



Wellow Parish Plan 2006



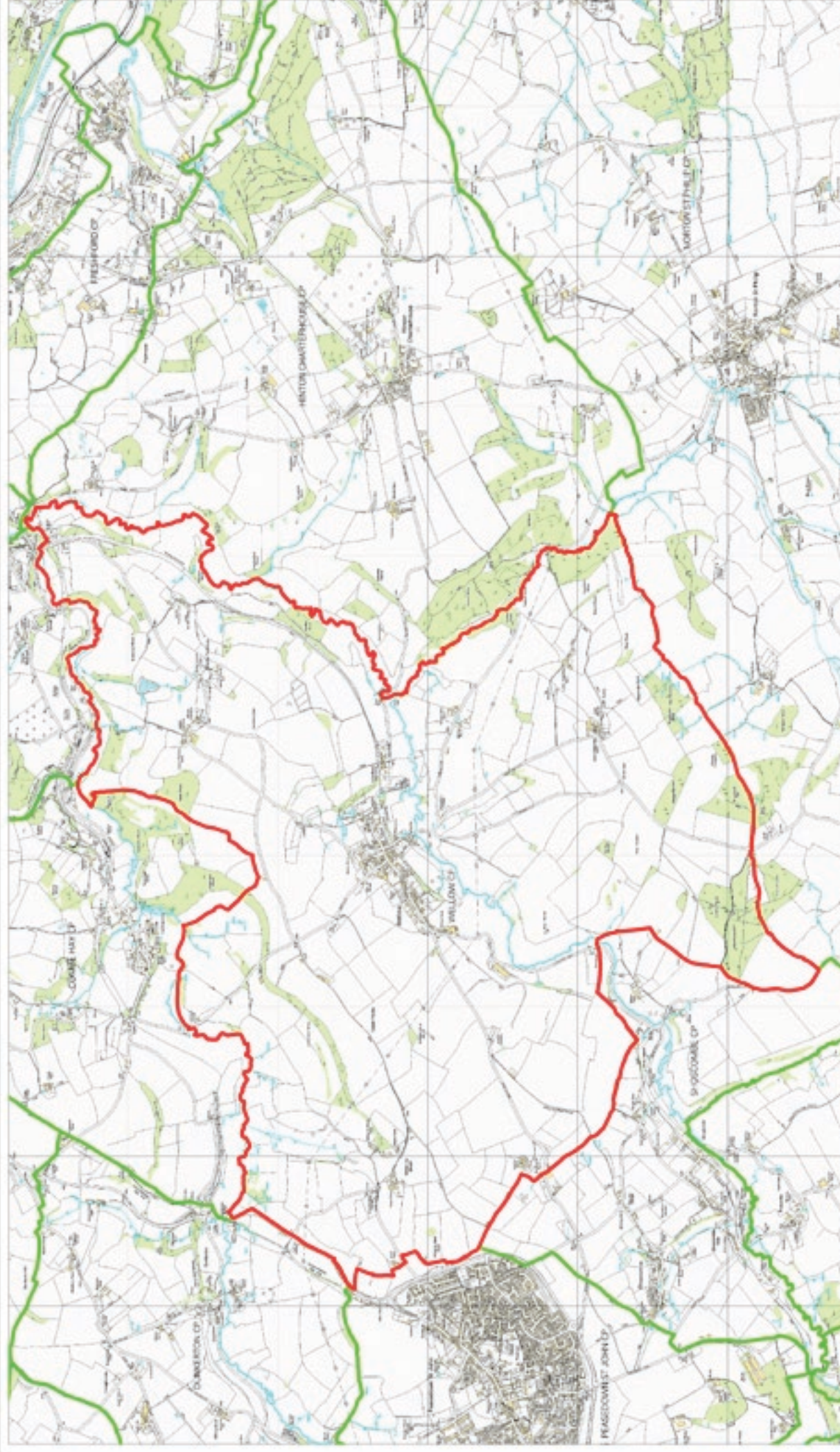
Willow Parish Council

Bath & North East Somerset Council
Riverside
Temple Street
Keynsham
Bristol BS31 1LA
Tel 01225 477000



Compiled by MTite on 9 June 2006

Scale 1:35000





Dedication

Although many have contributed to the production of the Wellow Parish Plan, perhaps no one has taken such a keen interest in Wellow - past, present and future - as Gordon Hewlett. Not only did Gordon get the Parish Plan up and running through his contributions on the Steering Group, but his enthusiasm for the project and his love of the people and the place leave us the poorer for his passing. We hope that the Parish Plan might be seen as a small part of his legacy, not only to those of us who knew him personally but also to those who did not.



Index

1.0	<i>Introduction</i>	1
1.1	Welcome	1
1.2	The Parish and Village of Wellow	1
1.3	A Brief History of Wellow	1
1.4	Wellow Today	2
1.5	A Vision for Wellow	3
1.6	Wellow Sustainability	4
2.0	<i>The Consultation Process</i>	5
2.1	Conduct of the Wellow Parish Plan	5
2.2	Wellow Parish Plan Timeline	5
2.3	Summary of Issues Raised at ‘Wellow Past, Wellow Future’	6
2.4	Summary of Working Groups	6
2.5	The Questionnaires	6
3.0	<i>Working Group Findings</i>	8
3.1	Development and Village Design	8
3.2	Environment and Conservation	10
3.3	Local Businesses and Employment	12
3.4	Parish Council	13
3.5	Senior Generation	15
3.6	Social and Public Services	16
3.7	Traffic and Roads	18
3.8	St Julian’s Church and Religion	20
3.9	Village Hall, Playground and Playing Field	22
3.10	Village School and Education	24
3.11	Village Shop	25
3.12	Younger Generation	27
3.13	Other Bright Ideas	28
4.0	<i>Implementing the Parish Plan</i>	29
4.1	Implementation	29
4.2	Final Words	30
5.0	<i>Appendices</i>	31
	Appendix A – Summary of Vision Statements	31
	Appendix B – Detailed Transcript of ‘Wellow Past, Wellow Future’	33



1.0 Introduction

1.1 Welcome

Welcome to the 2006 Wellow Parish Plan. This document presents the findings and recommendations of the people of the Parish of Wellow.

The document starts with a description of the Parish and outlines some of the visions of the community. It then discusses a variety of issues of concern to the population and identifies aims and actions for follow on work. It also describes the measures that will be taken to ensure successful implementation of the plan. It is only when the plan is executed that it will add real value to the Parish!

The Steering Group take this opportunity to place on record their thanks to all those who participated in the process, including those who formed the Working Groups and all those who expressed an opinion through the questionnaire or other routes. In particular we would like to thank Gordon Hewlett, Shirley Hurdle and Marian Osborne for their contributions.

1.2 The Parish and Village of Wellow

The Parish of Wellow lies some three miles to the south of Bath and the largest centre of population is the village of Wellow itself. Outlying smaller communities are located at Twinhoe, White Ox Mead, Baggeridge and bordering Midford. A map showing the boundaries of the Parish may be found on the inside front cover. The Parish mainly comprises land devoted to agriculture which is the chief local industry, although tourism and leisure play a significant part.



Wellow was once the largest parish in Somerset when it included such communities as Peasedown St John and Shoscombe but now it is greatly reduced. The population of the Parish numbers just over 500 compared with over 1,000 in the 1950s when many more than today were employed in agriculture.

1.3 A Brief History of Wellow ¹

The Parish of Wellow is steeped in history. The oldest evidence of human habitation in Wellow is the Long Barrow at Stoney Littleton, now dated at between 3,000 and 5,000BC. The next oldest is the Roman Villa to the north west of the Village. This was the centre of a large estate which is thought to have comprised most of the existing Wellow Parish. Curiously enough, there is no mention of Wellow in the Domesday Book although the discovery of a Saxon stone font gives credibility to the belief that there was a Saxon church.



In the medieval period part of Wellow was owned by the Carthusian monks of Hinton Charterhouse and part by the Hungerford family of Farleigh Hungerford. During the Reformation the priory land passed to the Hungerfords.

¹ The text of this history is based on that used in the 1993 Village Appraisal.

In the early eighteenth century, the Hungerford land was sold to Earl Temple of Newton St Loe who held it until 1907 when the estate was sold on the death of the Earl to a Mr Collins of Bath. His family still have a small tenure but the days of the big landlords have now gone.

The present St Julian's church, a magnificent building, was constructed in about 1372 by Thomas Hungerford (who was the first speaker of the House of Commons) and is a testimony to the wealth of the area which was largely based on wool. Another famous alleged resident of the Village was John Bull who has been credited with an early composition of the National Anthem. The Packhorse Bridge probably dates from the sixteenth century and would have been used by the animals carrying bales of wool to Norton St Philip. An annual sheep fair was held in the Village in October each year until 1925 and many properties in the High Street have clauses in their deeds concerning the penning of sheep at the fair. Around the turn of the 20th century, some 2,000 sheep were sold in a single fair.



Some houses in the Village, such as Wellow House and George House, have evidence of Elizabethan style architecture. The Manor House, built around 1620, has a mantelpiece with the Hungerford coat of arms. Church Farm also dates from this time. There was a corn mill by the ford with a mill dam and leet which, although old, is not dated accurately. In 1884 the Fullers Earth building was constructed.

The Radstock arm of the Somersetshire Coal Canal, running from Midford through Wellow, was constructed around the turn of the nineteenth century to carry coal from the Somerset coalfield to Bath. The canal was never operated fully as it suffered from levelling and other problems. By 1815, a tramway had been built on the route of the canal to link the Radstock collieries with the canal at Midford. The Radstock Tramway was sold in 1871 to the Somerset and Dorset Railway and the railway opened to trains in 1874, with a station at Wellow.

The link created between Wellow and the Somerset coalfield opened up a new source of employment for men from the Village who worked in mines in Radstock and Dunkerton, though these were all shut down by the 1960s. The railway was closed under the Beeching axe in 1966. The first daily bus service to the Village did not begin until after the closure of the railway. Subsequently, the railway station was owned by the artist Sir Peter Blake who was part of that highly creative period in the 1960s. The Beatles' Sergeant Pepper album cover is attributed to Sir Peter. Some residents can recall seeing many famous faces, including John Lennon, in the Village.

In recent years, the smaller farms have largely disappeared and farm work represents a much reduced source of employment. Most of the working population in the Parish now finds employment elsewhere, although there is an increasing number of people 'working from home'.

1.4 Wellow Today

The Parish's population comprises an interesting mix of people. Some of our most senior residents have spent all or most of their lives in the Parish, as have many of the younger population. Whilst the farming industry has gradually changed over the years and less local employment has been available, there has been a growth in the number of families who live in the Parish but commute to their daily work. We are pleased to see many families with young children in the Parish.

Although small, the Parish has a number of key assets whose strengths are recognised by the population. St Julian's primary school provides education for the younger children and has pupils from both the Parish and from a wider area. St Julian's church provides a focal point for many in the Parish. The Village Hall and attached playing field, although in need of further modernisation and improvement, are much used for a variety of events

by local groups including Wellow Amateur Dramatics Society (WADS), Wellow and District Horticultural Society with its very well supported annual flower show and country fair and the Magic Box pre-school group.

The Fox and Badger is at the heart of the social scene and attracts visitors from wider areas. The local farms provide some employment and also help to protect the environment throughout the Parish. Wellow Trekking Centre is well known in the area and attracts many visitors to the Parish. The Village Shop, a community run venture, provides local shopping facilities and is also a social centre.



We have recently had the opening of the National Cycle Route 24, The Colliers Way, running almost the length of the Parish, much of it now utilising the track bed of the former Somerset and Dorset Railway line between Midford and Radstock. There is a lot here for a small community, but it has to be said, there is room for improvement.

The Parish character can be best summarised by saying it has a great sense of community. It has all the essentials for a vibrant rural community: church, pub, shop, school, village hall and playing field. Its 500 or so residents come from many backgrounds and socio-economic strata. This adds to the strength of community spirit. The number of groups within the Parish, the activities staged and the response to problems that have arisen from time to time are testament to this. Many visitors to the Parish comment on this, harking back to days when the majority of our nation was like it is today in Wellow.



However, nothing stands still and the purpose of this plan is to identify those things that we as a community wish to change/improve and some of the ways in which that might be achieved. The endorsement by the Parish Council of this plan is greatly welcomed and together we can make it happen. We look forward to your continued participation.

1.5 A Vision for Wellow

Wellow already has a strong sense of community and what is clear throughout the research that has been conducted is that this is highly valued by the residents. The sense of community is more important than the bricks and mortar of the Parish. A strong community spirit brings people together, whether to enjoy each other's company or to help and support each other. This is already manifest in many ways: the Village Shop is a prime example where residents identified the need for the shop and then took action to establish and then run it.

The underlying message seems to be that most people are happy with the Parish as it is and do not want to see radical change to it or its surroundings. There seems to be an underlying feeling that people want the Village to be 'alive' and that it should not turn into a dormitory for commuters. There are however a number of key areas where some change would be welcomed, the most obvious of these being :

- **Traffic** – many people expressed concerns about the volume and speed of traffic through the Parish, and the Village in particular. This is exacerbated in some areas, for example by the school. Traffic brings other problems, such as issues concerning parking. Plans for developments outside the Parish, but in the locality, suggest that the traffic related problems are likely to become worse unless some form of action is taken.

- **Village Hall** – whilst the hall and playing field were seen to be adequate, many people would like to see further improvements to the building and the facilities it provides. In an ideal world they would like to see the existing building replaced with something more suited to the variety of uses to which it is put and the playing field levelled and perhaps landscaped.
- **Leisure** - organised activities and sports facilities were suggested by a number of people.
- **Transport** – much support for keeping and indeed improving public transport to and from the Parish, including the bus service. This provides a lifeline for many who do not own cars. However, as we go to print, we learn of the decision by B&NES to terminate the bus service. Although the impact of this will, in part, be offset by proposals for a ‘Fare Car’ scheme and an extension of the Norton Radstock ‘Dial-a-Ride’ service, we are not confident that the Parish will be adequately served by public transport from July 2006..
- **Parish Council influence over planning** – people would like the Parish Council to either have more influence or to exert their influence more in relation to planning applications, particularly where developments do not adhere to their agreed plans.
- **Young population** – the Parish is currently only able to offer limited facilities for the growing younger population.

As noted earlier, there are a number of centres for the community within the Parish, including the church, school, pub, shop, and village hall, that provide focal points for social contact. In addition there are the variety of clubs and societies noted. We have also identified a number of communities within the overall community, for example there is a strong community spirit between the residents of Manor Close sheltered housing, the residents of Henley View and several others. The vision for the future is for the Parish to protect and further develop this sense of community.

Conservation and the environment are also very important. The Village is currently surrounded by green fields thanks to the local farms. These help provide a buffer to the threat of large scale development. The lack of such development has also allowed the Parish to be a haven for a diversity of wildlife. A community group is gradually developing an area to the immediate south of the Village as a wildlife conservation area.

The need for some development over time is recognised, but only in ways that accord with the wishes of the parishioners and not in ways that may spoil it. Village lifestyle was reported as being important to many people and any significant development may damage this.

1.6 Wellow Sustainability

In response to the growing awareness in parts of the community of the gradual exhaustion of world oil supplies, 2006 saw the launch of an energy conservation plan – ‘Wellow Sustainability’. Wellow Village, not being supplied by the natural gas grid, is likely to feel the effects of energy shortages sooner than many other communities.

An Energy Steering Group has been formed and its main aim is to alert the community to the need to prepare for the inevitable localisation of most economic activities within the next two decades, as a consequence of transportation costs becoming exorbitant.

It is hoped that this trend should only strengthen the community’s sense of cohesion and mutual support similar to that experienced 50+ years ago when the Parish was more self-sufficient. It is hoped that the economies of greater community energy self-sufficiency will in turn ameliorate longer term global warming.

2.0 The Consultation Process

2.1 Conduct of the Wellow Parish Plan

The idea of developing a Parish Plan was first discussed in late 2003. Subsequently a small Steering Group of five was established, which included two members of the Parish Council. The Steering Group met on a frequent basis to work out how to develop the plan.

A grant application was made to the Countryside Agency and a substantial grant was subsequently awarded. At the start, we were assisted with much input from Community Action and Chew Magna Parish Council, as well as from B&NES.



Parishioners were invited to attend our first formal event, the 'Wellow Past, Wellow Future' event at which they could both study the history of the Parish and offer their views, concerns and their ideas for the future. These responses were grouped together into themes and a Working Group of interested parishioners was established to address each theme, twelve groups in all.

The Steering Group, with support from the Working Groups, developed a broad ranging questionnaire that was distributed to all households in the Parish. We were delighted to have a 67% return rate for this. In addition to the main questionnaire, a Young Persons questionnaire was devised for those aged between 11 and 17. This was also delivered to all households at the same time as the main questionnaire. The Working Groups then explored particular issues and framed visions, aims and action plans for the topics they were concerned with. Unfortunately, the Steering Group was reduced to four members at this time, through the untimely death of one member, and, not long afterwards, another member left the Parish to start a new life in East Anglia.

The Steering Group reviewed the output from the Working Groups and used this to produce the first draft of the Parish Plan. This draft was then made available to all within the Parish for their comment prior to the production of this final version.

2.2 Wellow Parish Plan Timeline

The timeline for developing this plan appears to be quite extended. Much of this has been due to the difficulty of developing and maintaining momentum in such a small community and with such a small Steering Group. What has been gratifying, and symbolises the spirit of the Parish, is that a number of actions identified in the plan are already being taken forward prior to the publication of the plan.



September 2003

May 6th 2004

June 19th 2004

May 2005

June 2005

July 2005– October 2005

November 2005 – April 2006

May 2006

June 2006

Committee formed

Grant approved

'Wellow Past, Wellow Future' event

Questionnaires sent out

Questionnaires collected

Data input and analysis

Drafting of report

Final consultation and drafting

Publication

2.3 *Summary of Issues Raised at ‘Wellow Past, Wellow Future’*

The ‘Wellow Past, Wellow Future’ event was held on 19th June 2004 in the Village Hall. An exhibition tracing the history of the Parish was put on display and parishioners were invited to put up ‘post-it’ notes about anything they felt strongly about in relation to the Parish. There was an excellent turn out on the day and well over 100 ideas and thoughts were captured. A detailed transcript of all the issues raised can be found in Appendix A. The Steering Group then consolidated the comments into a number of naturally forming themes as shown below :

- Local Businesses and Employment
- Environment, Conservation and Quality of life
- Traffic, Roads, Paths and Streetlights
- Village Assets – Hall, Shop, Church, School, Car Park and playing field
- Development, including low cost housing
- Welfare, including Healthcare, sense of community and crime
- Public Services such as the bus service
- Vision, Publicity and Image

It is interesting to note that this event identified the key themes that remained constant throughout the plan process, such as traffic and Village Design and development.

2.4 *Summary of Working Groups*

The following Working Groups were set up to investigate particular areas of concern for the Parishioners :

- Development and Village Design
- Environment and Conservation
- Local Businesses and Employment
- Parish Council
- Senior Generation
- Social and Public Services
- Traffic and Roads
- Village Church
- Village Hall, Playground and Playing Field
- Village School and Education
- Village Shop
- Younger Generation

2.5 *The Questionnaires*

The main questionnaire was developed using the ‘Village Appraisals for Windows’ software package (devised and supplied by the University of Gloucestershire) and comprised 72 questions. Each of the Working Groups was allowed to contribute a number of questions and the Steering Group included additional questions covering demographics and areas not addressed by the Working Groups, as well as free text space to permit additional comment on any topic. The Young Persons questionnaire was prepared in conjunction with the Younger Generation Working Group. A copy of both questionnaires was distributed to every household in the Parish. The results were then entered into the computer package that was used to analyse the results.

Mandate

The statistics below demonstrate that a significant majority of the population responded to the questionnaire and this means that the results were deemed representative and, as such, were valid to use as a basis for developing the Parish Plan.

- 139 households returned the questionnaire, representing 67% of the 208 households identified in the 2001 Census.
- 249 adults responded to the questionnaire. The Census indicated there were 405 parishioners aged 16 and over, so the response was 61.5%.
- The number of people, including children, in the households who responded to the questionnaire totalled 343. Out of the census population of 511, again this represents 67% of the total.
- The ages of the respondents tied in reasonably with the demographics of the Parish, by reference to the census. 5% were in the 18-24 age group, compared to a census population of around 8%. 69% were in the 25-64 range, compared to a population of 50% in this age range, and 25% of respondents were 65 and over, compared to 21% of the population.
- The gender split of the respondents was 46% male, 54% female, the census population split being nearer 50:50.

Key points from questionnaire

- Less than 12% of the population were born in the Parish, 16% came here with family (perhaps not of their own volition), which means that 72% of the population chose to live here.
- Less than 25% of the population had been here for five years or less, approximately a quarter falls between 6 and 15 years. 20% have been here for between 16 and 25 years and 30% for 26 or more years.
- 50% identified the community as the most important feature of Wellow and 71% said they want the Parish to remain a friendly, caring community. 93% want the Parish Sweeper retained.
- 26% identified the environment as the most important feature of Wellow and 99% say that the quality of the countryside is important to them, of whom 88% state that it is very important.
- 85% want traffic reduced and 65% do not want street lighting, however, 22% want more street lighting.
- 66% want the Parish to stay broadly as it is, with 53% wanting the future to be guided by residents' preferences. 32% want the Parish to be a working community, 1% as a commuter community and only 4% want the Village to expand.

Census Statistics

The following statistics were drawn from a review of the 2001 census :

- Of 208 households, 73% were owner occupied, 17% social housing and 10% private rented.
- The population of 511 was an increase of 6% from the 1991 Census, an increase of 13% from the 1981 Census, and 26% from the 1971 Census.
- Of 364 people aged between 16 and 64, 59% were in employment, 24% were economically inactive and only four people were unemployed, of whom three had either never worked or were long-term unemployed.
- 371 people were said to be in good health and 75 suffering from long-term illness.
- 23 households had no vehicle and yet there were 326 vehicles owned/used by parishioners.

3.0 *Working Group Findings*

The following sections describe the findings and recommendations based on the work of each of the Working Groups. Each section has the following structure :

- Statements that put the topic into context and typically describe the current situation.
- Comments specific to the results and findings of the questionnaire.
- A vision statement - this describes where we would eventually like to be in relation to the issue. The vision statements do not concern themselves with whether or not they are truly possible to achieve or how they could be achieved.
- Long, Medium and Short term aims – these are the stepping stones to achieving the vision.
- Actions and Quick Wins – these are things that could be done relatively quickly that would return useful benefits.

3.1 *Development and Village Design*

As noted in the introduction, the built environment of the Parish has its origins in agriculture and the Village has developed primarily around the different farms, both within the Village and across the Parish at large, although many have since been subsumed into the smaller number of larger farms that exist today.

The construction of the canal through the valley around 200 years ago and, subsequently, the tramway and, thereafter, the railway, brought with them further development. Although the outlying settlements have not been subject to significant development over the last 50 years or so, social housing and infill development have seen the Village grow to its current size. This final phase of development has coincided with significant changes in agriculture.

The rural setting of the Parish is highly valued, the majority of the population having been attracted to live here by the features outlined in the Environment and Conservation section of this document. The majority wish to see the Parish remain broadly as it is, with little desire to see the Village expand.

Whilst a number of respondents would like to see the Parish remain as a working community, there is only minority support for any form of development except for improved facilities and amenities for residents. A significant minority (41%) supported agricultural related development and leisure/tourism related development (34%). By contrast 35% were against any form of development at all, even if it benefitted the parishioners.

Although the majority are against most forms of development, the need for more affordable housing and housing for first time buyers was seen as necessary by a sizeable minority (44.1% and 34.7% respectively).

If development is to take place, small scale conversion and/or redevelopment of existing buildings is preferred, as is traditional design, few favouring contemporary design. Perhaps most significantly, parishioners wish to see any future development guided by the residents.

The emerging B&NES Local Plan has already been adopted for development control purposes by the B&NES. This document sets out planning policy for the B&NES area, including Wellow. The Wellow Inset Map that currently forms part of the Draft Local Plan is reproduced on the inside back cover.

The consultation process has also highlighted concerns over traffic and how to control it, without resorting to unsightly modern methods, especially if these would lead to the need for street lighting. Traffic concerns are dealt with particularly in the relevant section of this report.



Vision

To protect, preserve and enhance the built environment in the Parish in order to retain its rural character and to control its future development and the use of both land and buildings for the benefit of parishioners and visitors alike.

Long Term Aims

- To produce, maintain and periodically update a written statement of the parishioners' vision in a form acceptable to B&NES as a Supplementary Planning Guidance document.
- Protection of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Greenbelt designations within the Parish.
- Apply pressure to B&NES to ensure planning permissions are properly implemented having regard to all conditions attached and enforcement action taken promptly whenever necessary.
- To ensure that the car park remains available for use by residents and visitors.
- To ensure that the highest standards of design are incorporated into any development in the Parish.

Medium Term Aims

- To ensure that the boundaries of the Village remain substantially unchanged to discourage any expansion.
- To support and promote the vision and aims set out in the Environment and Conservation and the Traffic sections of this plan to deliver a holistic approach to these inter-related issues.

Short Term Aims

- Apply maximum pressure to ensure that all vacant buildings are brought back into use, especially those that are derelict or in poor condition.

Actions and Quick Wins

- The creation of a Working Group to develop the themes flowing from the consultation process in conjunction with the Working Groups dealing with traffic and environment and conservation.
- To see the implementation of the proposals for The Batch.
- To encourage participation by Parishioners in debates on issues relating to development and Village design through the Parish Council, Working Groups and, where appropriate, public meetings.



3.2 *Environment and Conservation*

As noted earlier, the Parish of Wellow is set in a tranquil rural environment comprised mainly of farmland. It is located within the southernmost part of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which means it is protected as a living, working landscape of national importance, for everyone to enjoy.

Wellow contains a variety of habitats including woodlands, hedgerows, verges, orchards, a river, Wellow Brook, a floodplain and three Nature Conservation Sites that support a diverse population of wildlife and plant life.



The majority of the Village is divided into two Conservation Areas. Conservation Area designation is given to protect an area's special architectural or historic interest. The majority of residents would like to see the Conservation Area designation extended so that it covers the whole of the Village.

It was clear from the questionnaire that almost all of the respondents (99%) stated that the quality of the countryside around Wellow was either very important (88%) or important to them. The main issues that

concern people are traffic, in particular rat running, speed and volume, planning issues (especially "The Batch"), litter and dog fouling which were all raised by significant numbers.

Wellow currently does not have street lighting, which keeps light pollution to a minimum, and allows the parishioners to enjoy wonderfully bright nightscapes, (as well as benefiting the local wildlife). The majority of respondents do not want streetlights to be introduced. It was also felt that use of additional signage should be avoided.

The majority of residents chose to live in the Parish and would like to see it stay broadly as it is.

Vision

To protect, preserve and improve the environment in and around Wellow, so that it remains an unspoilt natural haven for people, wildlife and flora. Village development should not impinge on or spoil the environment.



Long Term Aims

- To implement and keep sustainable environmental and conservation practices throughout the Parish.
- Resurface the roadway across the ford to make it more in keeping with the Packhorse Bridge.

Medium Term Aims

- Enlarge the current Conservation Areas so that the whole of the Village is designated as a single Conservation Area.
- Develop and publish a Parish Environment and Conservation Strategy, with the aim of raising awareness and encouraging involvement in practical conservation issues.
- Reduce the traffic flow through the Parish and, in particular, through the Village and thereby reduce its impact on the environment.
- Ensure no further extensions are granted to the landfill site, so that it can be returned to agriculture and to nature. At the time of going to print, a planning application has been submitted relating to the ending of the use of the landfill site, its restoration and future use.

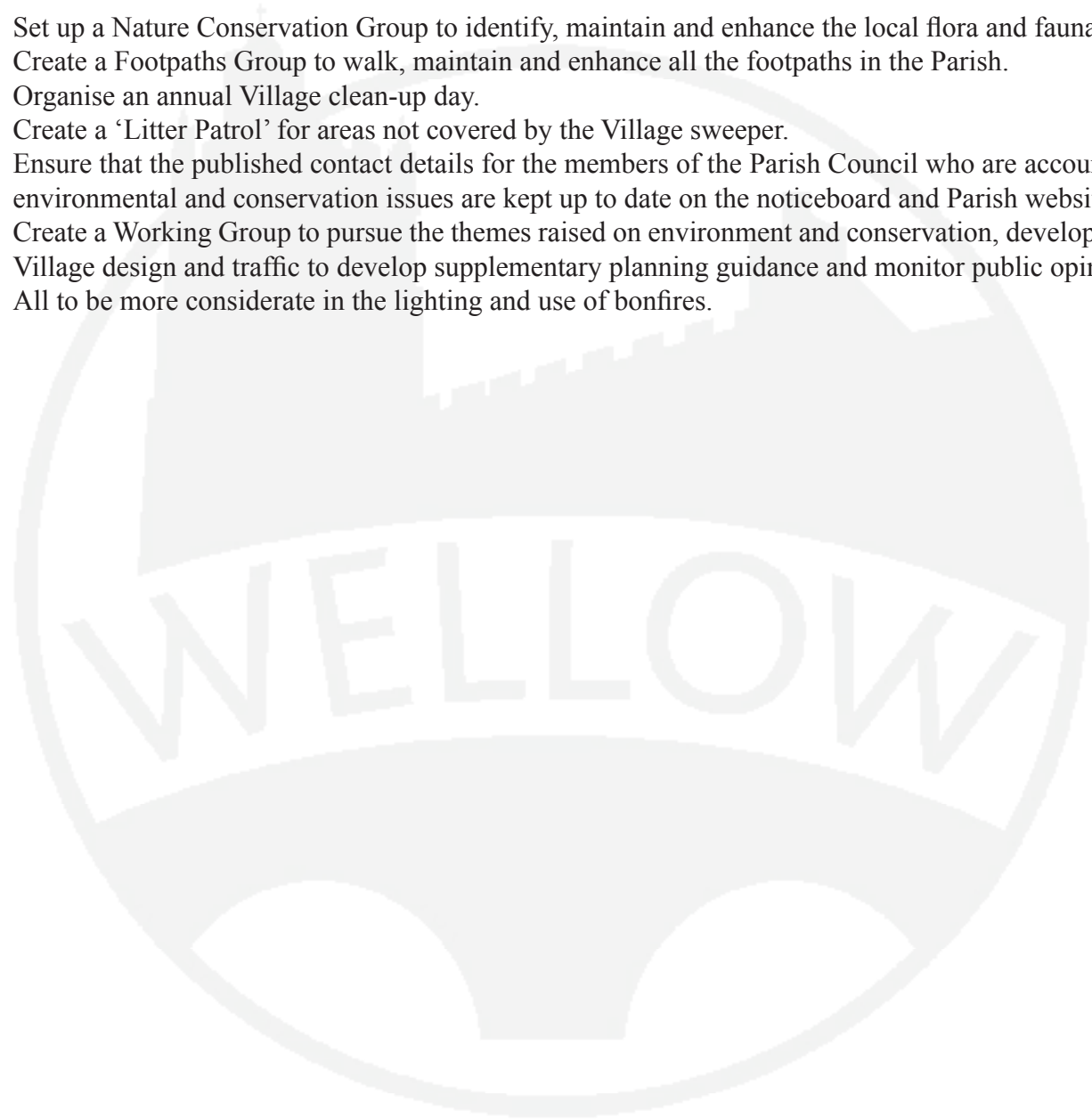


Short Term Aims

- Identify areas of common land within the Parish, with a view to planting and maintaining them.
- Investigate the availability of grant funding for conservation projects.
- Continue to press B&NES to set up 'Quiet Lanes' within the Parish.
- Ensure that local environment and conservation issues form part of the agenda of the Energy Steering Group that has been formed to consider alternatives to fossil fuels and identify energy minimisation practices suitable for local implementation.

Actions and Quick Wins

- Set up a Nature Conservation Group to identify, maintain and enhance the local flora and fauna.
- Create a Footpaths Group to walk, maintain and enhance all the footpaths in the Parish.
- Organise an annual Village clean-up day.
- Create a 'Litter Patrol' for areas not covered by the Village sweeper.
- Ensure that the published contact details for the members of the Parish Council who are accountable for environmental and conservation issues are kept up to date on the noticeboard and Parish website.
- Create a Working Group to pursue the themes raised on environment and conservation, development and Village design and traffic to develop supplementary planning guidance and monitor public opinion.
- All to be more considerate in the lighting and use of bonfires.



3.3 Local Business and Employment

Years ago, the Parish was an active farming community with a number of dependent activities operating around farming. The streets of the Village were alive with people. Nowadays, that focus has been lost through changes in circumstances with many of the population working outside the Parish. As a result, Wellow could become a retirement Village or a dormitory Village. By reference to the consultation undertaken, this is not what the Village should become nor what the parishioners want.



There is a wide range of businesses operating within the Parish of Wellow. Visible local businesses include several farms, a landfill site, 'Woody's Auto Repairs', the pub, the shop, the Wellow Trekking Centre and a number of bed and breakfasts within the Parish. There are also less visible businesses that are operating successfully – typically, these comprise people working from home, often making use of modern technology, for example broadband internet connections.

Technology is creating new opportunities that the Parish could seek to exploit. With the new telephone capacity recently installed and currently being connected, this will create the opportunity for more working from home and enable more small businesses to be accommodated in and around the Parish.

The questionnaire showed that many people thought that businesses were important to the Parish. There is a sense that whilst people are keen to see businesses develop, this should not be at the expense of the character of the Parish, so any new developments would need to be carefully controlled (there has been strong opposition to plans for a waste recycling centre for example). Ideas for new business opportunities included tourism related activities, a craft centre and local services. Some opinions were expressed that questioned the benefits that these small businesses give to the community.

Vision

Local businesses are encouraged to thrive and add value and life to the Parish without spoiling it. Agriculture is promoted and supported, as well as working from home.

Long Term Aims

- Parish Vibrancy - to make the Parish more active between 09:00 and 18:00 during weekdays. This may have a positive knock-on effect for the shop.
- Significantly improved transport facilities - this is needed to obviate the need for multiple ownership of cars enabling movement into Bath and onwards for meetings.

Medium Term Aims

- Establish a Business Support Centre – an area with access to office space and facilities.

Short Term Aims

- Parish Council to consider setting up a Grant Sub-Committee to seek funds for the promotion/development of business opportunities.

Actions and Quick Wins

- Set up a Business Club where people engaged in business can meet on a regular basis to discuss issues and support each other.
- Parish website is regularly updated to ensure list of businesses is current.
- Publish list of local businesses on the Village Noticeboards (especially local services).

3.4 *Parish Council*

The Parish Council is the first tier of local government and as such has authority for setting the Parish precept and then discharging it through the provision of local services. It has certain delegated powers for decision making. The council comprises nine members who are elected on a four year cycle, the next election being due in 2007. Meetings are held every month, except August, and agendas and minutes are published on the main Parish noticeboards. At each meeting there is an agenda item that allows the general public to raise and discuss issues. Generally, the meetings are attended by small numbers of the public although this number is above the norm for small parishes.

Overall, the Parish is happy with the level of service provided by Wellow Parish Council. However, as in all cases, there is room for improvement. Generally, the tasks undertaken are done well, but the process, whether this be consultation with parishioners, their right to attend and speak at meetings or the publication of the results of the process can be improved. This information is available via the Parish notice boards, Wellow's website and the monthly St Julian's Church Parish Newsletter. However, the messages do not always filter through in as effective a way as those involved may have believed. A solution may lie with the newsletter, for example, the Parish Council meetings are being moved to coincide more closely with the newsletter to ensure the information reported is as up to date as possible. There is a body of opinion that suggests parishioners would like to see the Parish Council exercise more influence over planning and development and to ensure that developments adhere to their plans and fit well with the Parish.



The Parish Council is considered to do well when making decisions for the good of the Parish – 68% said well or better. Over 55% of respondents rated the council's performance in publicising its decisions as good or better, although 14% felt this was done badly. The provision of services such as street sweeping scored an 80% satisfaction rating. Consulting with parishioners is an area for improvement with only 9% believing this is done very well and 30% rating the consultation process as being poor or bad.

51% of parishioners have never attended a Parish Council meeting. Predominantly most of these believed that their attendance would not make a difference, although others did not know when meetings were being held or found the timing inconvenient.

Whilst many people expressed an opinion that they believed they could not make a difference at Parish meetings, the Parish Council has tried hard to allow parishioners to have their say. There is a regular item on the agenda for public participation and although not designated as a 'public meeting' the Chairman will normally allow parishioners to contribute to the debate on other agenda items. Perhaps this message could be used to entice more people to attend meetings.

In summary, the Parish Council is seen to deliver good quality services and is thought to perform well by the majority of parishioners. Whilst its meetings are generally attended by few parishioners it is thought that the level of attendance is actually relatively high compared to many other small parishes. In recent years the numbers attending have generally increased.

Vision

There is strong support for a Parish Council that understands the wishes of the Parish, achieves success on its behalf and keeps the Parish well informed of its activities.

The Parish Plan is reviewed annually and refreshed every four years to ensure it continues to represent the views of the parishioners.

The Parish Council uses the Parish Plan to help develop the Parish in accordance with the wishes of the parishioners.

Long Term Aims

- To achieve Quality Status in order to gain more delegated authority from central government. This may allow the Parish Council to have greater influence in the planning process for example.

Medium Term Aims

- To establish a Parish Office. The office would be manned at certain times and would enable parishioners to meet Councillors face to face to discuss ideas and issues.
- To establish a Parish Archive. Thanks to the efforts of certain individuals, Gordon Hewlett in particular, an extensive library of historical documents concerning Wellow has been created. The Parish Council would very much like this to remain in the Village as an asset for all.
- To improve the relationship with B&NES. Whilst the Parish Council has a working relationship with B&NES, developing and improving this relationship would lead to efficiencies.

Short Term Aims

- To increase public attendance at Parish Council meetings, perhaps through increasing awareness of activities, impacts and successes of the Parish Council and by making people aware that there is an opportunity to make their voice heard.
- To develop an even higher level of consultation between the Parish Council and the parishioners.
- To find ways of making parishioners more aware of planning activities and encouraging them to be more active in making their views known.
- The Parish Council to encourage the population to take ownership of the aims and actions in the Parish Plan and to turn them into reality. The council may wish to appoint a mentor for each of the areas the plan covers to help facilitate this.

Actions and Quick Wins

- Establish a sub-committee to identify the full range of grants available to the Parish and task someone to pursue the most useful/likely ones.
- To continue to publish a list of Councillors with appropriate contact details and to list their various responsibilities and also including a list of the various sub-committees that operate within or below the council.
- To include a periodic agenda item covering progress against the Parish Plan on the Parish Council meeting agenda. Initially the council may like to prioritise the actions.

3.5 Senior Generation

According to the results of the questionnaire, age groups in Wellow appear to be well-balanced, with the numbers of those over 65 (67) almost the same as those of children aged 15 and under (68). 63 of the senior generation responded to the questionnaire. Many of them are in good health, have their own transport and play an active part in Parish life. It is amongst the others, especially those living alone, that problems associated with age arise. These are the adults least likely to have cars, and their principal concerns are with the availability of public transport, accessibility of health services and the ease and safety of getting about the Village on foot.

Thanks to there being a sheltered housing estate in the Village, Manor Close, there are no significant housing difficulties for this group. Some older people have to contend with the problem of loneliness, but most find that the social events (the regular Luncheon Club for example) that take place and the neighbourly character of the Village offer opportunities for companionship.

As noted in the Social and Public Services section of the plan, the results of the questionnaire show that among parishioners as a whole there are virtually no problems with access to health services, thanks mainly to there being a weekly surgery at Manor Close and arrangements for prescriptions to be delivered.

Like most other residents, this group found the speed and volume of traffic in the Village to be intimidating, especially in the absence of pavements in many parts of Wellow. Only a small proportion of those responding to the questionnaire felt the need for more seats about the Village. There was however, widespread support for a good neighbour scheme. The impending loss of the bus service is most likely to impact on this group.

Vision

Wellow should continue to be a place in which elderly people feel safe and valued and can live full and comfortable lives.

Long Term Aims

- To ensure the continuance and improvement of services such as public transport, the mobile library, suitable housing and health care, and to promote social contacts in the Parish for this age group, perhaps trying to promote more integration with other age groups – perhaps this could become a project for St Julian's School.

Medium/Short Term Aims

- To encourage greater use of public transport services by all residents of Wellow and a wider range of services.
- To control the speed and volume of traffic in the Village.
- Set up a good neighbour scheme.

Actions and Quick Wins

- Some parishioners are planning fundraising activities to provide a seat or seats near the Village Hall and playing field.
- Seek a volunteer to research good neighbour schemes, visit one or two such schemes in the area and arrange for a talk/meeting to publicise the findings and put forward proposals for setting up a scheme for Wellow.

3.6 Social and Public Services

As part of the consultation process, we sought to identify areas of particular relevance to day-to-day life in the Parish. Under this heading, we have grouped services provided to us in the Parish, services available to us outside the Parish and their accessibility, including travel to and from the Parish.

Elsewhere in the Parish Plan, we have specific sections relating to Wellow Parish Council, St Julian's School, the Village Hall, the Senior and Younger Generations and Traffic, all of which are relevant to these services and so this section tries to deal with matters not dealt with specifically in other sections of the plan.



The Parish Council is responsible for the provision of only a small part of the services available to us but tries to deliver these whilst striving to keep the precept to a minimum. One of the services most appreciated is that of the Parish Sweeper, no longer fully funded by B&NES. The decision by the Parish Council to commit the funds necessary ensures that Stewart Cole continues to deliver his high standards of service to us and remains the eyes and ears of the Village.

Although not exclusively the responsibility of the Parish Council, a significant number of people would like to see improved amenities for parishioners and voice aspirations for the Village Hall and playing field.

Of the other service providers, B&NES was rated poor by over 41% of respondents and received positive ratings from less than 43%. Nonetheless, some of the specific services provided by B&NES were well regarded, especially the recycling and refuse services and the mobile library, as well as the gritting of the roads in winter.

Somer Community Housing Trust provides services to only a minority of parishioners, but this is of vital importance to those served. Of the 23% of respondents who are served by Somer, over 80% gave a positive rating. The Fire Service also received a positive rating from almost everyone who offered a response, whereas the Police received a positive rating from just over half of respondents.

Of the utilities, both electricity and water services were seen as reasonable or good by over 80% (no gas service is available, despite a pipeline running through the Parish). By contrast, phone services were rated positively by less than 60% and as poor by over 35%. This is of concern in an age of increasing dependence on telephone services and the rapid growth in the use of the internet (especially broadband) by small businesses and households. Radio reception fared even worse, less than half giving a positive rating and almost as many rating it poor. TV reception however, was rated positively by over 70%.

Accessibility to services provided outside the Parish was positively rated, with over 80% of respondents never having difficulty getting to hospital, doctor, chemist, optician, dentist nor to the Post Office or Police Station and less than 2% having frequent difficulties. Over 70% offered a similarly positive view of access to the train station and to other medical facilities.

This positive experience may prove shortlived for the minority who have no access to a car, given the recently confirmed decision by B&NES that the Parish will lose the existing bus services later this summer. Over one third of respondents make use of the bus service, even if not on a daily basis, and almost half of the respondents cited the timetable as the biggest issue, ahead of routes and cost.

Even if the bus service is partially replaced with some form of extended 'Dial-a-Ride' service and a 'Fare Car' scheme as B&NES is proposing, the parishioners will be left increasingly dependent on private cars for access to services, school and work. This is of great concern with a significant population over the age of 64 and a burgeoning young population, in times of increasing concern for the environment and rising energy prices.

As noted elsewhere in the plan, the changing demographics of the Parish is a factor that needs careful monitoring, as the needs of different age groups must be part of long term planning to ensure that the appropriate services are available to all and at reasonable cost.

Vision

To ensure that the Parish and parishioners enjoy the full range of high quality, affordable and accessible services, both within the Parish and outside.

Long Term Aims

- To ensure that all service providers are fully aware of the needs of the Parish, including public transport, and deliver the highest quality of service.

Medium Term Aims

- Regular monitoring of services and service providers to ensure standards are maintained.
- The development of a strategy to identify longer term service needs of parishioners, given the changing demographics, including better amenities within the Parish.

Short Term Aims

- All telephone lines to be connected as soon as possible to the newly laid cable serving Wellow to ensure best possible connections for voice calls and the fastest possible high quality connection speeds to the internet via broadband.
- Re-establishment of the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.

Actions and Quick Wins

- The strongest possible pressure to be put on B&NES to reconsider the decision to terminate the bus service and ensure the provision of an effective, appropriate and affordable public transport service.
- Encourage parishioners to bring problems with services to the attention of the Parish Council to allow effective lobbying of providers, especially B&NES and the Police.

3.7 *Traffic and Roads*

This is one of the key themes that has consistently been identified throughout the consultation process as a matter that affects most, if not all, parishioners and needs to be addressed urgently.

The location of the Parish immediately to the south of Bath and between the A36 and A367, combined with the increasing traffic congestion, both in Bath and along these arterial routes, have given rise to ever-growing volumes of traffic through the Parish. Particularly in the mornings, Wellow has become a rat-run for more and more commuters, school runners and the like.

Coinciding with the increase in rat-running through Wellow is the growing volume of traffic on the school run to and from St Julian's in Wellow, the majority of pupils now living outside the Parish, especially in Peasedown St John.



Reduction in the volume of traffic is the key issue identified by almost 85% as being important in resolving the wider traffic issues. Speeding, and its impact on the safety of pedestrians and other road users, was also a key factor highlighted, along with the identification of particular danger spots through the Village, parking issues and issues relating to the condition of our roads, notably Hinton Hill and potholes.

Solutions to these problems are complex: partly because we do not have control over traffic volumes; partly because the physical constraints of both the Village and the lanes in the Parish are difficult to work around; and partly because strong views have been voiced against street lighting, additional signage and road markings. On top of this are the financial costs of designing and implementing appropriate measures. The £47,500 fund for traffic calming gained from the Peasedown St John development does not take us very far.



In light of these difficulties, and following an initial presentation in November 2005, Hamilton-Baillie Associates was commissioned by the Parish Council to explore ways in which we might resolve these issues. At the subsequent presentation in the Village Hall on 23rd March 2006, there was unanimous support for pursuing the “shared space” concept as an innovative solution to these problems. The first urban shared space scheme in the area is about to be implemented in Julian Road, Bath with the approval of B&NES.

There are also a number of wider issues that may affect the Parish in the future such as the proposals for an A46/A36 road link and the development of 1,500 new homes on the south western side of Bath, in line with the Regional Spatial Strategy, as well as the impact of large scale development proposals in the locality such as the Bath Business Park at Peasedown St John and the land adjacent to the Odd Down Park & Ride.

Vision

To see traffic volumes and speeds appropriate to our small Village, its rural setting and the narrow country lanes that serve it, without the need for measures that may impair the character and the tranquillity of the environment in which we live.

Long Term Aims

- The implementation of a comprehensive traffic management strategy to deliver our vision.

Medium Term Aims

- The development of a comprehensive traffic management strategy, to include improved car parking arrangements.
- Fundraising to permit the implementation of the strategy.
- The development by St Julian's School of a transport plan for the school run.
- Lobbying with local and regional authorities who are responsible for strategic matters, including the Regional Spatial Strategy and the proposals for an A46/A36 Link.
- Run a project to determine the viability of a Parish run 'Shuttle Car' that provides lifts to local destinations (eg Park and Ride) on demand, at short notice.

Short Term Aims

- Maintain the Traffic Working Group within the Parish to focus on traffic matters.
- The Working Group to develop the Hamilton-Baillie shared space solution.
- The Working Group to advise the Parish Council on the most effective use of the S106 monies.
- The Working Group to discuss with the Police how best to implement a 20 mph speed limit in Wellow.
- The Working Group to monitor the condition of the roads serving the Parish, especially Hinton Hill and Combe Hay Bridge.
- The Working Group to pursue the 'Quiet Lanes Initiative' with B&NES, in conjunction with the Environment and Conservation Working Group.

Actions and Quick Wins

- Encourage more considerate parking in Wellow.
- Encourage the use of the car park by all visitors to Wellow.
- Report those commercial vehicles noted to drive through the Village at excessive speeds on a regular basis to the companies who own the vehicles.
- Procure/borrow a Community Speed Gun.

3.8 St. Julian's Church and Religion

St Julian's is a largely mediaeval church with an imposing tower which dominates views of the Village from the surrounding countryside. Its beautiful interior, which largely escaped Victorian elaboration, lacks the amenities required of a modern church – a lavatory, kitchen area, meeting room and comfortable seating. Plans exist to improve the facilities; for example a state of the art digital sound system has just been installed.

The majority of respondents to the questionnaire value the church as an historic building and focal point of the community, although only a third use it for Christian worship; however this figure is well above the national average. The significant majority of the remaining respondents stated they are not an active member of a religious group.

Recently the church has been used with considerable success as an alternative venue for a fashion show and for various concerts. These events have demonstrated that the St Julian's is considered more than just a landmark and a place of worship, it can potentially become well used for social events by the whole community.

There are no other places of worship in the Village and no particular desire for an alternative religious venue was expressed by respondents to the questionnaire.



Vision

To make the church more central to the lives of a greater number of people, and to respond to their spiritual needs in a relevant and sensitive way, with non-church goers involved in the day to day maintenance of this historic building and churchyard. In addition to see the church well used as a focal point for community gatherings.

Long Term Aims

- To increase the congregation.
- To provide a lavatory and a meeting room when the money is available.
- To arrange visits to our link Parish primarily for teenagers from the Village.

Medium Term Aims

- To encourage those who view the building as important to help finance modernisation plans.
- To refurbish the vestry for use by children or as a meeting place.
- To form a link with an overseas third world Parish that will include our school and stimulate interest across the Parish by assisting them with an agreed project.
- To hold services with a more general appeal eg renewal of marriage vows or a pet's service.

Short Term Aims

- To encourage more regular participation in worship amongst church goers and to make the services 'user friendly'.
- To have challenging sermons which are relevant to people's lives.
- To provide an opportunity to discuss these and any other topics at a weekly gathering.
- To modify the Jacobean pews.
- To use the church for secular events such as concerts and to integrate the church more closely with the Primary School.
- To provide crèche facilities for children during the services.



Actions and Quick Wins

- To use the widely read Parish Newsletter to distribute information about current activities in the church.
- To use the church for a weekly school assembly.



3.9 *Village Hall, Playground and Playing Field*

The Village Hall is one of the Parish's key assets providing a meeting place for most community activities. The Parish Council meets there every month and it is used daily during the week by children's pre school groups; Wellow Wrigglers, Magic Box and Sleeping Lions. It is the principal venue for large public gatherings and is used regularly by the majority of the community with over 33% of respondents to the questionnaire using it at least once a month. Only 20% never use it at all and whilst the majority feel it is adequate for the needs of the Parish in terms of size there is a desire to see facilities expanded and improved to help it operate more economically.



The building, that is approximately 35 years old, is managed by the Village Hall Committee. They have recently overseen essential stabilisation works, the replacement of the windows and its internal redecoration. Considerable volunteer time and intensive fund raising has been required to pay for and to undertake these works and, because the building is a lightweight portal frame structure, funds will be constantly needed to keep it in good repair. Despite concentrated and intensive lobbying of Central and Local Government for available grant money, the Village Hall Committee has so far been unsuccessful in securing any such support.

The building is generally regarded as unattractive by many parishioners who feel that its external appearance and the parking area could be improved. There are currently plans by Magic Box (with the support of the Village Hall Committee) to extend the building, although no planning application has yet been submitted and its funding has not been secured.

A number of respondents to the questionnaire suggested they would be willing to help raise funds, assist with maintenance and join the Management Committee. A number of those respondents are already involved but there is a constant need for more help.

The children's playground is well used by most children of the relevant age. Nearly 50 % of respondents felt that the facilities were reasonable and nearly 18% said they were good. A small minority, 7%, said they were poor.



Regular formal use of the Playing Field is infrequent but it is well used on an informal basis and it is an important public open space. A significant number of respondents have suggested that the facility could be improved to encourage more formal activity. Improvements were suggested such as levelling the field, providing a cricket square, general landscaping of the entrance and some planting to enhance the visual amenity. It was generally felt that providing a changing facility in the Village Hall may assist the provision of more formal activities.

There was considerable comment over the provision of new leisure activities in the Parish, some of which would use the Hall and Playing Field. Particular support was noted for activities such as an arts and crafts club, card games and a keep fit or yoga club. There was considerable comment and support for the provision of a tennis court either as part of the Village Hall/Playing field complex or elsewhere in the Village.

Vision

To develop a self-financing Village Hall and Playing Field as a highly valued centre for leisure and community interaction for all Parishioners.



Long Term Aims

- To replace the Village Hall with a modern and economic facility with improved catering facilities and changing rooms to serve the Playing Field. To level the Playing Field, improve its visual amenity and provide a tennis facility in the Village.

Medium Term Aims

- To improve the children's playground facilities so that it is perceived as 'good' by relevant users.

Short Term Aims

- To build on the results of the Parish Plan and investigate the potential new activities/clubs to use the Village Hall and Playing Field.

Actions and Quick Wins

- To encourage those who have stated they are willing to offer their services to come forward and help in maintaining and raising funds for the Village Hall.
- To build on the consultation already undertaken and develop a strategy for delivering the range of facilities and amenities desired by residents and user groups, both current and potential.
- Consider a review of potential avenues of grant funding based on the findings and support of the new Parish Plan.
- To explore options for collaborating with neighbouring parishes to increase the potential number of users for the hall and its facilities.

3.10 Village School and Education

Over the last 5 to 10 years there has been a considerable increase in primary aged children in the Parish and many have, and are, benefiting from attendance at St Julian's Primary School. Not surprisingly, St Julian's is considered very important to the local community according to 74% of the respondents to the questionnaire. Less than 3% of people believed it to be not very important.

In the last Ofsted report on the school, the poor condition of the buildings was highlighted and considerable remodelling of the interior is required to provide a modern educational facility with appropriate disabled facilities and access. The Local Education Authority has agreed to allow the school to have some of its allocated funding for building maintenance and repairs three years in advance in order to help resolve these problems as soon as possible. In addition, a further £10,000 has been promised if the school can raise an equal amount by the end of this summer. Fundraising activities will need to be significant and actively supported for this target to be reached.

The school provides a sustainable primary education choice for residents of the Parish although it also needs the support of the many pupils attending the school who live outside the Parish. This has resulted in significantly increased traffic flows in the Village at dropping off and picking up times and conflicts with a strong desire from residents to see less traffic in Wellow. A more sustainable approach to the school run has strong support in the Parish. Many respondents to the questionnaire voiced support for more school activities contributing to Parish life, including shopping and visiting the elderly, carol singing and organising a bonfire party. In addition, it was felt that the school could be used for such activities as arts and craft classes, exhibitions and local societies.



In respect of other educational facilities, there was some support for the expansion of existing Wiggler and Magic Box groups operating in the Village Hall but good support for the introduction of adult evening classes. After school and holiday clubs also received reasonable support.

Vision

The school to continue to be a vital educational facility for primary aged children in the Parish, but in buildings which are fully modernised and functional to ensure its long term viability; with a sustainable transport policy and being regularly used by a wide variety of local groups/adult education classes.

Long Term Aims

- To raise sufficient funds to fully modernise the school.

Medium Term Aims

- To encourage/implement a sustainable transport policy.

Short Term Aims

- To establish new 'out of hours' uses of the school to raise funds.
- Investigate B&NES 'Safe Route to School' policy and seek appropriate funding from them

Actions and Quick Wins

- To use the Parish Plan to confirm the importance of the School to potential sources of funding.
- Increased communication between school staff/parents representatives and the Parish perhaps by a presentation/report to the Parish Council or regular Parish Newsletter updates to ensure Parish-wide understanding of school issues.

3.11 Village Shop

The original 'Parlour Shop' was established in 1978 as a private enterprise. In 1997 the business operator decided it was no longer viable as a private business and started taking measures to close it. A number of parishioners were sufficiently concerned about the impact of this that they took on the shop and operated it as a 'Village Shop Association' under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act. As such, it is not required to return a significant profit or to pay tax. The shop receives some funding from Community Action, Countrywork and the Parish Council and also through a system of shareholders. The shop has one paid part time employee, all other activity, including running the shop, collecting stock, administrative and maintenance work, is conducted by a band of enthusiastic volunteers. There is a management committee that provides overall control.



The shop stocks some 500 different lines and is proud to include locally sourced produce. In addition it provides other valuable services including; deliveries, dry cleaning, selling tickets for local events and disseminating local information. It is open 09:00-17:30 weekdays and 09:00-13:00 on Wednesdays and Saturdays. A significant proportion of the local population make use of the shop and it also manages to capture passing trade. The shop provides an important informal social centre for the Parish where people can meet and exchange their news. It is therefore a highly important asset for the community.

Possibly the most difficult issue facing the shop is the ability to recruit and retain the body of volunteers that run it, for without them the facility would be forced to close. Those that run the shop have some ideas to increase its viability – such as being able to serve refreshments to passers by – but these are unlikely to happen without the staff to support them. The capture of passing trade would be made easier if it was possible to increase the visual profile of the shop in some way. This may be difficult given restrictions over planning etc.

Over 200 people who responded to the questionnaire indicated that they made use of the Village Shop, and over half of these made weekly use of it. 100% of the younger population who responded indicated that they made frequent use of the shop. This provides an indication of its importance to the community. Many who use the facility do so because they wish to support their local shop. Other important reasons why the shop is used include the fact that it is convenient and it helps provide 'last minute items'. The main reasons given for not using the shop include more choice and lower prices elsewhere and more convenient opening hours. Generally, the majority of people felt the facilities in the shop were reasonable.



Over three quarters of the respondents to the questionnaire felt there would be a noticeable negative impact on the sense of community if we were to lose the shop. The impact would probably be particularly severe for the senior generation and for families without private transport, particularly given the impending loss of the bus service.

Vision

The shop to remain a key asset to the community by being both an economically viable business that provides choice and value to the Parish of Wellow and also as a centre for social interaction.

Long Term Aims

- Maintain shop as a social centre.
- Make the shop the place of choice for parishioners to do their shopping.
- Generate sufficient cashflow to employ a full time manager.

Medium Term Aims

- Increase the capture of passing trade – this may be easier if a way could be found to improve the visual presence of the outside of the shop.
- Expand the range of services provided by the shop to increase its customer base and revenue.

Short Term Aims

- Carry on successfully as we are.
- Encourage more to use the shop.
- Encourage more people to join the band of volunteers.

Action and Quick Wins

- Identify and act upon other sources of funding ie bodies that may provide grants.
- Increase awareness of and re-invigorate the 'Share' scheme to raise funds and increase awareness of issues concerning the shop.

3.12 Younger Generation

A separate questionnaire was sent to young people between the ages of 11 and 17 in order to ensure clear and separate understanding of under 18 opinions. Although there are currently limited numbers of young people between the ages of 11 and 17 in the Parish, there are a significant number of children under 11 in the Parish and the results of this questionnaire will guide actions to help both current and future members of this age group.

When asked what young people liked about Wellow, there was considerable comment on the friendly community, the general rural setting, tranquillity and the unpolluted environment of the Parish. Facilities such as the Village Shop and the Playing Field were used by 100% of the respondents to the questionnaire. Most respondents felt safe in the Village, although there was some general concern about theft, vandalism and drunkenness.

One of the principal concerns for young people was the limited bus service to Bath and the fact that there was no service in the evenings. The loss of the bus service with no other appropriate replacement will be a major blow for the independence of 11 to 17 year olds. Other principal concerns included speeding traffic through the Village and the lack of local facilities for their age group.



There were a number of suggestions for the Playing Field and playground areas. These included more equipment in the playground for the older children such as additional climbing frames. Suggestions for the Playing Field which received support included; ramps for skateboards, football and cricket nets and a tennis court.

It is important for our community to recognise that the needs of our young people will have to become a key priority for the Parish because of the forecast for significant growth in the number of 11 to 17 year olds in the next few years.

Vision

Young people to continue to enjoy a friendly caring community but with safer and quieter roads and have the use of good quality sports facilities and a range of leisure activities within the Parish. In addition, to have their transport needs addressed to ensure easy access to and from the Parish.

Long Term Aims

- To have good quality sports facilities and well used club activities.

Medium Term Aims

- To re-establish a youth club or similar body in the Village Hall.
- To ensure appropriate public transport is available for young people.

Short Term Aims

- To identify a variety of transport options for young people for example, parents car sharing to take groups of children to the same activity.

Actions and Quick Wins

- To consider the purchase of football nets and additional playground equipment appropriate for older children.
- To build on the consultation already undertaken and liaise closely with the development of the strategy for delivering the range of facilities and amenities for the Village Hall/Playing Field to ensure that young people's needs are catered for.

3.13 Other Bright Ideas

During the development of the plan a number of bright ideas were identified that did not directly fall into any one of the Working Group areas. These ideas are described below :

- **Register of Skills and Interests** : The Parish has a relatively small population and has expressed the importance of community spirit. One way to help develop this would be to provide a centralised register of peoples skills and interests. This could be through the Parish website or by using a hard copy document held in the Village Shop (and Parish Office in the future). Individuals would be able to list particular skills that they might be prepared to share with others and also their personal interests eg football, photography, guitar playing etc. This would help people with similar interests identify each other and perhaps then form groups, societies etc. The idea will need further thought before it can be implemented (are there data protection issues for example?).
- **The Roman Villa** : The Parish may wish to consider uncovering the Roman Villa (on a temporary basis) because many in the Parish have not had the opportunity to see it since this last happened. It may also be a way of attracting visitors to the Parish and of providing some publicity.

4.0 Implementing the Parish Plan

4.1 Implementation

A plan without actions achieves nothing but a warm feeling ²

The intent of the Steering Group is that the plan should represent the way that the local population wish to see the Parish develop over the longer term towards achieving a shared vision. However, without leadership, progress against the plan is likely to be sporadic at best and minimal at worst. The Steering Group therefore recommends that the Parish Council should take ownership of the plan and use it to help them guide the Parish to achieve its aims.

We envisage that much of the work to take the ideas in the plan forward will need to be done by the parishioners themselves, either individually or in organised groups – for instance, some of the Working Groups wish to continue with their good work. Some of these groups are likely to form naturally by themselves by interested people.

It will be necessary for a central body to try to keep track of the progress of the various groups and to ensure they are working adequately closely to the directions of the plan and with each other. This central body could be the Parish Council. As part of this function, individual Councillors could mentor the development of each group. Some deviation from the plan is bound to occur. Things will not go to plan, people may come up with better and more realistic ideas. However, on the basis that the plan was developed through public consultation, care must be taken to avoid significant deviation from it.

Over time, the plan may become out of date. We feel it is vital that the plan, and progress against it, is formally reviewed by the Parish Council – although they may wish to delegate this responsibility to nominated individuals if they wish. Arising from this review should be a set of prioritised targets that the council wish to try and achieve over the next 12 months. There is a need to be realistic in setting these targets. Wellow is a small Parish with a limited population and limited funding. It is unlikely to be able to deliver a lot of progress in any given year. However, failure to set any targets is likely to result in no progress being made at all.

A new Parish Council is elected every four years. Our recommendation is that the newly elected council should conduct a major review of the plan shortly after its election in 2007, and four yearly thereafter. This should include an element of public consultation, perhaps using a similar questionnaire to the one that supported the production of this plan. This will then enable it to identify its goals for the term.

The Steering Group recognises that the Parish Councillors already have busy agendas and that directly owning the plan may either overburden them or cause an element of suspicion or mistrust in the community. An option to prevent this would be for the Steering Group to remain active. The Steering Group would then take responsibility for tracking and coordinating progress and reporting such progress back to the Council. The Steering Group would need to be staffed by volunteers and would almost certainly require some level of funding from the Parish Council.

The rate of progress against the plan must be judged carefully. Many people are happy with the way the Parish is and do not want to see wide ranging or rapid change. However, there are areas where some change would be appreciated. A balance must be struck between achieving the benefits that some changes could make and significantly changing the appearance and character of the Parish, in the worst case alarming or unsettling parishioners.

² Chris Cook, 15th March 2006

4.2 *Final Words*

Finally, the Steering Group would like to thank all of the parishioners who have contributed to the preparation of the plan, whether by making their views known, contributing to the Working Groups, attending meetings or providing their time to help draft and distribute the plan. Without their help, it would not have been possible to produce this plan.

This document is intended to be the beginning of a process not an end. If having read it you have further observations or wish to take part in its implementation please contact the Parish Council.

The Steering Committee

Chris Cook
Alistair Colston
David Halewood



5.0 Appendices

Appendix A - A Summary of the Vision Statements

Simple Overarching Statement

A caring community in an unspoiled environment.

Traffic and Roads

To see traffic volumes and speeds appropriate to our small Village, its rural setting and the narrow country lanes that serve it, without the need for measures that may impair the character and the tranquillity of the environment in which we live.

Development and Village Design

To protect, preserve and enhance the built environment in the Parish in order to retain its rural character and to control its future development and the use of both land and buildings for the benefit of parishioners and visitors alike

Local Businesses and Employment

Local businesses are encouraged to thrive and add value and life to the Parish without spoiling it. Agriculture is promoted and supported, as well as working from home.

Environment and Conservation

To protect, preserve and improve the environment in and around Wellow, so that it remains an unspoilt natural haven for people, wildlife and flora. Village development should not impinge on or spoil the environment.

Village Shop

The shop to remain a key asset to the community by being both an economically viable business that provides choice and value to the Village of Wellow and also as a centre for social interaction.

Senior Generation

Wellow should continue to be a place in which elderly people feel safe and valued and can live full and comfortable lives.

Younger Generation

Young people to continue to enjoy a friendly caring community but with safer and quieter roads and have the use of good quality sports facilities and a range of leisure activities within the Parish. In addition, to have their transport needs addressed to ensure easy access to and from the Parish.

Parish Council

There is strong support for a Parish Council that understands the wishes of the Parish, achieves success on its behalf and keeps the Parish well informed of its activities. The Parish Plan is reviewed annually and refreshed every four years to ensure it continues to represent the views of the parishioners. The Parish Council uses the Parish Plan to help them develop the Parish in accordance with the wishes of the parishioners.

Village School and Education

The school to continue to be a vital educational facility for primary aged children in the Village, but in buildings which are fully modernised and functional to ensure its long term viability; with a sustainable transport policy and being regularly used by a wide variety of local groups/adult education classes.

St Julian's Church and Religion

To make the church more central to the lives of a greater number of people, and to respond to their spiritual needs in a relevant and sensitive way, with non church goers involved in the day to day maintenance of this historic building and churchyard. In addition to see the church well used as a focal point for community gatherings.

Social and Public Services

To ensure that the Parish and parishioners enjoy the full range of high quality, affordable and accessible services, both within the Parish and outside.

Village Hall, Playground and Playing Field

To develop a self financing Village Hall and Playing Field as a highly valued centre for leisure and community interaction for all parishioners.

Appendix B - Output from ‘Wellow Past, Wellow Future’

Activities

- Please take care to ensure Village activities don't become too expensive. We need to raise money but several functions lately have been unaffordable for my family
- More activities in the Village Hall
- Review requirements and match with facilities at Village Hall/Playing Field
- Lets have a Village art gallery and/or open house art week
- Encourage or persuade farmers to keep footpaths open all year around
- More needs to be done to keep footpaths open – especially those on the Upper Hayes
- Production of definitive guide for rights of way
- Footpaths to be accessible all year
- Replace styles with gates
- Gates not styles
- Encourage environmentally friendly activities – horse-riding, cycling
- Provide facilities for pre/teens – skateboard ramps, bike jumps?
- (Teens) Do they need a youth club again or similar?
- Tennis Courts

Bonfires

- Bonfires only between Monday and Friday, not on sunny days
- No bonfires in Village
- Soiled straw from commercial stable should not be burned constantly

Business

- The residents health and comfort should not be jeopardised to subsidise business profits
- Derelict Fullers Earth Works would make a super area for small businesses
- Put the Fullers Earthworks into good order. Either as a small workshop (pottery, offices) or residential use
- Encourage skills and crafts, perhaps convert Fullers Earthworks to units – hot desking
- What should be done about Fullers Earthworks and ‘Raffles’ shop?
- Starter Offices or light industrial units (residentially friendly) would be good to encourage local employment and enterprise
- Perhaps farmers could create an income from turning some land into park land and charge a fee for membership and use it for the purpose of dog walking, picnics and general recreation
- Office/Studios?
- Keep working farms in Village
- Keep horse in Village – good idea

Bus Service

- Bus service to link with Park and Rides
- Review to match need with provision
- Increase bus services ie to Hinton Charterhouse, then A36 to Bath
- More direct bus services vital for sustainable community development

Car Park

- The Car Park is a valuable asset and should stay unspoilt
- I think that the Car Park is a valued asset to the Village. It is well used by ramblers, fishermen, picnickers, etc. It is essential to have this facility to reduce visitors parking on the road
- Encourage use of Car Park
- Ditto
- Better use of Car Park by making it safer
- Improve access to Car Park from Canteen Lane
- No Low Cost housing in Car Park – no real need
- Negotiate with B&NES to handover Car Park to Wellow Parish Council
- Transfer ownership from B&NES to Parish Council
- Relocate Car Park to near Village Hall – buy a field
- The trouble with the Car Park is that it is not located where people want to park

Church

- Use church more for secular events
- Use church more for events
- Facilities – loos, kitchen and better seating

Community

- Broadband
- Cobbles or stone sets for the paving around the Batch would greatly improve the centre of Wellow
- Need for a more disciplined system in the square
- A Welcome Pack for all new householders – very important

Conservation

- More Nesting Boxes for birds
- Compile a Wellow History and keep it on CD. Maybe sell copies at the Village shop
- Conservation is excellent but should not be used as an excuse to (nullify?) all development, improvement and progress
- Create field edge/wildlife boundaries, particularly on cemetery side of road/roadside of Village
- New houses/buildings to be in style & character of existing ie, not like the Batch
- Organic farming? Less use of pesticides. Plant hedges & copses/trees

Crime

- Neighbourhood Watch – yes please

Development

- Ensure that any future development meets a real identified need. If such a need is found, plan carefully and thoughtfully with due consideration to ALL Village residents
- Define needs and locations for all developments
- Decide where expansion to the Village would be acceptable
- Some development is healthy – but should not be allowed to expand the Village to outside its current boundaries
- No geographical expansion of the Village – Brown field development is by far the preferred option
- Aesthetic considerations should apply when considering new building. But do we need more expensive, ugly houses?
- Promote return to use of disused homes
- Deal with derelict buildings and unsafe ones
- Derelict house in square – repair before it deteriorates further
- Change the (...) redundant barns to high quality new buildings – residential use or holiday lets
- Farm buildings could possibly be Hi Tech offices or studios – sympathetically designed to suit Village
- Bring Broadband to Wellow (only a few homes have it)
- Promote harmonious diversification (Farms)
- Willow Farmyard – mixed residential & office/studios
- New development at the Batch – now that the old barn has been knocked down – don't replace/rebuild new garage but run pavement all around as this will give a more open look and be safer
- On mixed use B1(3) light industrial small scale residential leisure use connected to sustram for Willow Farm

Environment

- Curb excessive chainsaw zeal which spoils trees
- Preserve valley/river area 'Natural setting', peace and quiet
- Encourage or persuade farmers to keep footpaths open all year around
- More needs to be done to keep footpaths open – especially those on the Upper Hayes
- Production of definitive guide for rights of way

Employment

- Promote Village based employment

Healthcare

- Assess the need for Village healthcare

Image

- Wellow should be delegated an area for leisure and recreation. Walking, Cycling (sustran etc), horse riding, etc for everyone to enjoy not just villagers
- Avoid suburbanisation trend. Country villages are supposed to look slightly untamed (NB see France, Italy, etc)
- We must keep the character of the Village! Traffic seems to be taking over

Low Cost Housing

- Use site of Fullers Earthworks for Low Cost Housing (it's close to park and ride so good communications)
- A few first time buyer small houses
- Homes for the first time buyers – starter homes
- Low cost housing is required, however, once sold on by the first occupier, market forces result in the property no longer being affordable. Affordable housing is a PC white elephant
- Sadly, a fact of life that we cannot all live where we may wish to. I accept that my children will not be able to afford to live in Wellow, as we could not afford to live in the area that our parents live in. Harsh maybe, but true! Starter homes will not change this fact
- Beware of NIMBYism (Not In My Back Yard)

Playing Field

- Lets have the playing field converted to a cricket pitch. Design the border areas with planting and flowers
- Make cricket pitch in Village playing field
- Use playing field for Boules and Croquet
- Village tennis court on playing field will encourage mix of community Village tournaments, school use, etc

Publicity

- Approach the television 'Time Team' and invite them to dig at the roman villa
- Invite Time Team to do a dig in Wellow
- Plan to open the villa in 2014 – 50 years on
- How about asking the Time Team to do a dig at the Roman Villa

Quality Of Life

- Village life is great. We have in our small area of the Village real community spirit caring for one another and helping in any way we can. Our neighbours range widely in age but everyone shares the same philosophy

Roads And Paths

- Safe footpath through to shop please
- Construct a 'pretend pavement' (like Alma Cottage) outside 'Why Not' cottage and D Halewoods for safety. Don't allow parking on other side as road is very dangerous
- Resolve dangerous bottleneck outside 'Homely'/'Why Not' cottages. Move 'bad paving(?)' on other side
- Encourage parents not to park outside school but to use the car park and walk
- Traffic calming from shop out to Stony Littleton lane
- Traffic Calming – Please could there be some chicanes throughout the Village
- Chicane or something needed at western end of Village where cars come very fast down cemetery hill round a 'blind corner'
- Keep the parked cars! Get rid of the through traffic
- No yellow lines. Parked cars help produce a chicane effect
- No double yellow lines – parked cars mean that it is more difficult to speed and they act as traffic calming
- Keep Hinton Hill subsidence unrepaired. On no account bring replacement road through adjacent wood
- Resolve parking through Village – Western End really bad
- Stony Littleton lane should be a quiet lane, tourism, trekking, Sustrans
- Pavement/verge shop to stony Littleton lane
- Provision to be able to walk to the cemetery (not end up in it!!)
- Slow down traffic, widen footpaths or pedestrianise the road
- Cobbling in square – slow down traffic
- Good idea – perhaps we can ask for cobbled chicanes opposite school and shop.
- We need some 'Dog Bins'
- Stop the 'Rat Runners'
- No Double Yellow Lines
- No Double Yellow Lines
- I think yellow lines will be unattractive. More importantly, parked cars slow down through traffic as they are an obstruction. I think that whilst mildly inconvenient, this is an effective speed deterrent
- Road humps or chicanes not yellow lines please
- Double yellow lines would breed traffic wardens – No Thanks!
- Much larger weight restriction signs for HGVs and more of them located on all roads into and through Village
- Extra 20mph signs required middle of Village. Some drivers either do not see these on entering the Village or choose to ignore them if road seems 'clear'
- Enforcement issue – Police need staff to enforce these regulations (parking)

School

- Promote use for Parish first
- School bus to/fro Peasedown
- Encourage parents to lift share

Streetlights

- Curb light pollution from existing properties and new developments
- Means of controlling noise and light pollution
- Thoughtless use of security lights should be avoided
- No street lighting please
- No street lighting - there is quite enough light pollution
- No street lights, it would spoil the charm of the Village
- No to street lighting – We need to value and respect the night sky, which is part of Village life
- No lighting pollution thank you
- I would not like to see street lighting – night sky is great
- No street lights
- No Streetlights thank you
- No street lighting please – too much light pollution as it is
- Definitely no street lighting. Keep dark night skies (or what's left of them)

Traffic

- Use a community speed gun, Share cost with other parishes
- Automatic sign required that flashes 'Slow Down' when speed is excessive
- Discourage parking at the top of Mill Hill outside school
- Parking by the school
- Discourage road parking somehow
- Don't ban car parking – maybe formalise it

Village Hall

- Knock down Village hall and build a cricket pavilion
- A cricket pavilion would be great
- Build a new Village hall
- Knock down Village hall and start again
- Knock down Village hall and start again to cater for all the Village
- We need a new Village hall rather than spend lots of money on repairing the cracks/subsidence to see no benefit
- It would be nice to have a bigger Village hall. Extend or renew.
- Extend Village hall. Get rid of rusty container. Construct verandah on front of Village hall
- More attractive Village hall and parking area or new Village hall
- Redecorate and tart up the Village hall with interesting materials in keeping with the Village
- Keep Village hall but re-elevate principle with verandahs, etc
- Need a BBQ area by the Village hall
- Funding for essential repair and extension of the Village hall
- Definitely apply for a grant for the Village hall
- Seek to improve Village hall – ID sources of grants and support
- Make Village hall appropriate for modern day use. It needs to be a much more attractive building to encourage outside bookings
- Village hall used by all, grants needed
- Use the issues of rural employment (Broadband) to justify grants for a new Village hall with IT high tech facilities

Village Shop

- I wish more people would use the shop. It would be awful if it had to close. It is so good
- Support the shop – what would we do without it
- The shop is an excellent facility and should be encouraged in any way possible
- Shop is an excellent facility
- Continue to support (the shop) but it must not become a burden to weary volunteers
- This is an important Village asset and deserves support from ALL the Village, not just a few. It would be excellent if it could be resited centrally in a new Village hall complex
- Incorporate the Village shop into a new Village hall – it would provide day time supervision too
- Relocate shop centrally
- Shop would do much better if it could be more centrally placed

Vision

- Please ensure that there is a 'Vision' so if there is a defined need we are not constrained by the status quo
- Peace and tranquillity are essential to living in our Village





Wellow Parish Council Local Plan Data

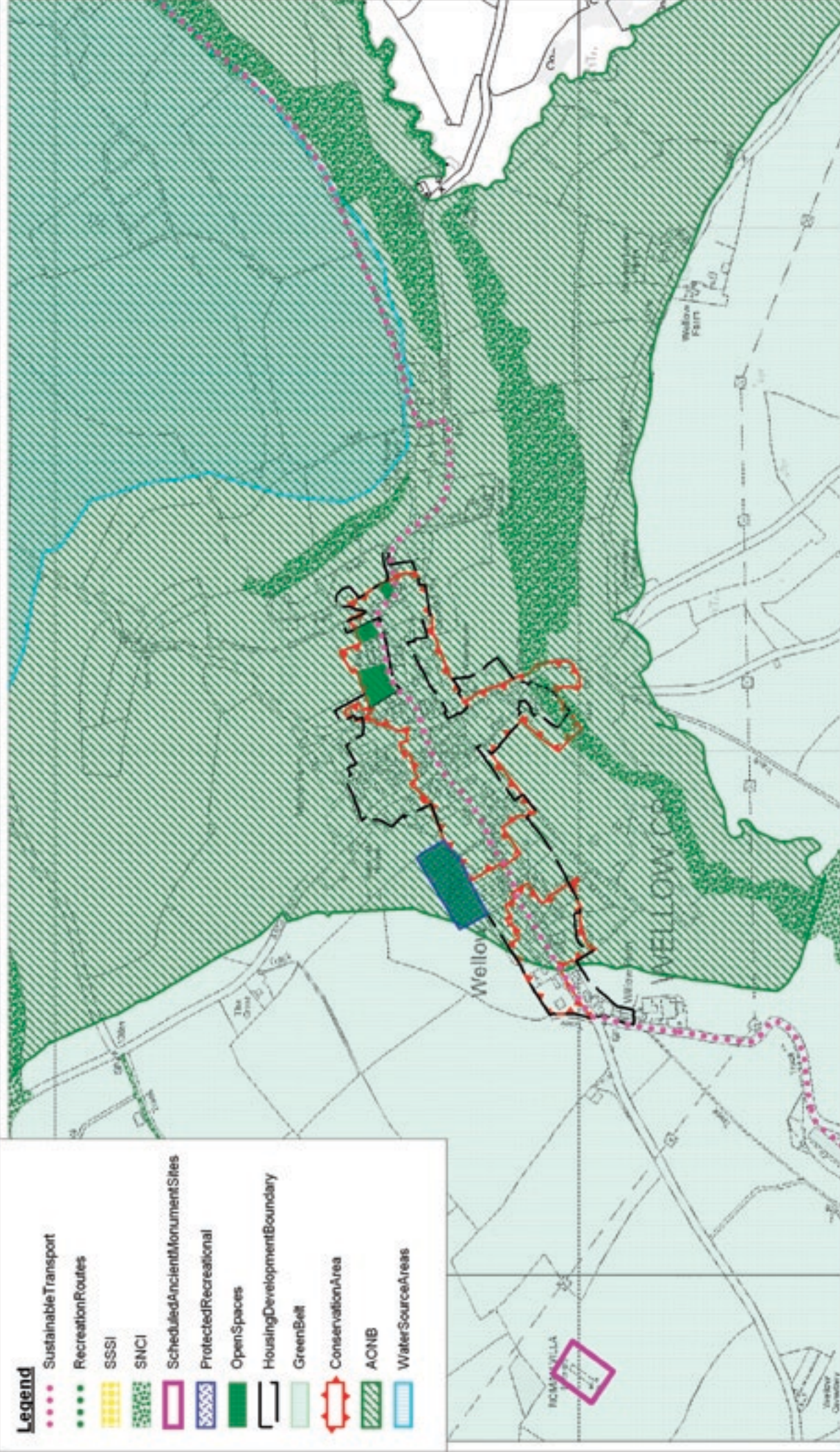
Compiled by MTile on 9 June 2006



Scale 1:10000

Bath & North East Somerset Council
Riverside
Temple Street
Keynsham
Bristol BS31 1LA
Tel 01225 477000

- Legend**
- Sustainable Transport
 - Recreation Routes
 - SSSI
 - SNCI
 - Scheduled Ancient Monument Sites
 - Protected Recreational
 - Open Spaces
 - Housing Development Boundary
 - Green Belt
 - Conservation Area
 - ACNB
 - Water Source Areas





*My Favourite Place in Wellow (St. Julian's School Paddock)
Winner of 'the best thing about Wellow' drawing competition at the Flower Show*