

Individual Decisions

The attached reports will be taken as an Individual Portfolio Member Decision on:

01 July 2008

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ID1660	Crookham Hill, Thatcham - Experimental 7.5t Weight Restriction	Emma Webster	53 - 73

Individual Decision

Title of Report:	Adoption of Boxford Parish Plan		
Report to be considered by:	Pamela Bale	on:	01 July 2008
Forward Plan Ref:	ID1651		

Purpose of Report:

To seek adoption of the Boxford Parish Plan by the Council.

Recommended Action:

The Plan be formally adopted by the Council as an important document.

Reason for decision to be taken:

Formal adoption of the Parish Plan.

List of other options considered:

None

Key background documentation:

Boxford Parish Plan

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- 1.6 This paper (and the accompanying Parish Plan) brings to Members' attention the contents of the Parish Plan for Boxford along with the above accompanying contextual information about the basis and progress on parish planning in West Berkshire.

Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 Until recently parish plans were formally adopted by the local authority through a presentation to the relevant Area Forum. The adoption of a Parish Plan means that the Council commits to working positively with the community to realise the vision set out in the plan. Area Forums being postponed, pending the outcome of the Task Group investigations, it has been decided that Parish Plans will be adopted through the Individual Decision process.

Parish Planning In West Berkshire

- 1.2 West Berkshire Council, working alongside other key partners from the Local Strategic Partnership such as Community Action West Berkshire and the local community, has promoted the development of Parish Planning across the District. The Council's success in pushing forward this work has been recognised nationally firstly through the award of Beacon Status for the local authority in 2006 as part of the "Empowering Communities Improving Rural Services" theme and more recently through the successful joint local authorities bid, which the Council led, to further develop work in Parish Planning to the national Beacon Peer mentoring fund. In 2007
- 1.3 Parish Plans are key documents that set out a vision for how a community wishes to develop in the future and contain an action plan that will help to realise that vision. Parish Plans are developed through a wide ranging consultation process with the local community. This helps ensure that the resulting plan reflects the needs and aspirations of local people. Parish Plans are therefore an important source of intelligence about the views and concerns of the community as well as highlighting specific actions they wish to see taken in their areas. This information plays an important part in shaping both service planning and delivery across the Council but is increasingly being used to inform Council strategy and policy development.
- 1.4 The process by which Parish Plans are developed involves extensive liaison and engagement with service providers and statutory organisations, most especially the Council. This close involvement and dialogue helps ensure that officers are aware of the direction and aspirations of the community and can help develop meaningful and realistic actions. This close engagement between the Council and the community at a very practical level helped to provide an excellent platform for improving relationships and communications between the local authority and the communities it serves. A further by-product or benefit emerging from parish planning is that it has helped bring communities and organisations together to focus on developing solutions to local problems, for example: discussion with the Citizen's Advice Bureau in the early stages of both the Purley and Pangbourne Parish Plans helped establish a Citizen's Advice Bureau outreach point in the eastern part of West Berkshire so those residents do not have to travel into Newbury or Reading to receive advice.
- 1.5 Parish Planning is now firmly established as an important part of the Council's work with local communities. This is shown by the fact that as of May 2008 some 29 parishes had completed a plan. The map overleaf shows graphically the penetration of parish planning in West Berkshire

Appendices

Appendix A - Boxford Parish Plan

Implications

- Policy:** Parish Plans are an integral part of the Council's Vibrant Villages theme within the Council Plan
- Financial:** There are no specific financial implications arising from this report at this stage. Any of the actions in the Parish Plan that have financial implications for services will need to be addressed as and when those actions are moved forward and will be accommodated within existing budgets. If actions require additional resources these will be brought to members for consideration in due course.
- Personnel:** There are no personnel implications at this stage
- Legal:** There are no direct legal implications at this stage
- Environmental:** Parish Plans often raise many local environmental issues and as such can play a very useful role in conserving and enhancing the environment at a very local level. The Boxford Parish Plan includes a range of actions designed to improve the environment of the community
- Equalities:** The wide ranging consultation (80% of households participating) carried out in support of the Boxford Parish Plan helps ensure that all people have an opportunity to have their views and concerns heard.
- Partnering:** Parish Plans are an excellent example of partnering between the local community and the Council.
- Property:** No specific property implications. Any property related matters within the action plan will be addressed by the relevant service as and when the action is moved forward by the community in conjunction with the Council.
- Risk Management:** There are no direct risk management issues arising from the plan. As and when actions are moved forward any risk issues will be addressed by the relevant service area
- Community Safety:** There are no specific or direct Community Safety implications

Consultation Responses

Members:

Leader of Council: Graham Jones
Overview & Scrutiny Commission Chairman: Brian Bedwell
Policy Development Commission Chairman: Councillors Marcus Franks, Irene Neill and Quentin Webb
Ward Members: All Downlands Area Forum Members
Opposition Spokesperson: Councillor Roger Hunneman
Local Stakeholders: Consulted through the Parish Planning process
Officers Consulted: Carole Ruse, Mark Harris, Andy Day, Emma Iamb
Trade Union: Not consulted to date

Is this item subject to call-in.	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position		<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by OSC or associated Task Groups within preceding 6 months		<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>

Cover graphics to be inserted

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Action Plan

2007 Survey Questionnaire and Results

Published

Introduction

What is a parish plan? Do we need one? Over the past two years I have been asked these questions many times. The development of parish and town plans is a government initiative to give more power to local people, to encourage them to decide what is best for their community and to give them more control over getting it done. The West Berkshire Council has strongly supported this initiative and encouraged the development of parish plans.

Our completed Plan is the result of detailed discussions and surveys within our community, including the younger generation. It can now serve as a valuable resource to help the Parish Council and other local committees in their future decision-making processes, as well as providing documented justification to support fund raising for projects.

The Plan sets down comments and ideas raised by the community over the last two years. Projects that received more than 50% support in the 2007 survey are incorporated in an Action Plan. All other topics and issues are still addressed but future action in relation to them will be the subject of further consideration by the appropriate village committee.

It is interesting to note that during the research work for the Plan two particular comments far exceeded the number of any others. The first was that most people in the community enjoy living in Boxford Parish and wish to preserve its rural character and keep things very much as they are. The second was that the Parish is divided and has no social centre. This is not surprising given its geographical fragmentation. These issues have been the subject of much discussion and are therefore carefully considered within the Plan.

Other favoured topics have been the rebuilding of the village hall, refurbishment of the sports pavilion, upgrading the children's play area in the recreation ground, renovation of the church, protection of the water meadows and concern about the noise from the M4 motorway. The recording of the parish history also received considerable support.

Indeed it has been encouraging to receive so much interest during the development of the Plan; 80% of the households in the Parish responded to the 2007 survey and many villagers attended the open meetings and events. Thank you all for your enthusiastic support and helpful comments.

So, what next? We have established an Action Plan for the protection and improvement of the beautiful Parish in which we are so fortunate to live. Now, we must turn our attention to implementing the Plan. In the meantime, this document contains much that none of us knew before about the Parish of Boxford and the views of its residents, I hope you enjoy reading it.

Mike Appleton
Chairman of the Boxford Parish Plan Steering Committee

Acknowledgements

Boxford Parish Plan Steering Committee:

Mike Appleton
David Willison
Mark Stallard
Christine Harris
Lucy Winfield
Heather Luff
Adam Elliot
Marion Knappe

Chairman
Deputy Chairman
Secretary
Treasurer
Publicity Officer
Parish Council Representative
Youth Representative
Committee Member

Boxford Parish Council:

Initial development work and start-up funding

Local Volunteer Assistance:

Joy Appleton & Mike Webb
Sarah Hays
Andy Swiss
Tony Stone
Joy Appleton
Colin Hays, Jerry Winfield, Joy Appleton
Katie Harris
Tim Hely-Hutchinson

M4
Housing
Sports
Village Hall
History
Photographs
Pie Charts
Editing

Children of Stockcross Primary School:
CAWB (Community Action for West Berkshire):
Officers of the West Berkshire Council:
West Berkshire Council:
Greenham Common Trust:
Dreweatt Neate:
"Awards For All" Lottery Fund:

Parish Plan logo design
Information
Advice
Maps
Copying facilities and graphics
Advertising banners
£3,000 Grant

1. Consultation Process

The Boxford Parish Council took the initiative to develop a Parish Plan in May 2006 when the first of three public meetings was held to introduce the concept of a Boxford Parish Plan. Between 50 and 60 attended the first meeting on 25th May in the Village Hall and there was lively debate about positive and negative issues affecting the community. As a result of the considerable interest shown, a pilot questionnaire was generated and delivered to each household, together with a letter from the Parish Council summarising the discussions and requesting volunteer help.

The second public meeting was held on 10th July 2006 at which the results of the pilot questionnaire were discussed and a decision taken to conduct personal interviews with a cross section of the community. This enabled the issues raised to be further explored and the level of interest for a Parish Plan to be gauged. These interviews were based upon 'walk & talk' sheets which ensured that all issues were covered and that the feedback was structured.

The final public meeting in this initial phase was held on 4th September 2006, the meeting considered the feedback from the 'walk & talk' sheets together with the earlier pilot questionnaire and level of interest shown. The meeting concluded that there was a positive mandate and need for a Parish Plan to be developed. To progress the development of the Plan, a committee was established comprising those people from the community who had volunteered to assist in the Plan's development.

The first meeting of the Boxford Parish Plan Steering Committee was held on 24th October 2006. At this meeting a constitution was drafted and officers elected. The committee was set up to be independent of any other committee in the Parish but with a line of reporting to the Parish Council. The committee continued to meet on a regular, monthly basis and was joined periodically by a representative from CAWB (Community Action West Berkshire). CAWB helped the committee by providing an interface with the West Berkshire Council and information on how other plans in neighbouring parishes had been, or were being, developed.

The role of the Steering Committee was, first, to identify the wishes of the community for the Parish and, secondly, to raise money to cover the development and printing costs of the Parish Plan. The second of these matters was resolved initially by the Parish Council allocating a small 'start-up' sum to the Steering Committee, and then by the Lottery awarding a grant of £3,000.

Identifying the wishes of the community had already commenced with the earlier work of the Parish Council. The Steering Committee therefore had only to structure these early findings, establish if there were other community wishes and accurately determine the level of interest in the issues raised. This was achieved by the development of a detailed questionnaire, which contained both an adult and children/youth section and gave the opportunity to all those over the age of five to express their views.

The questionnaire was launched at the Open Weekend held on 23rd and 24th June 2007. Over 130 people came to the launch and most spent a good deal of time with members of the Steering Committee discussing their views and ideas. Any household that did not collect its questionnaire at the Open Weekend had one delivered during the following week.



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The level of response to the questionnaire was very encouraging and the results were presented to the community at a feedback evening held on 1st November 2007. About 50 people attended and expressed their satisfaction both with the questionnaire and the way in which the survey had been conducted.

The table opposite shows that 80% of all occupied households responded to the survey and means that the results can be considered a true reflection of the wishes of the majority of the residents of the Parish. The detailed questionnaire incorporating all the results is included at the end of this document, where more information on the respondents can also be found. Each question and result is considered in detail within the following sections of this document.

Number of Questionnaires issued to occupied premises	186
Number of unoccupied premises	6
Number of Questionnaires returned	149
Percentage of Questionnaires returned from occupied premises	80%

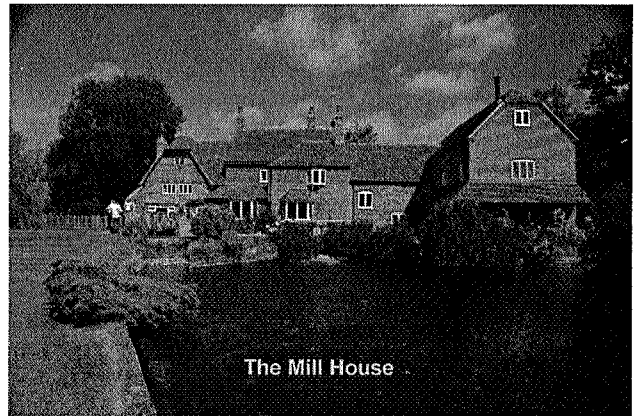
2. The Parish

The Parish of Boxford is attractively situated in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a few miles north-west of the market town of Newbury in Berkshire. The Parish is characterised by open chalk and flint downland fields running down to the rich soils of the wooded river valley of the Lambourn. To the south-west of the Parish there are large woodland plantations, through which the old Roman Road of Ermin Street passes.

The village of Boxford itself sits naturally protected by the surrounding woods and hills such as Shepherd's Hill, testament to a long association with sheep, and Hoar Hill which was once covered with *Box* from which the village takes its name. The River Lambourn, a fine trout stream, meanders through the village and thence south-east to Newbury, where it joins the River Kennet. Nearly all the water meadows at the heart of the village are classified as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

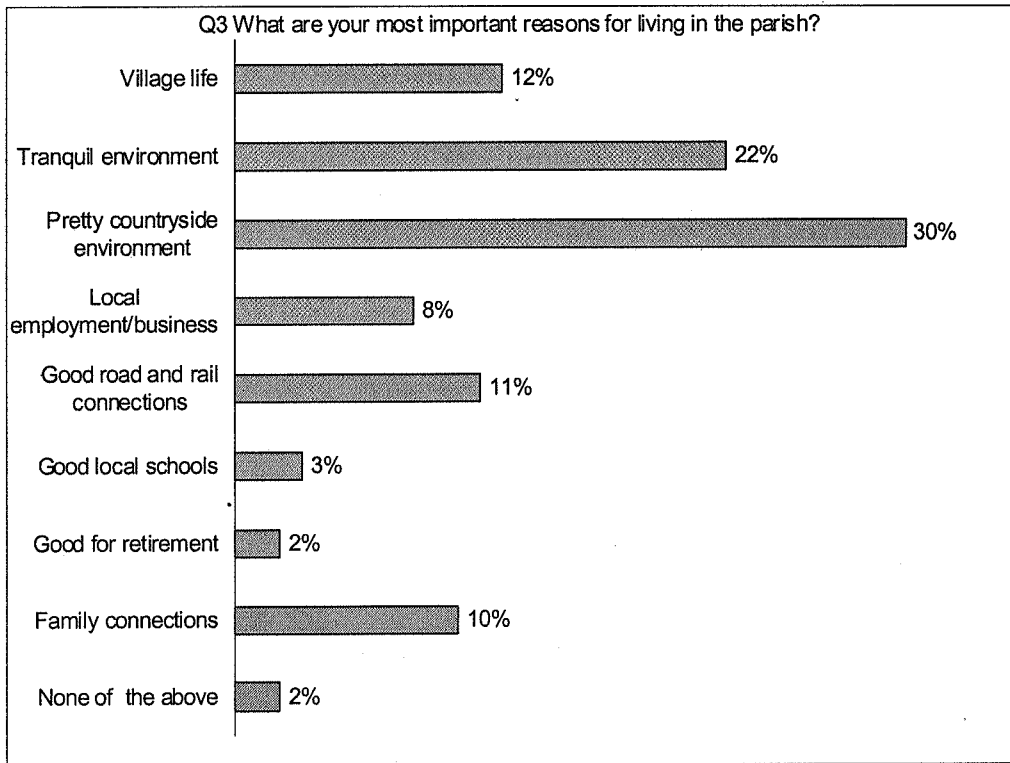
The village of Boxford comprises the centre around the Mill House and St Andrew's Church, School Lane, Shepherd's Hill, Southfields, Westbrook, Winterbourne Road and properties along the Valley Road. The hamlets of Hunts Green, Ownham and Wickham Heath are to be found in the Parish and dotted throughout are working farms, cottages and converted farm buildings. The Parish is bordered to the south-west by the B4000, Ermin Street, to the north-east briefly by the B4494, Newbury to Wantage Road, and dissected east to west by the M4 to the north of Westbrook.

Boxford retains a substantial number of historic buildings, including many thatched cottages - some dating from the 16th century when they were owned by the Abbey of Abingdon. The largely 13th century Parish Church, dedicated to St. Andrew, stands on the site of an earlier 11th century church on the banks of the River Lambourn. The war memorial in front of the church was refurbished as part of a Millennium Project and illustrates the heavy toll paid by the parishioners in the First and Second World Wars. The Mill House on the River Lambourn in the centre of the village combines the architectural style of three centuries, while nearby Boxford House is an example of gothic revival architecture. Westbrook House was home to the author Charlotte Peake, who wrote the *Boxford Masques* in the early years of the 20th century. These plays have recently been rediscovered by villagers and, following adaptation by award-winning author Geraldine McCaughrean, revived and performed again on Hoar Hill by the local community under the direction of Ade Morris of the Watermill Theatre. The Bell Inn was rebuilt, after a fire in 1888, on the site of the old coaching inn.



The village has a large recreation ground and a village hall, home to the mother and toddler group and a pre-school. Boxford no longer has a school but children are able to travel by bus to Stockcross Primary School. Whereas Boxford was a pastoral community before the First World War, only about 16% of residents now work in the Parish.

Boxford is surrounded by beautiful countryside and endowed with many attractive and historic buildings. It has good road and rail connections with London and the south-west. The responses to Question 3 resoundingly show the importance accorded to a tranquil village life in attractive surroundings. Few respondents thought Boxford a good place for retirement. This probably reflects concerns about the lack of local services and poor public transport.



The population of the Parish, according to the latest census in 2001, totalled 466 spread across the age ranges shown in the table below.

2001 Census									
Total Population	Age Under 5	Age 5 - 15	Age 16 - 24	Age 25 - 44	Age 45 - 64	Age 65 - 74	Age Over 74	Total Males	Total Females
466	28	58	29	125	169	37	20	231	235

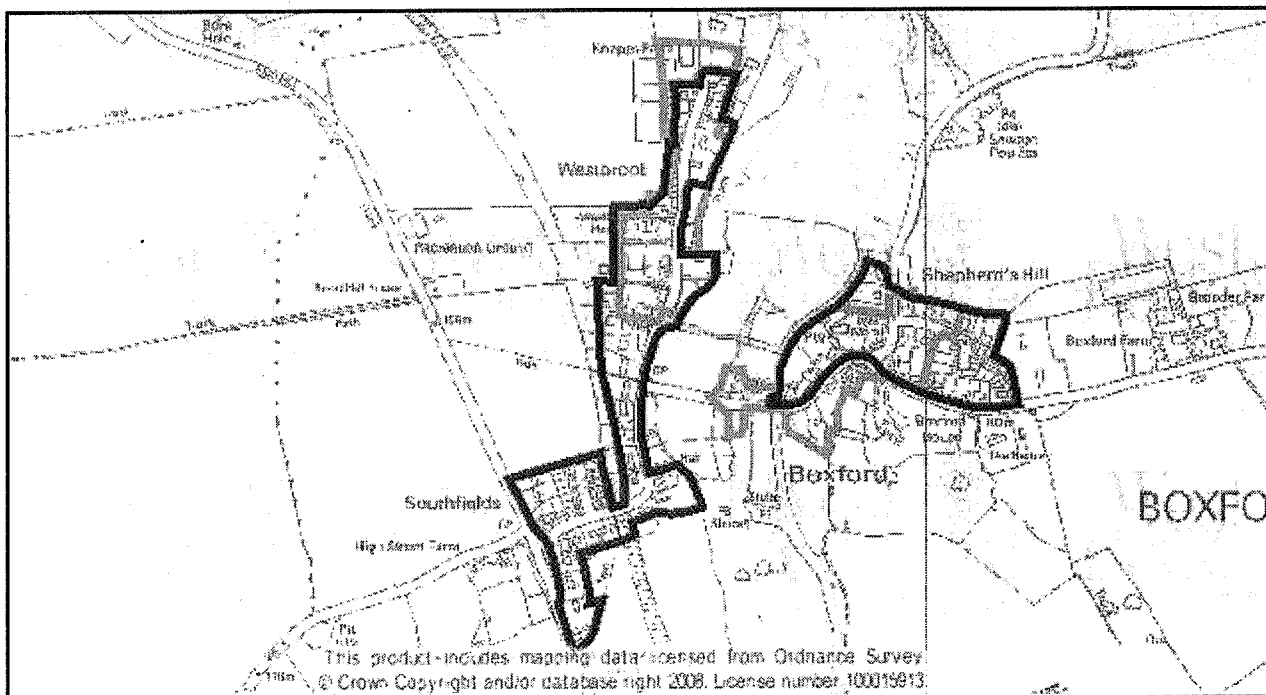
When comparing the above census figures with the 2007 Parish Plan survey, it appears that there has been little change in the last seven years.

3. Housing

In the 2007 Parish Plan survey, 192 properties were recorded, six of which were unoccupied. The bulk of the housing stock is naturally in the centre of the village of Boxford and the adjoining hamlet of Westbrook. Together with Shepherd's Hill and School Lane, these are the areas where the oldest properties are to be found and, with Southfields, they form the main settlements of the Parish. One further significant area of housing is at Wickham Heath, where cottages were originally built for employees of Sir Richard Sutton's Settled Estates. The majority of the housing stock in the Parish is now privately owned, including the Wickham Heath cottages and some of the council-built properties at Southfields and Shepherd's Hill. There are a number of rented properties in Winterbourne Road and Westbrook as well as in outlying hamlets.

The council-built properties at Southfields and Shepherd's Hill were designed with plenty of green space and generous plot sizes, as were the former estate cottages at Wickham Heath. In the main, properties throughout the Parish have been built individually on fairly large plots. This feature, together with a high proportion of property of historic or architectural merit, helps to make the Parish an attractive place to live and Boxford a distinctive village.

West Berkshire Council's map of Boxford below shows permitted settlement and conservation areas.

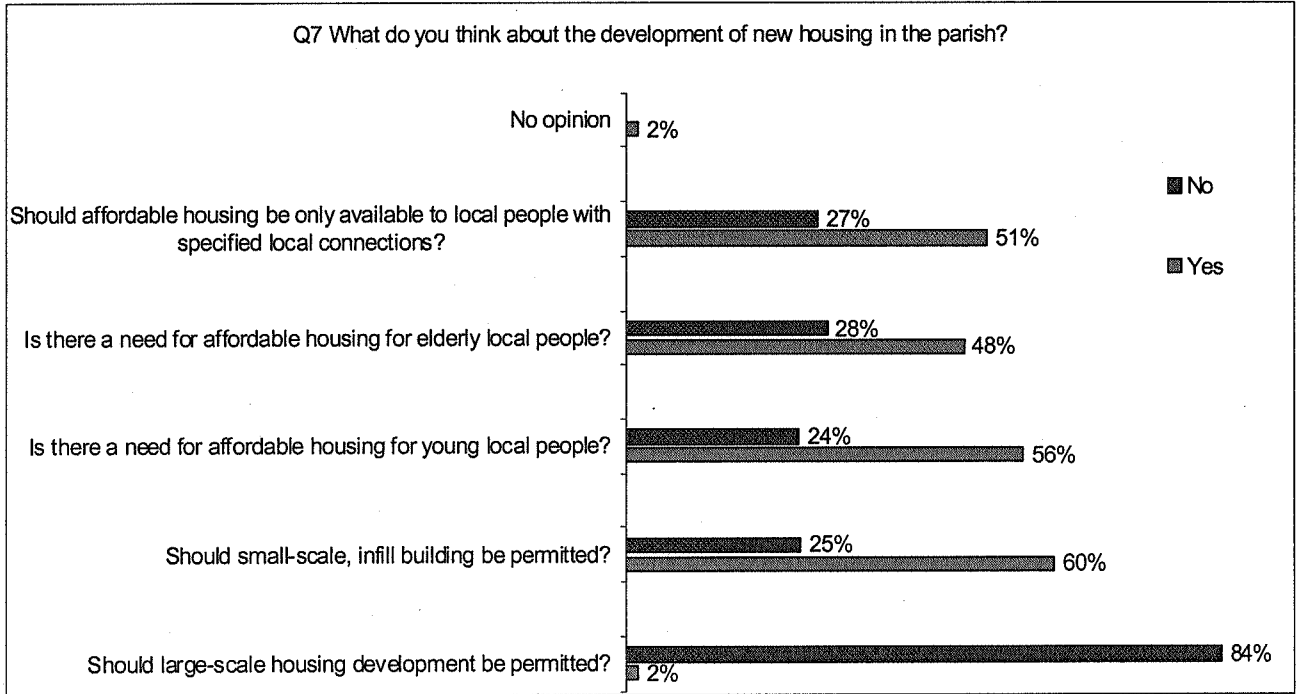


Settlement Areas – Black
 Conservation Areas – Yellow

The results from Question 7 indicated that residents are in favour of infill, small-scale development (60%); however, very importantly, development on a large scale is overwhelmingly opposed (84%). These results are included in the Action Plan. There was less of a clear cut response on affordable housing; 56% of respondents were in favour of affordable housing for young local people and nearly half (48%) for the elderly. 51% of the respondents felt that

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affordable housing should be only available to local people with specified local connections. Scoring over 50%, the first and last of these results are reflected in the Action Plan. While the 48% return in favour of affordable housing for the elderly has not been taken forward to the Action Plan, it should be kept in mind for future reference.

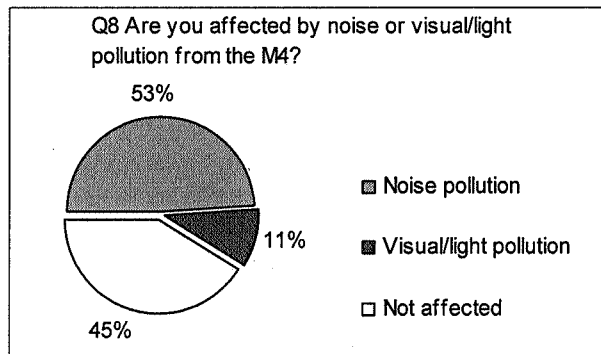


These results show that residents wish to keep the distinctive characteristic appearance of the area but also allow for conservative small scale infill expansion.

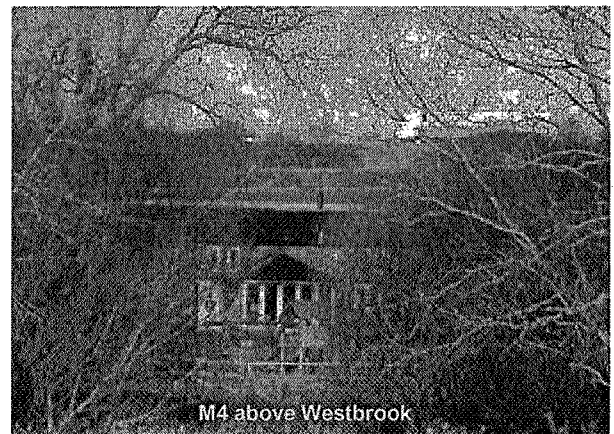
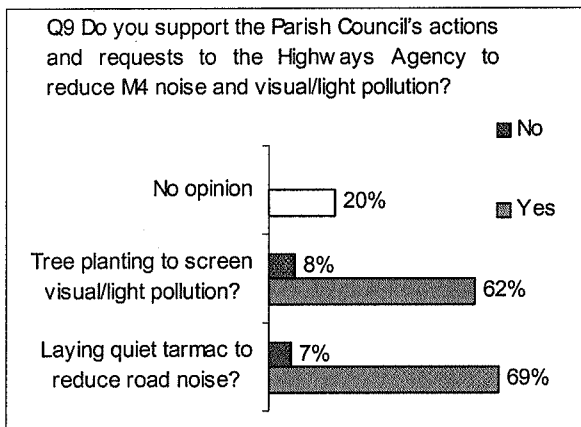
4. Motorway

Boxford’s section of the M4 was opened in 1971 and runs east to west almost through the centre of the Parish to the north of Westbrook, and at some points on an embankment 90 feet above the surrounding area. This section of the motorway has never been fully resurfaced; instead, over the last 37 years, it has been maintained by patching. Traffic volumes have increased dramatically since the motorway opened and so has the noise and visual impact.

The 53% positive response to Question 8 suggests that more than half the inhabitants are affected by noise pollution from the M4. This is high, given that properties are so widespread throughout the Parish. Westbrook, School Lane, Winterbourne Road and the Lambourn Valley Road appear to be the most badly affected areas. Looking at the 45% who are unaffected by noise pollution, the returns show that these responses come from residents who are shielded from the motorway by distance (Wickham Heath for example), topography or adjacent properties acting as sound barriers. A significant proportion of residents, 11%, are also affected by visual/light pollution and these residents are in the main in Westbrook.



There was overwhelming support in response to Question 9 for the Parish Council’s actions and requests to the Highways Authority to reduce M4 noise and visual/light pollution. Support for this action came from residents across the Parish, even if some were personally unaffected.

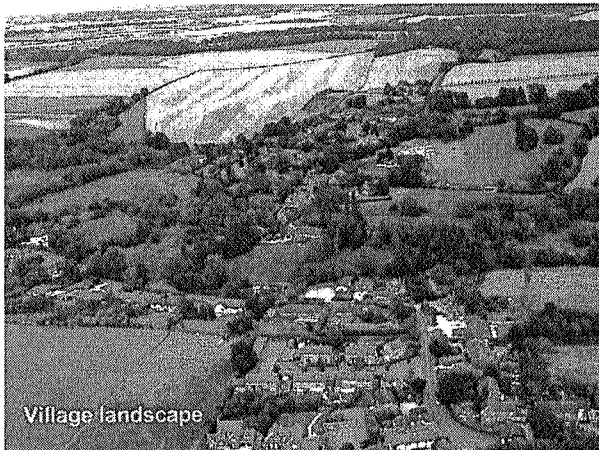
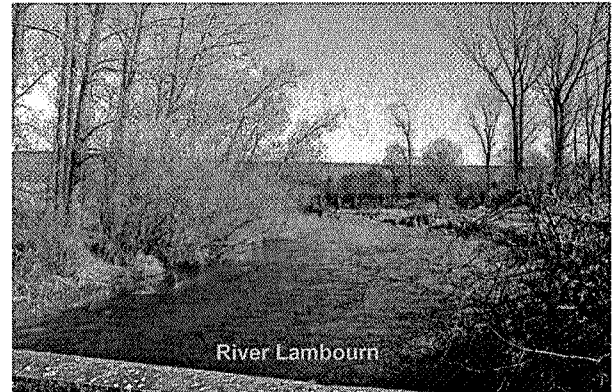


As a result of the level of support in response to Question 9, this topic has been carried forward to the Action Plan.

During the period of finalising the Parish Plan, the Highways Agency has resurfaced the westbound carriageway of the M4 with “quieter tarmac” and advised that it will undertake some tree screening on the motorway verge. It has also indicated that the resurfacing of the eastbound carriageway is provisionally programmed for 2009.

5. Environment

The Lambourn Valley runs through the Parish from Welford at its western boundary to Woodspeen at its south-east corner. The area is very rural in nature, with no industrial employer. The water meadows are at the centre of the Parish and provide ever-changing interest for locals as well as visitors. To the north, on either side of the road to Leckhampstead, the countryside comprises rolling downland. The

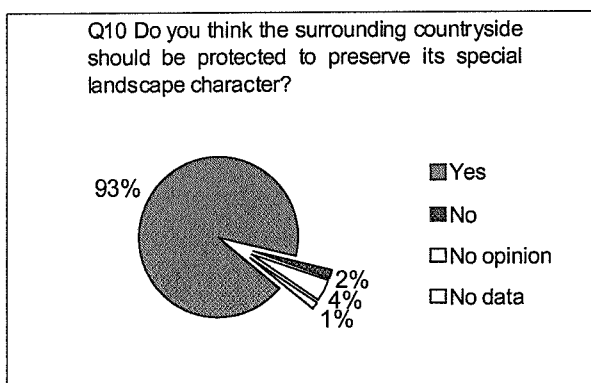


motorway has a negative impact on the environment of this area of the Parish in particular.

Further south, Wickham Heath, on the ridge between the Kennet and Lambourn valleys, straddles the old Roman road, Ermin Street, with Hunts Green and Ownham located on the valley sides down towards the river. This area has a higher proportion of forestry than elsewhere in the Parish. The residents of Wickham Heath and

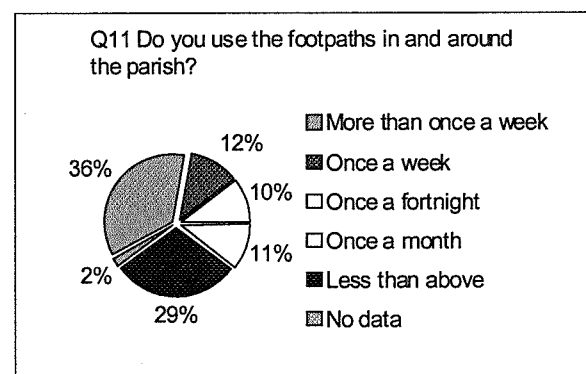
surrounding hamlets are mainly shielded from the noise impact of the M4. Although heavy lorries have been banned from the B4000, traffic, especially the menace of speeding vehicles, still has a negative impact on householders - particularly those alongside the road.

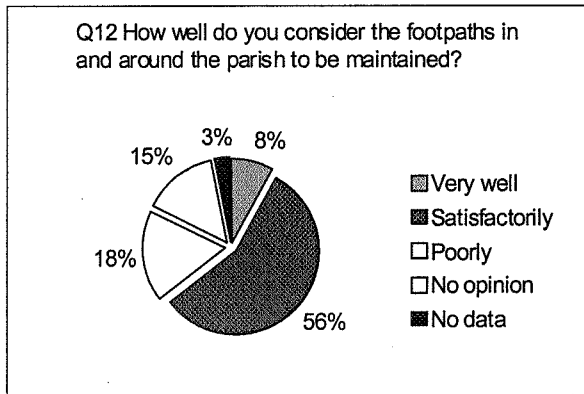
Historically, agriculture and other land-based activities, with their limited impact on the visual environment, were the main source of income in the Parish. Agriculture is still important but modern mechanisation reduces the need for local employment and, since there is no industry in the Parish, most employment is found elsewhere.



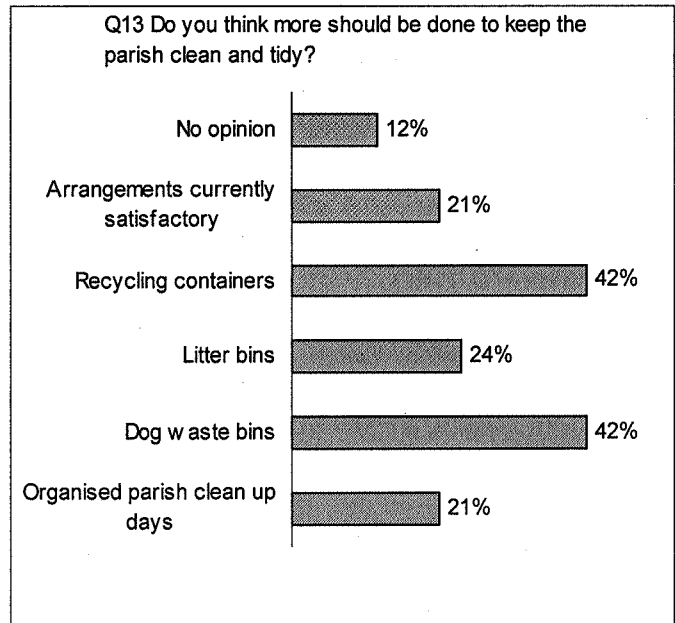
Question 10 addressed the central issue of the protection of the environment. Not unexpectedly, 93% of the respondents affirmed that the surrounding area should be protected to preserve its special landscape character. This overwhelming result is reflected in the Action Plan.

Responses to Question 11 clearly showed that parishioners enjoy the countryside, with a total of 69% using the local footpaths. A map showing the footpaths in the Parish has been published by the Parish Council, with funding and support from West Berkshire Council. A copy has been delivered to every household in the Parish.

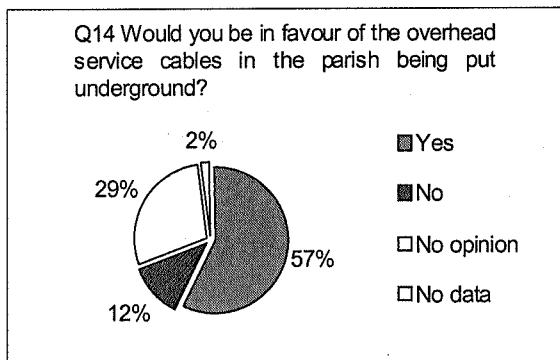




Responses to Question 12 indicated that 64% of residents consider the footpaths to be more than satisfactorily maintained.

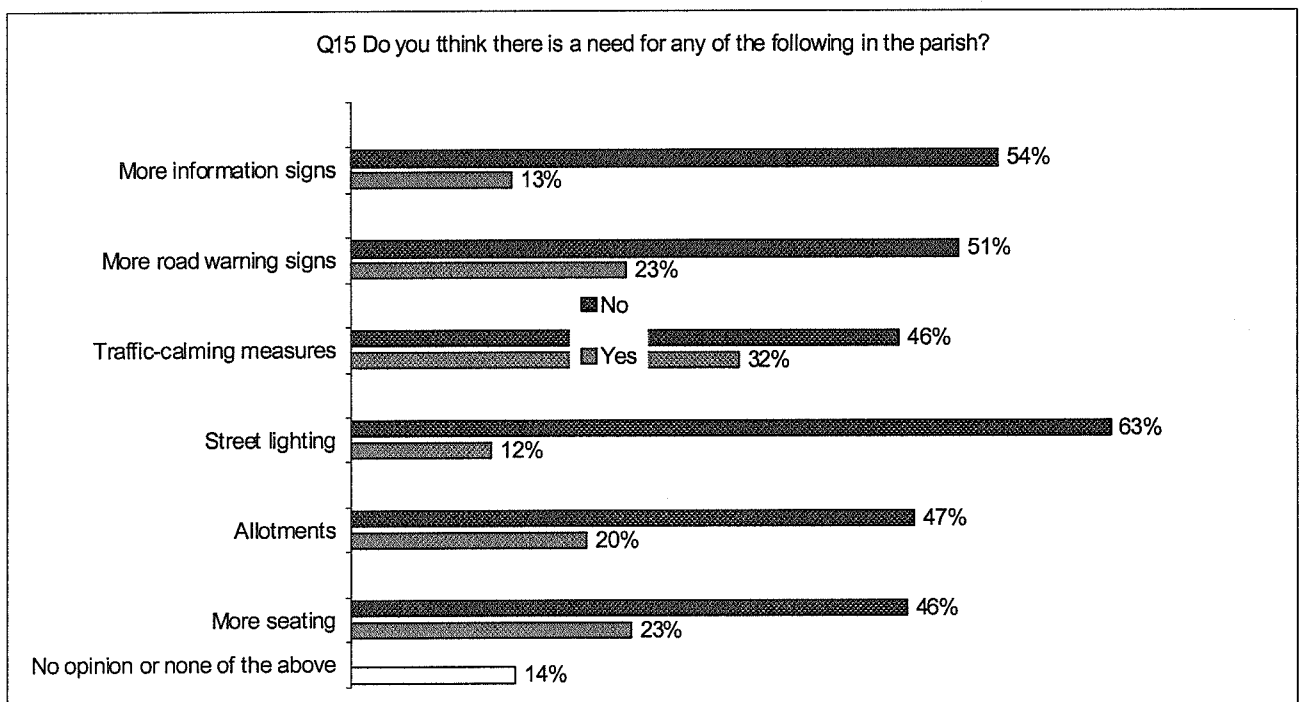


Question 13 listed ideas raised to help keep the Parish clean and tidy but none received the level of support sufficient to take them forward to the Action Plan. These ideas will be monitored for possible future consideration.



Burying service cables underground received 57% support in response to Question 14 and this item is included in the Action Plan, with the utility providers being entreated to comply with this requirement whenever they renew any facilities.

Responses to Question 15 again indicated the wish of the community to retain the status quo in respect of the village character. It would appear there is little support for more seating or signage, and neither is there sufficient support for allotments, street lighting or traffic-calming measures.



Flooding

Although there had previously been some flooding in the centre of the village, the impact had been minimal and no comments regarding flood defences were raised prior to the 2007 Parish Plan survey being conducted. However, the torrential rainfall on 20th July 2007 (when a local farmer recorded 135mm falling in 18 hours) resulted in serious flooding within the village. A number of houses suffered damage, roads were blocked and the village was cut off for a short time. Because of the prospect of further flooding, representatives from the Parish Council and Parish Plan Steering Committee attended the District Parish Conference on flooding issues. As a result, Boxford Parish Council is now completing a 'Local Flood Plan'.

6. Water Meadows

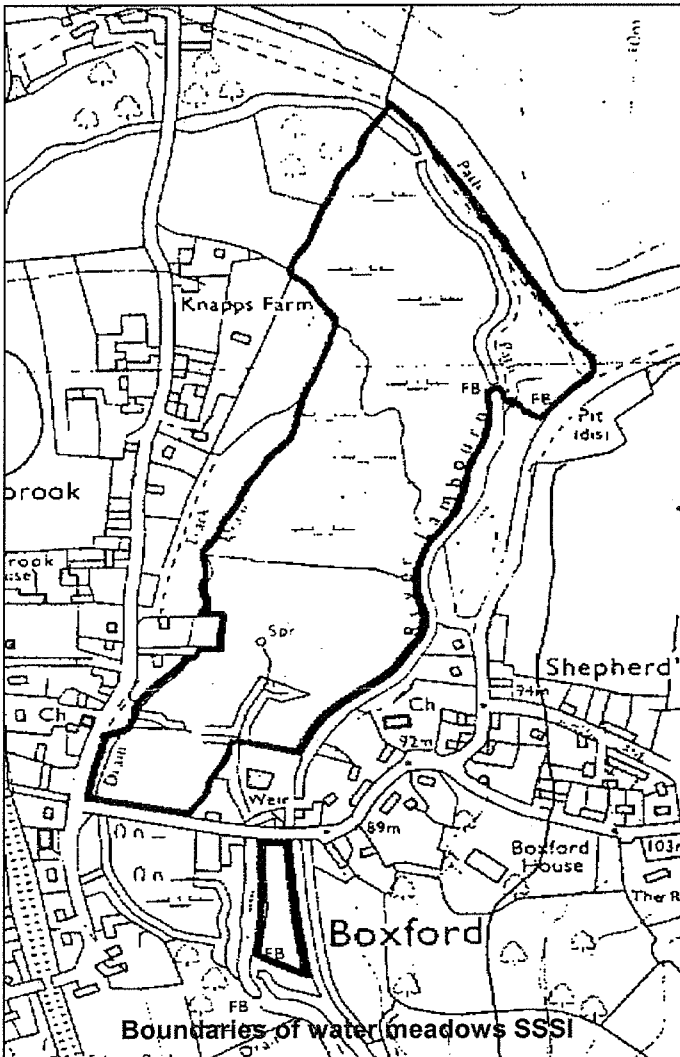
The Lambourn valley, with one of the loveliest streams in the United Kingdom running through it, offers many of the characteristic features of chalk stream valley landscapes. These are an important part of our national heritage and, in the case of Boxford, they include water meadows of great beauty and scientific importance.

The Boxford water meadows are home to numerous rare and endangered flora and fauna. They are also unusual in providing open countryside in the very centre of the village.

This wetland area has been designated both as a Special Area of Conservation under English and European Law, and most of it as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). These designations give the water meadows special protection under the auspices of Natural England.



Part of the water meadows



The map shows the boundaries of the SSSI which took effect from 1986. The area was classified as an SSSI because of the unique combination of 17 species of grass, 7 species of sedge and 76 species grassland herbs.

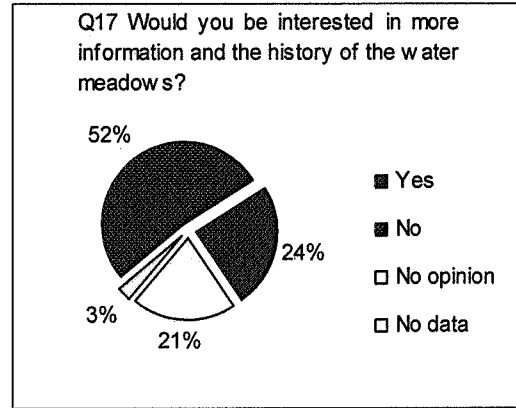
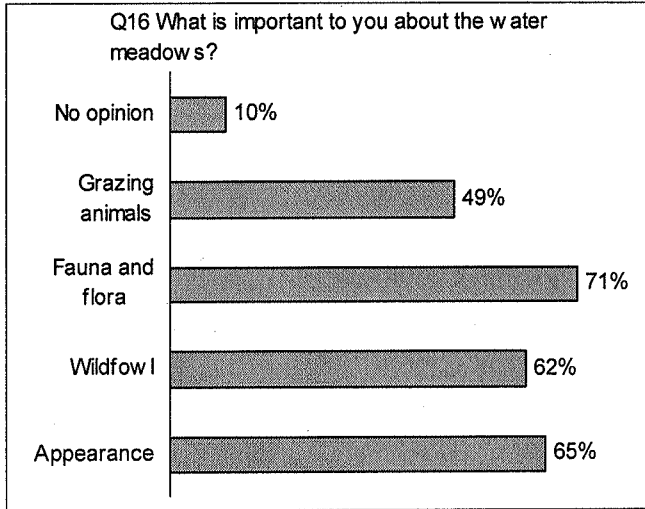
Several of these species are normally associated with ancient meadows with a long history of freedom from 'improvement' and disturbance. Additionally, the insect fauna was noted as being diverse with rare species of beetles, such as *Cantharis Pallida* and *Subcoccinella 24-punctata*, being found.

When the population of the Desmoullian Whorl snail (*Vertigo Moulinsina*) along the route of the Newbury by-pass was threatened, additional survey work was carried out along the Lambourn and Kennet rivers in 1996. It was found that the species was "widespread and very common" in the wetter areas of the Boxford water meadows.

The little egret, water rail, snipe and other common species of birds associated with marshy land have all been observed in the water meadows.

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Two questions on the water meadows were asked in the 2007 survey. Question 16 explored the respective importance to the residents of their various features and Question 17 asked residents if they were interested in having more information on the history and nature of the water meadows. The charts below show that respondents felt the flora and fauna were the most important features (71%), but there were high scores for every feature including general appearance. A majority (52%) would like to have more information on the history and nature of the water meadows.



The level of support in relation to both questions was sufficient to take the points forward to the Action Plan. It should be noted that the Boxford water meadows are privately owned and therefore any project has to have the agreement, commitment and support of the landowners concerned.

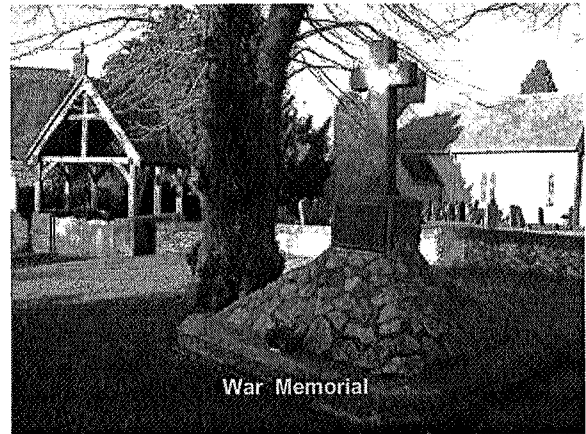
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7. History

Before the advent of man, the area was covered by a warm sea, evidenced by rare microscopic sea creatures found in one of Boxford’s chalk pits, and now protected by Natural England as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Early man was drawn to settle here because of the clear water supply and river ford. Neolithic flints have been found across the Parish from Westbrook to Ownham. Earthworks at Borough Hill near Wyfield Farm are evidence of an Iron Age settlement and Romans who lived alongside the locals left many relics across the whole Parish as well as a network of roads, of which Ermin Street is the most notable. Much of the land in the Parish was subsequently owned by Abingdon Abbey, later confiscated by Henry VIII and leased, sold or gifted during his reign and that of Elizabeth I.

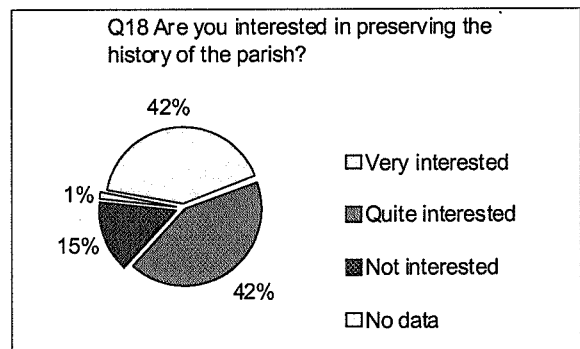
Up to World War I, Boxford was a largely self sufficient settlement with farmers, bakers, brewers, millers, wheelwrights, cartwrights, ropemakers etc. and many people in domestic service. Church registers and census data record the beginning of the end of the old social order following the war, with far fewer people in domestic service and many trades disappearing.

After the First World War, villagers tried unsuccessfully to raise enough funds for a lych-gate as a memorial for those villagers who had given their lives and built a modest war memorial instead. A Millennium Project refurbished this war memorial, and built the intended lych-gate together with a brick and flint wall which re-established the boundary between the churchyard and village green. Additionally, in collaboration with local school children, research was undertaken into the lives of the men named on the memorial. This was subsequently published in leaflet form and distributed to every household. Parishioners also contributed to a substantial time capsule which was buried under the large threshold stone in the centre of the lych-gate.



War Memorial

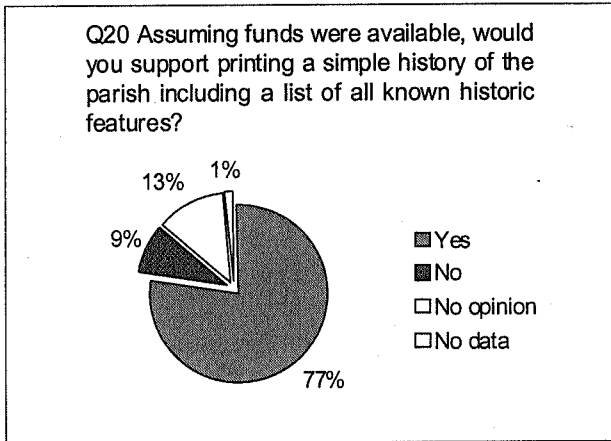
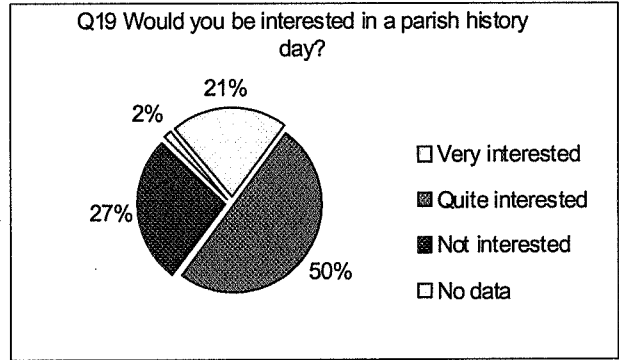
With previous historical projects having been well supported by the community, it was not surprising to find an 84% response to Question 18 in favour of preserving the history of the Parish. It is gratifying to note that this interest came from all age ranges, from 11 to over 85 years; indeed, in every age band more than 50% interest was recorded.



Preserve parish history – age group	11 - 17	18 – 24	25 - 44	45 - 60	61 - 64	65 - 75	76 - 85	Over 85	No data	Total
Very interested	8	5	34	39	14	16	6	3		125
Quite interested	4	9	29	44	9	19	10	2		126
Not interested	5	3	11	15	3	3	4		1	45
No data	1			1			1		1	4
Total	18	17	74	99	26	38	21	5	2	300
Percentage interested	67%	82%	85%	84%	88%	92%	76%	100%		

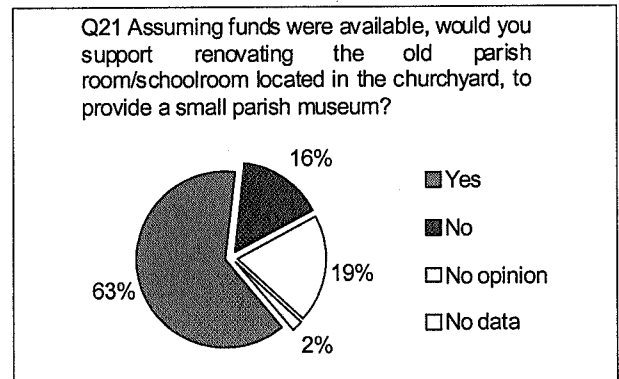
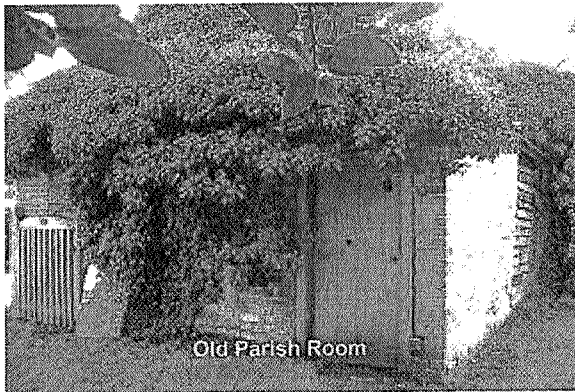
Additionally, 71% expressed interest in a Parish History Day, as shown in the responses to Question 19.

Boxford Barleycorn, a history of Boxford written by Elsie Huntley in the late sixties and published in 1970 by the Abbey Press, has long been out of print. It is a gold mine of information for those lucky few who have copies. It is therefore not surprising that 77% of respondents to Question 20 supported printing a simple history of the Parish, including a list of its historic features.



Boxford has 50 Grade II listed properties ranging from tombs, outbuildings, houses and the church together with many other sites of special historical interest, a considerable number for such a small parish.

The Parish is very fortunate in that many documents of historical interest are held locally; however, few people see them and strong interest was shown in having them easily accessible. The response to Question 21 indicates that 63% support renovating the old parish room/school room and turning it into a small museum.



As a result of the level of interest in and support for the topics covered in Questions 19 -21, they have been carried forward to the Action Plan.

8. St. Andrew's Church

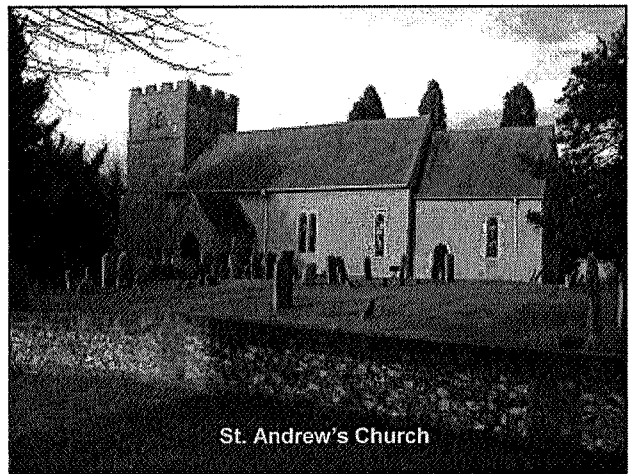
There is evidence of a church in Boxford from as early as the 11th century. Like most country churches of its time, the original St. Andrew's was considerably smaller and simpler than it is today, comprising only a nave and chancel. The present building dates from around 1225 and was mainly built from local flint, although there are indications that the east chancel wall may be of earlier Saxon origin.

In the 15th century, rebuilding work was carried out to the nave and chancel, and above the arch to the chancel a fresco was painted depicting a Tudor coat of arms, part of which is visible today. The first reference to a tower also dates from this time but it collapsed in 1667 and was rebuilt in 1692. The porch was added in the middle of the 18th century.

The church was significantly extended and remodelled in 1841, when the north aisle and vestry were added. However, by 1900 it had fallen into a bad state of repair and underwent a major restoration in 1907/8.

In 1967 the church was listed as a Grade II* building and as such is considered to be of national importance, being one of only 4% of all similarly listed buildings in England.

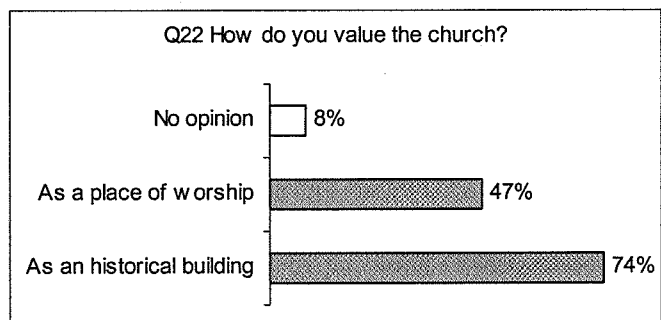
Unfortunately, the fabric of the church again requires serious maintenance. During the last restoration, cement rendering was applied possibly in an attempt to overcome internal rising damp. This has not been successful, as the damp is trapped in by the impervious rendering. Specialist advice suggests that this rendering should be removed and either replaced with a breathable lime mortar or, preferably if the original building materials are reasonably satisfactory, the walls could be restored to their original appearance and re-pointed.

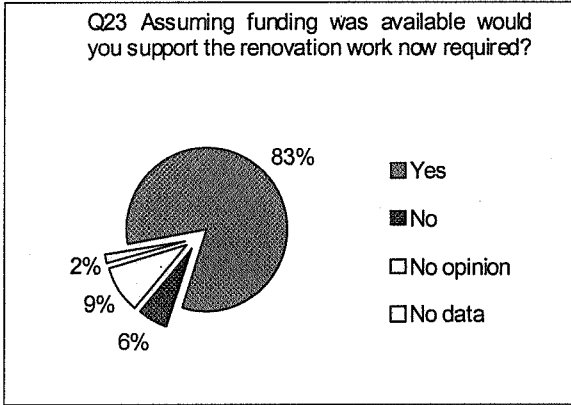


The main cross beam supporting the tower roof also needs replacing, as does the lead roof covering. Some of the stonework around the windows is in need of attention and the interior of the church is well overdue for redecoration.

While carrying out this restoration work, it would be possible to incorporate a toilet and a kitchenette, which would greatly add to the versatility of the building. The extra facilities would certainly be appreciated for family services and special services such as weddings and funerals. They would also enable the church to be used more frequently as a venue for such village events as would benefit from the good acoustics, the size and the character of the building.

Question 22 of the survey explored the value the community placed upon the church. The results shown in the bar chart indicate that 74% of respondents valued the church as a historical building, although somewhat fewer, 47%, valued it as a place of worship. Support for the need to renovate the church received a very positive 83%, as the chart for Question 23 shows.



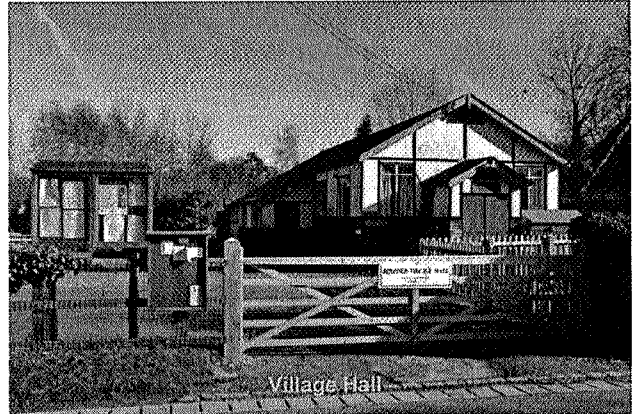


St. Andrew's is managed by the Parochial Church Council (PCC), which represents the laity. Together with the Rector, the PCC is responsible for all matters relating to the church, including the maintenance of the church fabric. Given the considerable support for the renovation work, the PCC and the Church Architect approached the Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC) in Oxford, the governing body which controls all work to be carried out to local churches. The DAC has subsequently indicated its support for the proposed work.

As a result of this support from the community and the DAC, the renovation work is included in the Action Plan.

9. Village Hall and Recreation Ground

The village hall was built by public subscription and the land was given by deed of gift in 1936 by Major H.L. Archer-Houblon of Welford Park. The land for the Recreation Ground was given to the village in 1947 by Mrs. Joan E. Palmer, the wife of one of the executors of the late Mr.H. Peake of Westbrook House.

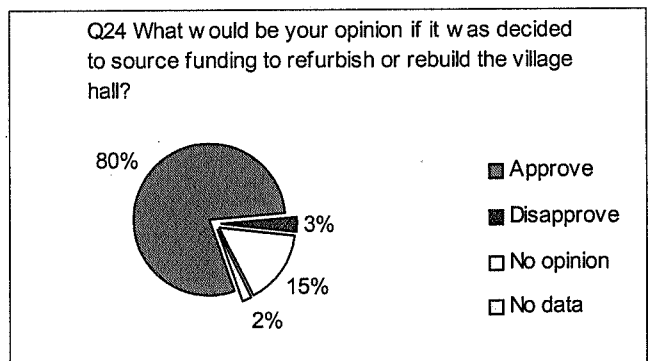


The current management of the hall and the recreation ground and associated facilities is organised by the Village Hall Committee. This committee oversees the accounts, organises general maintenance and administers the hiring of the hall and playing field. It also organises some of the village events, such as the flower show and the senior citizens' and children's Christmas parties.

The most regular current users of the hall are the Teddy Bears Pre-School, the Panda Club playgroup and the weekly bingo club. The hall is also occasionally used for private parties.

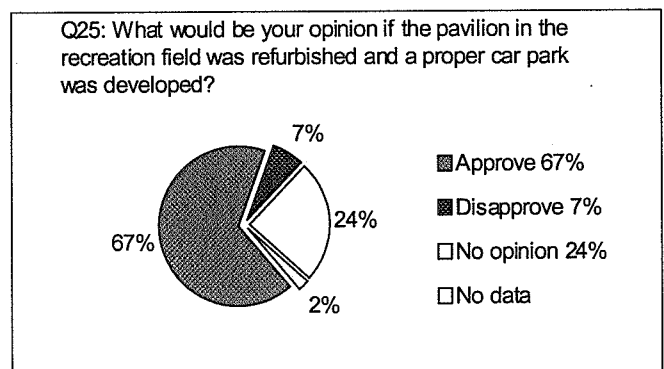
It now requires considerable maintenance, which is placing a burden on finances. Recently, the electrics and plumbing have been upgraded to satisfy legal requirements for the pre-school activities but the hall is generally in poor condition and without an adequate heating system.

The 2007 survey sought the opinion of the community with regard to either refurbishing or rebuilding the village hall. Responses to Question 24 showed 80% in favour of sourcing funding for this course of action. As a result of this strong support, the topic has been included in the Action Plan.

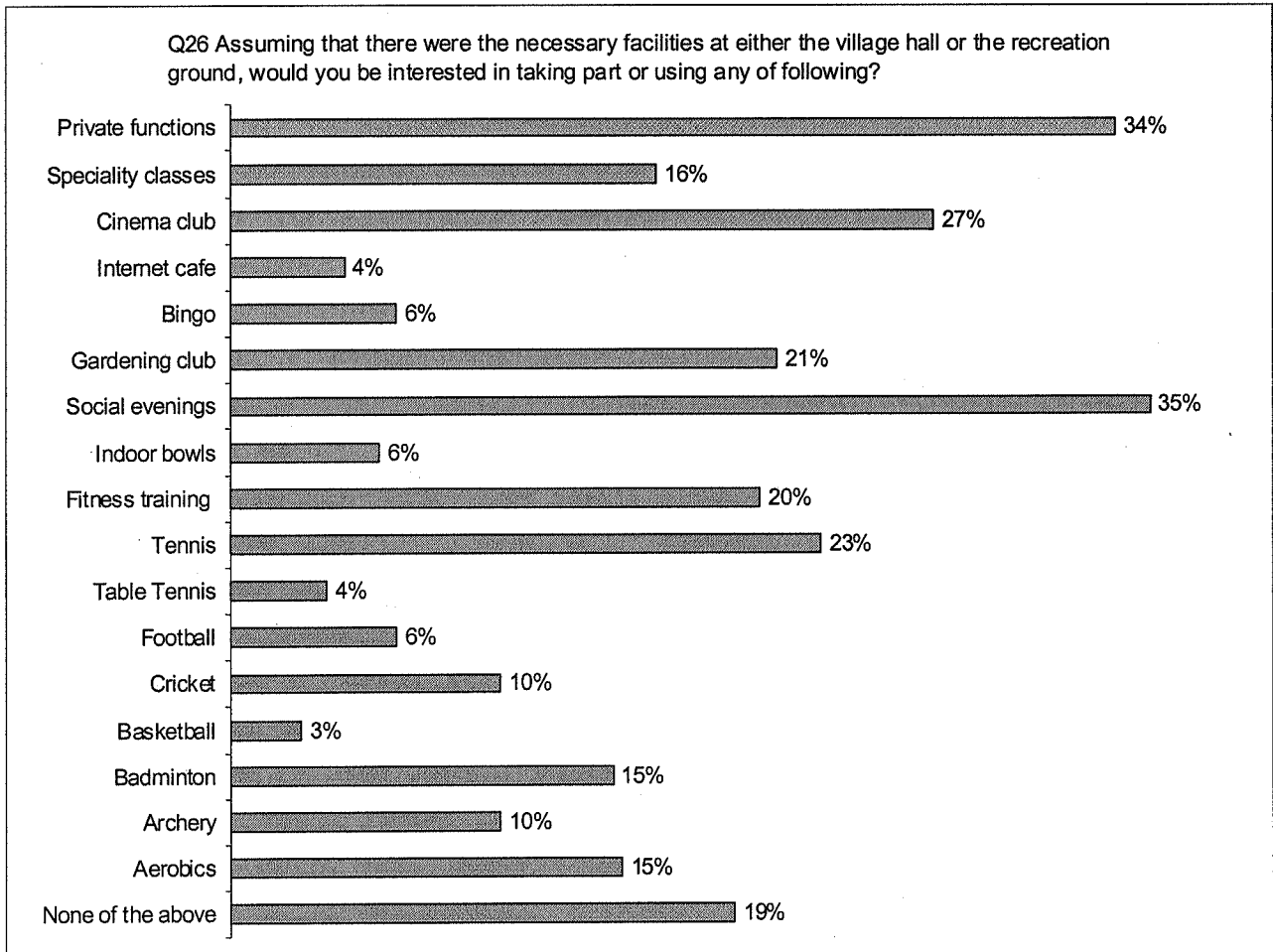


The recreation ground and pavilion are important parish amenities and have regular users in the form of two local football teams. However, the pavilion is in need of upgrading to include shower

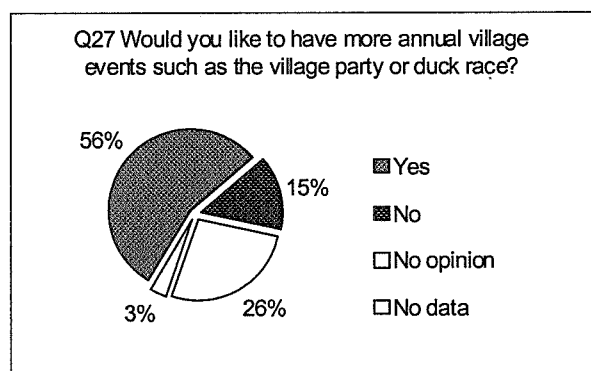
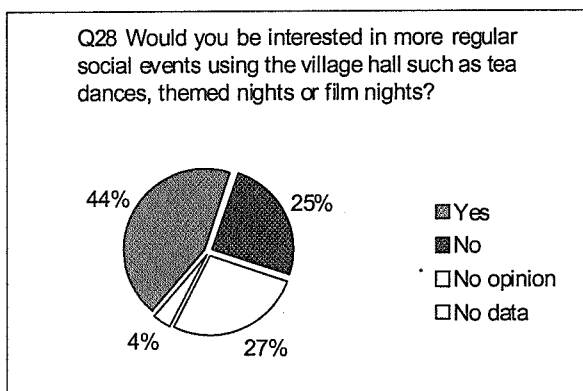
facilities and to avoid dangerous congestion on Rood Hill, off-road parking is required. Responses to Question 25 indicated that 67% approved the proposal for refurbishment of the pavilion and development of a car park. The strong support given has led to this topic, too, being included in the Action Plan.

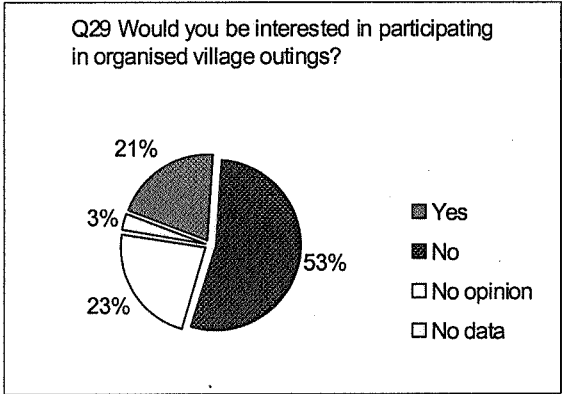


A redeveloped village hall could provide the focal point currently lacking in the Parish and an upgraded pavilion greater opportunity for sports activities. The activities listed below in Question 26 were derived from comments received from the pilot questionnaire and the 'walk & talk' sheets. Any new work to the village hall and the pavilion should take into consideration the following results and the wishes of current and prospective users.

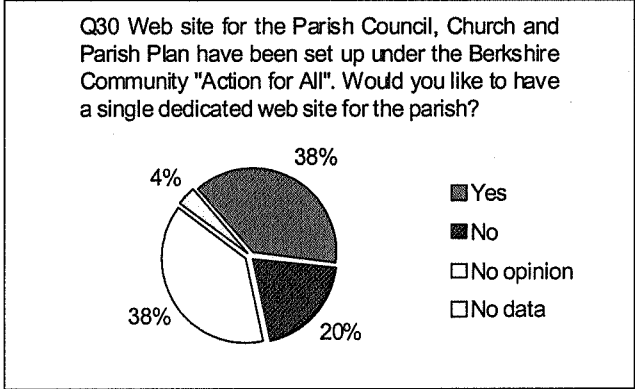


Questions 27, 28 and 29 explored the community's ideas for recreational activities. 56% indicated a preference for annual village events, such as the village party and duck race. This conclusion has been carried forward to the Action Plan.





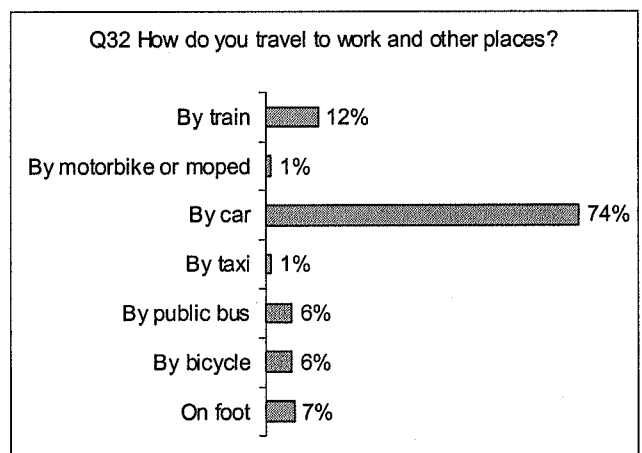
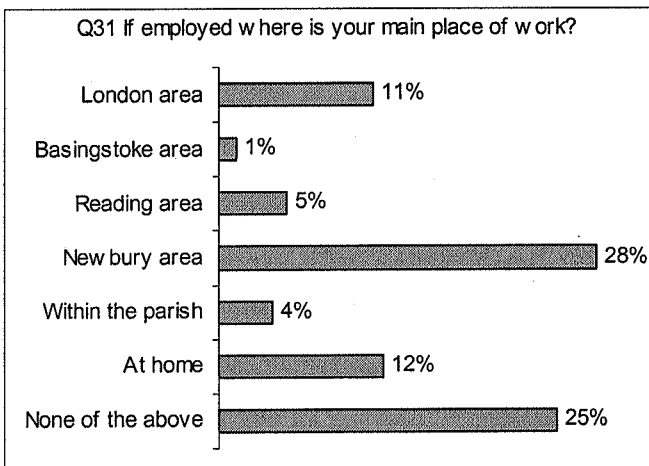
Currently, there is no single web site for the Parish; each organisation has developed its own using the 'Action for All' site provided by West Berkshire Council. Question 30 considered the possibility of a single parish web site. However, the response was only 38% in favour. This item should be further monitored by the Parish Council and, if circumstances change, reconsidered.



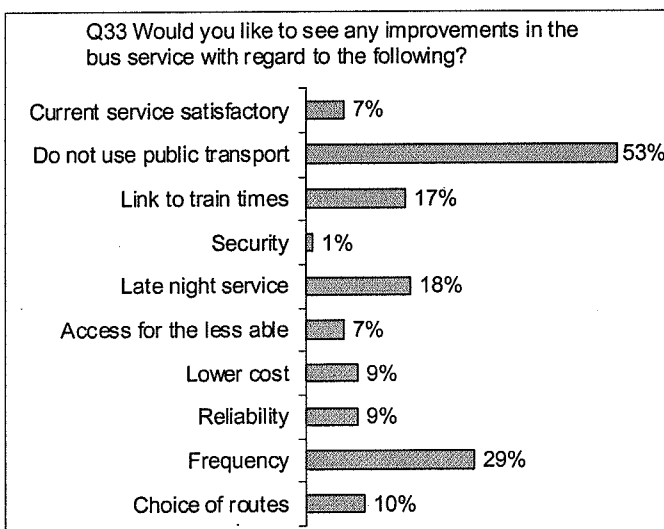
10. Travel

The Parish is well served by road connections, with easy access to the east and west by the M4 motorway, as well as to the north and south by the A34 trunk road. The village of Boxford used to have direct access to the rail network through the station on the Lambourn Valley Railway which was opened on 2nd April 1898. However, the line was eventually declared to be uneconomic and the last passenger train ran on 4th January 1960. Subsequently, the land upon which the railway ran was sold to various landowners and householders. Today, Newbury and Didcot stations provide access to the major rail networks. The Lambourn Valley is served by a bus service, with a schedule that appears to favour the requirements of the employed.

The responses to Question 31 showed that only a small proportion of the employed section of the community works in the Parish (16%). The great majority works elsewhere, with Newbury and London being major destinations. The car is by far the most commonly used means of transport to get to work and for social purposes, as indicated by the responses to Question 32.

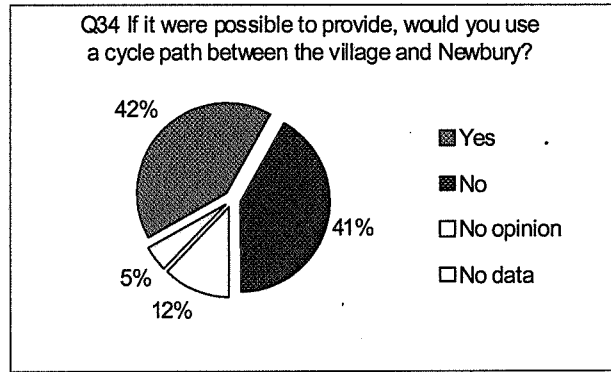


Enquiries about the local bus service in Question 33, indicated that there is room for possible improvement and the Parish Council, together with the service provider, should monitor the situation and aim to enhance the service, especially its frequency.



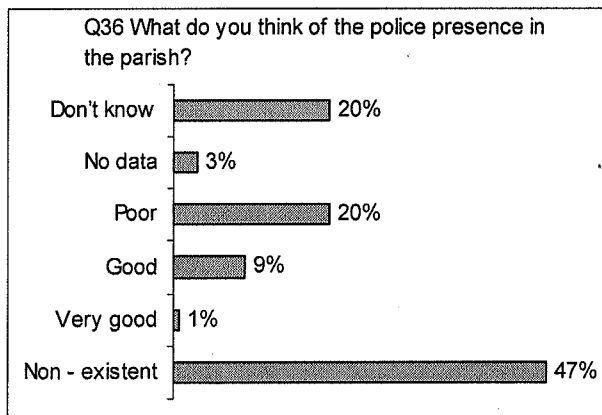
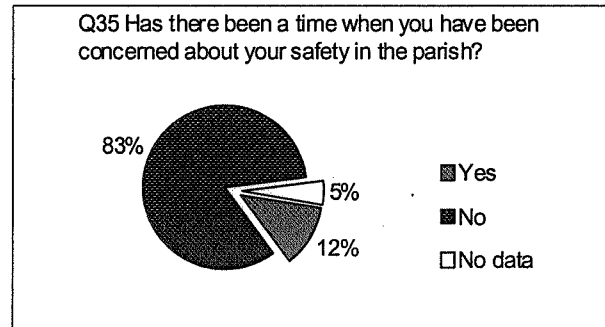
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Support for a cycle path between the village and Newbury was explored in Question 34. Responses in favour amounted to fewer than 50% and therefore this item has not been included in the Action Plan. By taking the Winterbourne Road out of the village and turning right along the bridleway to Copse Barn and Bagnor, then rejoining the Lambourn Valley road at Speen, it is possible to avoid the most dangerous parts of the journey to Newbury.



11. Safety

Although most respondents to Question 35 (83%) indicated they had no concerns for their safety, some people living in the more isolated parts of the Parish did indicate some anxieties. The level of reported crime in the Parish is low; however, parishioners should be encouraged to notify the police of vandalism and petty crime so that it can be properly monitored and so that, if there is an increase, appropriate action can be taken.



The police presence in the Parish was explored in Question 36, with the result that 20% considered it poor and 47% non-existent. The Parish Council should note these concerns for possible further consideration.

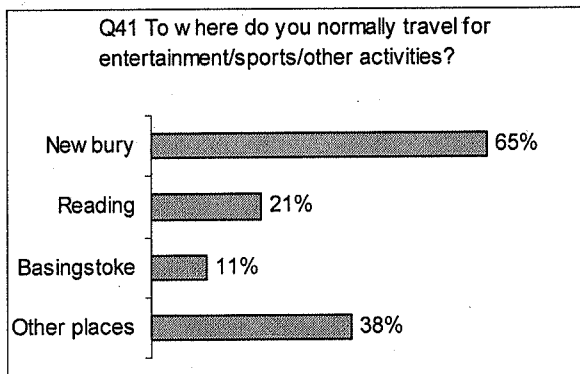
Speeding

16 comments relating to speeding were noted under Question 37 – ‘Additional Comments’. The Parish Council has progressed this matter with West Berkshire Council and a 40 mph speed limit has now been imposed on the Lambourn Valley Road. Despite the 50 mph speed restriction along the B4000 through Wickham Heath, speeding still remains a problem and should be monitored by the Parish Council.

12. Children & Youth

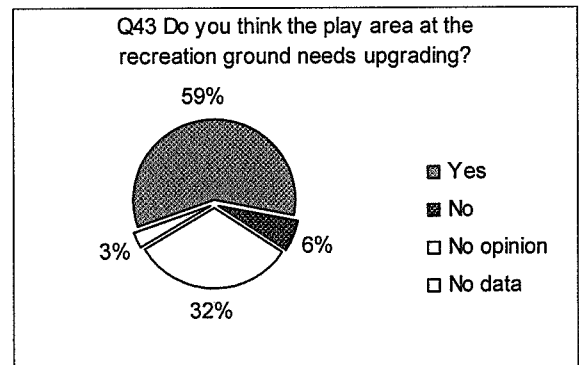
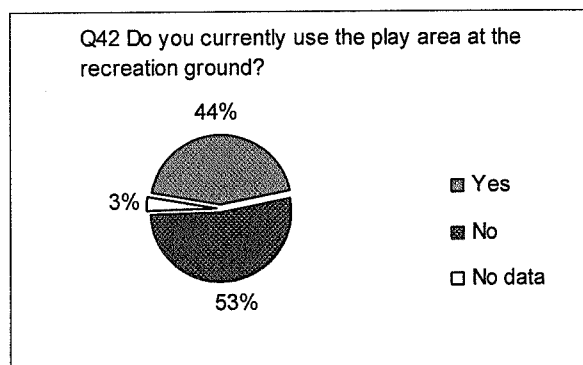
The results of the pilot questionnaire and 'walk & talk' sheets showed considerable interest in the activities of the children and youth of the community. Discussions were held with representatives of the younger age group, 5 to 17 year olds, with a view to finding out how they felt they fitted into the community. Their main comments related to after school and holiday activities, as well as the lack of facilities - apart from the recreation ground.

One of this age group joined the Parish Plan Steering Committee and assisted in formulating questions for inclusion in the 2007 survey. In the 'Children and Youth' section of the survey, 34 in the age group responded.



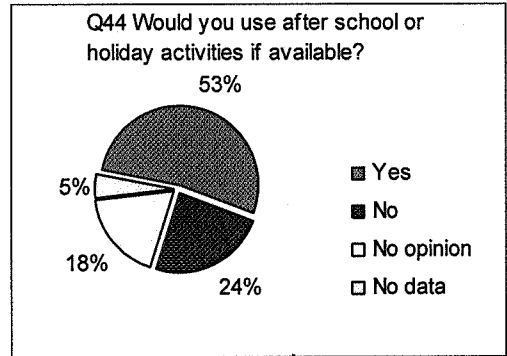
The responses to Questions 38 and 39 indicated that the family car provides the main transport for both school and social travel. The local bus service provides for a number of youngsters to attend school but the timetable does not satisfactorily meet the needs of social travel. The results from Question 40 indicated that young people regularly travel outside the village for their entertainment, sports and other activities. The answers to Question 41 indicated that Newbury is the biggest single destination.

The responses to Question 42 showed that the recreation ground is frequently used by about 44% of the children and youth. Responses to Question 43 (59%) indicated that the majority feel the facilities should be upgraded. This item has been carried forward to the Action Plan.

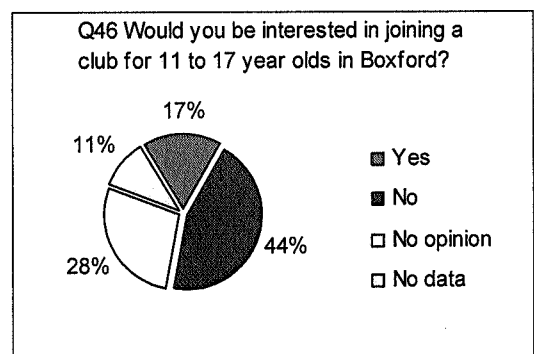
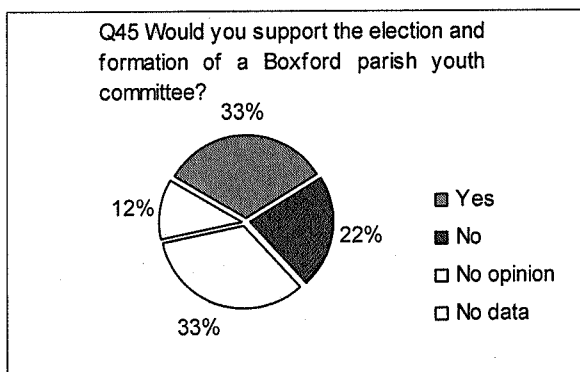


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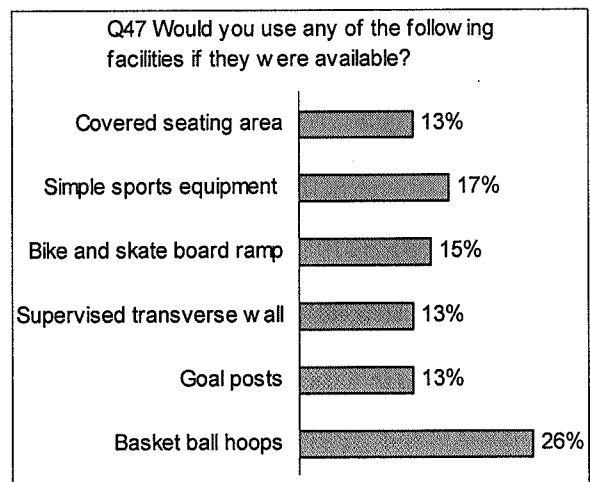
The responses to Question 44 indicated 53% support for after school or holiday activities and this item has been carried forward to the Action Plan.



The ideas of a village youth club for 11 to 17 year olds, or a parish youth committee, were also raised but did not receive a high level of support, as indicated in the responses to Questions 45 and 46.



Question 47 lists some of the facilities requested by the youth in the community when the questionnaire for the 2007 survey was being developed. Despite the relatively modest level of support for these individual suggestions, the Village Hall Committee should keep them in mind when upgrading or designing new village hall or pavilion facilities.



13. Additional Comments

Question 37 gave parishioners the opportunity to make comments freehand about any additional ideas or proposals not covered in the questionnaire. These comments are listed below under six categories and will be available to the various parish committees for consideration. Where an additional comment has been addressed in the Parish Plan a section reference has been included within the tables.

Facilities	
Comment	No.
Local shop/ post office	9
Skate park/bike ramps/kids facilities – ref. Section 12	5
Farmers' market/village cooperative	3
Visitor parking	2
Squash court	1
More library visits	1
Village pond	1
Church car park	1
Public toilet at pavilion – ref Section 9	1
Preserve old bus shelter	1
Use pub more	1
Allotments	1

Events	
Comment	No.
More events for children	1
Conservation days	1
Youth clubs/sports clubs – ref. Section 12, Q45/46	1
WI	1
Coffee mornings	1
Bonfire night	1
Boxford Open Gardens mid June rather than July	1

Safety	
Comment	No.
Traffic speeding – ref. Section 12	16
Street lighting – ref. Section 5, Q15	3

Environment	
Comment	No.
Stop low flying helicopters	3
Provide recycling and waste bins	3
Hedge maintenance	2
Village tree management	1
Communication re farm spraying	1
Reduce village carbon footprint	1
Fly tipping	1
Protection of the landscape – ref. Section 5, Q10	1
Flooding – ref Section 5	1
Hawking to deter pigeons	1
Wind turbine	1
All verges to be cut by contractor via PC	1

Communications	
Comment	No.
No broadband	2
List local tradesmen on website	1
Local interest items and things to do	1
Map of village footpaths – ref. Section 2	1
Bird watching news	1

Transport and Access	
Comment	No.
Better access from village centre to recreation grd.	3
More and better maintained bridleways	3
Footpaths in Wickham Heath not accessible	2
No footpath linking Ownham to Boxford	1
No footpath linking Hoe Benham to Wickham	1
Transport in and out of Newbury for elderly	1
Roads to be resurfaced throughout Parish	1
Weight restriction required on Lambourn Road	1

BOXFORD PARISH PLAN - Action Plan

Note:

Items included in this Action Plan received more than 50% community support in the 2007 Parish Plan survey. Priorities have been determined by the appropriate committee and reflect, where possible, the level of interest shown in the item, as well as practical considerations.

Action	Development	Priority	Timescale	Responsibility	Funding	Monitoring
Social Topics						
S1	Housing development Response to Planning Applications to take account of strong opposition to large-scale housing development and approval for small-scale infill development in a village context that protects and enhances the local environment.	High	Ongoing	Lead: West Berks. Council Partners: Parish Council	NA	Parish Council, with progress being reported in the Council's minutes.
S2	Affordable housing Consult with Rural Housing Enabler at the CCB for the provision for affordable housing for young people ensuring availability only for local people.	Medium	TBA	Lead: Parish Council Partners: West Berks. Council and Rural Housing Enabler (CCB)	TBA	Parish Council, with progress being reported in the Council's minutes.
S3	Rebuild village hall Employ architect to submit design proposals and cost estimates. The design to incorporate ideas arising from the Parish Plan survey and current users of the hall. The prime location for the rebuild to be the site of the existing village hall but consideration also to be given to other potential sites. Contractors to be subject to a competitive tendering strategy.	High	3-year programme, commencing 2008	Lead: Village Hall Council of Management Partners: Village Hall Committee and Parish Council Charities Commission to be kept informed	Limited kick-off funding available from the Village Hall Committee and Parish Council. All outstanding funds to be raised by the Council of Management.	Village Hall Committee and Parish Council, with progress being reported in their respective minutes.

BOXFORD PARISH PLAN - Action Plan

Action	Development	Priority	Timescale	Responsibility	Funding	Monitoring
S4	Refurbishment of sports pavilion and provision of car park Scope of work to be prepared by Village Hall Committee. Contractors to be subject to a competitive tendering strategy.	High	2-year programme, commencing 2008	Lead: Village Hall Committee Partners: Parish Council	Funds to be raised by the Village Hall Committee through grants.	Village Hall Committee and Parish Council, with progress being reported in their respective minutes.
S5	Promote annual village events Explore possible annual events for participation by the community.	Low	Ongoing	Lead: Village Hall Committee	NA	Village Hall Committee.
S6	Renovate St.Andrew's Church Summary scope of work and high level cost estimate has been prepared by church architect. Support given by Oxford Diocesan Advisory Committee. Specifications and drawings to be developed and a faculty applied for. Experienced renovation contractors to be used and, wherever possible, to be subject to a competitive tendering strategy.	Medium	3-year programme, commencing 2008	Lead: Churchwardens Partner: Parochial Church Council and Oxford Diocesan Advisory Committee	Limited kick-off funding available from the Fabric Fund controlled by the Parochial Church Council. All outstanding funds to be raised by the Parochial Parish Council.	Parochial Church Council, with progress being reported in the Council's minutes. Also key milestones monitored by the Oxford Diocesan Committee.
S7	Renovate old parish schoolroom as a museum Parish History Committee to be established. Church architect to prepare scope of work and cost estimate. Support from the Oxford Diocesan Advisory Committee to be sought and, if necessary, a faculty applied for. Experienced renovation contractors to be used and, wherever possible, to be subject to a competitive tendering strategy.	Low	3-year programme, commencing 2008	Lead: Parish History Committee Partners: Parochial Church Council, Parish Council, West Berks. Museum and County Archivist	Funds to be raised by the Parochial Church Council and Parish Council through fund raising and grants.	Parochial Church Council and Parish Council, with progress being reported in their respective minutes.

BOXFORD PARISH PLAN - Action Plan

Action	Development	Priority	Timescale	Responsibility	Funding	Monitoring
S8	Document a simple parish history and hold a Parish History Day	Medium	2-year programme, commencing 2008	Lead: Parish History Committee Partners: West Berkshire Council, West Berkshire Museum and County Archivist	Funds to be raised by the Parish History Committee through grants.	Parish Council, with progress being reported in the Council's minutes.
Environmental Topics						
E1	Reduce M4 noise and visual pollution	High	Action under way	Lead: Boxford Parish Council Partners: Highways Agency, West Berkshire Council, Richard Benyon MP and 11 neighbouring parishes	To be funded by the Highways Agency. Limited funding from Boxford Parish Council for tree screening.	Parish Council, with progress being reported in the Council's minutes.
E2	Protect and preserve special landscape character of the Parish	High	Ongoing	Lead: West Berkshire Council Partners: Parish Council, North Wessex Downs AONB, Natural England, Environment Agency and Berkshire RIGS Group	NA	Parish Council, with progress being reported in the Council's minutes.
E3	Service cables to be put underground	Low	TBA	Lead: Parish Council	NA	Parish Council, with progress being reported in the Council's minutes.

BOXFORD PARISH PLAN - Action Plan

Action	Development	Priority	Timescale	Responsibility	Funding	Monitoring	
E4	Protect and preserve the water meadows and their important features	Invite local landowners to meet and review what can be done in this project area.	Medium	Ongoing	Lead: Landowners' group Partners: Natural England and Environment Agency	Grants to be sought as appropriate.	Parish Council, with progress being reported in the Council's minutes.
E5	Provide information on the ecology and history of the water meadows	Establish Water Meadows Committee to collect and collate relevant information and produce leaflet.	Medium	1-year programme, commencing 2009	Lead: Water Meadows Committee Partners: Natural England, Environment Agency, British Trust for Ornithology and RSPB.	Grants to be sought as appropriate.	Parish Council, with progress being reported in the Council's minutes.
Children and Youth Topics							
Y1	Play area in recreation ground to be upgraded	Scope of work to be prepared by Village Hall Committee, in consultation with local families and children. Contractors to be subject to competitive tendering strategy.	High	2-year programme, commencing 2008	Lead: Village Hall Committee Partners: Parish Council	Funds to be raised by the Village Hall Committee through grants.	Village Hall Committee, with progress being reported in its minutes.
Y2	More school holiday activities	Details of possibly activities to be prepared by the Village Hall Committee in consultation with local families and children.	High	Ongoing	Lead: Village Hall Committee	NA	Village Hall Committee, with progress being reported in its minutes.

BOXFORD PARISH PLAN - 2007 SURVEY

Results for Questions 1 - 47 excluding 37

Number of Questionnaires issued to occupied premises	186
Number of unoccupied premises	6
Number of Questionnaires returned	149
Percentage of Questionnaires returned from occupied premises	80%

HOUSEHOLD SECTION

How many people including children normally live in your house in each age and gender group?

Q1

Age Group	Male	Female	Male	Female	Age
Under 5	12	14	3%	4%	7%
5 - 10	8	16	2%	4%	6%
11 - 17	11	12	3%	3%	6%
18 - 24	14	12	4%	3%	7%
25 - 44	36	43	10%	12%	21%
45 - 60	53	46	14%	12%	27%
61 - 64	13	14	4%	4%	7%
65 - 75	18	21	5%	6%	11%
76 - 85	11	11	3%	3%	6%
Over 85	2	3	1%	1%	1%
Gender Totals	178	192	48%	52%	100%
Total of all occupants	370				

In which part of the Parish do you live?

Q2

Hunts Green	5	3%
Lambourn Road	6	4%
Leckhampstead	1	1%
Leckhampstead Road	7	5%
Ownham	5	3%
School Lane/Shepherd's Hill	21	14%
Southfields	23	15%
Westbrook	37	25%
Wickham Heath	16	11%
Winterbourne Road	12	8%
Boxford - centre of village	16	11%
Total	149	

What are your most important reasons for living in the Parish?

Q3

Family connections	33	10%
Good for retirement	6	2%
Good local schools	10	3%
Good road and rail connections	36	11%
Local employment/business	27	8%
Pretty countryside environment	101	30%
Tranquil environment	75	22%
Village life	40	12%
None of the above	9	2%
Total	337	

In your household, how many children under the age of 19 currently attend the following?

Q4	Panda club	6	8%
	Teddy Bears – pre-school	7	10%
	Other pre-school	8	11%
	Stockcross School	14	19%
	Other primary schools	9	12%
	Trinity School	2	3%
	Other secondary school	18	25%
	College/university	9	12%
Total		73	

PERSONAL SECTION

Please tell us about yourself.

Q5	Age Group	Male	Female
	11 - 17	9	9
18 - 24	8	9	
25 - 44	33	41	
45 - 60	53	46	
61 - 64	13	13	
65 - 75	17	21	
76 - 85	10	11	
Over 85	2	3	
Gender Totals		145	153
No data		2	
Total completing questionnaire		300	

Except in the 'Children and Youth' section - Questions 38 to 47, each percentage indicated below is expressed as a percentage of the total number of people completing the questionnaire, namely 300.

For how long have you lived in the Parish?

Q6	Less than one year	27	9%
	1 - 5 years	49	16%
	6 - 15 years	88	29%
	16 - 25 years	61	20%
	26 - 50 years	52	17%
	Over 50 years	10	3%
	Whole life	9	3%
No data		3%	

Housing

What do you think about the development of new housing in the parish?

Q7	Should large-scale housing development be permitted?	Yes	5	2%
		No	252	84%
	Should small-scale, infill building be permitted?	Yes	181	60%
		No	74	25%
	Is there a need for affordable housing for young local people?	Yes	168	56%
		No	73	24%
	Is there a need for affordable housing for elderly local people?	Yes	143	48%
		No	85	28%
	Should affordable housing be available only to local people with specified local connections?	Yes	153	51%
		No	81	27%
No opinion		5	2%	

Motorway

Individual Executive Member Decisions - 2008-07-01

Are you affected by noise or visual/light pollution from the M4?

Q8	Noise pollution	160	53%
	Visual/light pollution	33	11%
	Not affected	134	45%

Do you support the Parish Council's actions and requests to the Highways Agency to reduce M4 noise and visual/light pollution?

Q9	Laying quiet tarmac to reduce road noise?	Yes	208	69%
		No	20	7%
	Tree planting to screen visual/light pollution?	Yes	185	62%
		No	24	8%
	No opinion		60	20%

Environment

Do you think the surrounding countryside should be protected to preserve its special landscape character?

Q10	Yes	278	93%
	No	5	2%
	No opinion	13	4%
	No data		1%

Do you use the footpaths in and around the parish?

Q11	More than once a week	109	36%
	Once a week	35	12%
	Once a fortnight	31	10%
	Once a month	32	11%
	Less than above	87	29%
	No data		2%

How well do you consider the footpaths in and around the parish to be maintained?

Q12	Very well	25	8%
	Satisfactorily	168	56%
	Poorly	54	18%
	No opinion	45	15%
	No data		3%

Do you think more should be done to keep the parish clean and tidy?

Q13	Organised parish clean up days	64	21%
	Dog waste bins	127	42%
	Litter bins	73	24%
	Recycling containers	127	42%
	Arrangements currently satisfactory	64	21%
	No opinion	37	12%

Would you be in favour of the overhead service cables in the parish being put underground?

Q14	Yes	170	57%
	No	35	12%
	No opinion	87	29%
No data			2%

Do you think there is a need for any of the following in the parish?

Individual Executive Member Decisions - 2008-09-01

Q15

More seating	Yes	70	23%
	No	139	46%
Allotments	Yes	59	20%
	No	141	47%
Street lighting	Yes	35	12%
	No	190	63%
Traffic-calming measures	Yes	97	32%
	No	137	46%
More road warning signs	Yes	69	23%
	No	152	51%
More information signs	Yes	40	13%
	No	162	54%
No opinion or none of the above		41	14%

Water Meadows

What is important to you about the water meadows?

Q16

Appearance	195	65%
Wildfowl	185	62%
Fauna and flora	212	71%
Grazing animals	148	49%
No opinion	29	10%

Would you be interested in more information on the nature and history of the water meadows?

Q17

Yes	157	52%
No	73	24%
No opinion	62	21%

No data 3%

History

Are you interested in preserving the history of the parish?

Q18

Very interested	125	42%
Quite interested	126	42%
Not interested	45	15%

No data 1%

Would you be interested in a Parish History Day?

Q19

Very interested	64	21%
Quite interested	149	50%
Not interested	82	27%

No data 2%

Assuming funds were available, would you support printing a simple history of the Parish, including a list of all known historic features?

Q20

Yes	232	77%
No	26	9%
No opinion	38	13%

No data 1%

Assuming funds were available, would you support renovating the old Parish room/schoolroom located in the churchyard, to provide a small Parish museum?

Q21

Yes	189	63%
No	47	16%
No opinion	58	19%

No data 2%

Church

Individual Executive Member Decisions - 2008-07-01

How do you value the church?

Q22	As an historical building	222	74%
	As a place of worship	141	47%
	No opinion	24	8%

Assuming funding was available, would you support the renovation work now required?

Q23	Yes	249	83%
	No	19	6%
	No opinion	28	9%
	No data		2%

Village Hall and Recreation Ground

What would be your opinion if it was decided to source funding to refurbish or rebuild the village hall? Please tick one box per person:

Q24	Approve	239	80%
	Disapprove	9	3%
	No opinion	45	15%
	No data		2%

What would be your opinion if the pavilion in the recreation ground was refurbished and a proper car park was developed?

Q25	Approve	200	67%
	Disapprove	20	7%
	No opinion	73	24%
	No data		2%

Assuming that there were the necessary facilities at either the village hall or the recreation ground, would you be interested in taking part in or using any of following?

Q26	Aerobics	45	15%
	Archery	31	10%
	Badminton	44	15%
	Basketball	8	3%
	Cricket	31	10%
	Football	19	6%
	Table Tennis	11	4%
	Tennis	68	23%
	Fitness training	61	20%
	Indoor bowls	17	6%
	Social evenings	106	35%
	Gardening club	63	21%
	Bingo	19	6%
	Internet cafe	13	4%
	Cinema club	81	27%
	Speciality classes	49	16%
	Private functions	102	34%
	None of the above	58	19%

Would you like to have more annual village events such as the village party and duck race?

Q27	Yes	167	56%
	No	44	15%
	No opinion	79	26%
	No data		3%

Would you be interested in more regular social events using the village hall, such as tea dances, themed nights or film nights?

Q28

Yes	133	44%
No	76	25%
No opinion	81	27%
		No data 4%

Would you be interested in participating in organised village outings?

Q29

Yes	62	21%
No	158	53%
No opinion	69	23%
		No data 3%

Web sites for the Parish Council, church and Parish Plan have been set up under the Berkshire Community 'Action for All' plan. Would you like to have a single dedicated web site for the Parish?

Q30

Yes	114	38%
No	59	20%
No opinion	115	38%
		No data 4%

Transport

If employed, where is your main place of work?

Q31

At home	36	12%
Within the Parish	12	4%
Newbury area	83	28%
Reading area	15	5%
Basingstoke area	4	1%
London area	34	11%
None of the above	74	25%

How do you travel to work and other places?

Q32

On foot	20	7%
By bicycle	18	6%
By public bus	18	6%
By taxi	4	1%
By car	222	74%
By motorbike/moped	4	1%
By train	37	12%

Would you like to see any improvements in the bus service with regard to the following?

Q33

Choice of routes	30	10%
Frequency	86	29%
Reliability	27	9%
Lower cost	27	9%
Access for the less able	20	7%
Late night service	54	18%
Security	4	1%
Link to train times	51	17%
Do not use public transport	159	53%
Current service satisfactory	20	7%

If it were possible to provide a footpath or cycle path between the village and Newbury?

Q34	Yes	125	42%
	No	124	41%
	No opinion	37	12%
	No data		5%

Safety

Has there been a time when you have been concerned about your safety in the Parish?

Q35	Yes	36	12%
	No	250	83%
	No data		5%

What do you think of the police presence in the Parish?

Q36	Very good	2	1%
	Good	27	9%
	Poor	59	20%
	Non - existent	141	47%
	Don't know	59	20%
No data		3%	

Q37 See separate data analysis.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH SECTION

How do you normally travel to school or college?

Q38	By bicycle		0%
	By public bus	3	9%
	By school bus	8	24%
	By family car	15	44%
	By car share	3	9%
	By taxi		0%
	Total 5 - 17 year olds	34	No data

Each percentage indicated in this section is expressed as a percentage of the number of relevant young people completing the respective questions in this part of the questionnaire.

How do you travel to other places?

Q39	By bicycle		0%
	By public bus		0%
	By taxi		0%
	By family car	31	91%
	By motorbike/moped		0%
	By begging a lift	1	3%
	Total 5 - 17 year olds	34	No data

How often do you go to other places for entertainment/sports/other activities?

Q40	Daily	5	15%
	Twice a week	12	35%
	Once a week	10	29%
	Once a fortnight		0%
	Once a month	2	6%
	Less than above	3	9%
	Total 5 - 17 year olds	34	No data

To where do you normally travel for entertainment/sports/other activities?

Q41	Newbury	22	65%
	Reading	10	21%
	Basingstoke	5	11%
	Other places	18	38%
	Total 5 - 17 year olds	34	

Q42 Do you currently use the play area at the recreation ground?

Yes	15	44%
No	18	53%
Under 17 year olds	34	No data 3%

Q43 Do you think the play area at the recreation ground needs upgrading?

Yes	20	59%
No	2	6%
No opinion	11	32%
Under 17 year olds	34	No data 3%

Q44 Would you use after school or holiday activities if available?

Yes	18	53%
No	8	24%
No opinion	6	18%
Total 5 - 17 year olds	34	No data 5%

Q45 Would you support the election and formation of a Boxford Parish youth committee?

Yes	6	33%
No	4	22%
No opinion	6	33%
Total 11 - 17 year olds	18	No data 12%

Q46 Would you be interested in joining a club for 11 to 17 year olds in Boxford?

Yes	3	17%
No	8	44%
No opinion	5	28%
Total 11 - 17 year olds	18	No data 11%

Q47 Would you use any of the following facilities if they were available?

Basket ball hoops	9	26%
Goal posts	6	13%
Supervised transverse wall	6	13%
Bike and skate board ramp	7	15%
Simple sports equipment	8	17%
Covered seating area	6	13%
Total 5 - 17 year olds	34	

Individual Decision

Title of Report:	Nominations for Representation to Outside Bodies		
Report to be considered by:	Councillor Graham Jones	on:	01 July 2008
Forward Plan Ref:	ID1659		

Purpose of Report:

To consider nominations from the Conservative and Liberal Democrat Group for representation on Outside Bodies.

Recommended Action:

That the Leader appoints representatives to the Outside Bodies as detailed in the attached Appendix.

Reason for decision to be taken:

The Council is required to make and re-new appointments to certain Outside Bodies.

List of other options considered:

None

Key background documentation:

None

Portfolio Member:	Councillor Graham Jones
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E-mail	gjones@westberks.gov.uk
Address:	

Contact Officer Details

Name:	Moira Fraser
Job Title:	Democratic Services Manager
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Address:	

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council is required to appoint representatives to the Outside Bodies listed in Appendix A.

Appendices

Appendix A – List of proposed Membership to Outside Bodies

Implications

Policy:	The proposals outlined in this report are not in contradiction to any of the Council's existing policies, including those outlined in the Council Plan.
Financial:	The possible payment of travelling and subsistence claims.
Personnel:	None
Legal:	None
Environmental:	None
Equalities:	These Outside Bodies promote Social Inclusion in line with the Council's Equalities Strategy.
Partnering:	None
Property:	None
Risk Management:	None
Community Safety:	None

Consultation Responses

Members:	
Leader of Council:	Councillor Graham Jones - no response received
Overview & Scrutiny Commission Chairman:	Councillor Brian Bedwell - no response received
Policy Development Commission Chairman:	Councillors Marcus Franks, Irene Neill and Quentin Webb. - no response received
Ward Members:	N/A
Opposition Spokesperson:	Councillor Jeff Brooks - no response received
Local Stakeholders:	N/A
Officers Consulted:	Robin Steel and Katharine Sheehan - nominations set out in Appendix
Trade Union:	N/A

Is this item subject to call-in.	Individual Executive Member Decisions - 2008-07-01 Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:</p> <p>The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Considered or reviewed by OSC or associated Task Groups within preceding 6 months <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Item is Urgent Key Decision <input type="checkbox"/></p>		

APPENDIX A

Body	Description	No. of reps required	Nominations	Agreed
Berkshire Adoption Advisory Service	A member of the joint adoption panel is required from each consortium agency. The BAAS manages the panel on behalf of West Berkshire.	1	Barbara Alexander	
Readibus Management Board	To provide mobility and transport for elderly and disabled people via a demand-responsive dial a ride, door to door fully accessible bus service	1	Emma Webster	
Watermill Theatre Ltd	Producing theatre - Member to act as an Observer	1	Carol Jackson-Doerge	

Individual Decision

Title of Report:	Crookham Hill, Thatcham – Experimental 7.5t Weight Restriction		
Report to be considered by:	The Executive Member for Transport, Highways and ICT – Councillor Emma Webster.	on:	01 July 2008
Forward Plan Ref:	ID1660		

Purpose of Report: To review comments from statutory consultees on the making of the above order along with accompanying road safety measures.

Recommended Action: That the Portfolio Holder for Transport, Highways and ICT approves:

- 1) The making of an Experimental 7.5t weight restriction traffic regulation order for Crookham Hill (along with strategic roads in Brimpton, Woolhampton and Frouds Lane, Aldermaston to prevent migration of HGV's to equally unsuitable routes).
- 2) Implementation of road safety measures on Crookham Hill to be agreed with the Crookham Hill Steering Group.
- 3) Commissioning a full economic and environmental appraisal of the possible widening of Crookham Hill to consider the feasibility of making the route fit for purpose as a HGV route.

Reason for decision to be taken: To progress the scheme as detailed in the body of the report.

List of other options considered: See Transport Task Group report – March 2008 in Appendix 1.

Key background documentation: None

Portfolio Member:	Councillor Emma Webster
Tel. No.:	(0118)9411676
E-mail Address:	ewebster@westberks.gov.uk

Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Jon Winstanley
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Address:	

Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 Ward Members and residents of Crookham Hill, Thatcham, have for some time campaigned for a restriction to prevent the road being used by heavy goods vehicles and raised concerns over the safety of the route.
- 1.2 A report was presented to the Council's Transport Policy Task Group (**see appendix 1**) and the Transport Policy Freight Sub Group, considering highway improvement options for Crookham Hill and the possible impact of a weight restriction. The Task Group endorsed the recommendations of the report and gave their support to:
- i) **The consultation and advertising (with the approval of the Executive Member for Planning and Highways) of an Experimental 7.5t weight restriction traffic regulation order for Crookham Hill (along with strategic roads in Brimpton and Woolhampton to prevent migration of HGV's) and the introduction of road safety improvements on Crookham Hill.**
 - ii) **The appointment of a steering group comprising Officers and Local Ward members to monitor the impact of the experimental order and to manage a full economic and environmental appraisal of a road widening scheme to make Crookham Hill fit for purpose as a strategic HGV route.**
- 1.3 An experimental order can be made under Sections 9 & 10 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and the reason for proceeding by way of an experimental order is to provide the opportunity to assess the effects of the weight restriction for a trial period before consideration is given to making the order permanent. The experimental order can continue in force for a maximum of 18 months trial period before a permanent order is considered. Within a period of 6 months from the commencement of the experimental traffic order any person may object to the making of a subsequent permanent order.
- 1.4 The Crookham Hill Steering Group (comprising of Local Ward Members and members of the Transport Task Group) met on 9th May 2008 to agree a monitoring regime in the event of a weight restriction being implemented (this can be seen in **appendix 5**). From this group a request was also made to consider reducing the vehicle speed on Crookham Hill. It has since been agreed by the Speed Limit Review Group to reduce the speed limit on Crookham Hill to 40mph. This will improve road safety along the route and will also prevent any potential general increase in traffic speed if HGV's are to be removed from the route.
- 1.5 The purpose of this report is to consider the results of a stakeholder consultation into the making of an experimental traffic order and to gain approval to proceed to implementation and formal advertisement. A brief presentation was also provided at the Thatcham Forum on 22 May 2008.

2. Consultation

- 2.1 Consultation was carried out during May 2008 and involved a letter and plan being sent to all Local Ward Members and Stakeholders. A full list of consultees can be seen in **appendix 2**.

- 2.2 All comments received to the consultation along with an officer's response are detailed in **appendix 3**. In general comments were in favour of banning HGV's from unsuitable roads, however understandably there was some concern expressed about the knock on effects that displaced HGV's will have on Thatcham, Newbury and Aldermaston Village in particular.
- 2.3 Concern was expressed by the Local Ward Member for Aldermaston, Councillor Irene Neill that HGV's travelling eastbound on the A4 may use Frouds Lane as a short-cut to avoid Aldermaston Wharf. As Frouds Lane is equally as unsuitable for HGV use as Crookham Hill it is proposed that Frouds Lane be included within the restriction.
- 3. Recommendations**
- 3.1 It is accepted that restricting HGV's on Crookham Hill will cause some undesirable knock on effects by increasing movements through Aldermaston and Thatcham/Newbury, however the inadequacies of Crookham Hill for use by HGVs in its current alignment and design characteristics cannot be ignored and it is therefore recommended that an experimental 7.5t weight restriction be imposed on Crookham Hill along with strategic locations in Brimpton, Woolhampton and Frouds Lane in Aldermaston. This can be implemented in conjunction with an improvement scheme to mitigate the poor road safety record on Crookham Hill. The road safety scheme is currently being designed and will be reported to the Crookham Hill steering group for approval.
- 3.2 The impact of the weight restriction will be subject to a comprehensive monitoring regime as detailed in **appendix 5**.
- 3.3 In parallel with the experimental weight restriction it is recommended that a full economic and environmental appraisal be undertaken into widening Crookham Hill to consider the feasibility and cost of making the route fit for purpose as a HGV route.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Transport Task Group Report – March 2008
Appendix 2 - List of Consultees
Appendix 3 – Summary of Consultee responses.
Appendix 4 – Experimental Order extent drawing
Appendix 5 – Proposed HGV monitoring regime.

Implications

Policy:

The proposals contained in the report help to achieve the following Council Plan Theme:

CPT2 – A Cleaner and Greener West Berkshire – a better place to live.

The proposals will also help achieve the following Council Plan outcomes:

CPO1 – Better Roads and Transport
CPO5 – Cleaner and Greener
CPO8 – A healthier life

- Financial:** The cost of the implementing the weight restriction including signing is **£40,000**.
The cost of road safety measures proposed for Crookham Hill is **£90,000**.
The cost of undertaking a full economic and environmental appraisal of widening Crookham Hill estimated at **£40,000**.
The above can be fully funded from existing S106 contributions and have been identified in the five year Capital Programme.
- Personnel:** None arising from this report
- Legal:** The proposal will involve the formal advertisement of an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order under Section 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.
- Environmental:** Removal of HGV's from Crookham Hill along with the proposed road safety measures will have a significant positive benefit for road users and residents.
The proposal will be subject to a comprehensive monitoring regime to assess the environmental impact of the proposals.
- Equalities:** None arising from this report
- Partnering:** None arising from this report
- Property:** None arising from this report
- Risk Management:** The project will be managed in accordance with the West Berkshire Project Management Methodology.
- Community Safety:** The scheme will improve road safety on Crookham Hill and remove HGV's from unsuitable roads in Brimpton.

Consultation Responses

Members:

- Leader of Council:** Councillor Graham Jones has been consulted and has no objection to the proposal.
- Overview and Scrutiny Commission Chairman:** Councillor Brian Bedwell has been consulted and offered his support for the proposed scheme.
- Policy Development Commission Chairman (where appropriate):** N/A
- Ward Members:** Local Ward Members, Councillors Owen Jeffery and Terry Port have been consulted and are in favour of the proposal.
- Opposition Spokesperson:** Councillor Keith Woodhams is a member of the Crookham Hill Steering Group and has endorsed the recommendations of this report.
- Local Stakeholders:** See appendices 2 & 3

Officers Consulted: Andrew Garratt, Sean Murphy, Mark Cole, Gary Lugg, Bryan Lyttle, Jenny Noble, Chris Sperring, Mark Edwards, Derek Crouch, Paul Goddard.

Trade Union: N/A

Is this item subject to call-in.	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Considered or reviewed by OSC or associated Task Groups within preceding 6 months	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Item is Urgent Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Title of Report:	Crookham Hill, Thatcham – Highway Improvements
Report to be considered by:	Transport Policy Freight Sub-Group – 4th April 2008

Purpose of Report:

To present highway improvement options for Crookham Hill, Thatcham.

Recommended Action:

That the Task Group consider the options and give their support to:

- i) The consultation and advertising (with the approval of the Executive Member for Planning and Highways) of an Experimental 7.5t weight restriction traffic regulation order for Crookham Hill (along with strategic roads in Brimpton and Woolhampton to prevent migration of HGV's) and the introduction of road safety improvements on Crookham Hill.
- ii) The appointment of a steering group comprising Officers and Local Ward members to monitor the impact of the experimental order and to manage a full economic and environmental appraisal of a road widening scheme to make Crookham Hill fit for purpose as a strategic HGV route.

Key background documentation:

Appendix 4 - Crookham Hill Road Safety report to Thatcham Area Forum on 16/11/06.

Contact Officer Details

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Implications

- Policy:** This study contributes to the corporate plan outcome 'Better Roads and Transport'.
- Financial:** Provision of road safety measures and an experimental HGV ban would cost approximately £130,000.
To undertake a full Cost Benefit analysis of the possible options is estimated at £40,000.
Both of these proposals can be funded from existing S106 contributions identified for improvements to Crookham Hill (this funding is time limited with a long stop of June 2009).
- Personnel:** None arising from this report
- Legal:** Implementing the recommendations of this report would require the advertisement of an experimental traffic regulation order for the provision of a 7.5t HGV ban on Crookham Hill.
- Property:** None arising from this report
- Risk Management:** The scheme will be managed in accordance with the West Berkshire Council's Project Management methodology, and a full risk register will be maintained throughout the project.

Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 Ward Members and residents of Crookham Hill, Thatcham, have for some time campaigned for a restriction to prevent the road being used by heavy goods vehicles and raised concerns over the safety of the route. A petition has also been received for the provision of a footway/cycleway along the length of Crookham Hill.
- 1.2 Consultants Peter Brett Associates (PBA) have been working on identifying preferred freight routes across the district on behalf of West Berkshire Council and have considered the potential of Crookham Hill as a strategic freight link. PBA's initial consultation document has identified the route as a 'District Access Route', however this assessment is in the context of the link that Crookham Hill provides between Thatcham and the A339 and does not take into account the current highway design characteristics of the route and potential safety issues resulting from use by HGVs.
- 1.3 This report considers the current suitability of the route for use by HGVs, focussing particularly on the highways design characteristics and road safety implications. The report then proceeds to consider the possibility and traffic impact of imposing a 7.5t weight restriction on Crookham Hill.

2. Crookham Hill - Highway Design Characteristics.

- 2.1 The physical characteristics of Crookham Hill have been assessed and compared with current design criteria for the construction of a new road exhibiting similar traffic conditions using the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB).
- 2.2 **Forward visibility:** Three locations along Crookham Hill have been assessed to establish the existing forward visibility. The minimum requirement for a new link road of this nature (considering the design speed) would be 160m. The table below gives the location assessed along with the minimum measured forward visibility.

Location	Minimum forward visibility (m)
South of Waterside Farm	50
Adj Avenelle's Cottage	81.5
South of Bury's Bank Rd junction	69

- 2.3 **Vertical alignment:** Although the southern section of Crookham Hill has a significant incline this does not restrict forward visibility.
- 2.4 **Carriageway width:** A rural road exhibiting the traffic flows and speeds of Crookham Hill if constructed as new would have a 7.3m wide carriageway. The majority of the northern section of Crookham Hill (from Bury's Bank to the Football Ground) is 5.5m wide. The remainder of Crookham Hill varies in width from 5.5m to 8m.
- 2.5 **Road Safety:** A safety report undertaken by the Council's Traffic Management and Road Safety Team identified a total of 22 accidents resulting in 28 casualties in the five year period from 2001 to 2006. Five of the accidents involved goods vehicles. The report identified Crookham Hill as having an above average accident rate per kilometre compared to other roads in the district and has been identified for road safety measures. A full copy of the report can be seen in appendix 4.

- 2.6 The above illustrates that the current physical characteristics of Crookham Hill are significantly inferior to those required for the construction of a new link road designed to accommodate similar traffic flows. This is reflected by the poor accident record. It is therefore Officers' opinion that Crookham Hill should not be advertised as a preferred route for HGVs without significant improvement.
- 2.7 The unsuitability of overloading Crookham Hill with freight movements has already been identified, as a number of Planning Conditions/agreements are in place with local hauliers restricting the use of this route. An investigation undertaken by Peter Brett Associates (PBA) as part of the consultation on freight routes has indicated that local freight operators GIST (Thatcham) and Kuehne Nagel Drinks Logistics do not allow their drivers to use the Thatcham level crossing (thereby not using Crookham Hill), either as a result of a voluntary agreement or by way of condition (i.e. planning or 'O' licence). These operators have expressed concern that this route has been identified within PBA's study as a 'District Access Route' as they have agreements/conditions not to use it.
- 2.8 In the short to medium term two options lay open to the Council, i) to ban HGVs from using Crookham Hill (the implications of this are considered in the following paragraphs); ii) to upgrade the road to design standard conducive to safe HGV use.

3. Traffic Impact of a Weight Restriction.

- 3.1 It is anticipated that introducing a HGV ban to Crookham Hill would cause some vehicles to rat-run along adjacent equally unsuitable roads. If a weight restriction were to be imposed on Crookham Hill, similar restrictions would also have to be introduced at strategic locations in Brimpton and Woolhampton to prevent HGV migration to these routes. The drawing in **Appendix 1** illustrates the proposed limits of the restriction.
- 3.2 In order to assess which roads HGVs would migrate to if a ban were introduced, a baseline assessment of the current HGV movements has been undertaken in Feb/March 2008. Table 1 below gives 24 hour flows along with the percentage volume of HGV's. Analysis of an origin and destination survey of HGV movements on Crookham Hill completed revealed that approximately 40% of HGV drivers currently using Crookham Hill do so as an alternative to the A340. We can therefore assume that if a ban were introduced 40% of HGVs would use the A340 through Aldermaston and 60% would migrate to the A339 (some longer distance users may migrate to the A34).

Table 1 – existing base traffic flows Feb/March 2008

Location	Total Vehicles	No of HGV's	% HGV's
Crookham Hill	8069	659	8%
A4 Benham Hill, Newbury	18924	2727	14%
A4 London Rd, Newbury	25676	3048	12%
A339 North of Pinchington Lane	25033	2825	11%
A339 South of Robinhood Rdbt	41732	2735	7%
A339 East of Swan Rdbt	21440	2079	10%
Brimpton Road	2807	223	8%
B3421 Hambridge Road	19760	2392	12%
A340 Aldermaston	10314	1686	16%

Bury's Bank Road	6588	337	5%
Floral Way, Thatcham	12489	747	6%
Lower Way, Thatcham	9719	750	8%
Turnpike Road, Newbury	6917	711	10%

3.3 Given the above figures it is anticipated that an additional 395 HGV's per day will travel along the A339 via Newbury and 264 will travel along the A340 via Aldermaston. This would represent a 2.5% increase in traffic on the A340 (15% increase in HGV's).

4. LTP2 Matrix Assessment of Possible Highway Improvements

4.1 In order to establish which course of action will provide value for money a number of possible improvements on Crookham Hill have been designed and assessed against the criteria set out in the Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP2). The LTP2 matrix has been developed to assess schemes against a set of fixed criteria that combine the Regional, Local Transport Plan (LTP) and other West Berkshire District Council strategic priorities and is used to prioritise schemes in the five year capital programme. The matrix will give a particular scheme a score based on how well it aligns with the LTP targets and the Council's priorities and value for money. The lower the score, the greater the value for money (a score of less than 10 demonstrates particularly good value for money).

4.2 The following table gives a brief outline of the design options along with the estimated cost and the assessment score.

Option	Scheme	Cost	LTP2 Matrix Score
1. Carriageway widening	Widening Crookham Hill to a minimum 7.3m width for its entire length and inclusion of a 1.5m footway and a 1.5m southbound cycleway.	£1.3m	21.11
2. Road Safety Improvements & Weight restriction.	Introduction of a weight restriction along with local safety improvements on the approach to the level crossing, Bury's Bank Rd junction and entrance to Crookham Common.	£130k	9

4.3 The significant cost (£1.3m) associated with the widening of Crookham Hill makes it a non-viable option when compared to a weight restriction. There are also a number of environmental and land constraints that could further restrict a road widening option. The majority of land required for road widening in the northern section of Crookham Hill is not owned by the Council and is in the flood plain. Any use of this land would almost certainly require an equivalent amount of land to be offered up as flood compensation.

4.4 In addition to the above options a scheme to provide a footway/cycleway connecting the route connecting Thatcham to the Thornford Park Hospital has also been assessed. Again due to land and environmental constraints in the northern section of Crookham Hill cost of the scheme is relatively high (approx £800k). As the scheme would only benefit a limited number of users the Matrix score is relatively high (23.45) offering poor value for money.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 When using the Council's LTP Matrix the most cost effective scheme is the introduction of a weight restriction coupled with road safety measures to address the current safety issues (and any safety issues resulting from an increase in vehicle speeds due to the removal of HGVs). It should be noted that a S106 contribution of £300,000 from New Greenham Park has been allocated to improvements to Crookham Hill. The long stop date for this funding is June 2009 (this was extended from June 2006) and **Appendix 2** details a list of possible works along with a cost estimate that this funding could be used for.
- 5.2 Although the Matrix is a good indication of best value it does not fully take into account the detailed environmental, economic and ecological issues that could arise from the above proposals. Of particular concern is the economic impact that a weight restriction would have on some of the smaller freight operators in the Colthrop area, and the fact that the District wide Freight Transport Study has identified this route as a district access route.
- 5.3 However the inadequacies of this route for use by HGVs in its current alignment and design characteristics cannot be ignored and it is therefore recommended that an experimental 7.5t weight restriction be imposed (on Crookham Hill along with strategic locations in Brimpton and Woolhampton). This can be implemented in conjunction with an improvement scheme to mitigate the poor road safety record on Crookham Hill.
- 5.4 An experimental order can be made under Sections 9 & 10 of the Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 and the reason for proceeding by way of an experimental order is to provide the opportunity to assess the effects of the weight restriction for a trial period before consideration is given to making the order permanent. The experimental order can continue in force for a maximum of 18 months trial period before a permanent order is considered. Within a period of 6 months from the commencement of the experimental traffic order any person may object to the making of a subsequent permanent order. The fact sheet in **Appendix 3** gives further information about experimental traffic orders.
- 5.5 The removal of HGVs from Crookham Hill will improve conditions for the more vulnerable road users (pedestrians/cyclists), however due to the expense the provision of pedestrian/cycle facilities cannot be considered in isolation.
- 5.6 It is also recommended that in parallel to an experimental weight restriction further detailed design be undertaken into upgrading this route to a standard appropriate for HGV use along with the provision of formal pedestrian/cycle facilities. Considering the significant cost of widening this road it is recommended that a full economic and environmental appraisal be undertaken to assess the viability of this as a long term option.
- 5.7 It is therefore recommended that a steering group is set up consisting of Officers and Local Ward Members (in consultation with the Executive Member for Planning and Highways) to monitor the effects of the removal of HGV's from Crookham Hill and to manage the process of a full economic/environmental appraisal and cost benefit analysis into a road widening option (and any other possible options the steering group may wish to see assessed). The steering group would be responsible for agreeing a study brief, appointing consultants to undertake the study and manage the design and implementation of any approved recommendations.
- 5.8 It is anticipated that undertaking such a detailed study will cost approximately £40,000 and will take approximately 6 months to complete.

Appendix 2 - List of Consultees

Title	First Name	Last Name	Company Name	Address Line 1	Address Line 2	City	State	ZIP Code
	All Ward Members							
	Clerk of Thatcham Town Council	Thatcham Town Council	Internal Parish Council Post	Post Room	Market Street			
	Clerk of Newbury Town Council	Newbury Town Council	Internal Parish Council Post	Post Room	Market Street			
	Clerk of Aldermaston Parish Council	Aldermaston Parish Council	Internal Parish Council Post	Post Room	Market Street			
	Clerk of Brimpton Parish Council	Brimpton Parish Council	Internal Parish Council Post	Post Room	Market Street			
	Clerk of Greenham Parish Council	Greenham Parish Council	Internal Parish Council Post	Post Room	Market Street			
	Clerk of Pardonham Parish Council	Pardonham Parish Council	Internal Parish Council Post	Post Room	Market Street			
	Clerk of Woolhampton Parish Council	Woolhampton Parish Council	Internal Parish Council Post	Post Room	Market Street			
	Clerk of Wasing Parish Council	Wasing Parish Council	Internal Parish Council Post	Post Room	Market Street			
Sir or Madam	Robert	Armstrong	Swift Couriers	Swift House	Market Street	Newbury		RG14 5TU
Sir or Madam	Ray	Sneezum	Hanson Thermalite	Enterprise Way	Hambridge Lane			RG19 4AN
Mr	Richard	Rees	SCA Packaging	Colthrop Lane	Thatcham			RG19 4NH
Mr	Louise	Baines	Parcelline Distribution Depot	Hambridge Lane	Newbury			RG14 5TU
Mr	Andrew	Garratt	Castle Windows Newbury Ltd	Black Barn	Unit C Frouds Park	Frouds Lane	Woolhampton	RG7 4LH
Mr	Mark	Cole	Gist	Enterprise Way	Thatcham			RG19 4BQ
Mr	Paul	Goddard	Kuehne & Nagel Drinks Logistics	Aylesford Way	Thatcham			RG19 4ND
Mr	Sean	Murphy	Traffic Management					
Mr	Kevin	Thompson	Development Control					
Mr	Matthew	Meldrum	Public Protection					
Mr	Stuart	Tagg	Internal Post					
Sir or Madam	Sue	Douglas	Greenham Common Trust	Market Street				
Mr	Sue	Buckledee	Road Haulage Association	Market Street				
			Freight Transport Association	Market Street				
			Royal Berkshire Ambulance NHS Trust	Liberty House	The Enterprise Centre	New Greenham Park	Newbury	RG19 6HW
			Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service	Roadway House	Rightwell	1 Benton Drive	Peterborough	PE3 8DR
			Thames Valley Police	Hermes House	St Johns Road	Tunbridge Wells	Kent	TN4 9JZ
			Environment Department HCC	PA to Phil Pimlott	44 Finchampstead Road	Wokingham		RG40 2NN
				Operations Support Department	103 Dee Road	Tilehurst		RG30 4FS
				Traffic Management Office	270 Whitley Wood Lane	Reading		RG2 8TL
Hague	Richard	richard.hague@hants.gov.uk	Civic Offices London Road Basingstoke Hants RG21 4AH	Hampshire County Council (Officer)	01256 776136			
Linihan	Nicky	nicky.linihan@basingstoke.gov.uk	Vitacress Salads Ltd	Head of planning and transport	01256 844844			
Sir or Madam			Marley Eternit Ltd	Lower Link Farm	St Mary Bourne	Andover	Hamps	
Sir or Madam				Grange Lane	Bath Rd	Beentham	Reading	

Appendix 3 – Summary of Consultee Responses

Consultee	Response Summary	Officers Comments
Councillor Jeff Beck	<p>Cllr Beck supports the proposals and is pleased to note that the Speed Limit Review Task Group resolved to reduce the speed limit on Crookham Hill to 40mph.</p> <p>Cllr Beck comments that monitoring the displaced HGV traffic is of the utmost importance and requests that all Council Members with Wards that may be affected by the proposals be kept fully informed of the monitoring process.</p>	Comments are noted.
Newbury Town Council	<p>Newbury Town Council's view is that it is critical that any monitoring process must produce valid figures on which to base a realistic decision after the 18 months.</p> <p>Our starting position is that it is not sensible to divert an additional 395 HGVs per day through the middle of Thatcham and Newbury. That is an increase according to the base statistics of around 14%, though it is only one very 4 minutes.</p> <p>New Greenham Park has an existing established westerly and south easterly freight route exit via the A339. As a freight terminus, it seems sensible to do whatever is possible to ensure a north easterly route too, across to the A4. this is the current desire line that is being banned. For this reason, we would like to see most emphasis put on the proposed detailed design and environmental and economic assessment of making Crookham Hill fit for HGVs (and potentially solving once and for all the level crossing / bridge issue at Thatcham). (cf the case for the Eastern Bypass / T4).</p> <p>If additional base data can be established in advance of the restriction being imposed, that would be useful. It looks like there is just one snapshot to compare against.</p> <p>We welcome the basic counts, which will quantify any increase in HGVs, but allowance must also be made for other factors which may increase or decrease the HGVs along the monitored routes in the 18 month period. (e.g. any additional freight destinations that are created/discontinued).</p> <p>We would like to see some measure of congestion (e.g. wait times at traffic lights) – not just traffic counts.</p> <p>We believe that much could be done via desk based modeling / hypotheses – to check validity of monitoring on the ground. (e.g. % split of diverted traffic through Newbury / Aldermaston).</p> <p>Counts must take into account through traffic and terminating traffic (e.g. to Newbury industrial areas).</p> <p>We welcome additional speed surveys, even though these are outside of Newbury Parish boundary.</p> <p>We welcome air pollution monitoring, but believe that additional</p>	<p>The Monitoring regime in appendix 5 has been agreed with the Crookham Hill freight steering group.</p> <p>It is accepted that this is not an ideal solution to the problem, however if the unsuitability of Crookham Hill as a HGV route can not be ignored.</p> <p>Whilst the experimental order is in place the potential upgrading of Crookham Hill to be fit for purpose as a HGV route will be investigated.</p> <p>All base data will be approved by the steering group prior to the implementation of the order.</p> <p>Any monitoring regime will take into account additional developments in the area to ensure the knock on effect of the restriction can be accurately measured.</p> <p>The potential increase in HGV's along the A4 will constitute an increase of less than 1% of the overall traffic flow. It is not considered that this will constitute an increase in congestion along the A4 and does not justify extensive queue length and time delay surveys.</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>This can be reported to the Steering</p>

	<p>points should be added, particularly in potentially impacted residential areas, e.g. Hambridge Road and Kings Road.</p> <p>We welcome noise surveys, these too should be executed in all potentially impacted residential areas.</p> <p>We welcome monitoring of accident statistics – the areas defined seem to have it covered.</p> <p>We would like additional monitoring of damage – e.g. to houses, road surfaces / pavements and verges and / or parked cars in adjacent resident parking zones</p> <p>Will there be any analysis executed directly on quality of life for residents on impacted routes.</p> <p>Proposed signage for the Newbury area all looks OK. We assume that implementation will coincide with SatNav updates for both local and International HGVs.</p> <p>We would welcome more details on enforcement – the number of lorries ignoring the ban may have an impact on results.</p> <p>Bottom line is that we feel that what is proposed is a knee jerk reaction to one specific freight problem, that does not necessarily fit into an overall Freight Strategy for West Berkshire which should surely be simplifying freight movement within the district.</p>	<p>Group for consideration.</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>Noted</p> <p>The Council undertakes a pavement assessment programme. With regards damage to vehicles/buildings/verges the Council will be reliant on the public reporting these incidents.</p> <p>This will be investigated and actioned.</p> <p>The area within the restriction will form part of the monitoring regime. Enforcement will be undertaken by the Councils Trading Standards Team.</p>
<p>Councillor Irene Neill</p>	<p>I am well aware that it is very difficult to come up with a satisfactory resolution to the problem and I fully agree that Crookham Hill, in its present form, is not a suitable freight route.</p> <p>However, the first point I would make is that Frouds Lane MUST be included in the roads pinpointed for weight limit (albeit a relaxation order, or whatever, will be needed on at least two occasions per annum when the swing bridge is closed for maintenance). Frouds Lane is just as unsuitable as the roads through Brimpton/Woolhampton and also Crookham Hill (maybe more so than Crookham Hill given its width and the bridges involved). Mark, some time ago we discussed the subject of weight limit on Frouds Lane and how an order could be relaxed as necessary - did we ever get information on this?</p> <p>Whilst I appreciate the need for a temporary weight limit on Crookham Hill I think WBC should only do this whilst funds are put in place for the necessary expenditure to upgrade the road (circa £1.5m). Maybe we need to be creative in obtaining/allocating S106 funding for this. I assume the local distribution depots etc (Colthrop and Greenham in particular) will be included in any consultation on this matter and I suspect they will not be happy with the alternatives - maybe they should be persuaded to put their hands in their corporate pockets to help fund the improvements (bearing in mind that most of these projects in Colthrop were built in pre-contribution days and that the authority as involved then did not foresee the problems which would evolve as these companies have grown).</p> <p>I feel that there will be a big protest from the residents in Aldermaston and Aldermaston Wharf when they realise that the</p>	<p>Frouds Lane has been included within the restriction.</p> <p>The Council will investigate the upgrade of Crookham Hill to be fit for purpose for HGV's.</p>

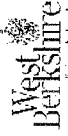
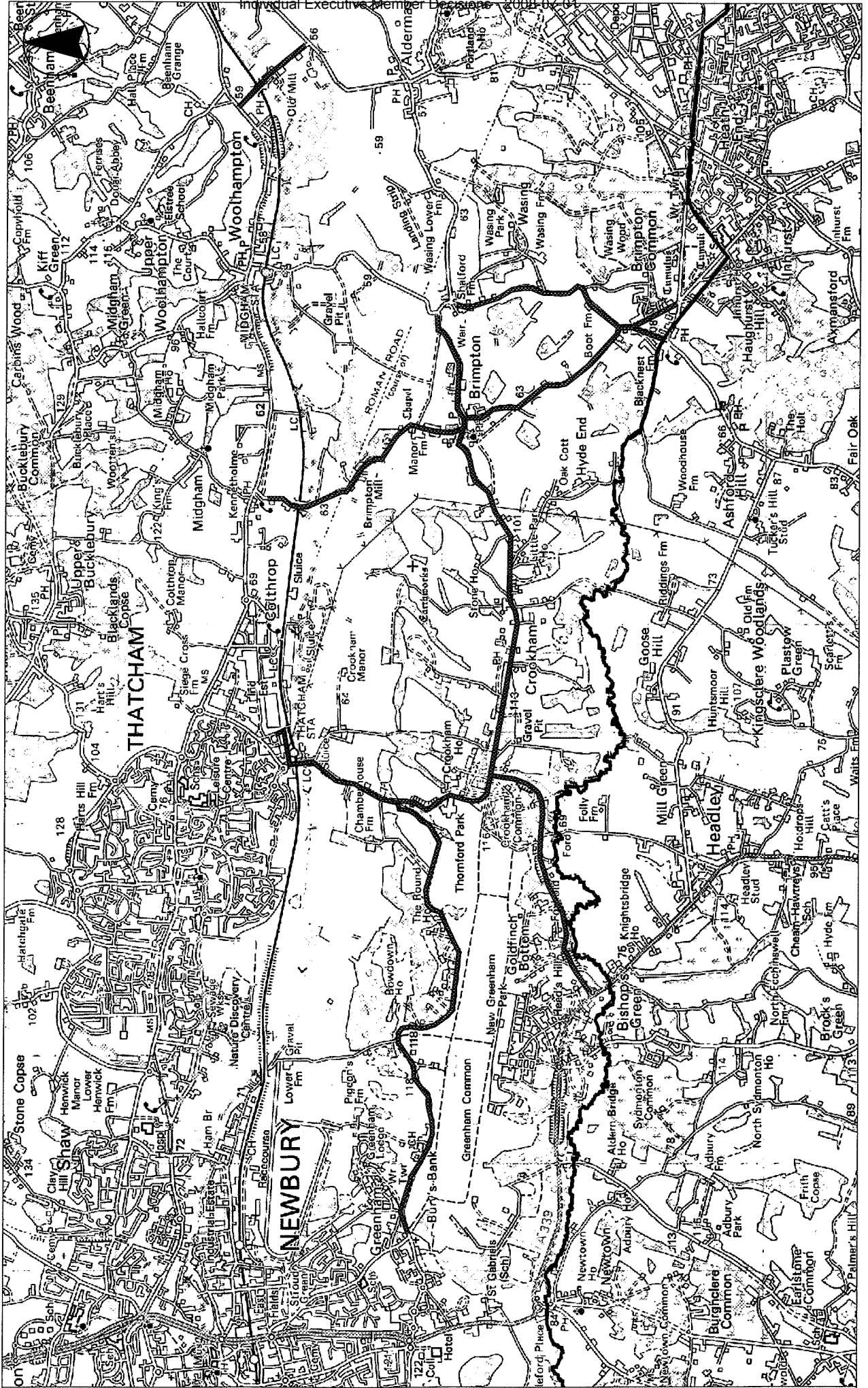
	<p>percentage figure of 16% HGV movements (the highest percentage on any of the roads in the district) will increase to approximately 20% if the assumption of 40% migration to A340 is correct. I would be very surprised if we do not get an equal protest from the residents of Tadley and also Hampshire CC and Basingstoke and Dean DC - I assume they will be included in the consultation? There is also the issue of a large number of additional HGV movements over the already troublesome lift bridge at the Wharf.</p>	
Wasing Estate	<p>Wasing Estates are broadly in favour of the proposal for the beneficial effect the restriction will have on Brimpton. However they raised the following concerns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A general concern about the impact on Aldermaston Village. • The proposed limit should be clearly signed "except for access" to allow Wasing to access farms etc. 	<p>The impact on Aldermaston Village will be monitored.</p> <p>The proposed restriction will be 'except for loading' and farm vehicles gaining access to Wasing Estate will be exempt.</p>
Vitacress	<p>Vitacress commented that they mainly use the Crookham Hill route mainly at night after delivering to premises in Enterprise Way, Thatcham. The use Crookham Hill to cause less noise and pollution to the residents of Thatcham and to avoid the traffic lights on the A4.</p> <p>They acknowledge that the A4 route is not ideal and occasionally have to replace mirrors due to the narrowness of the carriageway. They do not feel it would be a major problem to use the A4 & A34 in future.</p>	Comments noted
Aldermaston Parish	<p>Aldermaston Parish Council strongly opposes the proposed weight restriction on Crookham Hill because of the consequent migration of additional Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) on to the A340. We believe a more appropriate solution would be to implement safety improvements on Crookham Hill to make it more suitable for HGVs – such improvements could possibly be funded by local HGV operators who would otherwise be adversely affected by the proposed weight restriction.</p> <p>When we undertook a Parish-wide consultation exercise in 2005 as part of our Parish Plan, one of the biggest issues identified by respondents was HGV traffic; this was cited by 85% of respondents. The A340 was not designed to handle such large vehicles, and the constant traffic through the Conservation Village is having a disastrous effect on the Listed Buildings, many of which do not have proper foundations and therefore suffer structural damage. As a consequence, we are lobbying for a Relief Road to divert such traffic away from the Village centre. In our July 2007 response to the FRN consultation exercise, we proposed that "the A340 south of the A4 should be classed as 'Other local access routes' in the same manner as the A340 north of the A4". The proposed weight restriction on Crookham Hill would have results diametrically opposed to that response of ours.</p> <p>Traffic data provided by WBC shows that during the working day 20% of traffic on the A340 is HGVs, compared to just 17% on the A4, even though the latter is designed to higher engineering standards. West Berkshire Council's own estimates suggest that if the proposed weight restriction is implemented on Crookham Hill, 40% of the HGVs currently using that route would migrate over to the A340, resulting in an unacceptable 25% increase of HGV traffic onto a road that is already carrying more than its fair</p>	

	<p>share of such traffic. Even these appalling statistics take no account of major developments about to be implemented within Aldermaston Parish – AWE expansion and the opening of Easter Park.</p> <p>We believe the long-term solution to North-South freight movements within West Berks should be a new road engineered to modern traffic standards, possibly routed between Colthrop and Thornford Road. In the meantime, the pain should be shared between Crookham Hill and Paices Hill, both of which are equally unsuitable for HGV traffic. The proposed weight restriction on Crookham Hill would result in Paices Hill carrying 100% of the burden, which is totally unfair.</p> <p>If West Berkshire Council does decide to proceed with this inequitable solution, we would request the following mitigation measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As SatNav systems will tend to direct traffic via Frouds Lane rather than via the A4/A340 junction, a weight restriction should be imposed on Frouds Lane to prevent it becoming a rat-run. • Traffic measurements should be taken and recorded before and during the trial, with pre-determined criteria to determine what would be considered excess for A340. • There should be prior recognition of the need for an Aldermaston Relief Road. <p>In addition, we believe that the increased HGV traffic on the A340 will result in increased maintenance costs of the lifting bridge at Aldermaston Wharf, and we would ask that such a cost estimate be prepared and communicated to Councillors and that they take this into account when reaching a decision on the Crookham Hill proposal.</p>	
<p>Hampshire County/Basingstoke & Dean Borough.</p>	<p>The opportunity to comment on your Council's proposal to introduce an experimental 7.5t weight restriction (except for loading) on roads in the Greenham, Crookham and Brimpton area as shown on your enclosed drawing is welcomed. Hampshire County Council does in principle support your proposal to prevent the use of unsuitable roads in the area by HCVs. However, the County Council would be interested to learn whether Thames Valley Police support the proposal and perhaps you would provide me with a copy of their response to your consultation. Also, the County Council would like to be kept informed of the outcome of detailed monitoring of the experimental TRO.</p>	<p>Comments are noted.</p> <p>The response from Thames Valley Police is detailed below and will be relayed to Hampshire County/Basingstoke & Dean Borough.</p>
<p>Greenham Parish Council</p>	<p>Crookham Hill is not a designated HGV route at the moment and the 3 options seem to be: 1. leave it as it is, with traffic using it as and when it wishes but with no specific management or improvements. 2. Make it a designated HGV route and improve the road to cope with the heavy traffic which uses it in any case. This would inevitably lead to increased rat-running by HGVs along Burys Bank Road/Pinchington Lane as traffic seeks to avoid the A4/A339. This would lead to a requirement for an enforced HGV ban on Burys Bank Rd and Pinchington Lane. 3. Ban HGVs as per the proposed trial. This will inevitably lead to all such traffic instead using the A4 to the Robin Hood roundabout and the A339 through the town so making the current traffic congestion much worse. On balance GPC considers this the least attractive option.</p>	<p>Comments noted.</p>

Councillor Ellen Crumley	I fully support the proposals for weight restriction on Crookham Hill. It is a narrow, dangerous bendy road and I consider it most unsuitable for some of the large vehicles I have seen using it. They also cause additional congestion at the railway crossing as they take up so much space!	Noted
Councillor Brian Bedwell	Cllr Bedwell supports the scheme.	Noted
Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service	<p>The Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) have no objection to the experimental order on the understanding that the following conditions are maintained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RBFRS vehicles are exempt from the restriction whilst under blue light conditions. • No physical barriers or width restrictions are introduced that will prevent access by RBFRS vehicles. 	All emergency service vehicles will be exempt from the restriction and there will be no physical barrier to enforce the restriction.
Thames Valley Police	<p>West Berkshire Council trading standards will be the primary enforcement authority for this restriction, police will only act in a support role. It may well be that little enforcement will be needed the order and signing itself being sufficient to solve the problem.</p> <p>Whoever carries out enforcement, area weight restrictions are very labour intensive. To obtain a prosecution it is necessary to follow a vehicle through the complete length of a restriction, to avoid a later claim that the vehicle was going to load or unload within it. My preference would be for very short restrictions which can be monitored from a static position, in this case the obvious point would be at the level crossing, which could even be monitored from the existing camera installations. This in itself would stop most of the lorries, but to avoid displacement an additional short restriction could well be needed at Brimpton, all of the planned warning signs would still be needed. As currently drafted it is unlikely that police would be able to carryout any meaningful enforcement.</p> <p>I request that a letter supporting the proposal in principle is sent to West Berkshire Council, but pointing out the practical difficulties with enforcement and our preference for short "curtain" restrictions. Letter to be addressed for the attention of Jon Winstanley quoting reference JW/js/Projects</p>	The enforcement action has been discussed with the Council's Trading Standards Team.

GREENHAM, CROOKHAM AND BRIMPTON

Extents of Proposed Experimental 7.5T Weight Limit Restriction



Baseline and Monitoring Information for Crookham Hill 7.5t HGV Restriction

The purpose of this document is to set out the baseline requirements and the traffic/environmental monitoring regime during the proposed 7.5t weight restriction on Crookham Hill and surrounding areas.

Classified Traffic Counts

Classified Counts will be undertaken at the locations listed in the table below before the HGV restriction comes into operation. During the experimental period the classified counts will be repeated at the same locations every 3 months for a 2 week period (avoiding school holidays). The drawing in **Annex 1** details the locations of the monitoring sites. Traffic flows will be recorded hourly and will give a summary of the 24 hour and 12 hour (7am to 7pm) flow along all routes.

Site No.	Location
1	A339 South of Robinhood
2	A339 North of Pinchington Lane
3	A339 East of Swan Roundabout
4	A4 London Rd Newbury
5	Hambridge Rd, Newbury.
6	Turnpike Rd, Newbury.
7	Lower Way, Thatcham.
8	A4 Benham Hill, Thatcham.
9	Floral Way, Thatcham
10	Burys Bank Rd, Greenham.
11	Crookham Hill, Thatcham.
12	Thornford Rd, Crookham
13	Brimpton Rd, Brimpton.
14	A4 Bath Rd, Woolhampton
15	Station Rd, Woolhampton
16	A340 Aldermaston Village.
17	Frouds Lane, Aldermaston.

Speed Surveys

To consider the impact the removal of HGVs will have on Crookham Hill, vehicle speeds will be recorded for a 2 week period before the restriction comes into operation. This will involve

recording the 85th percentile including the locations listed in the table below. During the experimental period speed surveys will be repeated at the same locations every 3 months for a 2 week period (avoiding school holidays).

Site No.	Location
11	Crookham Hill, Thatcham.
16	A340 Aldermaston Village.

Air Pollution Monitoring

Air pollution monitoring sites will set up to help monitor the environmental effects of the HGV restriction. The sites listed in the table below will be monitored to enable appropriate information to be gathered.

Site No.	Location
2	A339 North of Pinchington Lane
8	A4 Benham Hill, Thatcham
11	Crookham Hill, Thatcham.
16	A340 Aldermaston Village.

Noise Survey

Potentially the greatest impact in terms of the percentage increase in traffic will be through Aldermaston Village. Noise surveys will therefore be undertaken before the restriction comes into operation and every 3 months during the experimental period.

Accident Statistics

The five year accident record on the lengths of road listed below will be logged before the restriction is implemented. The accident record will be monitored and compared to the baseline for the duration of the experimental period.

Location
Crookham Hill, Thatcham between the level crossing and Thornford Road junction.
A340 Aldermaston between the A4 and Caleva Park Roundabout.
A4 between Pipers Thatcham, and Robin Hood Roundabout Thatcham.
Hambridge Road for its entire length.
A339 between Robin Hood Roundabout and New Greenham Park.