

FINAL FOR WBC ADOPTION

**APPENDIX A**

BUCKLEBURY PARISH COUNCIL

# Bucklebury Parish Plan Refresh

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2011

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## Background

Bucklebury was one of the first communities in West Berkshire to undertake a Parish Plan. Work on the Parish Plan was started in 2004 and the first plan was published in 2006; this was then adopted by the Parish Council and West Berkshire Council.

The summary of the vision for Bucklebury in the 2006 Parish Plan stated:

*Bucklebury will conserve its rural heritage and retain its distinctive character. It will continue to have a thriving small business economy with a substantial commuter population. Changes and improvements that enhance the Quality of Life of the whole community are to be encouraged. Developments of whatever kind or scale will be in harmony with their setting and enrich the Parish.*

These aims have been sustained throughout the ensuing five years and much has been achieved. The first plan contained actions grouped under Key Subjects which differ from those now used in the parish plan template developed by West Berkshire Council. The Sections of the 2006 Parish Plan covered:

1. **The Environment**
2. **Planning & Housing**
3. **The Economy**
4. **Roads**
5. **Transport**
6. **Utilities**
7. **Schools & Youth**
8. **Welfare**
9. **Sports & Leisure**

The 2006 Action Plan was prepared under these headings. The headings used in the current Refresh Action Plan follow the template developed by West Berkshire Council and are described later

The following examples show some of the benefits to the parish that have been achieved from the first Parish Plan:

- **Crime Reduction:** Better policing of the Common resulting in fewer motor cycles and 4x4 vehicles using non-permitted routes
- **Traffic Management:** Introduction of traffic calming measures through Upper Bucklebury; Speed Indicating Devices (SID's) installed in Upper Bucklebury and Chapel Row
- **The Environment:** Improved reporting of fly-tipping
- **Conservation:** Returning part of the Common back to heath-land
- **Stronger Community:** The Memorial Hall extension
- **Housing and Planning:** Monitoring of planning applications for compliance with Bucklebury Vision (the Parish Design Statement)
- **Children and Young People :** The Play Park Revamp project

The original parish plan generated 59 actions. By 2009 75% of the specific objectives of the original plan had been achieved or were no longer relevant and West Berkshire District Council indicated, and the Parish Council agreed, that it was time to refresh the parish plan. The 12 open actions in the original parish plan have been carried forward into the Refresh action plan.

## The Parish Plan Refresh Process

Bucklebury Parish Council set up a working party of parish councillors and parishioners to start work to refresh the Parish Plan in 2009. The launch of the Refresh was announced at the annual Parish Assembly in the Memorial Hall on 8th May 2009. A Steering Group was formed comprising parishioners, members of the Parish Council and a Community Planning Development Worker, Sarah Ward from the Community Council Berkshire (CCB). The kick off meeting was held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2009. The Steering Group decided that the public Parish Consultation meeting be held in the Memorial Hall on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> September 2009. Prior to this a communication and feedback event was arranged at the Chapel Row Fair on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2009. The Parish Consultation meeting and the Chapel Row Fair event generated 260 comments from all ages of parishioners. These were consolidated under the Refresh objectives described below in the section on The Action Plan. The comments were very wide ranging but it proved possible to consolidate the 260 comments down to a more manageable number of 105. A separate Young Persons consultation was facilitated by Sarah Ward of CCB and Tanya Honor of The Berkshire Association of Clubs for Young People ( BAYC) with the pupils of Bucklebury Primary School on 22<sup>nd</sup> September with a follow up session on 21<sup>st</sup> October. A feedback session targeted on older parishioners was held with the St Martin's Club on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2010.

From these events and ideas two questionnaires were developed, one for Adults (parishioners aged 16 years and older) and one for Young People (aged from 8 to 15). These were designed to be completed by individuals. Packs comprising 2 Adult and 2 Young Person's Questionnaires were prepared and distributed to the 875 households in the parish with further copies available on request and from the Parish Council website. The number of households in the parish has grown by about 4% from 840 to 875 since the previous parish plan was published in 2006.

The Steering Group decided that the topics that were appropriate for the Refresh and should be in the adult questionnaire based on the previous consultations would be:

- **Communications** – parishioners' access to computer facilities, broadband service availability, use of parish websites, The Oaks parish magazine
- **Community Activities, Events and Interests**
- **The Local Economy**
- **Housing and Planning**
- **Conservation and the Countryside**
- **Greening Bucklebury**
- **Outdoor Activities** – cycling, walking and other outdoor activities
- **Young People**

The separate Young Person's Questionnaire asked young people in Bucklebury about:

- What they liked/disliked about living in Bucklebury and their interests
- Activities for young people in Bucklebury
- What they might do to help other people in Bucklebury
- Whether they might join a focus group to talk about the questionnaire results and make their ideas happen

Expert help was gratefully received from Greenham Common Trust in the design, production and analysis of the questionnaires. 436 Adult questionnaires and 62 Young Person's Questionnaires were completed and returned which represents 23% of the parish population (based on the 2001 census with

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an adjustment of 4% for growth in number of households). This is a typical level of response for other Parish Plan Refresh questionnaires. A check was made to see if the questionnaires reached a wide enough cross section of the parishioners. Questionnaires were delivered in a pack to each household to try to encourage individual answers. In spite of this there is evidence to suggest that many households answered only 1 questionnaire, i.e. one per household rather than on an individual basis. Replies came from households containing 895 people in total which represents about 40% of the population of the Parish.

A further check was made to see if the responses came from a representative cross section of the community. The respondents represented all ages of Bucklebury parishioners and no single group predominated or was under-represented. All ages were represented in much the same proportions as the age distribution of Bucklebury parishioners. The over-60's group contributed a somewhat higher response in proportion to the size of that age group but not by an amount large enough to distort the questionnaire results.

## Vision for the future

The views of the community expressed this time through public consultation and the questionnaires are very similar to those expressed five years ago. Bucklebury is essentially a rural parish and parishioners strongly want to retain its character and sense of community.

From the results of the questionnaires, five main areas for future action and projects became apparent:

- Better communication about parish issues, events and activities with parishioners via newsletters, websites, email distribution lists
- Community activities and events
- Reducing our personal and community carbon footprint by running a Greening Bucklebury campaign
- Improved facilities for cycle users and walkers in Bucklebury
- Facilities for Young People

Most actions were found to lie with the community to implement and working groups have been set up or need to be set up to carry them out. As most actions lie with the community it goes without saying that successful implementation of the Refresh Action Plan will rely on volunteers coming forward from the parishioners. It is proposed to establish a Community Partnership, the Bucklebury Parish Partnership (BPP), to coordinate community-based initiatives and to facilitate the work in these areas. Unless stated, actions are community actions. Where actions are the responsibility of Bucklebury Parish Council (BPC) or West Berkshire Council (WBC), this is stated in the Action Plan.

Note that all percentages referred to in this document (%) are, unless otherwise stated, the percentage of people giving a particular response to a question, based on the number of people who answered that question. Some questions from the 2004 questionnaire were repeated to see whether people's views had changed. As stated above, the vision of the parishioners is overwhelmingly that Bucklebury wants to retain its character as a rural community. One change noted is that parishioners now see Bucklebury not just as a place to live but as a place to live and work as the number of people working from home increases reflecting national trends.

## The Action Plan

The process of parish planning has developed considerably since Bucklebury published its first plan in 2006. Building on good ideas from many communities, West Berkshire has now developed a template that it requires communities to use in describing their parish plans. This is linked to the West Berkshire Community Strategy. The template asks communities to consider their needs and aspirations under seven headings:

- **A Safer Community** - Examples of this include reducing anti-social behaviour, reducing speed on roads, emergency planning
- **A Prosperous Community** - Communities may, for example, seek to support the economy of villages, encourage Tourism, or support employment in rural areas
- **A Healthy Community** - Communities are asked to think widely about health, including such things as fostering a sense of place and belonging, improving health and well-being of local people and young people, promoting independence of vulnerable people
- **A Greener Community** - This can include reducing carbon footprint in the community, reducing waste and increasing recycling, encourage consumption of local produce, increasing diversity of local wildlife.
- **A Stronger Community** - Actions in this category should seek to include everyone, fostering a sense of belonging and participation in community life, providing similar life opportunities and accessible services for all
- **Housing** – Actions in this category should enable sufficient housing in communities to accommodate continued economic prosperity
- **Children and Young People** – Enabling young people to contribute and to ensure that they feel secure and safeguarded. Ensuring accessible services for young people

The following pages contain:

- What the people of Bucklebury have said through the questionnaires and public consultations.
- The resultant objectives and actions.
- The Action Plan Template which is to be found at the end of the report.

## A Safer Community

### Questionnaire results and commentary

At the first Parish Consultation public meeting in September 2009 many concerns were expressed by parishioners about the need to continue to find ways of reducing speeding in Upper Bucklebury. The traffic calming measures introduced in Upper Bucklebury following the 2006 Parish Plan have had a mixed reception. This topic generated more comments than any other item at this Parish Consultation.

Following severe flooding of Bucklebury village in 2007 a flood alleviation scheme has been developed by the villagers in conjunction with the Environmental Agency. The Parish Plan refresh did not directly address this issue, as the village committee had already formed and started its planning, developed its partnership working model, and the scheme was already underway. However, the avoidance of further flooding is very much part of the parish's vision for a safer community.

## **Vision for the future**

The vision that emerged from the public consultation process was that Bucklebury should become a place where drivers are discouraged from speeding.

The risk of flooding of Bucklebury village has been mitigated by completing the flood alleviation scheme. This scheme was completed in April 2011 and will protect 25 homes, the village hall and the church from further flooding. The project has included building flood bunds, digging a bypass channel, and developing a new ford, to divert flood flows around the village. It has been funded by the Regional Flood Defence committee with contributions from villagers, West Berkshire Council and the Parish Council. Other more minor projects have addressed the risk of flash flooding by the clearing of drains, ditches, culverts, gullies etc.

## **Community Action Plan**

The issue of speeding in the parish, particularly through Bucklebury was part of the 2006 Parish Plan and lies within the current action plan for which Bucklebury Parish Council is responsible. It was decided that this existing topic would not be revisited during the Parish Plan Refresh but would remain with BPC for action.

However 3 actions were instigated with respect to speeding:

1. The consolidated comments from the Parish Consultation were fed back for information to Andrew Garratt of WBC Highways in November 2009 following discussions at the Parish Planning Surgery on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2009 between Andrew Garratt and Peter Brook (BPC).
2. The Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) is aware of the concern of the parishioners and have discussed the comments with the Police who have put speeding through Upper Bucklebury (Broad Lane) as a priority action area. The NAG will continue to liaise with police and discuss problems with Andrew Garratt of WBC Highways as they arise.
3. Encourage parishioners to feed back concerns, particular locations and times of speeding to the NAG. NAG to publicise via The Oaks and via parish websites and email.

With respect to emergency planning, actions identified are:

1. BPC to continue to provide support as and when necessary to the flood alleviation scheme for Bucklebury village.
2. Encourage Bucklebury villagers to elect inspectors to monitor weed growth in the River Pang and new flood alleviation channel and the condition of roadside ditches and gullies
3. Contribute to the flood water management plan. BPC to elect flood wardens to liaise between villagers, land owners and WBC as part of the flood warning escalation process.
4. Contribute to a plan for other emergency situations.

## **A Prosperous Community**

### **Questionnaire results and commentary**

As a rural community, Bucklebury does not possess a large single employer although livestock farming, agriculture and forestry provide a number of employment opportunities.

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The parish is home to a significant number of other businesses and traders. These include:

- “High street” outlets - pubs, convenience store and butcher
- Small businesses based from home - photographer, garden designers, solicitor, builders and trades people.

The loss of the full-time Post Office in Upper Bucklebury is indicative of the desirability of supporting and maintaining local services. Fortunately this has been mitigated by the provision of a temporary twice-weekly Post Office service operating in the church hall.

Increasingly, many employers offer staff the opportunity to work from home and this is reflected in Bucklebury. Nearly one third of respondents worked from home some or all of the time. Consequently Bucklebury is considered a place to work as well as to live by 42% of respondents.

In the survey a number of people commented on the need for better and faster broadband, together with improved mobile phone reception. Support was expressed for both print and web directories of local businesses.

North Wessex Downs AONB is very supportive of the desire to help local businesses and the wider rural economy. Links to surrounding areas and how partnerships are recommended as means for improving what Bucklebury can offer to local people and visitors. The North Wessex Downs LEADER programme may be able to offer assistance with developing local businesses in respect of offering financial grants.

## **Vision for the future**

The vision that emerged from the public consultation process was that Bucklebury should become a place where:

- Anyone working from home should be able to access reliable telecommunications services
- The community can locate and use local businesses and suppliers

## **Community Action Plan**

- Improve existing community websites to promote Bucklebury as an attractive place to live, work in or visit.
- Campaign for faster broadband services. Focus community action through BPC.
- Support the installation of better telecommunications infrastructure where it does not detract from the rural environment. Focus community support through BPC.
- Draw up, publish and maintain a list of local businesses, e.g. information about local businesses. Make available on community website.
- Support and encourage local businesses to help retain the economic vitality of the parish.



## A Healthy Community

### Questionnaire results and commentary

At the community consultation events there was support for more outdoor activities, including walking, cycling, an outdoor gym and other possibilities such as netball, a skate park, or a BMX trail. The parish already has a variety of sports clubs, including tennis, cricket, football and badminton.

Bucklebury has over 150 off-road rights of way (RoW's), more than any parish in England. 80% of respondents felt that they were easily accessible, and most were satisfied with their maintenance although 77 people thought more could be done. The majority of people (83%) were not interested in improving access to the Common for wheelchair and pushchair users. There is already a walking group in the village, which meets once a month on a weekday. 141 people were interested in having more guided walks in the parish (eg local and natural history, social rambling). There was considerable support (259 respondents or 68%) for a book or leaflet of recreational walks in the parish. 11 people have offered to help produce it.

The results of the questionnaire showed that there is currently only limited support for an outdoor gym in the parish. Only 19% or 84 people expressed an interest. Of those in support, the most popular site would be near the Memorial Hall in Upper Bucklebury. Whilst this is not a priority now this is something that could be explored at a later date. There was little interest among adult respondents for the other outdoor activities.

During the consultation process, a keen group of cyclists formed called Better Bicycling in Bucklebury (BBB), who are committed to improving and connecting up cycle ways in the parish. Their aim is to improve recreational and utility cycling, the latter by enabling people to access secondary schools, railway stations and local towns in a greener and safer way. The questionnaire revealed that 187 people (43% of adult respondents) would like safer, gravelled, cycling routes in the parish. People were asked which of 4 routes they currently cycled, and which they would use if made safer. The most used route (both now and improved) is from Upper Bucklebury to Chapel Row along the Common Straight, closely followed by the route through Upper Bucklebury. All 4 of the identified routes would be used more if made safer. 54% would like a map of cycle routes in the parish. North Wessex AONB is starting to map legally accessible off road cycling routes. The majority of people (71%) did not want to join a cycling group, although 35 respondents would like that opportunity. 88% of young respondents cycled.

Improving access to the surrounding landscape, through walking, cycling and horse riding is an aim of the work that the North Wessex Downs AONB is currently undertaking in partnership with other protected landscapes. NWAONB can offer assistance with producing walks literature and providing training for walks leaders.

## **Vision for the future**

The vision that emerged from the public consultation process was that Bucklebury should become a place where:

- Walking is encouraged, both individually and in groups.
- Cycling is made easier and safer, so that parishioners can cycle to school or work or nearby shopping centres without difficulty, and enjoy recreational routes.

## **Community Action Plan**

The following actions will be carried out by members of the Bucklebury Walkers and the cycle users group, Better Bicycling in Bucklebury.

- More organised/guided walks including walks at weekends
- Consider obtaining assistance from North Wessex Downs AONB in producing walks literature (electronic template available) and training for walks leaders
- Produce a book of Bucklebury walks with local history included
- Produce a map of cycling routes in the parish using byways, bridleways, quiet lanes and roads.
- Improve off road cycle ways where roads are dangerous, starting with investigating the feasibility of improving the surface of the byway to the north of the Common Straight, by negotiating with landowners, getting a volunteer working group together, and seeking funding for hiring equipment. Subsequently look at the feasibility of improving the other 3 identified priority off road cycle routes.
- Consultation with other parishes and groups in order to connect up longer cycle routes.

## **A Greener Community**

### **Questionnaire results and commentary**

#### **Greening Bucklebury**

Parishioners were asked whether the community should be more proactive in reducing our carbon footprint (reducing consumption, saving energy, promoting renewable energy and doing more recycling). There was a very high level of response to this question (408 responses). Nearly 2 out of 3 respondents (65%) believe we should reduce our carbon footprint in the parish.

When asked whether they were interested in joining a community energy conservation group for "Greening Bucklebury" there were 400 replies to this question. 132 (31%) of the parishioners who responded to this question are potential supporters of a Greening Bucklebury campaign. From this group of 132, 24 (6%) said they would join the Greening group and 108 (25%) wanted to find out more.

### **Car Sharing Scheme**

The numbers of parishioners interested in joining a car sharing scheme is low. Only 22 “Yes” responses and 102 “Depends” responses were received out of a total of 1137 individual responses, i.e. about 9% of total responses. This is to be expected in a rural community where car ownership is high and public transport is less than frequent and does not reach many areas. When asked what car sharing routes they might participate in, there were 48 expressions of interest with trips to Newbury predominating as the preferred destination for leisure and shopping trips. In a community where many residents commute to work it is a worthwhile objective to try to facilitate car sharing.

### **Improvements in the bus service which would encourage more use**

Parishioners were asked what improvements would encourage them to use the bus services more. 212 out of 436 respondents or 48.6% do not use public transport at all.

The two major improvements that would encourage parishioners to use the bus are a more frequent timetable and more routes. This implies that the convenience factor of using a bus has to improve if we are to encourage more frequent use but budgetary constraints make it hard to increase the general frequency of rural bus services. The bus service is always at a disadvantage because parishioners value the independence, convenience and time-saving that a car gives. Cost appears to have less of an impact. It has to be recognised that many parts of the parish cannot be reached by bus. However 3 responses noted the lack of a bus service to Bucklebury village.

A selection of relevant comments made by parishioners as to what would encourage them to use the bus service more included:

- Newbury is the most popular destination.
- The lack of a direct route to Reading town centre and station is commented on.
- Several respondents are looking for better connections to the train stations (Theale, Thatcham, Midgham).

### **A “walking bus” or a “walk to school day” to Upper Bucklebury Primary School**

Parents were asked whether they would be interested in a “walking bus” arrangement or a “walk to school day” to Bucklebury Primary School. These arrangements are only of interest to parents with children at Bucklebury Primary School so the number of participating respondents is restricted. Nevertheless 30 people would be interested in a “walking bus” or a “walk to school day”.

The Chair of the Governors of Bucklebury Primary School has advised that the full governing body of the school met and agreed to review their current school travel plan with a view to ‘greening’ it.

### **Village Energy Saving Groups**

There was the most interest in setting up groups to install or use the following (in order of interest):

1. Regular Saturday market (59.9%)
2. Heating oil bulk purchase scheme (51.5%)
3. Tetrapak (drinks carton) recycling (38.8%)
4. Solar panels (34.5%)

Home insulation would be No.5 (at 32.2%) on the list if loft insulation (18.3%) and cavity wall insulation (13.9%) were considered as a single category. There was no evidence that parishioners were aware of grants available for home insulation, in particular the insulation grants available which are part of the Government's new Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT). The major utility companies (British Gas, NPower, E.ON, EDF, Scottish Power, Scottish & Southern Energy) have to meet targets to reduce carbon emissions by paying for insulation in domestic properties.

There was little interest by parishioners in taking part in home heat loss surveys (73.3% said "No" or did not respond). This result should be tested further by consulting with parishioners at a future Greening Bucklebury public meeting.

### **Vision for the future**

The future vision is to reduce Bucklebury's carbon footprint by reducing consumption, saving energy, promoting renewable energy and doing more recycling. This should be done by launching a Greening Bucklebury campaign.

Support and encourage the work of the Greening Bucklebury working group in launching the campaign.

Share experiences and collaborate with neighbouring parishes (Cold Ash, Hermitage and Thatcham) who are already running Greening Campaigns. The shared experiences and collaboration between the parishes offer the chance of making a significant reduction in West Berkshire's carbon footprint.

### **Community Action Plan**

- Greening Bucklebury campaign to be progressed by the Greening Bucklebury working group. (WBC has approved Greening Campaign funding).
- Share experiences and collaborate with the Greening Groups in neighbouring parishes when running the Greening Bucklebury campaign

- Encourage individuals willing to car share or looking for a car share to advertise in The Oaks, the Parish Magazine or the website.
- Pass results and comments made by parishioners as to what would encourage them to use the bus service more to Newbury & District bus company.
- Collaborate in the review by the pupils, teachers and governors of Bucklebury Primary School to make their current school travel plan more green
- Set up a Saturday market. Support for a Saturday market is encouraged as this activity will contribute to a Stronger Community as well.
- Investigate with WBC if it is possible to set up facility at Memorial Hall to recycle Tetrapack(drinks) cartons. These are not recyclable at present via the WBC waste disposal facilities.
- Investigate setting up a heating oil bulk purchase scheme as this would be supported by parishioners.
- Arrange a public information forum on solar panels, home heat loss surveys and insulation (possibly at the Greening Bucklebury Second Phase Launch meeting).

## Conservation

### Questionnaire results and commentary

Bucklebury Parish lies wholly within the North Wessex Downs AONB. Accordingly the key reason for this designation is to “conserve and enhance” the area. AONB’s have the same status as national parks. Conservation of Bucklebury’s environment is important to parishioners. It is the overwhelming desire of the parishioners to live in a peaceful rural environment. All recipients of the questionnaire (436) were asked their reasons for choosing to live in Bucklebury. A total of 1498 reasons (out of 2582 responses) were given supporting why people chose to live in a rural parish such as its very nature, the peace and quiet, the access to country walks, the lack of urban noise, the lack of urban traffic and other rural characteristics.

Environmental management and conservation activities will help to maintain this rural environment and its biodiversity. Members of the general public are not always aware of the need for continuing management to maintain the environment and biodiversity they desire. The majority of respondents (64.3%) would support restoration of more of the Common back to heath land. 258 respondents supported it against 143 who were not in favour. A volunteer group is interested in restoring the old mill in Bucklebury village. 288 respondents agreed that this was a good idea with only 33 against. 156 had no opinion.

## **Vision for the future**

- Bucklebury should remain a place where its rural heritage and distinctive character is maintained
- Activities which protect our environment such as the Common Clearance Days and surveillance of illegal activities on The Common shall be maintained
- More of the Common should be restored to heath-land

## **Community Action Plan**

- Ensure all relevant Authorities are aware of the parishioners' strong wishes for Bucklebury to remain a 'Rural Parish'. Ensure this desire is reflected in the Local Development Framework.
- Review, support and implement the relevant objectives of the North Wessex Downs Management Plan 2009-2014. (This is a statutory document).
- Ensure that the environment of the Common is protected by continuing to organize Common Clearance Days and continued surveillance of illegal activities. This is an ongoing action between BPC/WBC/Thames Valley Police
- Consider further restoration of The Common to heath-land by Bucklebury Heath-lands Conservation Volunteers
- Review whether restoration of the old mill in Bucklebury village is feasible.
- Maintain biodiversity and off-road Rights of Way by continued support by BPC and WBC for voluntary groups such as :
  - The Bucklebury Heath-lands Conservation Volunteers
  - The Pang Valley Conservation Volunteers
  - The Pang Valley Ramblers
  - Pang, Kennet & Lambourne Countryside Projects (FWAG)

## **A Stronger Community**

### **Questionnaire results and commentary**

The community would like more activities and events bringing people together. Families would like events for the whole family. 152 respondents (35%) were interested in a communal orchard. Only 86 respondents (20%) were interested in Bucklebury being twinned with a foreign village.

The two public meetings in November 2010 produced valuable additional information and 12 parishioners volunteered to help organise activities and events. A list of the 8 most popular activities and 5 most popular events has been drawn up.

New activities are planned for adults starting with a Women's Group. The support for this was surprisingly strong as there is no such group meeting in Bucklebury at present following the cessation of Women's Institute (WI) activities in Bucklebury some years ago. 52 respondents would attend regularly or occasionally and 8 would help set it up.

The Royal Wedding has proved a focus for community activity and collaboration. A working group was set up and decided that the celebrations in Bucklebury should take the form of a Royal Tea in the (Farm) Park.

Effective communication with parishioners is seen as essential if we are to build a Stronger Community. The Oaks parish magazine is popular and is read by 93% of adult questionnaire respondents. Readers like the variety of local information and made comments such as “wide range of articles” “excellent local magazine”, “well presented”, “makes me feel part of the community” “rounded magazine”, “keeps me up to date on local issues”.

274 respondents (63%) would like to see advertisements in the Oaks. 94 (21%) would not. 78 people (18%) would like other information included in the magazine. Suggestions for improvements/inclusion include more frequent publication e.g. bi-monthly, reports from the police/crime warnings, reference to web links, club contacts, more information on parish council activities such as planning applications, state of the roads and when repairs are planned, articles on local shops and restaurants, reviews of local businesses, bus timetables, phone numbers/contact details of clubs and services, articles on wildlife and nature, meetings and activities in the village halls, local opinion in the form of letters to the editor and a retrospective section such as this day/year in the past.

At present The Oaks is published only three times per year. The church parish magazine is published monthly but tends to focus on church rather than parish events and business. There is a need for a more immediate “rapid response” mechanism to communicate with residents. An emailing list of Bucklebury residents is being built up using addresses given by the respondents in their questionnaire responses. This will be used to meet the need for an immediate communication mechanism within the parish.

There are two websites operating in Bucklebury, one for the Parish Council and a second one which aims to service the community interests and events. Most people who responded have a computer (70%), and of those, nearly all have a broadband connection. Only 42 people have a dial up connection. Only 25% of those respondents who own a computer visit the parish websites. There is no coordinated strategy for the two websites. Their aims are not clear and create confusion for the users. Of the 77 people who do visit parish websites, there were a variety of ideas about what should be there e.g. up to date information about parish events, clubs, businesses, hall booking systems, PC minutes, public transport, neighbourhood watch schemes.

## **Vision for the Future**

Although there are already a number of clubs and activities in Bucklebury, there is obviously a demand for more and this will be actively investigated. There is a demand for more adult learning which should be investigated.

Letting parishioners know what is taking place has been a problem in the past. Better communications are obviously important. E-communication is seen as a way forward for improving communications with parishioners. “Rapid response” communication needs should be significantly improved by setting up

email distribution lists which need to be in accordance with the Data Protection Act. It is recommended that a working party is formed to establish e-communications in the parish.

Support for a number of interesting ideas has come out from the questionnaire. The information will be made available to those interested in pursuing them to investigate their feasibility.

## **Community Action Plan**

- Set up a Bucklebury Parish Partnership (BPP) organization to act as an umbrella organization which acts as a coordinating and facilitating resource to other working groups in Bucklebury
- Form a new activities and events committee to set up and plan events for the whole parish.
- Consider amending the constitution of the Bucklebury Memorial Education and Recreational Society (BMEARS) to facilitate holding events
- New activities for adults to be planned starting with a Women's Group. Setting up a book club, film club and theatre group will be investigated.
- Adult learning opportunities to be addressed.
- Improved advertising of events and activities will be investigated.
- E mail system to be set up for "rapid response" information. Set up email distribution groups in accordance with the Data Protection Act for dissemination of urgent information. This will be managed via BPC Parish Clerk.
- Meeting of The Oaks editorial team to discuss what should be included in The Oaks
- Better and regular signposting needed in the Oaks to other sources of information (eg planning applications on WBC website, BPC minutes on the parish website).
- Form a working group to upgrade design and content of parish websites, e.g. consider including businesses, transport, neighbourhood watch etc. Provide better publicity for websites. Keep information on them up to date
- Investigate support for community orchard with Bucklebury Horticultural Society

## **Housing**

### **Questionnaire results and commentary**

From the initial consultation process there was considerable comment about planning matters which was fed back to the parish council to inform them in this area of their work. As this had been a focus of the first parish plan, it was decided to concentrate on other areas this time around. People were



however asked if “Bucklebury Vision”, the village design statement, which was produced in 2002, needed updating. Only 168 respondents (38%) had an opinion about it. Of those, 85 people thought it needed updating, 83 thought it didn't.

Generally people had strong feelings about housing development, with only small numbers not answering or not having an opinion. However feelings were divided. 59% felt there was no need for more family homes. Respondents were divided about the need for more affordable housing (196 in favour, 189 against). More people (209) were against more starter homes for young people than were for (161). 208 respondents thought there should be more housing for older people, but 177 were against. 52% (226 respondents) were in favour of a survey of housing needs in the parish, 36% were against it. WBC Housing Service would welcome a local housing needs survey and have indicated their support for action to undertake this by providing financial support for the associated printing and postage costs. North Wessex Downs AONB would also support the need for a local housing needs survey.

## **Vision for the future**

The vision that emerged from the public consultation process was that Bucklebury should remain a quiet, peaceful and rural parish and is valued for its beautiful countryside, and large gardens, and its lack of urban noise and traffic. Residents have mixed feelings about housing development but a majority supported a survey of housing needs.

## **Community Action Plan**

- A survey of housing needs in the parish to be instigated.
- Better communication about how the parish council makes its decisions on planning applications and its use of Bucklebury Vision e.g. expanded article in every Oaks magazine publication, newcomers to the village to be given a copy in their welcome pack.

## **Children and Young People**

### **Questionnaire results and commentary**

62 young people responded to the separate Young Person's questionnaire, 27 female and 33 male with 2 unspecified.

A number enjoy the peace and quiet of the rural location but are concerned by speeding traffic and the difficulty of travelling to Thatcham and Reading. Transport issues and the lack of an indoor or covered meeting place, especially for teenagers, were noted by adults. 88% of youth respondents cycled.

Young people are involved in a wide variety of activities, within and outside the parish as well as at school but 70% would like more opportunities.

The parish benefits from a thriving pre-school and primary school. The play facilities to the rear of the Memorial Hall have recently been expanded and the primary school has an active “Friends” association.

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There is a noticeable lack of facilities and meeting places for independent teenagers. Upper Bucklebury, the largest population centre, does not have an accessible playing field.

A BMX trail and a skate park were the most popular outdoor activities requested. Indoor activities requested included table tennis, cinema, music and a youth club.

### **Vision for the future**

The vision that emerged from the public consultation process was that Bucklebury should become a place where:

- Young people in the parish can play and meet safely
- Facilities are provided that can be used without the need for constant adult supervision to encourage independence and responsibility

### **Community Action Plan**

- Review existing events and investigate whether any can be expanded or adapted to accommodate families and young people
- Consider the practicality and location of a covered meeting place
- Support the creation of a skateboard park and/or a BMX track
- Support the development of an all-weather pitch at the Memorial Hall or other suitable location
- Consider whether any use can be made of the Hockett Field