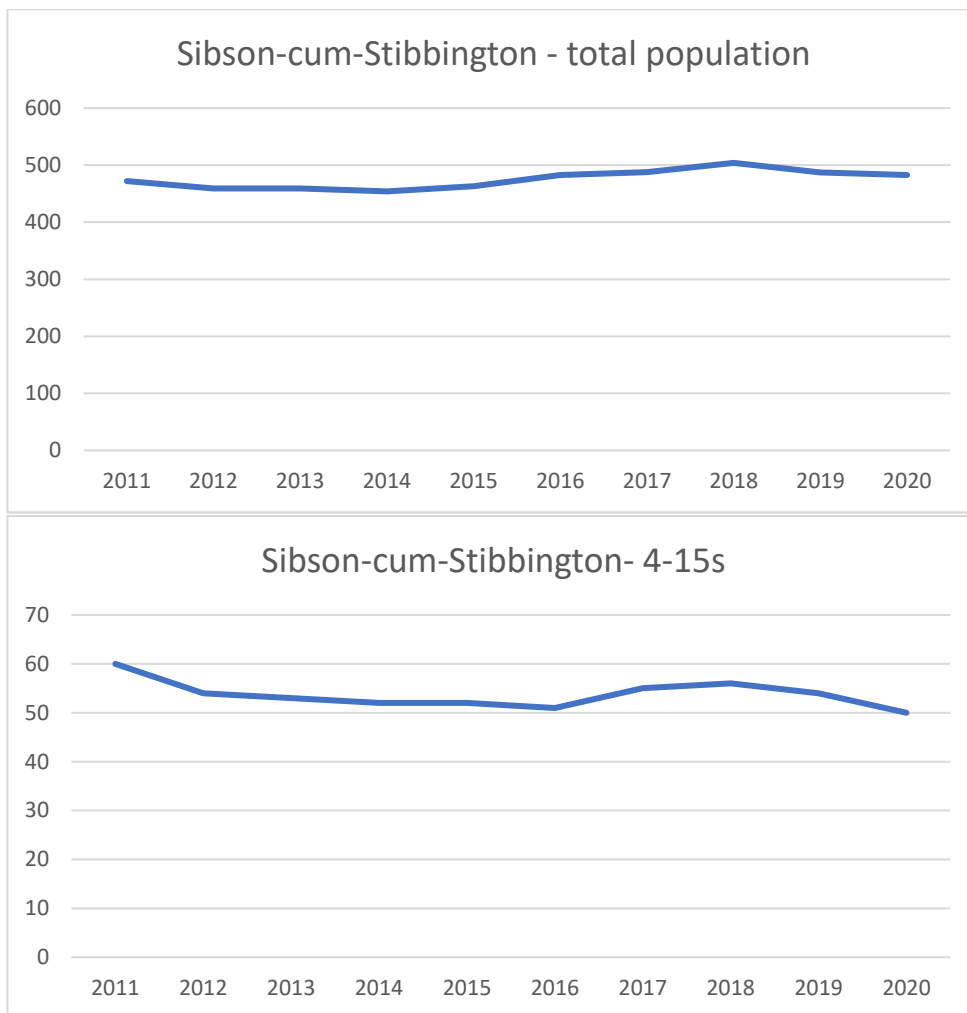
Catworth total population 2011 - 2020

Age	Census 2011	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total population	347	353	378	401	404	400	392	387	401	383	393
PLASC count age 4-15		37	49	45	47	45	45	41	43	38	43



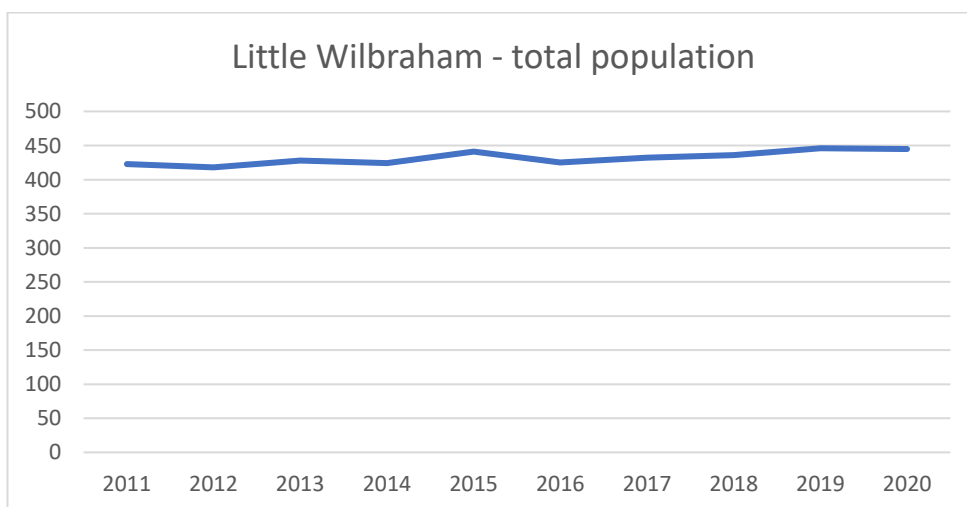
Sibson-cum-Stibbington total population 2011 - 2020

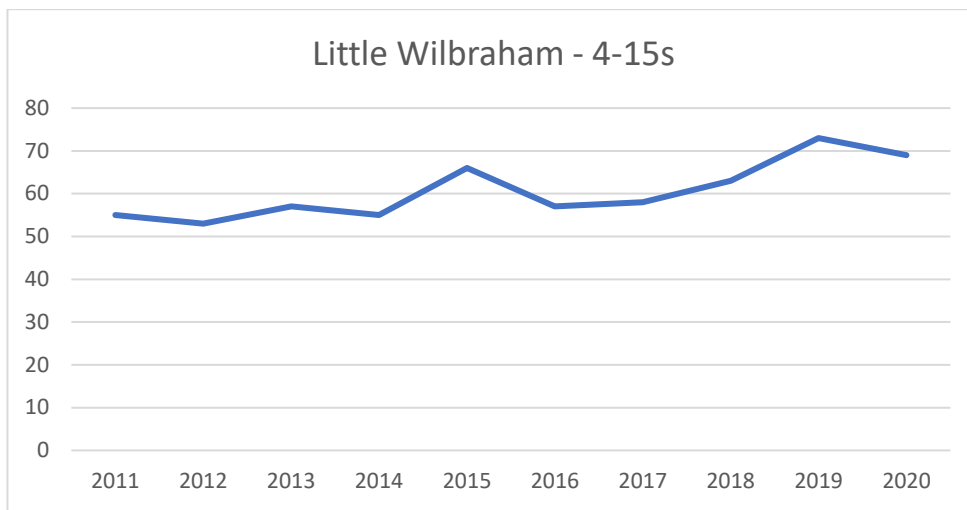
Age	Census 2011	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total population	473	472	459	459	454	463	483	488	504	487	483
PLASC count age 4-15		33	27	26	25	25	24	28	29	27	23



Little Wilbraham total population 2011 - 2020

Age	Census 2011	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total population	425	423	418	428	424	441	425	432	436	446	445
PLASC count age 4-15		36	35	39	36	43	37	38	43	53	49





Wimpole total population 2011 - 2020

Age	Census 2011	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total population	301	295	308	319	310	314	316	319	319	322	326
PLASC count age 4-15		23	27	30	26	24	27	30	29	32	34

