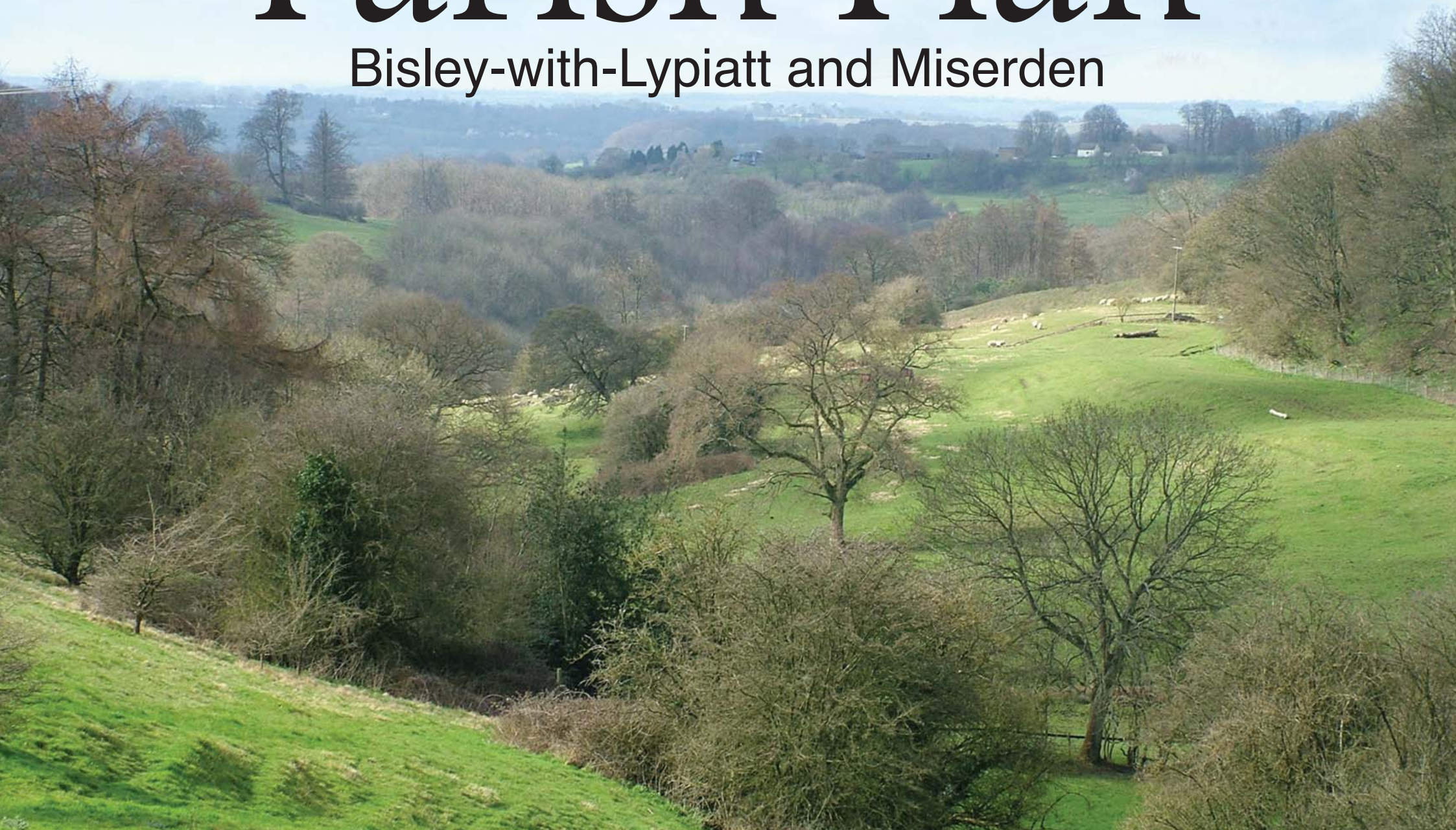


Parish Plan^{april 2006}

Bisley-with-Lypiatt and Miserden



Contents

CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Health, Police and Fire Services	2
Education and Schools	4
Social and Cultural Activities	6
Recreation and Sports	8
Transport	10
Housing	12
Economy	14
Landscape and Environment	16

‘Most people who have lived here all their lives, or moved here years ago, have done so because they valued the rural nature of the area and its natural beauty. These qualities are at great risk of being lost forever and one of the most important tasks of the Parish Plan must be to protect and guard these features...’



Introduction

This booklet results from the joint efforts of Bisley-with-Lypiatt and Miserden residents who have worked together, supported by the Parish Councils, to make a 'Parish Plan'. It is a snapshot taken in 2005 and illustrates opinions on current issues as well as showing the different weight given to concerns across the area. It will be updated from time to time as is necessary, and will be followed very soon by the next stage of consultation, the 'Village Design Statement', which will focus more on the built environment and will ask for parishioners' views on what their area looks like and how they think it should develop or change in the future.

The parish plan scheme is a central government initiative, developed by the Countryside Agency, to consult people and involve them in the process of decision-making in their parish, influencing local authorities, and guiding their parish into the future. Each parish council will be expected to develop into a 'Quality Parish'. This status will carry with it more responsibility and also more opportunity to have a say in how the local area will evolve. One of the qualifications necessary to achieve 'quality status' is to have constructed a parish plan.

In response to this initiative, Bisley-with-Lypiatt and Miserden Parish Councils joined together and a steering group was formed from both councillors and parishioners. They decided to identify issues, partly through a series of public meetings, and then disseminate them for comment through a structured questionnaire that listed a 'vision', proposed 'action' and a suggested 'timescale'. For evaluation, the information had to be gathered into an analysis of points scored for each entry. The eight areas for discussion were divided into four different meeting topics so that each could be explored and recorded fully. The topics were (1) Health, Police and Fire Services, (2) Social Activities, Recreation, Schools and Education, (3) Housing and Transport, (4) Economy, Landscape and Environment.

The public meetings were well attended and were very volatile when certain issues were raised. Over four consecutive months, Bisley, Oakridge, Eastcombe and Miserden each hosted one meeting to discuss one topic. When relevant, 'expert' outside speakers were invited to address the meetings. After the meetings and following wider consultation there were two points that became very obvious.

Firstly, everything is connected. For example, falling job numbers in the villages mean that people commute out to work; commuting out means that many potential customers for village shops and post offices are elsewhere in the daytime so the shops are at risk of closure, thus reducing the number of jobs available. Likewise, services such as doctors and hairdressers move to centres of more daytime activity. More houses are being built, but fewer jobs exist locally, and this leads to more commuting and more cars and more traffic problems. This in turn leads to more stress on the environment. Our villages have developed into what they are today because of the influence of many things: the local economy, transport, the development control system ('planning'), the local environment and topography, the population, and increasingly the influences from outside. To repeat this first point: everything is connected, and this must be taken into account when considering the way forward.

Secondly, communication is lacking. At every meeting people identified a lack of communication and of relevant local information. They called for greater lines of communication between individuals within the villages; between villages; between parishes; and between the parish, district, and county councils. This dearth of communicated information results, for example, in parishioners not knowing about local services such as tradesmen or the North Link bus, or about the different roles of the tiers of local government.

Accepting that these points are common to all topics, the following pages outline the opinions and expectations of parishioners as we travel further into the 21st century. The questionnaire, delivered to every house, resulted in just over 10 per cent of households completing and returning it. This low response could indicate that the majority of parishioners are happy and have nothing to say, or that 'apathy rules OK', or perhaps they feel that expressing their opinions will make no difference. Whichever of these is the case, this is a document representative of opinion in the parishes at this time.

This Parish Plan was supported by a grant from the Countryside Agency. The process was guided by a steering group with representatives from Bisley-with-Lypiatt and Miserden Parish Councils, and is published as one combined document covering both parishes. The priorities of each parish have been listed separately, and both councils have resolved to try to achieve the goals set out in the plan – those that are within their remit – and to try to facilitate and influence those that are within the scope of other authorities.

Health, Police and Fire Services

Facts

These facts about our parishes are taken from the Parish Profile produced by Stroud District Council, 2004.

Health

Health of parishioners is similar to that of the Stroud district.

74% of residents class themselves as being in good health.

14% class themselves as having a long term limiting illness.

5% of people who are of working age, class themselves as having a long term limiting illness.

12% provide unpaid care (mostly between 1-19 hours/week).

There are no doctors' surgeries within the parishes; surgeries at Bussage and Painswick are used by most people.

24-hour accident and emergency departments are available at Stroud and Cirencester Hospitals.

Crime

Burglary from a dwelling was 80% lower than for the county and district.

Vehicle theft is 85% lower than for the county and district.

Theft from a vehicle was the same as the county rate, but 30% more than for the district.

There is a mobile police station which stops in a few villages, and will stop elsewhere if contacted by phone (07734 068376).



'All emergency services [should] have satellite navigation'

Feedback

The rural nature of our villages often makes it difficult to locate properties, and the top priority was identified as making sure that the emergency services have good quality, up-to-date maps of the villages, with any access limitations identified. It was also suggested that response times could be improved if 'all emergency services have satellite navigation'.

A common theme is the need to make useful information available. For health and police services, it has been requested that information is supplied about the mobile police station and about what health services are available and how they can be accessed.

Some comments received included 'We need more policing; it would be nice to see a policeman walking around sometimes', and there should be 'Quicker response times; had an experience recently of police taking one-and-a-half hours for an emergency'. For health services some suggestions made were 'Could Gloucestershire County Council [GCC] and the health authorities be lobbied to get more help into rural communities, to enable elderly people to stay in their own homes?' and 'Could there be a central collecting point for prescriptions, or a delivery for those who are unable to travel?'

Traffic is a major concern, in particular speeding. Most people approve of low speed limits and consider flashing speed signs to be effective, but most dislike humps, chicanes, signs and road markings. Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish Council has a portable flashing speed sign, which it shares with Painswick. Miserden Parish Council has recently persuaded GCC to install permanent flashing signs at The Camp, and their effectiveness will be monitored. Reduced speed limits are being considered for some selected areas within the villages. In deciding whether any new road signs should be installed, the impact on the rural nature of the villages always needs to be taken into account.

Health, Police and Fire Services

HEALTH, POLICE AND FIRE SERVICES				
THE VISION	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	PRIORITY	
			Bisley	Miserden
A safer environment, and information on services available	Collect and distribute information on Mobile Police Station services and give non-urgent contact telephone number	Short term	6	7=
Readily accessible health services for all	Collect and distribute information on what health services are available, and how to gain access to them	Short term	4	9=
Quicker response times for the emergency services	Check quality of maps currently held by the emergency services	Short term	1=	1
	If necessary, assist in improving/updating maps	Short term	1=	1
	Work with emergency services to identify constraints (eg, access problems, shortage of hydrants)	Short term	3	3
	Encourage residents to ensure that their house names / numbers are clearly marked	Short term	7	9=
A safer road network for the villages	Maintain policy of inviting police to undertake occasional speed checks in the villages	Ongoing	8	4
	Ask Gloucestershire County Council for more positive speed control measures, appropriate for rural areas	Ongoing	5	5=
	Monitor the effectiveness of flashing speed signs	Ongoing	9	5=
Greater home safety awareness	Invite Fire Service to come to villages to talk about fire safety in the home	Short term	10	7=

Education and Schools

‘The role of village schools as a bonding mechanism for the wider community cannot be over-estimated’

Facts

There are four primary schools and one secondary school in the parishes of Miserden and Bisley-with-Lypiatt. Thomas Keble School (secondary) is also a ‘community school’ with access for the wider community at certain times for specific activities such as using the gym.

Feedback

Education and schooling received very similar responses for both parishes. The suggestions outlined by the questionnaire were not challenged, rather, there was, in general, agreement. The outstanding and unanimous priority for those responding to this section was that there must be local schools for local children.

Supporting this was a number of particular comments. These ranged from the point made about the role of village schools that ‘act as a bonding mechanism for the wider community’ and ‘young children should not have to travel long distances to school’.

The questionnaires unearthed the complexities of school transport and accessing local schools. Although Miserden supported free school buses as the second most important issue in the questionnaire, Bisley-with-Lypiatt put more emphasis on walking and cycling to school. There is clearly a fundamental dilemma in relation to sustainable school transport. The majority of comments in both Bisley-with-Lypiatt and Miserden favour safe cycling and pedestrian routes to school - one specifically for health reasons

and another for climate change reasons - and parishioners are clearly concerned about the safety of our rural roads and lanes for young people. At least two respondents (from Oakridge) suggested that parents themselves were the cause of much danger. ‘Parents drive dangerously fast in our lanes’ and ‘a risk assessment made around the school [showed] mainly mothers collecting and delivering children from outside the village’. However a strong minority of practically focused respondents asked how cyclepaths and footpaths could be funded as they were so expensive, so the ‘vision’ of the Parish Councils helping to fund feasibility studies toward the provision of cycle and footpaths came out as the lowest priority. Four people asked for subsidies for school public transport.

Adult education was the second least-favoured area for support. One person suggested adult education needed crèches. Adult education achieved the only strongly negative comment in this section which was ‘A waste of money!’

One further comment suggested that there might be a need for more pre-school education in our area as this ‘would attract people’.

Conclusion

Accessibility to local schools for local children is the prime concern emerging from the consultation. Accessibility encompasses both the availability of local schools but also safe routes to schools. The Parish Councils’ prime role can be to lobby the local education authority and central government to ensure that there are local schools for local children. The Parish Councils also have a further role: to campaign for safe rural roads so that children can be more independent getting to and from school. The Parish Councils may also have another role in encouraging all local schools to open up for wider community use out of hours.

Education and Schools

EDUCATION AND SCHOOLS				
THE VISION	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	PRIORITY	
			Bisley	Miserden
Continued existence of local schools for local children	Lobby the local education authority and central government	Ongoing	1	1
Free bus transport for all children	Lobby the local education authority to change rules to give free bus travel for journeys of less than three miles	Short term	3	2
Alternative means of transport to the car to help make rural roads safer	Encourage walking and cycling	Medium term	2	3=
	Lobby for the provision of footpaths and cyclepaths	Medium term	4	3=
Adult education available in the villages	Through a questionnaire research the need for the types of adult education classes that local people will support	Medium term	5	5
Alternative means of transport to the car to help make rural roads safer	Contribute seed funds towards feasibility studies for footpaths and cyclepaths	Long term	6	6

Social and Cultural Activities

'I suggest we work for improved, enlarged and more comprehensive village magazines'

Facts

Each village has its own newsletter, partly subsidised by the Parish Council. These are free to residents, being largely paid for by advertising, except for Eastcombe's which charges a small subscription and has a circulation of nearly 1000 as it covers Bussage and Brownshill (in Chalford Parish) as well as Eastcombe. Oakridge churches and Eastcombe Women's Institute produce a 'welcome pack'. Stroud District Council also produces a 'welcome pack'. Each village has a range of self-initiated events, open studios, and performances, but villagers remain largely dependent on private transport if they wish to go to events in, for example, Stroud, Cirencester, Cheltenham or Gloucester.

Feedback

There was general agreement from both parishes (first priority in Bisley-with-Lypiatt and second in Miserden) that the most important key to a socially and culturally vibrant village community was an effective and accessible village newsletter and regular digest of events. There were many favourable comments from respondents about all the village newsletters. At a time when not yet everyone has access to the internet ('not everybody has a computer') there is demand for an 'improved, enlarged and more comprehensive village magazine' (Oakridge) and even a request for 'somewhere in the parish a source of information and communication such as a parish office or meeting room'. Both parishes cautiously welcome the coordination of a shared annual events calendar.

The idea of a 'welcome pack' for new residents containing a range of information, including public transport timetables, was also welcomed by both Miserden (fourth) and Bisley-with-Lypiatt (third), although one resident objected to her council tax being spent on it.

Just as it is crucial for villagers to be able to access local information about their own village facilities and events, the

responses show it is also important for villagers to be able to go to events further afield. The second most important priority for respondents was to encourage alternative forms of transport in the evenings (first for Miserden and second for Bisley-with-Lypiatt). Ironically the new North Link bus service caused most comment with obviously grateful thanks from a Miserden resident ('Thank you for extending the North Link to Whiteway and Miserden on Friday and Saturday evenings') to the pertinent comment from Eastcombe 'The North Link bus service has been so badly advertised that nobody knows of its existence – intensive publicity would generate many more customers'.

The Parish Plan responses reveal a subtle difference between Miserden's and Bisley's cultural needs. Miserden (third priority) is much more keen than Bisley-with-Lypiatt (sixth priority) for the Parish Council to explore bringing a range of professional cultural events into the villages. There were some concerns in Bisley village that events may increase traffic and parking problems. Miserden wished to work to enhance opportunities in village halls for more events.

Of all the comments only one person (Bisley) felt that any social or cultural initiative should not place a 'burden on council tax'.

There was a general sense that artists' already open their studios and these events are well publicised.

Conclusion

There is a strong consensus that village newsletters are extremely important and could be enhanced by a shared digest of events. The Parish Councils can play a leading role in helping to develop access to information. There is also a role for the Parish Council in helping to coordinate a 'welcome pack' for new residents. The Parish Council needs to support the continuing existence of public transport links to main centres where cultural events take place. Miserden may need to take a stronger lead than Bisley-with-Lypiatt in identifying opportunities to bring cultural events to the village halls, but there is no reason why initiatives of this kind cannot be shared.

Social and Cultural Activities

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ACTIVITIES				
THE VISION	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	PRIORITY	
			Bisley	Miserden
Produce a regular digest of events to insert in village newsletters and ensure websites are updated regularly	Accept Bisley resident's offer to compile and deliver	Short term	1	2
	Ensure website managers list events	Ongoing	5	6
Encourage alternative forms of transport in evenings	Explore whether the North Link Bus could extend its timetable	Medium term	2	1
Produce a 'welcome pack' for each parish	Parish Councils to research, agree funds for, put together and deliver as appropriate	Short term	3	4
Encourage a range of professional cultural events to come to the villages	Research and cost options and initiate a pilot project	Medium term	6	3
Encourage local artists to open studios	Explore levels of interest	Medium term	7	7
Coordinate the production of an annual events calendar for the parishes	Investigate how this can be done	Short term	4	5

Recreation and Sports

‘[There is a need for a] major investment in sport for young people’

Facts

Each main village has a recreation ground and areas for children’s play, but the quality of facilities varies. The village recreation grounds have cricket and football pitches, and these are well used. Eastcombe also has a Scouts and Guides Association headquarters, which serves a large area. The Frith Youth Centre, with professional youth leaders, is in Chalford parish but is open to young people from our parishes. There is an excellent network of local footpaths and bridleways. The secondary school (in Eastcombe) has gym facilities open to the community. Each main village in Bisley-with-Lypiatt parish has allotments.

Feedback

The feedback from both parishes was consistently supportive and similar. Residents from both parishes support sport and recreation for young people. The priority in Bisley-with-Lypiatt is to encourage and support others who initiate and support recreation for young people and in Miserden traffic-calming/slowing schemes so young people can reach recreation grounds without danger (this was given second priority in Bisley-with-Lypiatt).

There is consensus that the views of young people need to be sought to find out what they want, (and comments to this effect from Eastcombe and Miserden) and agreement that there needs to be more information for young people so they know what is available locally.

There was a range of similar comments from respondents - from an idealistic comment ‘every village [should have] a tennis court or skating rink... and of course a swimming pool in summer and

football pitch in winter!’ (Oakridge) to ‘had land not been sold off we would have had enough [recreation space]’ (Bisley), and a request to ‘update play equipment’ (Eastcombe) and ‘provide children’s clubs and groups’ (Miserden). One Eastcombe resident asked that support be given to scouts and guides rather than the Frith Youth Centre, and another that voluntary youth leaders be encouraged, rather than paid ones. The only negative comment was from one Bisley resident who stated ‘no burden on council tax’.

Allotments are less of a priority for parishioners than recreation for young people, but are nevertheless supported. Eastcombe has the largest allotment site, accordingly there were more comments from Eastcombe about allotments - ‘allotments should be organic’, ‘people should be allowed to keep chickens on allotments’, ‘a second tap on the allotments’, two requests for a ‘public composting area on allotments’ (there is a Community Composting scheme in Bisley village so this may have precipitated the comment) and a specific request to the Parish Council that ‘allotments must never be used for housing’ (Oakridge).

From Miserden there were suggestions to encourage rural activities – eg, walking and horse riding, and that landowners should be encouraged to maintain footpaths and be more welcoming to those using footpaths and bridleways.

Conclusion

There was approval for the Parish Councils’ support for recreational and sporting activities for young people, and for safe independent access to those facilities. There was more than a hint too, that the Parish Councils need to listen to young people themselves to hear what young people have to say, before making parish grants. The Parish Councils need to continue to support better facilities and equipment everywhere. They can also work to ensure allotments are protected from development.

Recreation and Sports

RECREATION AND SPORTS				
THE VISION	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	PRIORITY	
			Bisley	Miserden
Adequate recreation areas in each village for young people	Seek views of young people	Medium term	4	3
	Find and buy/lease land that can be used for recreation purposes, or use the planning frameworks (Section 106) to negotiate for land as part of developments (Bisley)	As appropriate	7=	8
	Lobby for traffic reduction/slowing schemes so young people can reach existing recreation areas without danger	Short term	2	1
Facilities for young people, especially those between the ages of 10 and 15	Ensure information on activities for young people is widely available	Medium term	3	2
	Encourage evening public transport/shared transport schemes	Medium term	5	4=
	Support Frith Youth Centre	Ongoing	6	7
	Encourage and support others who initiate activities for young people	Medium term	1	4=
Maintain and where possible revitalise the allotments	Ensure accessible information about availability of allotments	Short term	9	6
	Divide size of some plots so they are not so daunting; plough in unused allotments and keep unused areas tidy; encourage other activities on allotments such community composting	Ongoing	7=	9

Transport

Facts

These facts about our parishes are taken from the Parish Profile produced by Stroud District Council, 2004.

74% of 16 to 74-year-olds drive to their place of work.
22% work from home.
8% use public transport, walk, cycle, or are car passengers.
90% of households have a car, but 54% have two or more.
i.e. households with two or more cars are more common than those with one.

Bus services

Eastcombe, Bisley and Oakridge have regular bus services to Stroud. Generally there are infrequent, often only once a week, bus routes to Stroud and Gloucester, but not always to Cirencester and Cheltenham. Miserden and Whiteway are less well served. Stroud North Link provides a flexible service to Painswick and Stroud, Monday to Friday between 7am and 6.30pm.

Evening travel by bus is also difficult but there is now a Friday and Saturday night service available.

'Ring and Ride' bus, staffed by volunteers, is particularly popular with the elderly.



'Too many vehicles using local roads'

Feedback

Driving to and from work and for leisure

With few employment opportunities in this rural area there is a need to travel for work and amenities. However, it was voiced by residents that public transport would be used more if it ran at convenient times, to enable arrival at work or appointments on time. Many people said that timetables should be more widely publicised, along with all other travel options. It was felt that lifestyle changes (such as working from home, more car sharing and encouraging walking and cycling) could also make a difference to the volume of traffic on the roads.

Driving to and from school

Thomas Keble School and the primary schools in our parishes cater for local children but are also popular with pupils from outside the area and this perhaps is the main reason they remain viable. This inward movement however results in more rural traffic. The [outside] three-mile rule for free bus travel for under-16s was criticised, as was the cost of bus passes. Many respondents felt that more car-sharing to the schools should be encouraged.

Walking and cycling

Many people stated, at the public meeting and subsequently, that our roads are too dangerous for walking and cycling. A clear wish was identified for safe, well maintained footpaths and cycleways linking each village. A safe and dry cycle lock-up, so that cyclists can link with other modes of transport, would seem to follow from this first point, and was supported as a long-term goal.

Conclusion

In order to evaluate measures that may be needed to curtail the rising volume of traffic, more research is needed to ascertain why and how often people travel within and out of the parishes, as well as through Bisley and The Camp. Our Parish Councils must lobby to keep and extend public transport services, and then to publicise the timetables via newsletters, notice boards and leaflets. The Parish Councils along with GCC and volunteers should also ensure that existing footpaths and bridleways are maintained and take steps to identify new routes between villages where none exist.

TRANSPORT				
THE VISION	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	PRIORITY	
			Bisley	Miserden
A clear picture of transport needs in the parishes	Commission a survey to establish why and how residents travel, and identify what opportunities there are to improve the situation	Medium term	5	6
	Publish initial findings and regularly monitor the effect of any actions taken as a result of these findings	Long term	7=	7
All residents to have access to information about the various modes of transport available to them	Publicise information on all possible transport options for parishioners without a car (eg, young and elderly, for visiting health services, shopping, etc)	Short term	1	1
Reduced traffic through the villages	Liaise with schools and employers to encourage car sharing and use of public transport	Medium term	4	4
	Publicise public transport timetables	Short term	3	2
	Investigate cycle routes	Medium term	9	8=
A public transport network and routes which offer a viable alternative to car usage and address the transport needs of all residents	Investigate possibilities	Long term	6	3
A central hub in each village to ensure that different modes of transport can link	Investigate possibilities	Long term	7=	5
Reduced traffic through the villages	Monitor the effect of any actions taken and modify where necessary	Long term	2	8=

Housing

Facts:

These facts are taken from the Parish Profile produced by Stroud District Council, 2004.

71% of houses are detached
20% are semi-detached
7% are terraced houses
2% are flats or mobile homes

There is a contrast in the type of occupancy of the housing in the two parishes. In Miserden village most housing is privately rented, whilst almost all housing in Whiteway is owned outright. Elsewhere

50% are owner-occupied (without mortgage)
26% are owned with a mortgage or loan
22% rented
2% are other or living rent-free.

In addition, in the two parishes there are 50 second homes or holiday homes; ie, 4% on average. Some areas have a higher concentration than others. This is a higher percentage than in the Stroud District as a whole. From comments received, Oakridge residents consider this to be a serious problem affecting such things as the quiet village scene, housing prices and their village economy.



Feedback

The results of the consultation exercise clearly show that any new housing proposed in this area should only be built if a genuine need can be shown. The density and style of build in the Windyridge development in Bisley was particularly criticised. If there is to be any new building, most respondents wish to see the local style retained, and for it to be of good design.

Mixed feelings on the affordable housing issue were apparent. Support for some small-scale social housing was evident providing the need was proven, and that it was genuinely affordable and remained that way. Some felt that encouraging younger people to remain in our villages was essential to maintain a balanced population. Affordable housing would facilitate this. The recently built social housing in Sapperton was generally admired at the public meeting for being sympathetic to the village in scale, design and purpose.

Conclusion

Clearly the Parish Councils must continue to work closely with the Planning Department at Stroud District Council. Together, and with the community, they should conduct regular consultations and determine whether or not existing housing meets the needs of local people. Any needs that are proven should then be addressed.

The same partnership should also continue to take a responsible attitude to all planning applications, particularly with regard to building style, construction materials and energy conservation.

The impact of second homes and holiday lets on local housing needs and the village communities should be monitored.

Housing

HOUSING				
THE VISION	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	PRIORITY	
			Bisley	Miserden
Constant awareness of local housing needs	Liaise with Stroud District Council to obtain information on local housing requirements. Make information available to parishioners	Short term	2	5
	Investigate possible options for affordable housing	Medium term	3	2
Address local concerns, if any, about second homes , holiday lets, and tourism	Commission independent research into the impact of holiday lets and second homes on small communities	Ongoing	6	4
	Contact Stroud District Council where there is significant concern about holiday lets and second homes to determine what planning policies are used	Medium term	5	6
Existing housing should be maintained or altered in a way that is appropriate to the local architectural style	Design and produce a housing survey with the participation of local people	Medium term	4	3
Development, only permissible if there is a genuine local need, should be in a style that is sympathetic to the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and on a scale that reflects the needs of the existing community	Work with parishioners and SDC to ensure that local needs highlighted by the survey are addressed. Regularly monitor to identify any changing needs	Long term	1	1

Economy

‘A strong local economy builds communication and self-reliance in the parish’

Facts

There is already a wide and diverse range of businesses in both parishes and these provide valuable local employment opportunities. While some of these businesses have a national or regional customer base, many provide a range of services to local residents: in particular, the farm shops, the village shops, post offices and the village pubs. Successful local businesses not only generate wealth but can contribute to a reduction in car journeys by both commuters and shoppers.



‘More work opportunities locally would reduce traffic and protect our environment’.

Feedback

The continued existence of viable and successful village shops, post offices and pubs was considered the top priority in both parishes, with support for wider publicising of these businesses and their opening times. However, the production of price comparison surveys to promote the benefits of shopping locally were considered more important in Miserden parish (second) than in Bisley (sixth). Both parishes agreed that raising the profile for all local businesses was important, and that the parish should be promoted as a suitable location for new sustainable businesses.

Conclusion

There is a clear role for the Parish Councils to ensure that more and up-to-date information about local shops and businesses is made available to parishioners through the village newsletters and the parish council websites.

The Parish Councils should support the establishment of new businesses in the parishes providing that these involve a minimal or positive effect on the environment.

Miserden parish should consider carrying out price comparison surveys to promote the benefits of shopping locally.

Economy

ECONOMY				
THE VISION	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	PRIORITY	
			Bisley	Miserden
A diverse range of successful local businesses generating wealth and providing local employment	Encourage their use by publicising details in the village newsletters, and in the Parish Directory on the parish council website	Short term	2	3
Maintain the working character of the parishes	Explore how local businesses and the local economy contribute to the character of the parishes	Medium term	3	4
The continued existence of viable and successful village shops and post offices	Make parishioners aware of local shops by publicising details and opening hours in the village newsletters, and in the Parish Directory on the parish council website	Short term	1	1
	Carry out price comparison surveys and promote the benefits of shopping locally	Medium term	6	2
A diverse range of successful local businesses generating wealth and providing local employment	Promote the parishes as suitable locations for new sustainable businesses that ensure local wealth creation with minimal or positive effect on the environment	Medium term	4	5=
A 'green' future	Explore the possibility of local production of renewable energy including bio-mass	Medium term	5	7
Practical support for local businesses	Investigate the availability of funding for training and business development	Short term	7	5=

Landscape and Environment

‘Most people who have lived here all their lives, or moved here years ago, have done so because they valued the rural nature of the area and its natural beauty. These qualities are at great risk of being lost forever and one of the most important tasks of the Parish Plan must be to protect and guard these features...’

Facts

Both parishes are rural in character and have the good fortune to be situated in a beautiful landscape, characterised by Cotswold stone - in walls and buildings - rolling hills with pastures and arable fields and largely wooded valleys. The villages and hamlets are also visually attractive, each with its own unique and distinctive character and buildings. Both parishes are completely within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Feedback

Bisley-with-Lypiatt parish, perhaps because it has been more affected by what many consider to be the planning disaster of the Manor Farm development in neighbouring Chalford parish, was much more concerned with development issues. Its first and second priorities were the ongoing monitoring of planning applications and any proposed changes to land use and their effect on the environment. The top priorities of Miserden parish on the other hand were focused on the countryside, with ongoing monitoring of the effect of planning applications on hedgerows, and the condition of footpaths, being their top priorities. Miserden was also more concerned about the effects of light pollution. Both parishes strongly supported the ongoing maintenance of those

stone walls for which the parish councils have responsibility. Strangely, there was less interest in the measures necessary to achieve these top priority objectives - the production of Village Design Statements to give more weight to local concerns over inappropriate development, and making landowners more aware of the grants and support available to maintain stone walls and woodlands for the benefit of the landscape and wildlife.

There were many comments about the perceived damage to the landscape caused by wind turbines (‘No windmills’) and general suspicion of the ‘Community Renewables Initiative’ (ranked tenth by both parishes). ‘We should declare as an AONB [that] we oppose the creation of windfarms in the parish, not focus on the renewable initiative if this is what it means?’ There was also a lot of comment about inappropriate and unnecessary road signs. ‘We do not need any more road signs!! but speed lights seem to be effective.’

Conclusion

There is clear support for maintaining the genuinely rural character of the parishes and the beautiful landscape for working, recreation and wildlife. Similarly there is concern that the villages maintain their distinctive visual character and size. There is general concern about the scale of new building and development and its effect on the landscape and environment.

To address these concerns in the most effective way, the Parish Councils need to produce Village Design Statements to ensure that local issues are given due weight in planning decisions made by Stroud District Council, and to ensure that they continue to be notified and consulted by Stroud District Council on all planning applications. Likewise, the Parish Councils need to ensure that local residents are also made aware of planning applications and their right to comment before decisions are made.

The Parish Councils need to clarify and explain the issues involved in order to gain wider support for the Community Renewables Initiative.

Landscape and Environment

LANDSCAPE AND ENVIRONMENT				
THE VISION	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	PRIORITY	
			Bisley	Miserden
A beautiful landscape for working, recreation and wildlife	Continue to publicise Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty grants for repairing walls, and the availability of dry-stone walling courses	Ongoing	5	9
	Continue to maintain the stone walls for which the parish councils have responsibility	Ongoing	3	4=
	Check status of hedgerows affected by planning applications	Medium term	10=	1
	Publicise availability of grants through the Community Renewables Initiative	Short term	10=	10
	Work to minimise light pollution (security lights angled down, tree and building uplighting to be limited)	Medium term	8=	3
Our villages to maintain their unique character and size with minimal new build	Consider producing a Village Design Statement to document the characteristics of each settlement, which should be considered by Stroud District Council in their Local development Plan.	Short term	8=	12
	Contact Stroud District Council where there is significant concern about holiday lets and second homes to determine what planning policies are used	Ongoing	1	6
Well maintained woods and paths	Publicise resources available to owners for woodland maintenance	Medium term	12	11
	Monitor the condition of footpaths in the Parish	Ongoing	7	2
Our parish to remain genuinely rural in character	Continue to monitor any proposed changes to land use and their effect on the environment	Ongoing	2	4=
	Continue opposition to any street lighting or other source of light pollution	Ongoing	6	7=
	Continue to work for the minimum necessary street furniture and road signs	Ongoing	4	7=

Funded by The Countryside Agency



The Parish Plan Steering Group wishes to thank the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council and Stroud District Council for help and guidance with the process of carrying out the work to complete the Parish Plan.



Printed by Buckstop - 01453 891428

Designed by Russ Coles-Jones - 01285 821792

Miserden Parish Clerk - 01285 821486

Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish Clerk - 01452 771089

www.bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk

© Bisley-with-Lypiatt and Miserden Parish Councils 2006

Printed on paper from a sustainable source