

# YATTENDON PARISH PLAN

## 2011 REFRESH DOCUMENT



“The Parish Plan has managed to get many projects done”  
Parishioner’s quote



# **CONTENTS**

**Introduction & Background**

**The 2005 Plan & Achievements**

**The Parish Plan Refresh Process**

**Key Issues From The Refresh Questionnaire**

**The New Action Plan And Way Ahead**

**Acknowledgements**

## **INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND**

The guiding principles, which some five years ago led to the creation of Yattendon's Parish Plan, are worth re-stating. From Yattendon and Burnt Hill a widely representative working party, together with the Parish Council enthusiastically supported four main objectives. These were:

- TO EXTRACT RESIDENTS' VIEWS OF LIFE IN YATTENDON PARISH
- TO HIGHLIGHT THE VALUES WHICH THE PARISH SHOULD SEEK TO MAINTAIN
- TO IDENTIFY DEFICIENCIES IN SERVICES FOR ADDRESSING WITH APPROPRIATE BODIES
- TO INVOLVE AS MANY RESIDENTS AS POSSIBLE

With some 70% of Parishioners replying to the original questionnaire we recognized that the Plan itself provided a valuable commentary on current life in the Parish to add to other established publications.

Throughout our work on the actions contained in the Plan we have been appreciative of the support of a number of bodies, in particular West Berkshire Council and Community Council Berkshire. Evidence of this support has been provided by the generous funding, the greater part of which we have qualified for due to the existence of our Plan.

Our Working Group has been prominent in the Parish planning process working with other parishes and notably as one of the two parishes invited by West Berkshire Council to present to Government to successfully secure coveted Beacon status

## **THE 2005 PLAN AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

Objectives one and two of the Plan drew forth the very high level of enjoyment residents experienced from living in Yattendon Parish – “an outstanding place to live” – a typical comment. For such a small parish there are numerous facilities rendering Yattendon an important centre and it is clear that most residents do not wish the parish to suffer major changes. The introduction of lighting at the car park, the church and the village hall, therefore, sympathetically installed for instance.

Furthermore a significant number of activities do take place, regular church social gatherings, the Youth Club, Toddlers Group, shopping trips for the elderly, volunteer driving to hospitals and, of course, the famous annual fete.

Reviewing the third objective clearly there were many subjects parishioners wished to see changed from their responses to the earlier questionnaire and the working party have worked continuously to address as many of these as they were able. Of the changes worthy of mention are the following:-

**Vandalism:** We put our concerns to the Chief Superintendent of Thames Valley Police, co-incidentally the creation of the Police Community Support Officer scheme allowing a greater police presence locally.

**Litter:** With the Parish Council and the Youth Club additional collection arrangements have been put in place.

**Dog Fouling:** Dog owners were identified and written to advising them of the consequences of uncontrolled dog fouling.

**Young Peoples Activities:** The Working Party were instrumental in securing initial funding for setting up the Youth Club which now meets regularly in the village hall.

**Notice Boards:** Funding was obtained for the installation of the first notice board in Burnt Hill and recently for replacement of Yattendon's.

**Village Hall:** Major work has taken place e.g. disabled ramp, toilet rooms, kitchen, flooring, doors, windows, new chairs all contributing to increased use of the hall.

**Adult Classes:** A series of computer training basic and photography classes have been held.

**Lighting:** Courtesy lights have been installed in the car park, at the village hall and at the church gate.

**Parish Web Site:** An extensive website with a range of contents is up and running.

**Road Safety:** The establishment of the “Green Path~” from The Withys to the School has improved access for young people.

Some suggestions we were unable to progress for a number of reasons. Cycle Paths was one, further consideration indicating that the nature of the roads in this Parish could not support these. Much time was spent by a sub-group of the working party led by the Rural Housing Enabler and including representatives from Frilsham Parish looking at the requirement for more affordable housing. Possible sites were identified but this whole subject is now being further reviewed with the appointment of the new Managing Director at Yattendon Estates. The need for a village design statement was discussed at a joint meeting with West Berkshire Council and Yattendon Estates and in the particular circumstances of Yattendon Parish was not considered to be appropriate.

There remain other issues, for the most part major ones, on which considerable time has been spent which are ongoing, involve major expense and for which we are dependent on external agencies. These include M4 traffic noise, vehicle parking in the village, speeding traffic and new pathways, all of which re-appeared in the recent questionnaire and are dealt with in the following sections.

## **THE PARISH PLAN REFRESH PROCESS**

The Parish Plan properly maintained should operate as a “living document”. West Berkshire Council with Community Council Berkshire and indeed Central Government claiming to extend the democratic process down to community level are all anxious to have parish plans regularly refreshed, an initiative more recently endorsed by the “Big Society” concept.

Our view is that many of the actions from the 2005 plan, having been progressed i.e. those within our more immediate control, we now have to deal with the more substantial actions. They are those referred to at the end of the previous section and which appear in the recent questionnaire. We are supported in this view by Yattendon Parish Council.

Towards the end of last year, therefore, the parish council approved a “Parish Future Needs Survey” copies of which were distributed to every household in the parish. This was designed in simple form to draw out the main remaining issues parishioners were concerned with. Unlike the earlier questionnaire, which was hand collected, the recent one was left to parishioners to return, the 45 responses received representing some 26% return which is in line with the other small number of parishes currently refreshing their plans. The issues arising are detailed in the following section.

## **KEY ISSUES FROM THE REFRESH QUESTIONNAIRE**

Although the new questionnaire repeated some of the earlier concerns there were some new and interesting suggestions (including the need to repair the road in the vicinity of The Fox at Hermitage – not, of course, within our parish but a subject discussed with Hermitage Parish Council and now addressed by W.B.C.).

As described above there is a need to involve external agencies – major costs involved – to progress many of our concerns and the action plan in the next section charts these. Here we describe in more detail the recent suggestions as well as the work undertaken on the outstanding issues.

**M4 Traffic Noise:** Many meetings have been held with similarly affected West Berkshire parishes, with the Highways Agency, with the Transport Research Laboratory at Crowthorne as well as our M.P. Richard Benyon. One parishioner’s comment “it completely destroys the benefit of being in countryside” supports our work.

**Vehicle Parking:** Problems near school at the village hall and on footpaths to be addressed with Highways Dept., WBC and local police.

**Village Hall:** Improve heating (funding now secured) and painting untreated surfaces (work in hand).

**Aerobatics & Helicopter Noise:** Strenuously being addressed by WAPAG (Wycombe Air Park Action Group) to which body we subscribe.

**Bryants Lane:** Two parishioners proposing one-way traffic but residents affected not in favour – suggest further examination with interested parties.

**Speeding Traffic:** Restrictions proposed on Manston Farm Road and past Orchard Day Nursery and Hill House (50mph) and from village hall to school (vehicle activated signs promised by W.B.C. in the original programme).

**Further Lighting:** For Garage area.

**Litter:** Extra bin in village square.

**Highways/Footpaths:** A range of proposals under these headings i.e. surface repairs by Bramley House and in front of village store, footpath from Burnt Hill to Yattendon, footpath from school to Yattendon Park mirror, footpath Bryants Lane to Withys, Burnt Hill sign from Stanford Dingley, cut back hedges/verges Scratchface Lane, Yattendon Lane verge by “Morleys” Burnt Hill. Discussions needed WBC and Yattendon Estates.

**Heavy Lorries Through Village:** Parish Council has made representations to WBC for restriction to be included in local transport plan.

**Youth Club:** Extend opening hours if possible by securing alternative accommodation – appeal for local resource.

**Yattendon Post Office/Stores.** At one of the public meetings held in the Village Hall to review parishioners' responses to the Refresh questionnaire the proprietors of this business raised a requirement to improve their facility. Plans and quotations have been obtained and approaches are being made to secure external funding in addition to their own and Yattendon Estates contributions.

Certain other requests arising from the questionnaire have already been addressed as included above. Additionally requests for dissemination of parish council information, signs to Old Chapel Cottages and review of the neighbourhood watch scheme have already been addressed.

So some proposals minor, some major but in the spirit of the fourth objective parishioners are urged to show their continuing involvement by supporting your Working Group and Parish Council efforts to achieve results.



## **THE NEW ACTION PLAN AND WAY AHEAD**

It is becoming customary within the Parish Plan fraternity to classify actions identified under the headings Safer, Greener, Healthier and Progressive i.e. Stronger.

In the following table, therefore, we have used these classifications to record actions both for the ongoing tasks from the initial and new issues from the Future Needs Survey.

It is important, however, to emphasize that the Parish Planning process must be supported at the highest levels. Community concerns understandably centre on issues which are readily seen to impact on day to day living. Many, indeed most, of these issues have been addressed with many completed working with the Parish Council. Perhaps the major example of this is the village hall, now substantially improved and work continuing. All in all funding obtained directly as a result of the publishing of the Parish Plan is in the order of £84,000 to date.

But more major issues e.g. local transport facilities, broadband improvement and M4 traffic noise require vigorous support by the local authority and above. Moreover, “wider” issues such as energy conservation and recycling perhaps not of immediate day to day concern but nevertheless important need to be pursued on a “multi-community” basis encouraged by West Berkshire Council, a proposal which your working group continues to press.

Lastly in this section the fourth objective of our original Parish Plan was to “INVOLVE AS MANY RESIDENTS AS POSSIBLE”. To carry out the continuing work the subject of this Refresh Plan we urge volunteers to come forward to join the Working Group in their effort.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Since the publishing of the Parish Plan in 2005 and in all the work leading up to it's production we have been generously supported by many groups and individuals from West Berkshire Council, their Partnership, Community Council for Berkshire, Greenham Common Trust as well as local bodies including Yattendon Estates.

Above all, the work undertaken by so many parishioners is acknowledged by the Working Group and the Parish Council, key to the changes we have been able to make and wish to continue to pursue.