

## **GCSE Geography Coursework**

### **Pirbright: A Village Study**

**Aim:** In this piece of coursework, my aim is to investigate if small villages can become suburbanised over time, and what factors will affect this. For this investigation, we have chosen to look at Pirbright, a small village just outside of Surrey.

### **Hypothesis: Is Pirbright a Suburbanised Village?**

To prove the hypothesis I will need to find out:

- ❖ Where is Pirbright located?
- ❖ What is it like?
- ❖ How has it changed over the years?
- ❖ What are the reasons?
- ❖ What are the consequences of these changes for the long-term residents, the businesses and the new comers?

### **Methods Of Research:**

In order to find answers to these questions and to prove the hypothesis I used various methods of research these will be:

**Questionnaire** - We made up our own questionnaires in groups of four. The reason we thought this would be a good idea was so that we could get opinions from people who have been living in Pirbright and learn more about these people. We surveyed 10 different people and we tried to ask various types of people such as pensioners, young students and adults. In order to do this we asked at different times of the day.

**Walk To Investigate Services And Shops** - We walked around Pirbright to investigate the different types of services they had to offer.

**Walk To Investigate Land Use And Location** - We also walked to and around Pirbright to investigate the uses of land and the layout of the village.

**Environmental Quality Survey** - This was a survey that had already been prepared for us. This helped us to decide whether or not the village was an attractive place to live. We completed the survey in different parts of the village.

**Research** – I will find out any other information from resources such as the Internet.

## **What is a Suburbanised Village?**

A Suburbanised village is a village that people from nearby towns and cities have moved into, gradually changing the character of the village and making it more urbanised. A suburbanised village change its functions from being a rural agricultural village to being a suburb of a town. Suburbanised villages can sometimes also be called commuter settlements or dormitory towns, this is because the village is used by residents who live and stay there to travel to work in nearby towns or cities. Since the 1980's people have been moving out of major cities such as London, -Reading and Guildford to get away from things such as crime, pollution and traffic congestion in cities. This is called counter urbanisation.

The characteristics of a suburbanised village are;

- Housing becomes more expensive leaving local people not being able to afford them. We would expect to find new houses built for newcomers, as well as old farmhouses that have been modernised for rich city commuters.
- The need for more houses and extra services is required to cater to the needs of the newer residents
- There are more newcomers than original residents; this can cause social problems within the village.
- Cars, noise and litter cause more pollution than before.
- The village is expanded to house more residents.
- More cars cause congestion.
- The village is forced to change to become more modern; this can also result in it becoming damaged.
- People move to rural villages that are commuting distance from their place of work, so a suburbanised village must have access to railway and motorway links.
- Newcomers will shop in cities and out of town shopping centres, so we would not expect to find medium or high order shops.

People move into villages for many different reasons, these are;

- People find towns and cities to be polluted, unattractive and very congested.
- Wealthy commuters can afford to buy bigger and more attractive houses in villages and since transport links have improved these people can still easily commute to work in the city.
- Retired people prefer to enjoy their leisure time in a peaceful and quieter environment.
- People find it to be safer in villages.
- There are newer houses being built, these sell for cheaper than they do in cities and towns.

### **How can location affect the sub urbanisation of a village?**

The location of a village can be affected by its location. If a village were located near a large city, it would be easier to make use of the services provided in the city. This would be useful because there will be more services in the city such as hospitals, large shopping centres or a wider range of schools.

If a village were located far away from a city it would be harder for the village residents because they would have to do with the only services provided in the village as it would be hard to get to the city. This would be inconvenient because usually there are not many services in a village.

If a village were located near good roads that lead into the city it would be easier for people to get to the city, there probably would be a bus or some sort of public transport that would lead into the city.

If a village is isolated with poor transport links it would make access in and out of the village difficult. This not only means that it would be for village residents to get to a city but also that visitors would find the village hard to get to.

If a village is located on hilly land it would be difficult to build new buildings whereas if the village was built on flat land it would be easier to improve the village with new buildings and services.

## Where is Pirbright?

The village that we are studying is called 'Pirbright' it is located in Surrey, southeast England (see map below). Pirbright is located near Guildford, Bracknell, Woking, Farnborough and Camberley. The roads that connect these towns to Pirbright are A322, A3214, A320 and A323. These roads are good for commuters because they can travel to and from work in different towns quite easily. If they do not have cars then there are good rail links into other close by towns. There is no train station in Pirbright however the closest one is in Basingstoke. It takes approximately one hour to travel from Pirbright into central London. From the map below I can see that Pirbright very close to London and also to other cities, where good jobs are available.

The land that Pirbright is built on is mainly countryside and there are many woodlands and open fields in and around the area. The land is mainly greenery and some areas are quite steep. The land is fertile, which makes it good for farming. There are also good communications in Pirbright.



Pirbright

Map 1: Southeast England

## What is Pirbright like?

Pirbright is a very attractive, yet small village. The population is approximately 3644 people, this has changed drastically over the past hundred years when there was only a few hundred people living in Pirbright. It has a large green in the centre of the village (see picture 1). The grass is always short and well kept. There are no signs of vandalism or litter. Around the green there are a few phone boxes and three bus stops, one going towards Woking and the other two going towards Guildford. The bus stops are connections to Guildford, Woking and other surrounding towns. There are a few shops around the green as well; these include a newsagent, a butcher, an antique shop and two pubs; The White Hart and The Royal Oak. There is a large pond and a children's playground on the green as well. Pirbright formally contained a post office, which was then forced to shut down because of robbery. This shows that the crime rate in Pirbright has increased. A mobile library visits Pirbright once a week.



Picture 1: views of the green

The church in Pirbright is called St Michael's church (see picture 2) and is around the green. There is only one school in Pirbright, Pirbright County Primary. It is only a primary school for five to eleven year olds. This means that when children are ready for high school they will have to travel to a nearby city or town. Most children travel to Guildford and Woking, as these are the closest and easiest to town to get to.



Picture 2: St Michael's church

Many attractive houses surround the green (see picture 3). These houses are mainly built before the 1940s. The houses are bigger in comparison to the sizes of housing in London, and are also much cheaper. An average three-bedroom house would cost approximately £385,000.

The houses have extra garden space, bigger drive ways and more space to build extensions because the houses are spread out from each other.



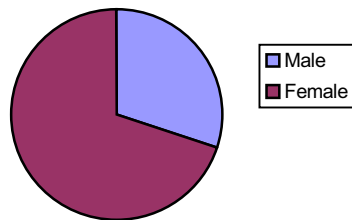
Picture 3: Houses around the green

Below is a land-use map, to show the services available in Pirbright, and the ages of the houses.

## People in Pirbright

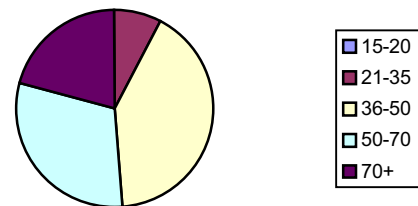
We visited Pirbright on a typical mid-week afternoon to find out about the types of people that live there, we found out this information by asking people to fill out a questionnaire that we had designed. These are the results we came back with. I also did some extra research to find out facts and figures of Pirbright.

Chart showing gender of Pirbright residents



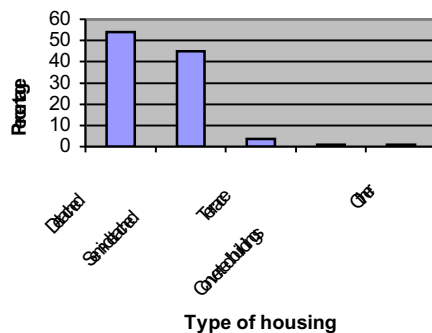
This chart shows that the majority of the population are female.

Chart showing age groups of Pirbright residents



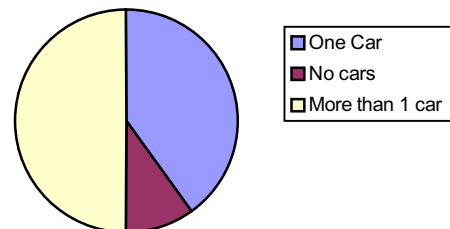
This chart shows that most of the population are aged between 36-50. This proves the theory that Pirbright is suburbanised, as most of the residents are commuters.

Graph showing types of housing in Pirbright



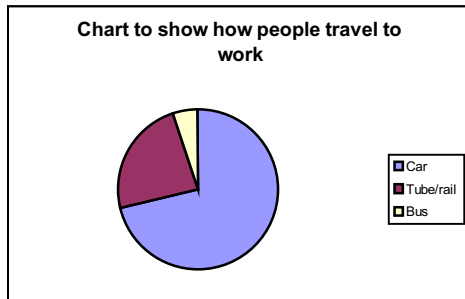
This Graph shows that most of the housing in Pirbright is detached or semi-detached. The houses are mainly detached or semi-detached, this suggests that Pirbright is suburbanised because the houses are large and expensive, which means they are mainly occupied by wealthy commuters.

Chart to show how many people in Pirbright own cars

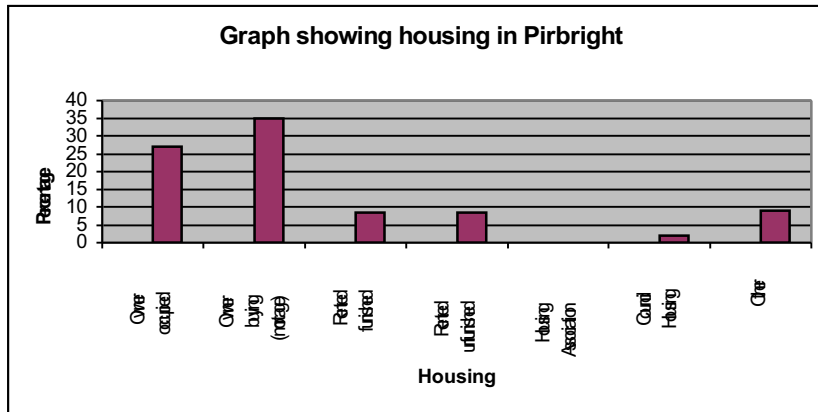


This chart shows that 90% of Pirbright's Population own cars, the majority owning more than one. This also shows that Pirbright is suburbanised as people use cars to travel, not public transport.

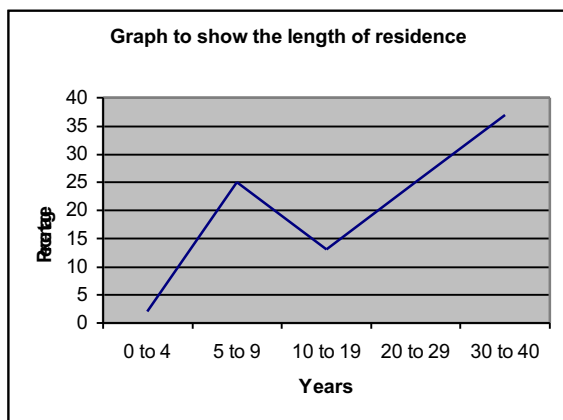




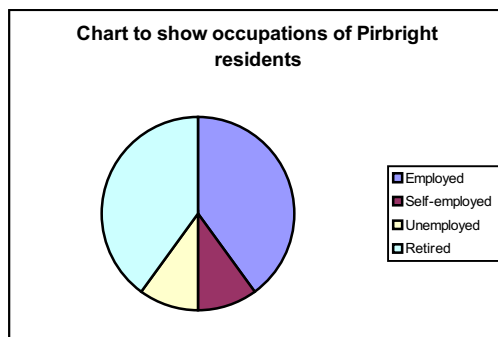
This chart shows that most people have to travel to work by car. This proves that Pirbright is suburbanised because these are mainly commuters that travel to London by car.



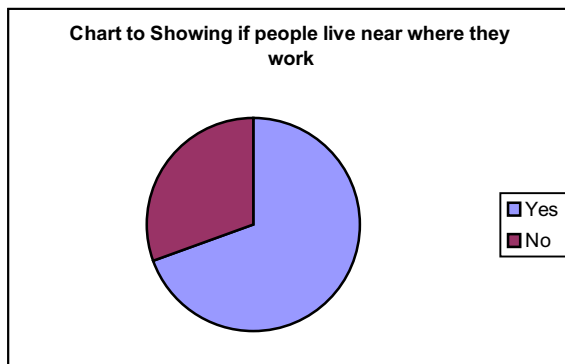
This graph shows that most people living in Pirbright own their own houses, or are buying them. This proves that Pirbright is suburbanised because most people own their own houses.



This graph shows that most residents have been living in Pirbright for over 30 years, however far more people have been living in the village for 5 to 9 years than people living in the village for 10 to 19 years. This proves that commuters have been moving into Pirbright in the last 5 years, which makes it suburbanised.



This chart shows that most of Pirbright's population is either employed or retired. This proves that Pirbright is suburbanised because all the people that are employed must be working in the city.



This chart shows that most people in Pirbright don't live near where they work, these are probably commuters who travel to work in London or other nearby towns.

### People's opinions on Pirbright

WHAT LEISURE ACTIVITIES ARE THERE IN THE AREA
Tennis
Karate
Golf
Cricket
Bowles
Dance

WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT PIRBRIGHT?
Quiet
Friendly People
Plenty For Children To Do
Peaceful Area
Countryside
Good Community

WHAT DO YOU DISLIKE ABOUT PIRBRIGHT?
Does Not Have a Post Office
Is Not Sociable

### **Services and Shops**

WHAT SERVICES ARE USED IN THE AREA	WHO DO THEY CATER FOR?
Newsagent	Everyone in the village, most people use the newsagent everyday.
Pubs	Used mainly by adults, as a place to relax.
Antique Shop	Used by the wealthy residents, once only a few times a year.
Butcher	Used to provide food for all residents, used once a week.
Mobile Library	Used by anyone that wants it.
Public Transport	Used mainly by the retirees and students travelling to high school.
Public Park	Used by everyone in the village.
Village Hall	Used for meetings and clubs etc. dance clubs.









### **Comparing Pirbright in 1871 to Pirbright today**

From the two maps I can see that Pirbright has drastically changed over the past 30 years. There was much more open space in 1871 but now a lot of that land has been used to build things such as houses and other services. The area that Pirbright occupies has expanded; more houses are being built so the village has had to expand to cater for the extra people. The land use has changed from mainly being farmland to having lots of houses and other buildings built on it. From the map of 1871 I can see that there were only a few houses whereas most of Pirbright is covered by houses now. More services have been added in Pirbright for example there used to be only one pub in 1871 but another one has been built now. Overall Pirbright has grown over the years and the open land has been used to build houses on.



## **Conclusion**

After analysing the statistics and information about Pirbright I have come to a conclusion that all the evidence shows that Pirbright has become a suburbanised village. In 1915, we would have expected people to have jobs such as farmers, woodcutters, small village owners, ground keepers for private estates, housemaids and stable workers. The sort of people that would want to live there now are upper-class people as they do not usually have to work, retired people as they do not have to work either and people whom do not want to live in London, but still be based near London. The facts that point to the conclusion that Pirbright has become suburbanised are:

- The population has greatly increased over time and is continuing to do so. Shown by the census figures.
- The village has become larger. Many of the old houses are in the centre of the village and the newer ones have been built on the outskirts. This proves that new houses are being built for commuters and other residents wishing to move to Pirbright. This is shown in the land use map.
- Most residents are middle ages and are high-skilled professionals – this proves that they are commuters as Pirbright does not offer and high-skilled professions. This is shown in the data that I collected on the field trip.
- The home of most residents are detached or semi-detached. This proves that they are expensive and can only be afforded by wealthy commuters.
- Most village residents own their own homes or are currently buying. This shows that the average Pirbright resident can afford houses; this is because mainly commuters live in Pirbright.
- More than half of the residents own their own car. This also proves that a lot of commuters live in Pirbright, as they need a car to travel to work.
- Most residents take their car to work, not public transport.
- Most of the residents have lived in the village for 30 to 40 years.
- The village is gradually becoming more modernised. The newcomers are transforming the village.
- There are no high order shops, meaning residents have to visit a town or city for shopping centres.
- Houses are becoming more expensive. The value is increasing as more people want to live in Pirbright and wealthy people can afford them.

All these facts that I have stated link back to my theory on suburbanised villages, Pirbright has successfully gained nearly all the characteristics of a suburbanised village. Pirbright has gone from being a unknown small hamlet, to becoming a modern and attractive growing villages used mainly by commuters and retired people. I have found the main reason people move from large towns and cities into Pirbright is because it is a quiet and peaceful area. The long term residence will live closer to the village centre and the newer residence will be living on the edge as this will be where the new houses will be built.

### **Evaluation**

I feel that this piece of coursework has greatly widened my knowledge of suburbanised villages. I did not thoroughly understand it at the beginning however after undertaking the research about the changes in Pirbright I have come to understand how and why small villages change their function to become urbanised.

I feel I have done well in this coursework as I did a lot of research and used many new ICT skills that I have learnt. I could improve the coursework by getting a broader range on data, I visited Pirbright on a working day therefore I did not get enough information about residents who may have been at work that day. To improve this now I would visit Pirbright on a weekend and carry out my research then.

However overall I believe I have created a good report on how and why Pirbright has become suburbanised.