

WINTERBOURNE PARISH PLAN



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The production of Winterbourne Parish Plan has given the Parish the opportunity to become involved in a project which has identified those things which people enjoy about living in Winterbourne and those which could be improved.

Winterbourne Parish is a very small community and with a limited number of people available to contribute the plan has taken much longer than originally anticipated. However, this has been the reality for many other Parish Plans in our area.

The original steering group was established to guide the Parish through the plan. This was very much driven by Mo Brickwood who put in a great deal of time and effort in getting the Parish Plan started and whose input has very much been missed since her illness and very sad death. The other members were Sue McLaren-Thomson, Isaac Batley, and myself. It soon became clear more members were needed and Gillian Mitchell and Peter Maydon kindly offered their help.

At each stage of the plan we have received help and support from numerous members of the Parish and I would like to thank everyone who has contributed their time and expertise to enable us to produce the Winterbourne Parish Plan. Additional thanks goes to those members of the Steering group and Individual Working Groups. I would particularly like to thank Sue McLaren-Thomson for her dedication to see the plan finished.

Of course producing this plan is really the start of a process. The questionnaire results and the subsequently formed action plans now need to be implemented. We need the continued support and active involvement of the Parish to ensure this happens.

On a personal level being part of the Parish Plan has given me the opportunity to meet and work with variety of people in the Parish which has been enjoyable.

Stephen Marbus, Chairman Parish Planning Committee

May 2009

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Introduction

The present exercise started in September 2005 with an open meeting held in one of the barns at Winterbourne Manor attended by over sixty people from within the parish. It was agreed that a parish plan, a broadly based initiative put forward by West Berkshire Council as part of its own future planning, should be developed and in due course published. The basic approach is for the parish as a whole to work out together what is needed in the situation which it is likely to face over the next ten years. What is it like to live in the village? What are the benefits which need to be protected and preserved? What shortcomings need to be remedied? What changes are envisaged or are likely to be imposed unless prompt action is taken? What can the parish do about it? In short, we need to look to the future, to plan what needs to be done and then make sure that it is done.

Subsequently, a Steering Group was elected/co-opted, chaired by Stephen Marbus and with the following members: Mo Brickwood, Isaac Batley, Peter Maydon, Gillian Mitchell, Sue McLaren-Thomson and Mike Taylor. Subgroups were established to focus on: facilities and amenities, community safety, transport and roads, development and planning, local environment, community spirit, and youth. Their discussions led to a comprehensive questionnaire which was distributed to all households in the parish in October 2006. The response (55%) was encouraging and the preliminary findings were again circulated to every household together with a note of the actions likely to be recommended by the Steering Group. These were discussed at a further open meeting held this time at the parish church on 13th October 2007. The discussion at that meeting has now been taken into account in drawing up the present plan. The Steering Group also organised a very successful and well attended presentation and display of artefacts, documents, photographs and drawings and paintings by the children relating to the parish past and present.

This plan then (by the parish for the parish) aims to set out the views and wishes of the whole community insofar as is possible. The next step once the plan has been agreed is to discuss, in the first instance with West Berkshire Council, how best to take forward the plan and to ensure that the actions recommended in the plan are implemented.

The Parish and its History

Winterbourne is an extremely pretty rural parish situated on gently rolling chalk hills four miles north-west of Newbury and two and a half miles south-west of Chieveley, one of the largest parishes in Berkshire, with which it has been closely connected over the years. Winterbourne's church (dedicated to St. James the Less) is a chapel of Chieveley dating back to shortly after the Norman Conquest with land for the churchyard given in 1156. Its records of baptisms, marriages and burials from 1564 onwards are preserved in the Berkshire Records Office. The parish is 2112 acres in all, much of which is arable farmland (sliced through by the new M4 motorway in 1971), but with substantial deciduous woodlands. The river Winterbourne runs along the north side of North Heath and over towards Chieveley before turning south-west to the village of Winterbourne and onward along the valley to Bagnor. To the east of the parish, the well managed Snelsmore Common Country Park lies on a heath-land plateau. The transformation from Second World War camp to a well used and much loved nature conservation habitat is a wonderful example of turning swords into ploughshares. We also have in the form of a chalk pit our own Site of Special Scientific Interest which provides very important evidence of the Cretaceous period, 80 million years ago, when up to a third of Europe was covered by a warm sea and at the end of which the Dinosaurs became extinct.

Traces of Stone Age habitation have been found in the Kennet Valley. A Stone Age handaxe was found on Snelsmore Common and there is evidence of Bronze Age ring ditches. The Iron Age hill fort at Bussock Wood, covering ten acres, was built probably in response to the threat of invasion from the south-west at the end of the second century BC. To the east of the parish the foundations of a romano-british encampment with a large villa or farmstead nearby were discovered in 1871. Near to Speen (Spinis), some two miles to the south, the important roman road from Silchester (Calleva Atrebatum) divided. (Calleva was the main town of the Atrebates, the celtic local tribe which came originally from Gaul.) Both roads went on to the roman fortress at Caerleon, Gwent (Isca Silurum); the one via Cirencester (Corinium Dobunorum) and Gloucester (Glevum) and the other via Bath (Aquae Sulis) and a crossing of the Bristol Channel. The Thames Valley has been a crucial east/west communications corridor over the years whether by foot, on horseback, by canal barge or by railway and Winterbourne benefits from being close by, with equally good links now north and south via the A34. There is a lot to be said to having the benefits and, as we shall see, the excitement at a discreet distance.

The Romans, or rather their Germanic legions, finally withdrew from Britain at the beginning of the fifth century AD and Winterbourne became part of the developing Saxon Wessex. Shortly before the Norman Conquest in 1066 there were no less than three manors in Winterbourne, one held by King Edward, one by his Queen and the third by the Bishop of Salisbury. By the time of the Domesday Survey (1086), the first two of these were in William the Conqueror's hands, whilst the Bishop of Salisbury retained the third with, as his tenant-in chief, the infamous Ranulf Flambard who rose from

humble beginnings to become William II's chief agent and, in 1099, Bishop of Durham. Of the King's lands, the first was held by Theodoric the goldsmith, a thane of King Edward, who may have erected a small castle at his holding at Hampstead Norreys; the second was held by Hascoit Musard, a Breton baron with numerous holdings, whose chief domain was at Staveley, Derbyshire. His holding in Winterbourne was subdivided between two subtenants Chemarhuec and Norman. (The latter granted some of the Winterbourne tithes to the Abbey of Abingdon and his son Eude sought to enter the monastery.) These three manors in Winterbourne were substantial, amounting to some 1400 acres in all. There were at that time 35 heads of household which would suggest a total population in the parish of 120-150 as compared with 200 today.

Two of the three manors came together in 1423 and were united with Winterbourne Mayne before the end of the fifteenth century. Interestingly, the land at Winterbourne has never been the subject of a parliamentary enclosure act. Indeed until the second half of the sixteenth century there was remarkably little enclosed land, although thereafter there is evidence of creeping non-parliamentary enclosure of former down-land grazing of which Penclose Farm may be an example. The Civil War provided a much more dangerous and immediate problem. Two battles were fought in the vicinity; both, although bitterly contested, were inconclusive. Squire Weston whose monument can be found in Winterbourne church was born in 1648. Four years earlier on 28th October a large column of the Parliamentary Army under the command of Sir William Waller with over 11,000 infantry and cavalry (the latter led by Sir William Balfour and Oliver Cromwell) marched from the north of Newbury to Chieveley via Hermitage to bivouac for the night at North Heath. The following morning a handsome statue of a blue boar purloined during a Yorkshire skirmish some three months earlier was left behind in the haste of departure from the Inn to which it subsequently gave its name (until recently renamed The Crab). The column moved south to Speen via Winterbourne, Boxford and Wickham Heath to attack the Royalists who held (and continued to hold) Shaw House and Donnington Castle. Two weeks later after the Parliamentarians had marched away northwards, King Charles returned to retrieve the artillery and baggage from Donnington Castle. During his journey he attended a service of thanksgiving at Winterbourne Church.

In due course, peace returned to Winterbourne; the farmers could get on with their ploughing and the well-to-do with their pastimes. About 1750 one of the great curiosities of Winterbourne was built, Hop Castle, a small hunting lodge in flamboyant neo-gothic style described by Nicholas Pevsner as 'the most delectable of Follies' and it was about this time or a little later that Winterbourne Manor acquired its imposing Georgian frontage. It is clear from John Rocque's splendid 1761 map that, rather than a single village, the clusters of population were the farms; Winterbourne (Southby's) Farm, Winterbourne Manor next to the church, Bussock Court (now Bussock Mayne), Copyhold (now Winterbourne Holt) Penclose Farm and North Heath Farm. The first three of these farms were almost certainly the sites of the three

Domesday Book manors with Winterbourne Holt acquired by the process of copyhold during the Middle Ages, possibly in 1235. This had been the pattern of habitation for at least the previous 750 years and would continue so for the next 250.

A hundred years later in 1850 we know that there were about 100 residents in Winterbourne village itself and the same number at North Heath. Both 'villages' had a large farm, a public house, a baker and a grocer. Worship required some exercise; from Winterbourne up the hill to the church next to Winterbourne Manor; from North Heath to the church at Chieveley; even further for the Winterbourne curate whose house was at North Heath. For Methodists the early Wesleyan chapel was just south of Winterbourne on the Bagnor road. At that time the parish was clearly prospering with the Fidlers at Winterbourne Farm and the Fishers at Winterbourne Manor; new buildings on the farming landscape and Winterbourne church rebuilt, remodelled and enlarged to provide 150 sittings through the energy and determination of the incumbent (Rev. John Ellill Robinson). The Chieveley National Society School with places for 50 boys and 50 girls, built in 1839 through the efforts of the Rev. Robinson, was in fact situated at North Heath. Winterbourne had its own infant school in the middle of the village built in 1865 to accommodate up to 40 children.

Throughout the nineteenth century the population of the parish fluctuated between 320 and 380, peaking at 395 in 1850 but declining towards the end of that period. Almost all the employment was agricultural, especially labourers and other agricultural workers and domestic servants at the farms. Winterbourne by the turn of the century also had living in the village a blacksmith, a boot/shoe maker, a wheelwright /carpenter, a general dealer and the Infant School Mistress, Miss Frances Hooper. At North Heath there was now a builder (John Thick) and a solicitor whose predecessor at The Elms was a retired master of the workhouse with his wife, the retired matron. Enter the phenomenal George Baylis who was largely responsible for the present nature of the countryside at Winterbourne and indeed well beyond its boundaries. Born in 1846 he , despite embarking initially on a career in law, was an innovator and entrepreneur par excellence who from very ordinary beginnings became the largest arable farmer in England, owning eventually over 12,000 acres at a time when farming generally was going through a very difficult period. He lived in Wyfield Manor to the west of Winterbourne, died in 1936 and is buried in Winterbourne churchyard. The other large landowner in Winterbourne towards the end of the 19th century was the formidable Sir Matthew Baillie Begbie, Chief Justice of the new Canadian province of British Columbia known, perhaps unfairly as the hanging judge. At the time of his death in 1894 the price of wheat and the value of land were half of what they had been twenty years earlier.

Farming and farmers continued to dominate life throughout the parish in the first half of the twentieth century. As for the village, recent living memory reaches back to the turn of the century to April Cottage where the shoemaker lived; to the old school house (now Bridge Pottery); to Pedlars in the middle of the village, the home of William Cook, the licensed hawker/general dealer; to Forge Cottage where William Jenner the blacksmith worked for so many years and the laundry

with Mrs Authorina Cook, the laundress; to Saxon Cottage where Caleb Pocock, the bailiff lived; and, looking up the village towards North Heath, to Hope Cottage, the home of John Lailey, the wheelwright and to Pound Cottage and the impounded stray cattle. More recently, the New Inn and The Shack in the middle of the village proved very popular with American Service men during their time here. Further afield in the larger houses were the Baylises at Winterbourne Manor and North Heath Farm, the Aldridges and the Hurds at Winterbourne Holt, the Nicholsons at Bussock Hill House and the Burneys at North Heath House. Cecil Denniston Burney who died in 2002 aged 79 is buried in Winterbourne churchyard; his father, Charles, the 2nd Baronet, was a prolific inventor and engineer of wide-ranging achievements including the R100 airship, the paravane and the Burney saloon car.

It was not until after the Second World War that the village moved away from its agricultural, tied cottage origins. Since then development has been positively controlled with a number of post-war houses filling in the gaps between extended older houses to create a pleasing environment. Outlying houses such as Kimber Cottage, Pit King Farmhouse, Bussock Hill House and Bussock Mayne have been similarly enhanced and extended. Coming now to the twenty first century and the 2001 census, the population in the parish is 206 and the average age just over 40 with 15% aged 65 or over and 14% aged 15 or under. 70% of the 95 dwellings are detached and a similar percentage owner occupied. Only 5 households are without a car. Almost half of those aged between 16 and 74 have two Advanced Levels or a higher qualification; over 70% are in employment, more than half of them in a managerial or professional capacity. Service industries are by far the largest employer. The average working week for men is 47 hours, for women 36 hours. Almost all the employment is outside the parish and the average travelling distance to work is thirteen miles. With regard to health, 87% say their level of health is good with 13% having a limiting long-term illness. All this points to a prosperous parish, in which the inhabitants generally are well educated, successful and in good health. But it must be remembered that this is in general terms; a statistic is not the same as an individual, particularly those who fall outside the general categories.

Geography and population

The civil parish of Winterbourne comprises 855 ha (2112 acres) four miles to the north-west of Newbury. Adjoining parishes are Peasemore, Chieveley, Shaw-cum-Donnington and Bagnor. The Ordnance Survey grid reference is SU4572.

All of the parish lies within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The 2001 census enumerated 206 people in the parish with 95 households. 70% of the properties are owner-occupied. There are no second homes in the village.

The settlement is scattered over several centres:

- Winterbourne village
- Winterbourne Manor and church
- North Heath

The main centre is Winterbourne village but North Heath is over 1.5 miles away, beyond the M4 which effectively cuts the parish in half. Winterbourne Manor and church are one third of a mile from the edge of the main village and properties along the B4494 and elsewhere are widely scattered.

Winterbourne Parish falls within the Speen Ward and that the councillors are Paul Bryant (cons) and Marcus Franks (Cons).

Architectural character and conservation

The colourful history of the Parish is already documented in an overview in this plan.

The parish originally consists of three manorial communities; Winterbourne Grey sited below Winterbourne Farm House, Winterbourne Mayne, (Bussock Court) above Bussock Mayne, Winterbourne Danvers, the current Manor site. All uniting before the close of the 15th Century within this agricultural framework two hamlets developed, Winterbourne Village and North Heath, together with outlying buildings.

Within Winterbourne village (from Ducksbridge to Pound Cottage) 50% were built before the close of the 19th century. On North Heath only two modern houses exist, these having been built in the 20th and 21st centuries, replacing two cottages destroyed by fire.

Between 1700 and 1900 Cottages were built to house estate workers. Four of these share the same design being Ducksbridge Cottage, Minnibrook Cottage, Hawthorne Cottage / Summer Cottage - bearing the date 1738 - and Heath Cottage on North Heath. – It is interesting that only 2 of these 4 similar cottages are protected through being listed (Ducksbridge and Hawthorne/Summer) The semi-detached farm-workers cottage at the end of Winterbourne Wood bears the date 1848

Winterbourne Villa - bearing the date 1850 - and Manor Cottage are originally of the same design.

Newfoundout, Kimber Cottage and Winterbourne Wood Cottage were also of similar design originally.

Meadow View Cottages were built in 1932.

The Listed Buildings / Monuments in the Parish

Building / Monument	Location	Listing	LBUID
Southby Tomb	Winterbourne, 1824, 40 meters South of Church of St James the Less	Grade II	394576
Barns 18 th and 19 th century	Winterbourne, 40 meters North West of St James the Less	Grade II	394577
Cart Shed 18 th century, Thatched (Part of outbuildings to Winterbourne Manor)	Winterbourne, 80 meters West of St James the Less	Grade II	394578
Winterbourne Manor 17 th and 18 th century	Winterbourne	Grade II	394579
Fir Tree Cottage 17 th century and later additions.	North Heath	Grade II	394580
Hop Castle Former Hunting Lodge 18 th century Flint and Bones with Brick dressing.	Penclose	Grade II*	394581
Penclose Farm House 17 th and 18 th century.	Penclose	Grade II	394582
Winterbourne Holt 18 th century with 19 th century addition	Winterbourne	Grade II	394583
Ducksbridge Cottage 18 th century. Thatched.	Winterbourne	Grade II	394584
Summer Cottage / Hawthorne Cottage Remaining as a pair of Cottages. 18 th century. Thatched.	Winterbourne	Grade II	394572

Church of St James the Less 12 th , 13 th and mid 19 th century. Chancel restored 1895. Main aisle sections 1854 (see Victoria County History, Vol 4 pp 66 to 67 and Buildings of England page 307)	Winterbourne	Grade II*	394575
The Crab Formerly The Blue Boar Inn. 18 th century Thatch and Tile.	North Heath	Grade II	394569
Dovecote 19 th century Flint with Brick dressings. Pyramidal roof. Brick nesting boxes remain.	Winterbourne 20 meters North of Winterbourne Farm House. On the site of the former Southby Farm	Grade II	394570
April Cottage 18 th century. Thatched.	Winterbourne	Grade II	394571
The Pightle 18 th century with 20 th century additons.	North Heath	Grade II	394568
Yew Tree Cottage 17 th century with 20 th century additions. Thatched.	North Heath	Grade II	394567
North Heath Farm House 18 th century.	North Heath	Grade II	394564
Barn 18 th century.	North Heath Outbuilding to North Heath Farm.	Grade II	394565
Plum tree Cottage 16 th and 17 th century with later additions, Timber framed, with half hipped tiled roof.	North Heath	Grade II	394566
Pedlars 18 th century cottage	Winterbourne	Grade II	394573

Detailed copies of the English Heritage Listings are available from West Berkshire Council, or locally from Sue McLaren-Thomson, clerk to the Parish meeting, The Old Cottage, Winterbourne, or Paul Savill, Gifford House, Winterbourne.

The 20 listed buildings in Winterbourne are the only historically designated sites (ie there are no Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks or Gardens or Registered Battlefields in the parish). Winterbourne also does not have a Conservation Area.

A triumph for Conservation has been Pit Kings Farm House, It was originally proposed to demolish and re build with a characterless brick building. With local intervention this fine brick and flint, vernacular building, with 18th century origins has been preserved. The only other brick and flint dwelling in the Parish being Hop Castle.

Investigations are being made to preserve as much as possible of the now declining important Dovecote in the Village. These are at the early stages, as is often in these cases funding remains the main issue.

Village institutions and facilities

In spite of the parish straddling the M4, Winterbourne is a very rural parish and there are only three parish institutions, namely the Church, The Crab at Chieveley (but in the parish) and the Winterbourne Arms.

Winterbourne Church (dedicated to St James the Less). Apart from its formal ecclesiastical services, the church is used as a meeting room for parish meetings, exhibitions and general parish gatherings.

The Crab has a longstanding historical connection. In its previous life as the Blue Boar Inn it was used as overnight accommodation for Oliver Cromwell on Saturday October 27th 1644, before the battle of Newbury, when his troops camped on North Heath. Now The Crab is a nationally known fish and seafood restaurant and boutique hotel with 14 deluxe rooms. Its also well known as a wedding destination.

In the village itself, stands The Winterbourne Arms, a typical country pub, formerly known as The New Inn. The origins of the building date back over 300 years as a former bakery. The menu reflects both traditional and modern style British food, whilst maintaining the traditional bar and pub atmosphere.

Snelsmore Common Country Park occupies a small part of the parish and is an excellent example of southern heathland, with many rare plants and animals. There is a full time warden and the common is managed to a high standard. . As well as being an important area for recreation, it is also a Site Special Scientific Interest for heath land and a Local Geological Site due to the swallow holes present on the site.

www.achurchnearyou.com/winterbourne

www.crabchieveley.com

www.winterbournearms.tablesir.com

Village communications

General

The parish is aligned on a north/south axis with the main centres of habitation, North Heath and Winterbourne village, being 1.5 miles apart.

Meeting places

There is no village hall, so village functions and parish meetings take place in the church and in the village pub. The village pub (the Winterbourne Arms) is in the centre of the village and the church is about three-quarters of a mile away on the Boxford road.

Roads:

The village is well placed for speedy access to the M4 and A34, with the distance to junction 13 on the M4 at three miles. These roads provide quick routes to the north (Oxford, Birmingham), the south (Southampton, Portsmouth), the west (Bristol, Cardiff) and to the east (London).

Railways:

The nearest railway station is in Newbury, where the mainline station (five miles), provides access to Reading, London and the West Country.

Busses:

There are no bus services available from the village, but a very limited service is available using the Service 107, which stops at the junction of the Winterbourne road and the B4494. This connects to Newbury, but involves a three-quarter mile walk via an unlit and narrow road.

Timetables are available from West Berks Council on 01635503248 or via email at transport@westberks.gov.uk. The mail bus has been discontinued.

Footpaths

There are many footpaths and bridle-paths providing the village with access to Snelsmore Common, Chieveley, Donnington, Bagnor, Boxford and North Heath.

Internet Broadband

The village has broadband access but is some distance from the Chieveley exchange (telephone) and the broadband speed is low.

Results of the October 2006 questionnaire

Questionnaires were distributed in October 2006, one asking about the household in order to capture the basic facts about the parish as it is today, one per adult covering the focus areas and one per youth covering their areas of interest.

The questionnaires were distributed to seventy nine households in the parish. Responses were received from forty four households.

Key learnings and recommendations

Things people like:

- Adults
 - low stress
 - it combines beautiful open **unspoiled countryside** with **unobtrusive village** community atmosphere and a great mix of people
 - residents are **friendly and helpful**
 - it is a **caring community** & a good community to be part of.
 - the most important thing is the **community spirit** of the village and the many friendships.
 - because it is a **perfect little hideaway** from the big horrible, modern, political world.
 - it is picturesque, **interesting historically** and has a lovely population of friends.
 - Winterbourne is a hamlet which should never change. We need to keep some places in this world just as they are, so that the future generations can see just what it was / is like in a **COMMUNITY!**
 - The countryside is **excellent for riding and walking**.
 - Winterbourne is not being swamped by new houses
- Young People
 - **running about** in the fields
 - **quiet**
 - the people are **friendly**
 - the countryside (**woods**)
 - There are a lot of **social events**
 - **lots of space** & country
 - free to do what you want in a **safe environment**
 - **lots of places to walk**

Things people dislike:

- Adults
 - the noise **from the motorway**, **4x4 drivers who destroy our tracks** and walkers who use the public foot path as access for theft
 - **lack of transport** to/from Newbury
 - very little! I am **concerned that over zealous planners will turn the road into a maze of speed humps and cameras.**
 - Chievely shop weekend opening hours
 - **motorbikes & 4x4** on bridleways
 - **M4 motorway noise**
 - Thames Valley hosepipe bans
 - no Saturday surgery at Downland practice
 - **motorbikes** without silencers and the convoys of **4x4 vehicles** that regularly motor round and over North Heath and **low flying helicopters**
- Young People
 - living near the **M4**
 - too **remote**
 - **distance** from friends
 - feel **intimidated** by a small group of people
 - the motorbikes
 - lack of **public transport**
 - **nothing** to do
 - it's very **small and secluded**

Crime, safety and policing:

- People feel safe both day & night
- Crime is low
- Only 28% of people think policing is good or adequate
- Neighbourhood Watch is in place – but there are not meetings

Recommendation:

A Neighbourhood Watch meeting with the police should be organised to raise awareness and to give opportunity to discuss issues with the police.

Transport:

- Transport is considered poor, but lots of cars in the parish, only 1 household does not have a car.
- Only 9% said they would use public transport if available.

Recommendation:

No action should be taken with respect to transport

Roads:

- 60% of people think the volume of traffic has increased on the B4494
- 40% of people think the volume of traffic has increased in Winterbourne
- 45% of people want speed limits on B4494
- 90% of people would support accident prevention measures on B4494 – but mixed views on what is appropriate
- 30% of people, 28 respondents want "Reduced speed limits Winterbourne Village & Lanes"
- 26% of people, 24 respondents, want "Vehicle restrictions (weight / width) Winterbourne Village & Lanes"
- A significant number of respondents 17 and 15 respectively , think improvements are necessary in terms of "Vehicle restrictions (weight / width)" and reduction of speed limits on roads around North Heath

Recommendation:

The Parish should investigate further speed and accident prevention measures for the B4494.

The Parish should investigate the feasibility of vehicle restrictions (weight / width) and speed limits in the roads around Winterbourne and North Heath

Development and Planning:

- 75% of respondents said they would not object to planning requests for residential homes in existing or redundant buildings
- 66% of respondents said they would object to planning requests for residential homes on green field sites
- 69% of respondents said they would be happy to see small family homes being developed

- 59% of respondents said they would object to planning requests for office developments
- 70% of respondents said they would object to planning requests for industrial developments
- 70% of respondents said they would object to a planning request to turn the Winterbourne Arms Pub into a residential home

Recommendation:

The Parish should develop and publish a Village Design Statement to capture all the development preferences expressed by the Parishioners of Winterbourne.

Local Environment:

- 11% of respondents consider their recycling habits to be poor
- Greater than 40% of respondents believe their recycling habits could be improved by suggested measures.
- No issues with refuse collection or roadside and hedge maintenance.
- 27% of respondents consider there is an issue with dog mess.
- 33% of respondents consider there is an issue with litter.
- Disturbances
 - 52% of people said Low Flying aircraft
 - 39% of people said Traffic noise (mainly M4)
 - 26% of people said Bicycle / motorbike scrambling (North Heath)
 - 21% of people said Light pollution (North Heath)
- 81% of respondents considered local footpaths to be adequate or good.
- 78% of respondents are interested in local wildlife and the landscape and said they would like to see many of the suggested improvements implemented
- Over 33% of the respondents said the Parish would for picnic, BBQ or child plays area.

Recommendation:

The parish should investigate how to have improved recycling measures implemented
The parish should develop a plan for improving the local wildlife & landscape
The Pash should develop a plan for the introduction of facilities for children

Community Spirit

- Less than 30% of respondents are interested in participating in parish groups for football, sewing, coffee mornings, choir, bell ringing or social club

- Less than 30% of respondents are interested in any suggested “help” ideas
- Several people expressed interest in participating some suggested group activities
- 66% of respondents said they would like to see regular information postings in the Parish magazine
- 65% of respondents said they would value the development of an updated Parish history.

Recommendation:

People should volunteer if they would like to lead a group activity

An editor for parish information submission to the Parish magazine should be appointed

The Parish History should be updated.

Action Planning

On the basis of the responses, and further exploration of the viability of the measures suggested, the steering group drew up the following action plan under four main headings:

- Environment
- Flood Prevention
- Roads, Bye ways, North Heath Issues
- Village Design
- Children Facilities

Each was tackled by a separate subgroup. The leader of each subgroup enlisted a great deal of practical help from other interested residents.

Environment Plan

Introduction

The list of improvements suggested for local wildlife and landscape includes:

- 1 more info about the Winterbourne stream
- 2 preservation of barn owls
- 3 encouragement of bird life
- 4 opening of new woodland walks/paths
- 5 Increase in wild flower population
- 6 planting of more hedges
- 7 planting of more trees

Items 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7 are all themes which occur constantly when there are discussions about improving local wildlife and landscape in a locality and they are all interconnected. Item's 6 and 7 concern the basic structure of the countryside in the parish, which if in good health will encourage birds (No 3) and wild flowers (No 5) and to a certain extent help barn owls (No 2).

No's 1 and 4 are different. No'1 is mainly about liaising with other organisations which have data on the stream or who have a statutory responsibility to keep records, such as the SWT (Sewage Treatment Works) who have to keep within certain constraints. It might be more appropriate if all the data on the stream was collected by the Flood Committee. No 4 concerns access, which is a separate subject.

Hedges and trees

There are two key areas where Winterbourne needs action.

- There are very few young trees, especially in the hedges. Trees in hedges, fences and roadside verges make an extremely important contribution to our landscape. Trees do not live for ever and replacements are needed.
- Winterbourne has what might be described as an empty quarter, where all the trees and hedges were removed in the latter part of the 19th century for arable farming. This area is bounded by the road into the village from the north, the road to the church, the track to Lower Farm, the bridleway to Wyfield, and the M4. The 1842 Tithe map shows us that this area used to have approximately twenty fields with nearly eight miles of hedgerow. Today there are four fields, with virtually no hedgerow. What makes this a candidate for specific action is that two other important factors come in here.
 1. This area is crossed by two bridleways.

2. A visual screen and a sound barrier is needed to protect the parish from the M4, and both of these are specifically mentioned in the new policies of the North Wessex Downs AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty). If hedges and trees were planted along the east / West bridleways, they would contribute much more than just being landscape and wildlife features.

If these hedges had a reasonable number of hedge trees and even wild flowers, they would encourage much wildlife.

Suggested action

- **Carry out survey of condition of hedges in the Parish.**
- **Carry out survey of type and age of trees outside of the main woods.**
- **Produce a draft plan for hedge repair and replacement and tree planting and replacement.**

This would be the basis of the case for hedge and tree planting in the empty quarter and elsewhere. The AONB team at Denford would probably be very happy to talk any ideas through with us. When all this has been achieved, an approach could be made to the relevant landowners.

Wild Flowers

The meadow wild flowers have taken such a hammering due to the intensification of agriculture over the years. Woodland flowers have survived because they are much safer away from arable herbicides, and in Maple Ash Copse they are doing fine although efforts to restore hazel coppicing are still being frustrated by deer and rabbit browsing. Lucinda Steel's 2 acre field was restored in 1988 and now presents a great sight when all the cowslips are in flower and the McGregor's 10 acre field was restored in 2000. There are other important areas such as the churchyard, Preston Rabi's field where scarce chalk land flowers grow and the verge of the B4494 beside the M4. In the ideal world, these areas should be joined up by wild flower field margins, but this may be far in the future. What may be possible in the shorter term is to concentrate on those areas which are still managed sympathetically for wild flowers, but where most of the wild flowers have been eliminated by herbicides over the years. There are some quite significant areas in this respect in the Parish.

Suggested action.

- Identify grassland areas where management is sympathetic and contact landowners to investigate whether wild flower enrichment is feasible.

Barn Owls

Barn owls require small mammals which require rough grassland. New hedges will help, especially if they have 2m field margins which are sympathetically managed Rough grassland areas where trees have been planted also help. But more can probably be done and professional advice is not far away in the shape of the Barn Owl Trust, which has its HQ at Sheepdrove Farm at Lambourn.

Suggested action.

- Contact Jason Ball at Sheepdrove Farm for advice.

Roads, Byways and North Heath issues Plan

1. B4494 Newbury-- Wantage road

It was noted that speed warning and caution signs had been installed on Bussock Hill and on the hill on the north side of the Crab Restaurant. It was agreed to monitor any accidents in the future as a measure of the effectiveness of these signs. In addition Stephen Mitchell would meet with Andrew Garratt at West Berks Council to explore other safety measures such as double white lines.

2. North Heath issues

Use of North Heath Byways by motor cyclists and 4x4s has led to serious ruts on the Byways making them hazardous for walkers. Meetings would be held with the council to see if further restrictions could be introduced on the south side of the heath to prevent further damage.

3. Heavy goods traffic on School Lane and Gidney Lane

An increasing amount of HGVs use these narrow lanes. A discussion will be held with the Council to explore potential weight restrictions.

Flood Prevention Plan

Background

On 20th July 2007, around 15 houses in Winterbourne Parish were flooded after rainfall of over 4 inches in the space of a few hours. Most of the flooding within the parish occurred along the banks of the Stream in the village of Winterbourne, although three properties remote from the Stream were affected to the north in the hamlet of North Heath.

The flood was caused by huge amounts of surface water running off the fields and into the Winterbourne valley. This water was not able to disperse quickly enough because the ground was already waterlogged and the stream was already running at an unusually high level for the summer period. The flood waters had subsided by the evening, leaving villagers with a huge clearing-up operation. In the ensuing months, the affected homes were dried out, plaster stripped off the walls and replaced, floors replaced, and in several cases it was over a year before the homes were reinstated to their former condition and the residents could move back in.

According to the Meteorological Office this was a 1-in-169 year event due to unusually heavy rainfall after three months with over twice the average monthly rainfall. However, with climate change, there is a probability that such events may occur more frequently. It is clear that the Winterbourne residents need to be better prepared and to take action before flooding occurs again. Accordingly, a village flood group was set up to draw up flood prevention plans and put them into action.

The Winterbourne Stream, as a typical chalk stream, should be kept flowing fast in order to maintain the gravel bed and avoid build up of silt and weed. At the time of the floods, the Winterbourne Stream was full of weed that had grown during the spring and summer. It is certain that even if the stream and drains had been working to full capacity, the village would not have totally escaped flooding, but it is likely that fewer houses would have been affected.

The Environment Agency normally clears the stream every year, at the end of the summer, in preparation for the winter. While it was suggested at the time that the Environment Agency had no budget for clearing the Winterbourne Stream in 2007, it is clear that even if money had been available, the work would not have been done until late summer. It should also be noted that watercourse maintenance on the stream is ultimately the responsibility of the riparian owner. Since 2007, the Environment Agency have continued to clear the stream once per annum, but it is clear that this not sufficient to ensure that the stream remains clear at all times of the year. Therefore, the villagers have decided to take on this task themselves. The first village stream work party in June 2008 was a major success with around 30 villagers

enthusiastically taking part in clearing the stream, no doubt motivated by the promise of refreshments in the Winterbourne Arms afterwards!

There is evidence that old drainage ditches have been filled in and that the land to the north of the village has been re-shaped, removing a natural flood plain that may have alleviated flooding in the past.

There is a pumping system in the Downland area (West Berkshire Groundwater Scheme), originally built to feed water from the chalk aquifers into the River Thames to supply London with water in times of severe drought. As part of this system there is a pipeline from North Heath to Bagnor, which could potentially be used to divert water from Winterbourne itself and to keep the groundwater levels lower. Contrary to popular belief, this pumping scheme has been used to reduce groundwater levels in several Downland villages (e.g. Great Shefford, Lambourn and Hampstead Norreys), and was used to reduce the level of the Winterbourne Stream during the winter of 2003-2004. The pumps are expensive to run, costing around £2000-3000 per month, but West Berkshire Council contributes to the running costs. The pumping scheme was not used in summer 2007, as it is considered most effective during the winter recharge period. Whether the pumping scheme would have helped reduce the affects of the July 2007 flash floods is open to conjecture, but it is clear that it is an important element in preventing groundwater flooding. (In this context it is important to understand the distinction between flash flooding, fluvial flooding and groundwater flooding.) The village flood group has made contact with the Environment Agency employee responsible for the West Berkshire Groundwater Scheme with the aim of ensuring that the pumps are switched on when the groundwater reaches a predefined trigger level.

A report by White Horse Contractors, commissioned by Preston Rabl, Parish Chairman, made the following observations:

1. Regular maintenance of the watercourse through the village should be carried out, involving removal of excessive weed growth, bank slips and any obstructions (natural or man-made) to maximise the flow of the existing channel.
2. A section of the stream below the village should be cleared to prevent backing up of water in the village itself.
3. There are various bridges in the gardens that could cause a restriction to the water flow at high levels, as the soffit levels are below the bank levels. It is recommended that the structures are removed or replaced at higher levels.
4. Some revetment works have also been installed along the banks and may have restricted the width in places.
5. The culvert to the east of the road as you enter the village [i.e. by Winterbourne Farm House] appears to be restricted. This should be cleared, and the outfall ditch should be cleared to ensure that flows are not restricted.
6. The stream should be excavated beneath access bridges to ensure that flow is not restricted. (This would need approval by the Environment Agency.)

A representative from the Environment Agency has inspected the stream since the flooding and made broadly the same observations as above.

During the July 2007 flood it was observed that rainwater ran in torrents down the hillside below Bussock Mayne into the low lying grass field just north of Winterbourne Farm and accumulated there before flooding over into the road. A suggestion has been made to investigate whether embankments could be built in this field to enable it to hold back a large quantity of water and release it into the stream at a controlled rate.

In common with a number of properties affected by the floods in the summer of 2007 across the country even owning a property at the top of hill did not mean you escaped from flash flooding. This is what happened to the three properties on North Heath. Flood prevention procedures for them can reluctantly be only limited to the provision of sand bags.

There is a consensus within the Parish that:

- Action needs to be taken to prevent flooding in future, e.g.:
 1. Keep the stream clear and fast-flowing throughout the year.
 2. Remove obstructions to the flow of water.
 3. Use the existing West Berkshire Groundwater Scheme pumping system.
- The village cannot rely on the Environment Agency and other agencies involved to accord Winterbourne a high priority in this area.
- The village as a whole should have a collective voice in decision-making, e.g. where the Environment Agency and other organisations are involved.
- The village as a whole should take action to prevent floods in future.

Objectives

1. To protect the village of Winterbourne from flooding.
2. To manage a flood situation to minimise disruption and damage.
3. To manage the post-flooding recovery process.

Suggested Actions

Establish a volunteer group to:

- Monitor the level of the stream and the ground water in the village to give advance warning of potential flooding;
- Ensure that the stream and drainage ditches are kept clear and fast-flowing throughout the year;

- Identify works that can be undertaken to prevent future flooding in Winterbourne, such as expanding the flow capacity of the stream and the provision of flood defences or flood plains;
- Ensure that the West Berkshire Groundwater Scheme pumping system is used to reduce water levels before the ground water rises to a dangerous level;
- Investigate possibilities for installing flood defences, e.g. physical barriers to protect the village and individual houses, and exploring the possibility of making a combined approach to a suitable supplier;
- Use the collective voice of the village to apply pressure to all organisations involved (e.g. Environment Agency, West Berkshire Council and Thames Water) to ensure that the necessary actions are carried out;
- Develop an emergency flood plan;
- Put the flood plan into action in the event of a flood;
- Assist in the recovery process in the aftermath of a flood, especially for those least able to cope.

In the ensuing period since these actions were identified, a Winterbourne Flood Committee has been set up to follow up these actions. Key activities made to date include the following:

- 1 Engagement of White Horse Contractors to perform a professional survey of the stream and its flow capacity, and to advise on the provision of flood defences, in particular the possibility of building embankments in the natural water holding area to the north of Winterbourne Farm.
- 2 A village stream clearing day in the summer.
- 3 Liaised with the Environment Agency to ensure that the annual programme to clear the stream is carried out.
- 4 Contact made with the West Berkshire Groundwater scheme to understand how the pumping scheme is managed and to receive regular monitoring data.
- 5 Investigation into domestic flood protection products and made contact with suppliers of sandbags with a view to sourcing a supply of sandbags for the whole village.
- 6 Liaison with West Berkshire Council to understand, review and recommend schemes to reduce the risk of flooding.

A number of flood initiatives are now in the pipeline with West Berkshire Council and Stuart Clark, Principal Engineer (Projects), Highways and Transport Department is in regular contact with the Parish Council. They are also planning to undertake some works to create a flood storage area in the field to the north of Winterbourne Farm. This is a stop gap measure ahead of a much larger flood storage scheme they are working on with the Environment Agency. Also identified are further works that include, new wide grips to the south of the village, an earth bund to redirect surface run-off in the field on the east side of the village from the Winterbourne Arms and reshaping the village green to create a spillway to direct flood water off the carriageway and back into the stream in the event of over spilling at the bridge over the Winterbourne.

Village Design Plan

The Village Questionnaire identified that the respondents wished to protect the character of the village of Winterbourne and restrict development to specific areas and to be of a specific nature.

Suggested Action:

A Village Design Statement should be produced which should ensure the following are addressed:

- Retention of the character of the village
- The Village is attractive to families with / planning children
- Development is sympathetic and low density
- The Winterbourne Arms pub remains viable and in place

Children's Facilities

At present there are no facilities for children or young families in Winterbourne. Within the last 5 years, since 2003, 11 children have been born to families in the village and outlying houses. This means that children under the age of 10 now account for almost 10% of the village population. Children are, therefore, an increasing part of the Winterbourne population and for the village to remain vibrant and attractive to other families moving to the area, their needs should be taken into account. To this end the Winterbourne Children's Group has been created and propose the construction of a small play area.

There are several sources of funding available for this type of venture for which the village qualifies. The question of where to site this area is as yet undecided but there are various options available all of which are in the heart of the village.

The objective of this is not only to provide a safe place for the children to play but to further strengthen Winterbourne's community spirit, as it is hoped that older members of the village may also choose to meet there to chat, or indeed to take visiting grandchildren etc.

Members of the Group have already spoken with people in other local villages who have recently created a play area such as Great Shefford, and Holybourne in Hampshire, to discuss issues of concern such as insurance, safety and so on. Planning Officers at West Berkshire Council have also been contacted and have no objection to the proposal.

Suggested Actions:

1. Establish sub-committee to look into, implement and manage the play area.
2. Apply for change of use for the proposed site for playground
3. Contact playground equipment companies for quotes.
4. Sub-committee to look into insurance, maintenance costs and capital costs.
5. Apply for funding; eg Vibrant villages, Greenham Common Trust, David Hogg - £1M pot

PARISH ACTION PLAN						Name of Parish		WINTERBOURNE	
Objective	Actions	Priority H/M/L	Start Date	Planned Finish Date	Project Manager / Lead Partner	Other Partners	Justification / comments (refer to community support from consultation)	Completed (Give Date)	Sustainable Communities Strategy Theme
Safer Communities (e.g. Reducing anti-social behaviour; reducing speed on roads; emergency planning)									
To protect the village of Winterbourne from a repeat of the devastating July 2007 flooding	Monitor the level of the stream and the ground water in the village	H	Oct-08	Ongoing	Flood Group	Environment Agency	stop future flooding and damage to properties		
	Ensure that the stream and drainage ditches are kept clear and fast-flowing throughout the year	H	Jun-08	continual	Flood Group	Environment Agency West Berkshire Council White Horse Contractors Environment Agency West Berkshire Council	stop future flooding and damage to properties		
	Identify works that can be undertaken to prevent future flooding in Winterbourne, such as expanding the flow capacity of the stream and the provision of flood defences or flood plains	H	Oct-08	End 2009	Flood Group	Thames Regional	stop future flooding and damage to properties		
	Ensure that the West Berkshire Groundwater Scheme pumping system is used to reduce water levels before the ground water rises to a dangerous level.	H	Oct-08	Ongoing	Flood Group	Environment Agency (Barry Russell)	stop future flooding and damage to properties		
	Investigate possibilities for installing flood defences, provide physical barriers to protect individual houses e.g. sand bags	H	Oct-08	Dec-09	Flood Group	Sand Bag Suppliers	stop future flooding and damage to properties		
	Develop an emergency flood plan	H	Sep-09	Jun-10	Flood Group	Flood Watch (Environment Agency)	stop future flooding and damage to properties		
Improve safety on B4494	Continue Track accidents as a measure of the effectiveness of signs	H	Jan-08	ongoing	Stephen Mitchell	Wester Berkshire Council	Fatal accidents; hence strong community support (90%)		
	Continue to consider further safety measures	H	Jan-08	ongoing	Stephen Mitchell	Andrew Garratt WBC			
Prevent damage from 4x4 vehicles on North Heath and Penclose Wood	Continue to meet with the council to see if further restrictions could be introduced on the south side of the heath	M	Feb-08	ongoing	Peter Maydon	West Berkshire Council	Danger to walkers, horses etc (98% of parishioners use these)		
To ensure no increase in heavy goods traffic on Gidley Lane	Continuing community objection - seek West Berks Council continued support.	M	2007	onging	Peter Maydon	West Berkshire Council	Danger to walkers, horses etc. Worry expressed by all users.		
Reduce heavy goods traffic on School Lane	Get a weight restriction on School Lane		1 June '09		Peter Maydon	West Berkshire Council Chieveley Parish	Huge increase in traffic		
Prosperous (e.g. Supporting skills and enterprise; economy of villages; Tourism, employment in rural areas)									
Ensure the village continues to have a working Public House	Oppose any planning applications for change of use	H	immediate	ongoing	The Officers of the Parish Meeting	Young Mother Group The community	Continuation of a vibrant community; social interaction		
	Encourage continued community use	H	immediate	ongoing	The Officers of the Parish Meeting	Young Mother Group The community	Continuation of a vibrant community; social interaction		

PARISH ACTION PLAN						Name of Parish		WINTERBOURNE	
Objective	Actions	Priority H/M/L	Start Date	Planned Finish Date	Project Manager / Lead Partner	Other Partners	Justification / comments (refer to community support from consultation)	Completed (Give Date)	Sustainable Communities Strategy Theme
Healthy (e.g. fostering a sense of place and belonging; improving health and well-being of local people and young people; promoting independence of vulnerable people)									
To establish a play area for the children of the village	see Children & Young People below								
Ensure the village continues to have a working Public House	Appose any planning applications for change of use	H	immediate	ongoing	The Officers of the Parish Meeting	Young Mother Group The community	Continuation of a vibrant community; social interaction		
	Encourage continued community use	H	immediate	ongoing	The Officers of the Parish Meeting	Young Mother Group The community	Continuation of a vibrant community; social interaction		
Ensure the village continues to have a working Church and utilises it for community activities	Encourage continued community use	H	continuous	ongoing	Edward Amies	Rev John Toogood Young Mother Group The community	Continuation of a vibrant community; social interaction		
Greener (e.g. reducing carbon footprint in the community; transport and sustainable forms of travel; reducing waste and increasing recycling; encourage consumption of local produce; increasing diversity of local wildlife).									
Improve quality and quantity of hedges and trees	Carry out survey of condition of hedges and trees in the Parish	M	Jun-09	Jun-10	Charles Flower	local land owners AONB	Restore local landscape and wildlife		
	Produce a plan for hedge repair and replacement and tree planting and replacement and wild flowers	M	Jun-10	Aug-10	Charles Flower	local land owners AONB	Restore local landscape and wildlife		
Accessible to All (e.g. improving equalities; diversity and inclusivity for all sectors of the community).									

PARISH ACTION PLAN				Name of Parish				WINTERBOURNE	
Objective	Actions	Priority H/M/L	Start Date	Planned Finish Date	Project Manager / Lead Partner	Other Partners	Justification / comments (refer to community support from consultation)	Completed (Give Date)	Sustainable Communities Strategy Theme
Housing (e.g. enabling sufficient housing in communities to accommodate continued economic prosperity)									
To maintain the visual integrity of the village and the character of the community.	To produce a Village Design Statement working in conjunction with et.....should be produced which should ensure the following are addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retention of the character of the village The Village is attractive to families with / planning children Development is sympathetic and low density The Winterbourne Arms pub remains viable and in place 	H	Jul-09	Dec-09	Preston Rabi	West Berkshire Council AONB Independent specialist	The Village Questionnaire identified that the respondents wished to protect the character of the village of Winterbourne and restrict development to specific areas and to be of a specific nature.		
Children and Young People (e.g. young people being able to contribute; that they feel secure and safeguarded; that they can make a successful transition to the work place; ensuring accessible services for young people.									
To establish a play area for the children of the village	Establish sub-committee to look into, implement and manage the play area. Apply for change of use for the proposed site for playground Contact playground equipment companies for quotes. Sub-committee to look into insurance, maintenance costs and capital costs. Apply for funding; eg Vibrant villages, Greenham Common Trust, David Hogg - £1M pot	H	as soon as practical	as soon as practical	Katharine Amies & Milena Batley	West Berkshire Council Greenham Common Trust Vibrant Villages David Hogg - £1M pot	Project approved by the majority at the Parish Meeting 4/4/09 comment: At present there are no facilities for children or young families in Winterbourne. Within the last 5 years, since 2003,11 children have been born to families in the village and outlying houses. This means that children under the age of 10 now account for almost 10% of the village population. Children are, therefore, an increasing part of the Winterbourne population and for the village to remain vibrant and attractive to other families moving to the area, their needs should be taken into account.		