



YARKHILL Parish Plan

June 2014

YARKHILL PARISH PLAN

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SECTION 1- Resume of the process

YARKHILL PARISH PLAN- The journey

Following a public presentation by Lynda Wilcox of the HALC and with encouragement from Patricia Morgan, Frome Ward Councillor, Yarkhill Parish Council resolved at committee meeting in 26th June 2012 to pursue a parish plan for the community. A steering group was formed and started having regular meetings. These meetings consisted of volunteers from the community and included 2 parish council members and the parish clerk. Most meetings were also attended by Sophie Price of Community First who was able to give valuable advice and guidance. The first stage included drawing up a programme and budget. These were used to gain approval of our grant application. A grant of £1500 was awarded by Herefordshire Council towards the cost of process that would lead to the production of a parish plan.

The next key event was the “planning for real” open meeting held at the village hall in December 2012. This was well attended by the community and gave the steering group a good idea of the issues that needed to be covered in the questionnaire. A lot of effort was put into getting the questionnaire right. The main criteria were to fairly reflect issues from the “planning for real” event and to avoid any leading questions that might bias the outcome. The questionnaire was finally circulated in May 2013.

The return of completed questionnaires was a very creditable 60% and was a reflection of how well the community as a whole had embraced this important stage of the process. The completed questionnaires were analysed by Herefordshire Council’s research team. The headlines from this analysis were published in September 2013. This was followed by an open meeting in October 2013 where the full report was available for inspection. There were a number of themes that had become evident and volunteers were requested to help take them forward. This led to the formation of 7 thematic groups. Each group has developed an action plan which form the heart of this parish plan. These plans are included in section 4.

SECTION 1- Resume of the process

The parish plan is intended to be a live document. It is an important milestone and marks the end of almost 2 years endeavour by members of the steering group. It is intended to give visibility to what the parish issues are and an action plan to move those issues forward. The action plans establish what needs to happen in the future and identifies who will take action and by when. If results are to be achieved it is essential that everyone gives what ever support they are able to give and that the parish council regularly monitor progress.

Clearly over time some of your issues will be dealt with. Undoubtedly other issues will arise and providing there are people in the community willing to take them on board then new action plans can be developed.

YARKHILL a brief history

The Herefordshire Council website lists 66 historical finds for Yarkhill. These are recorded in the Herefordshire Historical Environment Records Database under the monuments section. The earliest of these dates back to the Iron Age. There are also recorded finds from the Roman period. Clearly, Yarkhill being in the Frome valley has attracted settlements throughout history.

The general area was important to the Romans as a frontier outpost. Their presence also had the effect of changing the landscape as greater land clearance was required for cultivation to pay the Roman Tribute Tax.

The Romans left by AD 409 and the area was progressively taken over by the Saxons. It was during the Saxon period that the village of Yarkhill was established. There are a couple of theories on the origin of the name. One theory is that it was named after a Saxon Knight called Arkell. Another is that it got its name from “yarcle”, the Saxon word for a slope. Hereford’s defences became more robust to fend off attacks from Welsh and Viking invaders during the Saxon period. Despite this, settled communities began to become established with Yarkhill being one of them. During this period Christianity was the main religion and a church was established in Hereford although construction of the present cathedral did not commence until shortly after the Norman conquest.

After the invasion in 1066, the Domesday Book categorises Hereford as a city, one of only 16 shire towns given this rating. There followed an unsettled and lawless period where lands were seized by Norman noblemen and the indigenous population was brutally put down. Largely as a demonstration of authority, castles were constructed and the churches were built to augment the Saxon monastic approach to worship.

SECTION 2- history

During the Medieval Period the county began to prosper with wheat and wool production being the main industries. Along with the remainder of the country, there was a major set back with considerable loss of life during the black death in 1348-49. The cathedral continued to be developed and a grammar school was established in 1384. There are a number of medieval moats recorded in Yarkhill. Yarkhill Church was built in its original form during the early part of the 13thC. Later on Yarkhill Church also became notable, particularly to campanologists, for Fabian Stedman who invented change ringing in 17th C (the art of ringing a set of tuned bells in a series of mathematical patterns called "changes"). There is also evidence of both watermills and a windmill in different parts of the village. In terms of building material, as oak was in abundance, many houses were framed using this material. During Henry V's reign, the county suffered as a result of the religious authorities opposing his reforms. In retribution there was major destruction of wool refining and grain milling sites in the county.

The loss of a frontier role and decline of economic significance was further exacerbated by the effects of the Civil War. Daniel Defoe recorded on a visit in the early 18th C that Hereford City was run down and dirty. However in the surrounding countryside, castles and monasteries were being replaced by large country houses, many estates of which still exist today. Local sandstone had become the favoured building material with imported bricks being used for detailing chimneys etc. It was not until later that the county had its own brick and tile works. There is evidence of a former brickworks at Newtown just to the north of the cross roads. This closed in 1886.

The industrial revolution largely passed Herefordshire by due to its poor communications and transport capability. The River Wye was never a reliable means of transport. During the latter part of the 18th C part of the ill-fated Hereford - Gloucester Canal was routed through Yarkhill. Broadly, rising construction costs and the advent of the railways led to its premature closure. The railway finally arrived in 1853, Hereford being the last cathedral city to gain a service.

SECTION 2- history

The landscape of Yarkhill is classified as Herefordshire Lowland. The Old Red Sandstone bedrock comprises beds of red and greenish-grey silts and locally calcareous mudstone, this gives rise to the area's rich red soils. In past times the fertile undulating open character of the valley was broken only by orchards and hop fields. The valley bottom meadows are now under pressure from agricultural intensification.

Cider orchards have been a significant part of the economy since 14th C. Although much of the county is now dominated by modern bush orchards, in Yarkhill a number of old variety standard orchards remain.

Hops have played a major role in Yarkhill's farming history. The Frome Valley was well suited to hop growing and this is evidenced by the hop kilns on local farms that are now largely converted to accommodation. For many farmers and their workforce hop growing was a way of life which culminated in September with the picking season when large numbers of seasonal workers; typically families from the Midlands and South Wales, gypsies and travellers arrived to work with the local population. Until the 1950's hops were hand-picked and the start of the school term was often delayed for the completion of picking. During picking the local population increased by up to 1/3rd with communities springing up in makeshift accommodation on the farms. Mechanised picking developed during the 1950's, thus reducing the labour requirement.

The market for hops was initially generated by immigrant workers from Flanders who came during the 15th C to work in the woollen industry. Records show that hops were being grown in Bromyard in 1577. Production reached its height in the second half of 19th C. By 1883, 81 parishes in the county, including Yarkhill, were producing hops on an area of over 12,000 acres. Production declined during the late 20th C due in a large part to cheaper imports. More recently the consumer's taste for lager has also affected the industry. By 1985 the area of production had reduced to 650 acres. The advent of the specialist micro-brewery is maintaining a level of production on a reduced scale.

SECTION 2- history

The distinctive white-faced, red coated Hereford is one of the oldest British native bred cattle, originating in Herefordshire in the mid 1700's, and famous throughout the world for producing high quality meat from grass, these have long been a familiar sight grazing the fertile pastures of the Frome Valley and Yarkhill.

Census information for Herefordshire indicates a significant migration of population during the 19th C as people left the land to seek employment in factories and coal mines. It is likely that Yarkhill would have followed this trend. This decline in population continued until the last part of the 20th C with an influx of people as a more mobile population sought space and a better quality of life in the countryside. This trend has continued into the 21st C and since 2005 has been more acute in Yarkhill than in Herefordshire generally. The change in the number of people of pensionable age has risen slightly over this period, much in line with the remainder of the County but by less than the national average. The population density (persons per hectare) for Yarkhill is about half that of the County as a whole and 1/10th of the national average.

Acknowledgements.

This information has largely been compiled from the "Herefordshire Through Time" section on Herefordshire Council's web site. We are grateful to the council for the use of this information. If you require more detail or would like to see their terms of use of this information please refer to their web site.

SECTION 3- summary of survey results

YARKHILL PARISH PLAN-Your survey results.

General information

There were 178 completed questionnaires for the adult survey and 26 for the youth questionnaire. To put the level of response for each question into context the total number of respondents has been put alongside each question.

The profile of respondents from information given in the surveys returned indicated an even split between male and female. The largest age range (42%) was between 45-64 years. Of the remainder, 36% were older than this and 22% younger. 97% live in the parish and 26% either work or have a business here. The largest number of respondents live in the Newtown area (30%) with the remainder more or less equally split between Monkhide, Watery Lane and other areas. 50% have lived here for more than 10 years with a further 23% who have lived here for more than 5 years. By far the most popular reason for coming to Yarkhill was to live in an attractive area.

65% are working either as employees or self employed. 32% are retired. Unemployed accounted for a further 3%. Of those in employment that responded to the question, 46% work within a 20 mile radius of the parish with 13% of those working from home. Another 12% work either further away or have no fixed place of work.

SECTION 3- summary of survey results

Traffic & Transport

Motorised vehicles (160 respondents)

The responses indicated a high level of ownership of motorised vehicles. 96% of respondents own a car. The primary use of vehicles was indicated as leisure (including shopping) closely followed by trips to work or place of education.

Bus service (168 respondents)

The majority of respondents indicated that they never use the bus service (79%). There were 7 adults who use the bus service regularly. However a number of respondents indicated that they think that they would use the bus service if:

1. There were more frequent services.
2. Pick up closer to home.
3. More routes.
4. Lower fares.

Some respondents indicated that an improved service was important to them (31%) and others indicated that an improved service may be more important to them in the future (25%).

SECTION 3- summary of survey results

Accessing services and facilities. (12 respondents)

12 people indicated that they had difficulty with access to services and facilities.

Action: A thematic group has been established to look into the comments on bus services and access problems. See section 4 for details.

Speeding, accident black spots and HGV traffic. (171 respondents)

47% of respondents were very concerned about speeding and a further 34% were fairly concerned. The most popular remedy was thought to be speed reactive signs (32%) followed by lower speed limits and speed cameras.

A majority of respondents were either very concerned or fairly concerned about HGV traffic on Stock Bridge road with 47% being in favour of a ban of HGVs on that road.

49% of respondents indicated that they were aware of accident black spots in the village.

Action: A thematic group has been established to look at these issues. See section 4 for details.

SECTION 3- summary of survey results

Environment.

Local Employment (168 respondents)

55% of respondents were in support of more local employment. There were fewer responses on what form that additional local employment should take. Of those that responded the most popular answer was for a public house followed by small business units. However 40% did not answer the question on what they would like to see in terms of additional employment.

Action: *A thematic group has been established to look at these issues. See section 4 for details.*

Cycle paths (169 respondents)

49% of respondents to this question were either very concerned or fairly concerned at the lack of cycle paths. 62 people saw cycle paths along the main road as a priority with 12 favouring action on village roads as more important.

Action: *As the requirement relates to the road network this issue is being handled by the thematic team looking into speeding and other safety issues. See section 4 for details.*

SECTION 3- summary of survey results

Public footpaths and bridleways (169 respondents)

The majority seemed to either be very or fairly satisfied or have no opinion on the current state. However a significant minority (34%) were either fairly dissatisfied or not satisfied at all. Of those that responded to what improvements they would like to see, walkable margins around recently ploughed fields was the most popular response closely followed by clearer signage and removal of obstructions.

Action: To date there have been no volunteers to take this issue forward.

Public open space (168 respondents)

A clear majority (81%) were of the opinion that public open space was very or fairly important. A slightly smaller number responded with an indication of what they would like to see. The clear favourite was developing the canal-side as public area followed by a nature reserve and a village green.

Action: To date there have been no volunteers to take this issue forward.

SECTION 3- summary of survey results

Dog waste (163 respondents)

The majority were fairly unconcerned or not concerned at all or did not answer this question. However a significant minority (62 respondents) were either fairly or very concerned. A clear majority would not support the cost of providing dog waste bins

Action: Reminder in Yarkhill News for all dog owners to act responsibly.

Improvement of local roads (173 respondents)

A large majority considered this to be either very or fairly important (97%). Fewer people responded on the question of priority. However repairing potholes was the clear priority from those that did respond with better maintenance of drainage a distant second. The majority were not in favour of entering into Herefordshire Council's lengthsman scheme if there were to be an additional cost to the council tax payer.

Action: The parish clerk has investigated the lengthsman scheme as it is possible that contributions from Herefordshire Council would entirely cover the cost. However to date there seems to be no one willing to take on the role.

SECTION 3- summary of survey results

Management of flora and fauna (147 respondents)

The majority seemed either satisfied or to have no opinion. Of those dissatisfied the creation of wildlife corridors was the top priority followed by planting more trees. 37 people indicated a willingness to volunteer for wildlife schemes.

Action: To date there have been no volunteers to take these issues forward.

Local services and facilities

Information (174 responses)

By far the most used medium for keeping informed about the parish was the Yarkhill News (97%). Word of mouth was the second most used option but was well down on the Yarkhill News. There were 9 suggestions on how to improve the format, some of which were looking to make it more succinct (e.g. less photos and crosswords). However some people suggested adding things (e.g. a young achievers section, more local news, nature notes, and small adds).

Action: These suggestions have been incorporated into the newsletter. Also a parish web site is being established.

Satisfaction with local services. (168 responses)

The majority were either fairly or very satisfied with local services (70%). There were fewer responses to areas requiring urgent attention with the top answer being the broadband service (66 people). Some way behind this was mobile phone reception (44) and litter removal from public areas (37).

Action: From Q49 it was apparent that the majority of broadband users are on a wireless system. However around 10% have no broadband at all and a further 15% are on either dial up or cable modem. Although some may have chosen to either not have broadband or

SECTION 3- summary of survey results

are happy with a system with limited functionality there may be cases where financial hardship has prevented migrating to the much faster wireless system. The parish council are discussing with the trustees of the village charity whether funds can be made available to assist with the installation cost of Airband where this is the case.

To date no one has volunteered to research mobile phone reception or litter removal albeit volunteer litter picking has been taking place from time to time for a number of years. The frequency has recently been increased to a monthly activity.

Crime (170 responses)

11% of respondents had experienced crime during the last 3 years. Of those that have experienced crime some were willing to share details of the type of crime. Most were theft of tools and other equipment from outbuildings although there were 2 incidents of fuel oil theft and 1 of a plant tub being stolen. In terms of measures to reduce crime there were fewer responses with the top answers being a neighbourhood watch scheme followed by a greater police presence.

Action: *Historically there have been neighbourhood watch schemes in place. See section 4 for details of the current status and contacts.*

SECTION 3- summary of survey results

Use of the village hall (141 responses)

The majority of respondents use the village hall occasionally and felt that it sometimes met their needs. Most would not support subsidising the existing village hall from council tax if it cannot be self sufficient. The majority of respondents to the question on the future of the hall wanted to see it remain and be promoted for other uses. 32 respondents indicated that they would volunteer to help run events at the village hall.

***Action:** A thematic group has been established to look at these issues. See section 4 for details.*

Use of the church (140 responses)

A considerable proportion of the respondents favoured adaptations to the church building to accommodate wider community use. However, there was a significant response in favour of retaining the church building exclusively as a place of worship.

***Action:** The P.C.C. are considering the community's responses and are reporting their proposals in section 4.*

SECTION 3- summary of survey results

The village shop (167 respondents)

The largest group of respondents indicated that they use the Newton Cross shop on a daily or weekly basis with a further significant number using the shop occasionally.

Action: None proposed

Community run schemes (131 respondents)

The most popular response was for a bulk buy oil scheme (70 respondents), closely followed by a community shop (68) , and community pub (64). There were 51 responses that indicated a willingness to volunteer to help run community schemes. The clear majority would not want to subsidise community run facilities through council tax.

Action: There have been no volunteers to date for the community shop or pub. See section 4 for details of the research done into bulk buy oil schemes.

Local government & planning

Council performance (166 respondents)

The majority were either fairly dissatisfied or not at all satisfied with Herefordshire Council's actions (47%). The remainder were satisfied or had no opinion.

The figures for the parish council showed 72% as being either fairly or very satisfied with 10% being either fairly dissatisfied or not satisfied at all. The remainder had no opinion. In response to what would improve the parish council the most popular choices were amalgamation with other parishes (22%) and elected members (21%) .

Action: None proposed

Planning (165 respondents)

In response to whether sufficient regard is taken of local opinion 45% thought not whilst 25% believed that sufficient regards was taken. The remaining respondents had no opinion on the matter. (In total there were 165 respondents to this question).

SECTION 3- summary of survey results

There were considerably fewer responses to what types of development people would support (120). Of the responses given 45% felt that 2 bedroom starter homes would be appropriate followed by 3 or more bedroom family homes. There was limited support for easy access homes, small scale enterprise units, self- build housing and key worker' accommodation ranging from 19-26%. Support for rented accommodation was the lowest choice at 10%. The question of development attracted a number of comments most of which indicated that any sort of development would be inappropriate for the nature and infrastructure of the village.

There was quite strong support for the parish council developing a neighbourhood plan (103 people) albeit the majority would not support any increase in council tax to fund production.

Action: The village's views on planning to be relayed to Herefordshire Councils' planning department.

In light of the community's views, the parish council are to investigate what changes have occurred in terms of funding and relevance to a village of our size and reconsider their stance on the production of a neighbourhood plan.

Youth survey

Transport (26 respondents)

All respondents travel around primarily in their parents' car. Some listed bus and bicycle as additional methods of transport. The main reasons given for not using the bus more often were infrequency and travel distance to bus stops.

Activities

The most popular pastime was cricket, with cycling, rounders and swimming close behind in equal second place.

What would you most like to see in Yarkhill? (24 respondents)

The most popular choice by some margin was an off-road cycle track. In joint second place were a playing field and organised sports facilities.

Action: *A thematic group has been established to look into the provision of an off-road cycle track. See section 4 for details.*

SECTION 3- summary of survey results

The Future (26 respondents)

The majority of respondents were unsure if they would stay in the village after leaving full time education. A small number responded to what would encourage them to stay in the village. The top answer was affordable housing with 4 responses.

What would you like to see to make Yarkhill a better place for young people? (16 comments).

Most of the comments centred around sports facilities and social clubs. However there were some comments on the lack of safe footpaths or cycle ways to allow young people to safely get around.

Action: Cycle ways being investigated along with other traffic issues. See section 4.

YARKHILL PARISH PLAN

TRAFFIC

Introduction

Yarkhill has two major roads through its boundaries the A4103 (Hereford Worcester Road) and the A417 (Leominster to Gloucester). The two roads meet at Newtown Crossroads where the traffic is controlled by a four way traffic light system. There is also a C class road (The Stock Bridge Road) and a number of narrow country lanes used mainly by local and farm traffic.

Speed limits are imposed on the A4103 before the Stock Bridge Road turning from the Hereford direction and on the A417 approaching the traffic lights from all directions.

The recommendations in this report are based on accident statistics and questionnaire evidence from residents living locally.

Accident black spots

Turning to Monkhide

Section 4- Action plans

There have been a number of accidents where traffic turns right into Monkhide from the Hereford direction. Traffic on the other side of the road from Worcester delay traffic from Hereford turning right and on a number of occasions a vehicle from the Hereford direction has gone into the back of the vehicle turning right causing injuries to the vehicle occupants.

The accidents are caused by traffic from the Hereford direction leaving the de-restricted speed zone and accelerating round a bend then descending from the brow of the hill allowing limited warning of a stationary vehicle in the road turning into Monkhide.

Solution :- There are two ways to reduce accidents at this point

1. Extend the 50mph speed limit beyond the Monkhide turning
2. Widen the road to allow a separate lane for traffic turning right into Monkhide

An ideal solution would be for both solutions to be implemented; additionally the 50 mph speed limit could be extended to where the 40 mph speed limit begins at Newtown Cross. There have been accidents caused by vehicles travelling too fast down the incline to Crews Pitch and a 50mph speed limit may reduce the risk of further accidents occurring.

School Bus Monkhide turning

Residents in Monkhide have brought to our attention that children waiting for the school bus have nowhere to safely wait and are often seen having to stand in the road because the verges are muddy.

Solution:- Build a paved area off the road where children can safely stand when waiting for the school bus

Section 4- Action plans

Stock Bridge Road

The Stock Bridge road is a C Class unrestricted road and does not have central white lines but is used as a cut through by a relatively large amount of traffic including articulated HGVs, heavy lorries, vans and farm traffic as well as private cars making their way to and from Hereford, Ledbury and M50. The road is in the Parishes of both Yarkhil and Tarrington. The road narrows at a number of points and has tight bends with poor visibility. The most dangerous point is the bridge where the road crosses the railway which has steep inclines either side with a tight bend at the top and traffic from one direction cannot see vehicles travelling in the opposite direction. There is insufficient room for an HGV and another vehicle coming in the other direction and there is a high risk of a head on collision occurring. One accident has already occurred which resulted in a road closure.

Solutions:- 1. Ban HGV traffic from Stock Bridge Road

3. Introduce 40 mph speed limit
4. Install traffic lights at Railway bridge to control single file traffic
5. Install priority signs either side of the bridge
6. Widen railway bridge
7. Widen Stock Bridge Road as a whole

The speed limit restriction to 40 mph or banning HGVs would be the most cost effective way of reducing the risks of accidents and in reality there is no reason why vehicles coming from Ledbury who wish to travel to the North side of Hereford should not use the A417 and turn left on to the A4103 at Newtown. Traffic from Hereford could continue down the A4103 and turn right at Newtown. The cost of traffic lights, road widening and bridge widening are probably prohibitive in the short to medium term but further consideration should be given to a speed limit and priority signs (which would make traffic from one direction slow down as they would know traffic from the other direction has priority).

Section 4- Action plans

Turning from A4103 into Stock Bridge Road

This is a very similar situation to the problems at the Monkhide turning where traffic from Hereford turning right can be stationary waiting for a gap in the traffic from Worcester. There is a relatively sharp bend to the left coming from Hereford before the Stockbridge Road turning and there have been a number of accidents resulting in injury to vehicle occupants and road closures as a result of a vehicle going too fast and hitting the back of a stationary vehicle turning right.

The solutions:- 1. Widen the road to provide a separate lane for traffic turning right
2. Install additional warning signs

Speeding A417 Stretton Grandison to Newtown

The stretch of road on the A417 from Newtown to Stretton Grandison after the 50mph ends is de-restricted and residents have complained that this encourages excessive speeds above 50mph at locations where there are a number of bends in the road and accidents have occurred.

The solutions;- Extend 40 mph speed limit from Newtown to the 30mph speed limit at Stretton Grandison.

Section 4- Action plans

Watery Lane Yarkhill –Flooding

Watery Lane, between the long bend before Yarkhill Church and Stretton Grandison frequently floods when the River Frome rises, to a depth where it is unsafe for vehicles to pass. In January 2014 the emergency services were called out to rescue a person trapped in a vehicle near Little Yarkhill Court.

The cost of raising the road or altering the route would be prohibitive for the small amount of traffic; however there are solutions which would reduce the risk when the road floods

1. Depth indicators showing the depth of water.
2. Flood warning signs installed at the long bend before the church and at the Stretton Grandison entrance to Watery Lane which can be folded down when the river is not in flood. Local residents would be very willing to take responsibility for operating the signs depending on the local conditions

Cycleways

A large number of residents in Yarkhill expressed a desire for safe cycleways alongside the A roads to avoid cyclists having to use busy roads with cars and lorries which they considered to be unsafe.

This will require investment to provide cycle tracks or paths for cyclists.

ACTION MATRIX

April 2014

Yarkhill Parish Plan	Action Plan Template					Thematic group:	Traffic	Date: 29th April 2014	
Required outcome	Action	By who	Dependencies	Timescales	Cost	Funding sources	Who will apply	Who will monitor	Priority
Traffic Hazards reduced	Prepare report submit to Traffic Engineers for advice	Thematic group led by TM	Councillor Morgan	Beginning March 2014	TBA	Local Authority	Parish Council	Parish Council	H
RTA's decrease	Negotiate with Herefordshire Council to obtain improvements	Yarkhill Parish Council	Yarkhill PC	April -July 2014		Grants if possible			
	Follow through with HCC		Villagers and businesses affected by changes	August 2014 -Dec 2015		Donations			
	Implement improvements on local initiative e.g. hard standing for school children waiting for bus			June 2014 - Aug 2014					
Right turn lane at Monkhide	as above			Priority					
Speeding restrictions Crews Pitch				4					
Cycle Lanes alongside main road				6					
HGV Ban Stock Bridge Road				2					
Turning to Stoke Edith				3					
Flooding Watery lane				5					
Hard standing Monkhide				1					
Speeding A417									

TRANSPORT

The questionnaire distributed in May 2013 to inform the way forward with the village plan highlighted issues around transport. To identify exactly what those issues were and how to address them a more specific questionnaire was distributed in October 2013. The response to this was small, just 17 were returned. Essentially, although some acknowledged that in due course they might have to rely on buses, only two adults currently use the bus on a regular basis since they have no car. Two school age children identified some difficulty travelling at times other than either end of the normal school day.

This response gave no grounds to approach the local bus companies to try to improve services so an informal voluntary arrangement of giving lifts was investigated. Because volunteers working with young people and vulnerable adults need DBS clearance, the system is aimed at the adults.

There are currently 6 drivers who are prepared to give lifts and who are happy for their details to be distributed to those who might require lifts.

The 2 people who might want lifts were given the driver contact details on 2nd February 2014. The accompanying guidance notes advised them to ring a driver of their choice to help them out when necessary. By 28th March 2014, only one driver had given a lift to one of these people.

In summary:-

- The aim was to formulate an uncomplicated format for providing lifts to adults within the village who do not own a car and who cannot always reach their destination on our very restricted bus service.
- The Action was to identify volunteer drivers and give contact details to those needing lifts.
- The scheme was devised by Ann Elliott and Tony Freeman
- The scheme was in place within 5 months.

Section 4- Action plans

- There were no issues around funding because there are no costs
- Ann Elliott will update the scheme every 6 months via the Parish Newsletter/website to identify potential drivers and any further people in need of lifts.

LOCAL EMPLOYMENT

Following the questionnaire and listening to comments from people in the parish the following approaches have been formulated

Development of:

1. Preparation sessions locally for job application, c.v. construction for different types of posts, and interview skills consideration, computer literacy, and training for specific software programmes.
2. Assessment of local and nearby employment opportunities including apprenticeship schemes with regular updating.
3. Preparation of lists of local casual jobs in the locality to be advertised in the newsletter/website.

Item 1 might develop in to an activity operating from the village hall which may have internet access facilities in the future.

As regards 1.

While waiting updating of the village hall, a parishioner and his wife have kindly offered their facilities to help run half day/day courses to this end at their home (Nick and Helen Nenadich).

*Funding has been asked for via Dave Tristram based at HVOSS Bath St., Hereford for possible Airband internet access, 2 surface tablets, and a printer /scanner/copier. The possibility of funding (join up fee of £150.00) for wifi access to the village hall (not the monthly payments) is also being considered by the Yarkhill Charities Committee.

Section 4- Action Plans

As regards 2.

Some employers in or close to Yarkhill have been keen to advertise their apprenticeship schemes/jobs in the newsletter which can also be placed on our Facebook page and in due course, the parish website. The blogsite running at present is to be changed into a website to make advertising easier with the help of a local parishioner (CE).

Units to rent may be made available if a need is shown when small businesses cannot be run from home. At present this seems unlikely (Monkhide)

As regards 3.

The newsletter editor will run a page also for casual jobs which will be updated initially by the parish clerk. Via this medium, three parishioners have found an energetic excellent car cleaner already. Also a gardener and ironer have been found for two other parishioners.

It is hoped that once the parish is accustomed to seeing adverts in the newsletter/website it might provide a source that people regularly search.

N.B.

A lot of this planning depends heavily on people volunteering to help or to give up-to-date information.

Section 4- Action Plans

Contributors to date:

Mr and Mrs Crawford HFT-Mitsubishi, Rotherwas

Pallisers, Acorn Business Estate

Mr and Mrs Nenadich

Youngs, Acorn Business Estate

Gamron Ltd

Hopton Arms

The Trumpet Inn

Yet to be approached

Verzons (Mrs Chase)

Messrs Hawkins

Other local businesses in or close to the parish.

*No electronic equipment for the village hall was requested in the questionnaire but previous training sessions were found to be useful when run on specific software teaching courses. With the advent of less and less paper use and more and more electronic devices it is difficult to predict the actual need of the above devices. Further assessment of these will be undertaken.

ACTION MATRIX

Yarkhill Parish Plan		Action Plan Template				Thematic Group:		Local employment		Date: 29th April 2014	
Required outcome	Action	By who	Dependencies	Timescales	Cost	Funding sources	Who will apply	Who will monitor	Priority		
Local Employment	Identify four aspects	HW	Local employers/means of communication of information/local usersof	2-6 monthly				HW	H		
Casual	Source needs via newsletter	HW									
	Update bimonthly in newsletter	HW/KB									
	Assess outcomes bimonthly	HW		Ongoing				HW			
	Costs negligible										
Apprenticeships	Approach local employers	HW/KB	Local employers	Bimonthly				HW			
Seasonal and other jobs	Approach local employers	HW/KB	Local employers	Bimonthly				HW			
Small industrial units	None available	HW		6monthly assessments							
C.V. alteration/interview skills/computer literacy/specific software training	Help and training offered	N&HN	Numbers of places wanted	6 monthly workshops	No charge			HW/ N&HN			
Purchase of IT equipment e.g wifi surface tablets printer copier scanner	Assess users	HW C-aR	VHC	6 monthly workshops	Equipment	HVOSS Awards for all	HW possibly with VH committee	HW KB PC			

YARKHILL VILLAGE HALL

The Parish Plan Questionnaire responses indicated that the current Village Hall does not meet the requirements of the Parish as it stands and needs much improvement in order to be fully utilised and encourage further village activities to incorporate the whole Parish. The majority of responses indicated that villagers would like to see the Village Hall used for more events and activities.

As a result we have formed a steering group to implement a three year plan of encouraging further usage of the Village Hall and improvements that would be of benefit to Parishioners. The priority is to see the Hall being used more regularly for events and activities that are of benefit to Parishioners and we are currently consulting a cross section of villagers to determine what types of events they would like to see taking place. In addition we are aiming to raise funds to make significant improvements to the Hall, thereby encouraging more use, before looking at further, bigger scale improvements, such as extending.

We have identified a number of possibilities for future use, which all reflect the needs of the community, including a Youth Club, Women's Institute, Coffee Mornings, Tots playgroup, Pop-up cafe/ restaurant, Farmers Market, Film Nights and Skittles evenings, to name a few.

In place for 2014 is a monthly coffee morning, which takes place on the last Thursday of each month. The numbers attending the coffee morning are growing steadily and villagers have enjoyed the monthly get togethers. For children, an Easter Egg Hunt took place in April and a Summer BBQ is planned for the whole community. Fundraising events planned include a plant sale and car boot, charity auction and the annual Christmas Fayre. Whilst the aim of these events is to raise some money for improvements to the Village, essentially it is an opportunity to increase usage of the Hall and to consult on further use of this community building.

Section 4- Action Plans

A questionnaire has been delivered to all households in Yarkhill to try to gain further understanding of the types of activities that would be well attended. Responses have been trickling in and providing further ideas for activities that would be attended. From this we will develop a further programme of activities, both for fundraising and general usage of the Hall.

We have applied for a number of grants to help with improvements of the Village Hall, and have received £2500 from the Garfield Weston Trust. Applications for further grants are underway with assistance from Community First.

The first phase of a clear up of the Hall has been undertaken with new lampshades and windows and curtains cleaned. Much of the old and damaged furniture has been sold or removed and future plans include a repaint of the Hall for which volunteers will be requested. The tree that darkened the meeting room has been removed, the kitchen crockery has been reorganised and a new urn purchased.

To date approximately £4,000 has been raised through Christmas Fayres and the sale of furniture and grants to put towards new equipment and refurbishment. It is hoped that future events in 2014 will raise the same amount and with further grants we will be able to undertake some of the larger scale improvements, identified below:

The dated and impractical kitchen needs complete renovation to bring it in line with Health and Safety regulations. We have estimated the cost for this to be £7560.

The Hall features a wooden floor, which over the years has been neglected and now needs a total overhaul. Quotes received for a professional job indicate a cost of £1000.

Furniture in the Village Hall is dated, damaged and mismatched. We would like to replace this with more modern, practical and uniform equipment at a cost of around £500.

Section 4- Action Plans

The heating system is inefficient and expensive to run. In order to modernise and ultimately save costs we are looking to replace this with a modern heating system at a cost of around £10,000.

The windows in the Hall are old fashioned and not energy efficient and we have received a quote for replacing these with double glazing of £11,000.

The Village Hall Committee will be meeting with Richard Timney of Community First in May for a Village Hall Health Check. This will no doubt identify further areas of improvement.

The Village Hall Steering Group consists of members of the Village Hall Committee, and includes: Wendy Nash, Ian Carr, David Madgen, Peter Francis, Kate Colcombe, Sarah Daw, Helen Walsh and Katie Bott.

ACTION MATRIX

Yarkhill Parish Plan	Action Plan Template					Thematic group:	V.H.C.	Date April 29th 2014	
Required outcome	Action	By who	Dependencies	Timescales	Cost	Funding sources	Who will apply	Who will monitor	Priority
Increased use of village hall	Ask community what they want	VHC	Commity response	completed	nil				H
Increased use of village hall	Building improvements	VHC	Parish council	6 months	£30,000	Grants & fundraising	KB	VHC & PC	M
Income generation	Raise awareness	VHC		on-going				VHC	L

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH, YARKHILL

The medieval church dedicated to St. John the Baptist, extensively renovated by the Victorians in 1862, stands at the heart of the parish as a miniscule museum, there to inspire and inform; primarily a spiritual place for quiet contemplation and prayer.

The Parish Plan questionnaire specifically asked ‘for parishioners’ views on the use of the church building’. The response was divided between those who wished to see the church retained exclusively as a place of worship and those who favoured adaptations to the building to accommodate wider community use.

Those who regard the church exclusively as a place for worship, which may include parishioners seeking the church’s presence for ‘rites of passage’; baptism, marriage and funerals, can be assured that it is the aim of the PCC to keep the church as a focal point for the parish and a place of welcome and worship for all.

The church has strong links with the history with bell ringing. The earliest evidence is of four bells recorded in the King Edward Inventory of 1553. “The father of change ringing” Fabian Stedman, son of the then incumbent Francis Stedman, was baptised here in 1640. Yarkhill’s recent bell project, dedicated to Fabian Stedman, has been the conservation of the old ring of four bells dated 1671 and the installation of a new ring of eight bells cast at Whitechapel Foundry in 2011. The new bells attract bell ringers from all over the country and have enabled some of the younger members of our community to socialise whilst acquiring a new skill which they in turn can take to other bell towers. The installation of the new bells was completed with the help of private loans of £12,000. In the past year we have been able to repay £4,000 leaving £8,000 outstanding.

Phase 2 of the bells project is the reordering of the bell tower to install a kitchenette and toilet facilities combined with raising the ringing floor.

Section 4- Action plans

The estimate for this is around £61,000. The PCC is mindful that there are currently outstanding loans on phase 1 which need to be repaid before we can commence phase 2. In preparation for phase 2 grant funding is being researched and it is hoped that community grants may be accessible for the project which could allow wider community use of the church building. Amenities which the church building might accommodate have been suggested such as a local lending library or art gallery.

Currently the parish is planning to mount a display in the church of memorabilia marking the outbreak of the First World War on 1st August 1914. There will be a Service of Commemoration at St John the Baptist at **11.00 a.m. on Sunday 3rd August** followed by refreshments in the church.

The churchyard is maintained with help from Merrivale. Available grave space is now very limited and we are allowed to make future burials in the vacant areas to the north and south of the church building from which the 18th and 19th Century headstones that you now see lining the wall on the north side were lifted in the fifties and sixties.

The tall overgrown leylandii trees on the eastern boundary of the churchyard which have been overshadowing some of the more recent graves have now been felled and will be replaced by a beech hedge.

The Church continues to perform a social function within the community; the annual Fête and Produce Show takes place on 26th July at the Moat field, Yarkhill Court. We also engage with the wider group of Hop and Cider Churches to put on social events such as quizzes and musical entertainments successfully raising funds for charity and to support core costs.

For further information on Yarkhill Church visit <http://www.yarkhillchurch.org.uk>

Section 4- Action plans

Yarkhill PCC resident in Yarkhill: Mrs. Jane Thomas, Mr. David Thomas, Mrs. Sarah Payne,
Mrs. Julia Savagar

Yarkhill PCC non-resident: Revd. Preb. Sue Strutt, Mrs. Joyce Barton, Mr. Ashley Fortey,
Mrs. Margaret Harrison, Mr. & Mrs. Michael Hibbins, Mrs. Annie Lane.

ACTION MATRIX

Yarkhill Parish Plan		Action Plan Template						Thematic Group:		Yarkhill PCC		Date: 18th April 2014	
Partners/													
Dependencies													
Timescales													
Cost													
Funding sources													
Who will apply													
Who will monitor													
Priority													
Preserve church as 'Place of Worship'	Support a responsible, caring PCC mindful of its pastoral, ecumenical and social responsibilities	PCC	The Incumbent Herefordshire Diocese Ledbury Deanery	Perpetuity	In 2013 our general costs were £8,011 of which £5,650 was Parish Share	Annual church income is raised from regular giving, donations, fees and fund raising	N/A	PCC	H				
Bell Project Phase 1	Repay loans	PCC Bell Fund	Bell ringing community		£8,000	Income for the Bell and Tower restoration fund is raised through donations, grants and fund raising	N/A	PCC	H				
Bell Project Phase 2	Install kitchenette and toilet	PCC Bell Fund	PCC Bell ringing community		£61,000	Donations Community grants Fund raising	PCC	PCC	M				

BULK BUYING OF HEATING OIL

Approximately 70 respondents to the questionnaire of last year indicated an interest in a fuel bulk buying scheme. There are already a few small buying schemes active in the Yarkhill Area where a group of 4 or 5 persons get together when they require heating oil and try to obtain the best price. The Parish Steering Group feel that a further saving could be made if these small groups amalgamated and a larger bulk purchase could be made.

There usually is a Voluntary Procurement Officer who gets together with all interested parties on a regular basis to establish the quantity of Oil required. This office then looks at the total quantity of oil required and will submit a request to a chosen group of suppliers to try and establish the lowest price possible. Once this price offer is established the Officer will then submit a spreadsheet to that supplier who, generally, will then contact the purchaser listed to confirm payment details before supply.

The average heating oil price for today, Wednesday 13th April 2014, is 51.93 pence per litre. ref:- BoilerJuice.

One company contacted (CPL) stated that they have sold a bulk buy order of 50000 litres for one village at a saving of 3.1 pence per litre (£31.00 per 1000 litres).

Watson's Petroleum of Ledbury offer a similar bulk buying scheme but are unable to give a ball park saving figure except to say a bulk buy scheme will save money, if the fuel is bought in sufficient quantity. They also offer a saving scheme which could save money. If a buyer is willing to pay into a monthly deposit scheme that money will earn currently 4% p.a. interest until used for the purchase of oil. 1500 litres per year at 52 pence per litre will require a monthly deposit of approximately £65.00 per month.

Section 4 – Action plans

CPL also offers a bulk buy system. They will offer a first purchase of “cash on the nail” and thereafter 21 days with no other upfront fees. They believe that they can always offer the best price. Two other companies did not return calls.

There is also the Community First Scheme who, for a membership fee of £20.00 p.a. will search and find the best price and will then inform the members of this offer. The member then orders and pays the recommended supplier.

Another scheme to use is BoilerJuice which offers a scheme where they can amalgamate orders from a Post Code area, search for the best price and deliver. This can be done on a one-to-one basis and does not require a procurement officer. They also offer a "Cash for Communities Scheme" where they donate 25p per 100 litres bought to a charity of choice. See www.boilerjuice.com.

BMX CYCLE TRACK

Source of the requirement

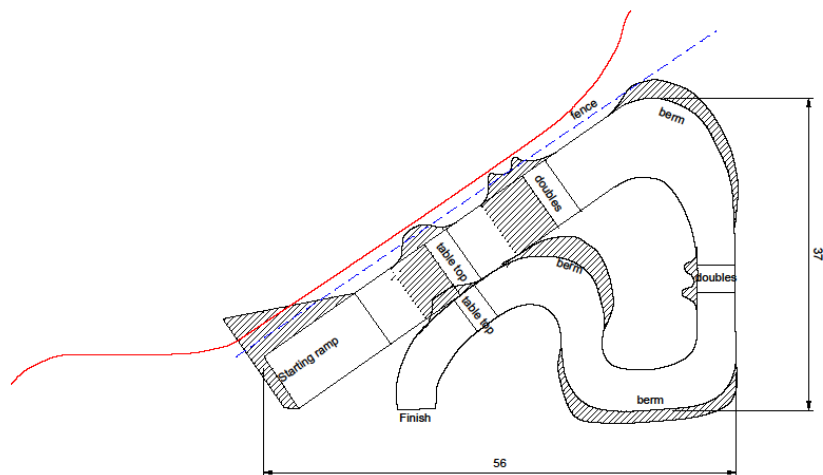
In response to question 7 of the youth questionnaire 70% of respondents chose an off road cycle track as the facility they would most like to see in Yarkhill. The most practical form of track is a BMX track as the spatial requirements are quite small. Nevertheless the sport is well established and is now an Olympic Event at its highest level. A grass roots facility in the village could provide a great opportunity for young people to develop their skills in this sport and even be used for competitive events providing volunteers could be found to organise them.

Track layout

As this is an established sport there is much information on the internet about planning a facility. Tracks can be fitted into a plan area as small as 30M x 14M although 60M x 40M would allow for a more interesting course.

As illustrated on page 2, the site need not necessarily be a regular shape.

Section 4- Action plans



Potential site

One of the major problems in creating a facility in Yarkhill is the lack of public open space. Other villages that have existing or planned tracks generally can tack them onto an existing recreation area. We are therefore totally reliant on the goodwill of existing landowners to offer a suitable space on affordable terms. To date, despite a general appeal in the newsletter and a direct approach to a major landowner nothing has been offered. PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT THIS SCHEME CANNOT GO AHEAD WITHOUT A WILLING LANDOWNER.

Section 4- Action plans

Construction costs

A villager who has earth moving equipment and appropriate knowledge and skills has kindly agreed to carry out the civil engineering works. There is likely to be a cost for importing fill material to create the vertical profile of the track and possibly a requirement for materials for land drainage. However, as developers have to pay for exporting arisings to landfill it is possible that a free source may be found. This would very much depend on local building activity taking place at a time to suit the track programme. It is impossible at this stage with no site identified to estimate costs. However Fownhope Parish Council have recently agreed funds of £1000 towards a similar facility.

Funding source

Although funding has been drastically reduced over recent times there are still a number of potential sources available. Engaging children in physical activity is an important theme which currently has central government support. However funds are generally offered on a matched basis so it is likely that the community will need to raise some level of funding.

Planning

It is probable that if a site were offered that a recreational facility would be a different use class under the Town & Country Planning Act. This may mean that a planning application would be required. If this were the case there would be an application fee albeit at a reduced rate if the application was made by the parish council.

ACTION MATRIX

April 2014

Yarkhill Parish Plan	Action Plan Template					Thematic group:	BMX track	Date 29th April 2014	
Required outcome	Action	By who	Dependencies	Timescales	Cost	Funding sources	Who will apply	Who will monitor	Priority
BMX track	Identify site	ME	Landowners	6 months					H
	Discuss with LPA	ME							
	Agree layout	ME							
	Planning application	ME	Herefordshire Council						
	Cost estimate	ME	Parish council		TBA once site identified	TBA once site identified	ME	Parish council	
	Funding application	ME	Grant administrators						
	Construct track	SD	Material availability						
<p>Notes</p> <p>1. The whole project can only happen if a suitable site is offered to the parish. If there are no offers made by December 2015 the project will be abandoned.</p> <p>2. If a site is offered the remaining actions will should take 4-6 months depending on the time of year.</p>									

YARKHILL PARISH PLAN- Post survey initiatives

Yarkhill ‘Field to Fork’ Festival

Asparagus, Cider and Strawberry Celebration taking place on Saturday 7th June, 2014, The Yarkhill ‘Field to Fork’ Festival is a celebration of local food and drink from this small valley in rural Herefordshire. Showcasing the best local asparagus, cider and strawberries, amongst other locally produced fare, with live music, cooking demonstrations, competitions and tasting opportunities this is a wonderful opportunity for producers and local farmers to promote their produce and brands and engage with consumers. Raising money for The Haven Breast Cancer – a locally based Charity which offers vital support and therapies to people affected by breast cancer and Yarkhill Community projects.

The intention is that this will become an annual event. Once established this should provide an increasing level of funds for both charities and community projects.

Working parties

Following the success of the litter picking working parties in Yarkhill, recently praised by the local MP in the Hereford Times, the Parish Council is planning to expand the remit of volunteer working parties.

In addition to litter picking, the purpose of the working parties would be to undertake some small projects in the parish, for example minor footpath works, cleaning signs, clearing vegetation where necessary and maintaining the village hall.

The intention is to give parishioners the opportunity to help keep the parish a desirable place to live. The working parties will be arranged for a Saturday morning, probably half a dozen times a year.

YARKHILL PARISH PLAN- Acknowledgements

The steering group would like to sincerely thank the many people in the parish who gave up their time to complete the survey and attend the open events. Without your support we would not have been able to produce the plan.

The following members of the community contributed to the production of the Yarkhill Parish Plan:

Yarkhill Parish Plan Steering Group members:

Julia Savagar, David Madgen, Tom Misselbrook, Katie Bott, Hazel Walter, Ian Carr, Peter O'Neil, Michael Needham, Andrew Kelly, Martin Ennis.

Yarkhill Parish Plan contributors:

Ann Elliott, Tony Freeman, Tom Misselbrook, Peter O'Neil, Julia Savagar, David Madgen, Katie Bott, Hazel Walter, Martin Ennis.

Support at events and questionnaire distribution:

Hazel Brooke, Hazel Misselbrook, Chrissie Dobson.

In addition, the steering group were supported at various stages by:

Section 6- Acknowledgements

Sophie Price- Formerly of Community First.

Chris Gooding- Formerly of Herefordshire Council.

The Herefordshire Council research team

Lynda Wilcox- HALC

Cllr. Patricia Morgan- Frome Ward