

Charlton Musgrove – our future in our hands

Contents

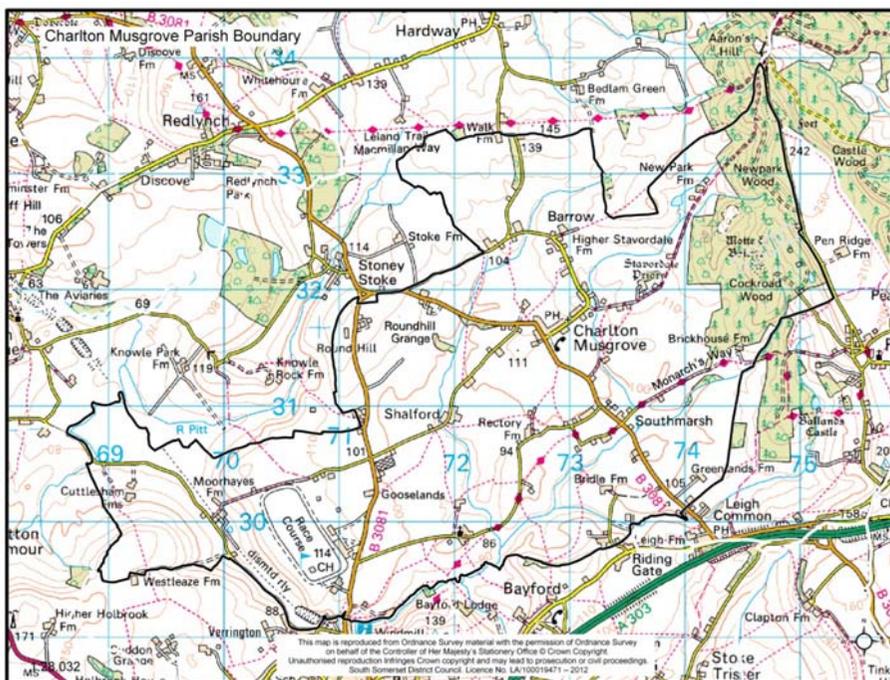
1.	Our Parish map	Page 2
2.	Why have a Parish plan and what we did	3
3.	About our village and our history	4
4.	Our Community	
a.	About you and your household	6
b.	Crime and Safety	7
c.	Communications	8
d.	Parish Council and District Council	9
e.	Children	10
f.	Our village hall and the mobile library	12
g.	Our churches	14
h.	The Smithy pub	15
5.	The Natural environment	
a.	The countryside	16
b.	Renewable energy	17
c.	Rights of way	18
6.	The built environment	
a.	Housing	20
b.	Affordable housing	21
7.	Roads and traffic	
a.	Speed limits and our lanes	22
b.	Cycling and public transport	23
8.	Summary of actions	24
9.	What next and thank you!	26
10.	Contacts and can you help?	27
11.	And finally - the red phone box	28

1. Our Parish Map



Charlton Musgrove is a sprawling rural community with 170 households and a population of 375 people. It is one of the largest parishes in Somerset (1485 hectares). The parish includes the hamlets of Barrow, Holbrook, Southmarsh, and Shalford.

Visit our village website at www.charltonmusgrove.org



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2. Why have a Parish Plan and what we did

Towards the end of 2007 the village hall Trustees were beginning to consider making improvements to the village hall. Through early meetings with South Somerset District Council (SSDC) regarding possible help with funding it became apparent that it would be very useful to produce a Parish Plan to help gauge the villagers' ideas and vision for the future of the village. The Parish Council endorsed this view and a Steering Committee was formed. Widespread consultation followed with two public consultations and several surveys conducted. The process hibernated periodically when pressure on time to progress the new hall project won out.

However, once the new hall was completed, in January 2011 a questionnaire was circulated to all homes in the village. We achieved a tremendous response rate of 72% which has given us the confidence to feel that the results reflect the views of the majority of the residents. These results and comments were analysed and made available on the village website. We then held another public consultation in November 2011 where villagers were able to view the results and give their reaction and suggest possible actions and aims to include in the plan. These were collated with the other information and the final Parish Plan has been produced.

The purpose of the Plan is to record these results, identify the issues you told us about and suggest actions to try and put in place some of the things you would like to see happening in the village - or leave some things just as they are! It is a voice from the village to SSDC and the Parish Council to help them make future decisions and form ideas for improvements. At the end of most pages are proposed actions for both the Parish Council and villagers to help achieve some of these wishes. They have been summarised at the end of the Plan along with suggestions of how we take these forward.

The Parish plan, with support from the Parish Council has already brought the community together on several occasions. Early comments encouraged the setting up of a website which was established in August 2008 and the creation of a play area on land generously made available by Sir Cameron Mackintosh. It helped us secure grants from Somerset County Council (SCC), SSDC, Viridor and others for the village hall and to achieve a consensus in September 2009 to build a new hall. Concerns related to speeding past the Smithy and accidents at Gooseland's corner were listened to by the Parish Council and action taken. The idea for the history book written by Claude Teague and Kevin Flint was also born at the start of the project. It was published last November and has been extremely successful with the first print run sold out and another print run selling well.

The Plan has been endorsed by the Parish Council and will be endorsed by SSDC to form part of the new Local Development Plan. The Localism Bill was given Royal Assent on 15 November 2011 and became an Act. This takes powers from central government and hands it back to local authorities and also to neighbourhoods and communities giving them the freedom and flexibility to achieve their own ambitions. This really will give us increasing opportunity and powers in the future to make more of our own decisions within the village. It is therefore even more important that the villagers have recorded their wishes so that they can be taken into account when decisions are made. Whilst the Parish Plan isn't a statutory document, SSDC integrates it into local planning and service delivery procedures and gives it weight when considering planning applications.

3. About our village and our history

The ancient parish of Charlton Musgrove is one of the largest in Somerset. The village is first mentioned in the Domesday book of 1069. Romano British artifacts and evidence of late Saxon settlements have been found south of Holbrook. The village covers an area of 15.5 square kilometres and is irregular in shape. The eastern part of the village, including Barrow, Shalford and Southmarsh, lies in an undulating valley on Oxford clay. West of St Stephen's in Rectory Lane and west of the B3081, the Racecourse and land at Gooselands, towards Stoney Stoke, the land lies on a stony brash.

The parish is situated north of Wincanton, from which it is separated by the River Cale, which forms the southern boundary. Bratton Seymour lies to the west, Penselwood to the east and Shepton Montague and Brewham to the north.

Alfred's Tower and Selwood forest provide a very attractive backdrop to the village. It is said that the Tower was built near the summit where Alfred erected his standard against Danish invaders after he secured one of his great victories over the Danes. It was built by the Hoare family and is 160 feet high and stands on a summit 854 feet above sea level. The late Sir Henry Hoare bequeathed his estate of 3,000 acres, including the Tower and the famous Stourhead Gardens to the National Trust in 1946.

The village also boasts an ancient oak tree thought to be nearly 700 years old. This arboreal veteran is a pedunculate oak and is calloused, squat and hollow in the middle. The girth measures 7.5 metres and is the one of the oldest maiden oaks in Somerset.



There is a motte and bailey castle in Cockroad Wood above the village which is now known as Kenwalks Castle. This is where Alfred gathered his troops to fight the Danes. The castle was a garrison as well as a stronghold for aristocratic residences and a centre of local or royal administrations.

The medieval village was originally near St Stephen's church in Rectory Lane. The bubonic plague came to the village in 1553. Licences to build cottages at Barrow and later at Southmarsh were granted in the 17th century. In the late 18th century and early 19th century, the cottage settlement expanded in both areas and Barrow has remained the centre of the population. Over the two centuries since the first census of 1801 the population of the village has been remarkably stable at between 350 and 490 people. According to one historical record, there were 75 inhabited houses in the village in 1831 and 35 of these were occupied by families working in agriculture.



Many properties today have been converted into single dwellings from two or three small cottages. In the 1960's, many people in the village were employed at the nearby Cow and Gate factory in Wincanton. The factory collected the milk daily, from 33 small milk producing farms in the village. Some of the milk was retained in the village for cheese making. Today just three large dairy farms with herds of 200 cows or more remain in the village.

3. About our village and our history continued

The Leirs were Rectors at Charlton Musgrove for 300 years and owned almost 1000 acres in the parish. The estate was sold in 1920.

There were several beer houses in the village where local people brewed their own beer and served the locals and cider was also made in the village. There was also a bakers, a butcher, a brick and tile maker, a wheelwright, a shoemaker, a cheesemaker and a malthouse, not to mention a poor house.

A wooden hut in Barrow Lane served as a social centre for the local community and there was a cricket ground next to Gooselands.



In 1818 there were both day and Sunday schools in the village supported by voluntary contributions. The village School closed in the early 1960's and pupils and the head teacher were transferred to Wincanton Council School. In 1965 the village had a cricket club and a WI, with 34 members, also a Post Office and village shop.

After the Second World War, Charlton Musgrove was still a village of small holdings and farms, in the ownership of individuals and they were the main employers. After the 1970's many small farms were sold and amalgamated into larger farms. Today, with not much local employment, many residents commute to local towns to work although a surprising number also work in a variety of businesses from their homes.



The railway line from Bruton to Wincanton used to run through Moorhayes Farm where the Keens live.

In the mornings the farmer would wait until the school train had passed before taking the cows out to pasture after milking. The trains were much slower in those days and the line very straight and at other times there was enough time to look both ways and then open the crossing gates to cross the line. The line closed on 7th March 1966.

Horse races were held near Wincanton in 1765 but not regularly until the 1890's when they were held on the course at Hatherleigh. In 1893 Grand National rules were adopted and it was the setting of the earliest steeplechases ever held in the 19thC before even Cheltenham and Aylesbury. When the lease of the Hatherleigh course expired in 1925 the company purchased Kingwell Farm in Charlton Musgrove and the first race took place in 1927 at the new racecourse. During the Second World war it was commandeered by the Military authorities. Today the races draw very large crowds with many other events taking place throughout the year. There is also a golf course in the centre and a very popular caravan site.

4a. Our Community - About you and your household

269 residents responded and live in 105 dwellings - an average of 2.5 people living in each dwelling.

27 youngsters are at nursery school or school.

17 are in secondary school or 6th form or college.

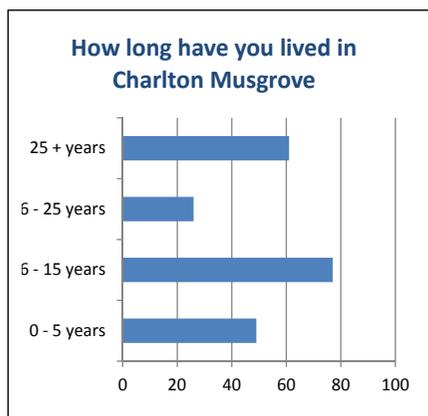
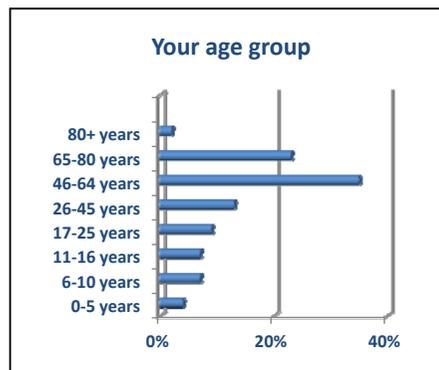
10 are at university or other higher education.

63% live in detached houses

18% in bungalows

18% in semi-detached houses

79% feel part of the village despite its scattered nature but **21%** don't and feel more part of neighbouring villages and towns.



25% are employed

25% are self employed

33% are retired

6% at school or higher education

8% house wife/husband

1% carer

1% unemployed

1% other

The nature of the businesses includes IT consultants, management consultancy, travel consultant, barrister, designer, data networks, structural engineer, farming, farm shop, bed and breakfast, interior design/decoration, author, teacher and painter/printmaker.

42 people mainly work or run a business in the village

50 full time people are employed in these businesses and

27 part time and

32 of these employees live in the village

13 people have a long term disability

36 people have a long term health condition

The vast majority felt that they received the care and support they need.

33% have connected to the mains drainage **19%** have private treatment plants **48%** have septic tanks.

13% reported pollution problems caused by sewerage drainage. People rated the new sewerage system as one of the best things in the village.

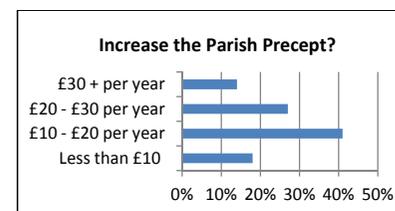
26 households were affected by surface water and storm damage or road water drainage problems.

4a. Our Community - About you and your household

15 households were affected by fly tipping but we were unable to establish where in the village this was. Volunteers pick up litter round the village lanes and equipment is available if you would like to help out – contact Jean and Jeremy Sellick on 32174.

68 households were interested in joining a community-run fuel purchase scheme to help negotiate lower prices. Details of a scheme have been circulated and are on village notice boards.

*25 horse riders and 2 carriage drivers live in the village.
19 horses and 19 ponies are owned or looked after by villagers.
66 horses or ponies could be stabled in the village.
SSDC have identified this region as an important equestrian area for tourism*



Locally inspired projects in the village may require a degree of local funding.

78% of households said, in principle they would support an increase in the Parish Precept to help finance such projects.

4b. Crime and Safety and Neighbourhood Watch scheme



Concern about crime in Charlton Musgrove was split with 41% concerned and 46% not concerned. But only 13% had been a victim of crime **in the village** during the past 5 years. These crimes were all theft of one sort or another, the majority of which were mainly from outside the home with only 5 burglaries reported.

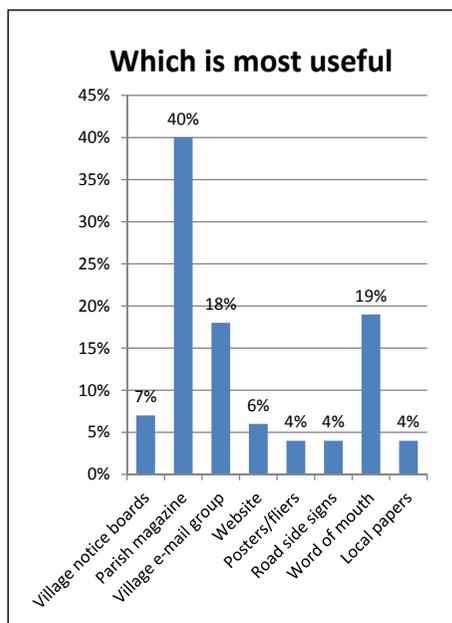
77% thought a Neighbourhood Watch scheme makes the village a better place to live. **5%** didn't think so but **17%** didn't know we had one.

Fundraising was done in the past for signage to be put up round the village but the signs all got stolen!

Notices are now circulated via e-mail. Our main contact in the village is Pene Volk - ☎ 32013

There were many responses to the questionnaire saying that one of the best things about Charlton Musgrove was that it is a safe, crime-free environment and a good place to bring up children.

4c. Our Community - Communications



The Village News (parish magazine) provides the most popular channel for villagers to obtain information about what is going on in the village. This is produced by the church and funded by donations. There were many responses to the questionnaire asking if this could include local advertisements which would help pay for printing.

The village hall project flagged up a need for good quick communication in the village and with many people now using computers with e-mail and internet access it was decided to design a village website. Four years ago www.charltonmusgrove.org was set up. This provides an excellent means of notifying not only villagers but also a wider audience of news and events in Charlton Musgrove as well as facilitating village hall bookings on line.

A data base of villagers' e-mail addresses was also assembled and there are currently over 100 on the list. It is regularly used to inform villagers of news and events and to circulate neighbourhood watch reports.

93% felt they were well or reasonably well informed about what is going on in the village.

73% said they would like to see an information map of the village showing footpaths, bridleways and interesting features. 39% would like to see this located at the village hall and 32% on a village notice board.

90 homes have a broadband internet connection and over half reported slow speeds particularly in the areas furthest from Wincanton.

Somerset County Council has secured funding to bring faster broadband to the area. 64% of villagers expressed an interest in testing the speed of their connection. To do so, complete the on line survey and register your interest at www.connectingdevonandsomerset.co.uk This will help SCC to identify the worst areas and determine the demand for better speeds and help target funds to improve our broadband.

What the Parish Council could do:

- Lobby SSDC and SCC for better broadband speeds.

What you could do:

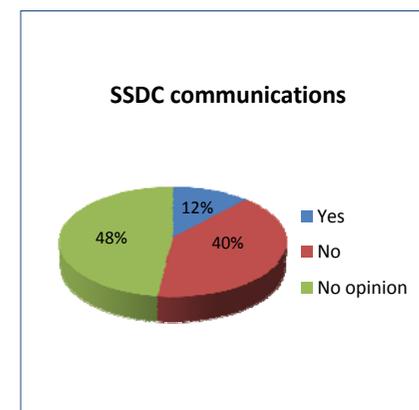
- Ask the Editor of the village magazine if we could include local advertisements.
- Let us have your e-mail address if you are not already on the data base.
- Contact your Internet Service Provider and tell them that your speed is well below the government's stated minimum speed (2mbps).
- Complete the on line survey.

4d. Our Community - Parish Council and District Council

The questionnaire asked if villagers felt the Parish Council does enough to let them know what they are doing. These results would seem to indicate that the Parish Council could communicate with villagers more.

Villagers are welcome at Parish Council meetings and can speak if they wish to.

Although the agenda and minutes of Parish Council meetings are posted on the notice board by St John's church and on the website, some villagers asked if they might be circulated by e-mail. This would inform many villagers in a more direct and easily accessible way. Notice of elections and results could also be similarly circulated.



The villagers were also asked if they felt that SSDC takes sufficient notice of local opinion when reaching planning decisions and these are the results.

Circulation of the agenda and minutes would keep villagers in contact more. The Parish Council have asked SSDC in the past to be given reasons why local opinion appears to have been ignored.

It is also possible to apply on the SSDC website for new planning applications and decisions to be emailed direct to you once a week, keeping you in touch and giving you more opportunities to respond to new applications. To register log in to the SSDC website www.southsomerset.gov.uk/ Go into Planning and Building Control and click on Planning weekly lists and register.

What the Parish Council could do:

- Circulate the agenda and minutes, other notices and information via e-mail and consider including a summary in the village news.
- Continue to ask SSDC to provide reasons for refusal/approval where there is conflict with Parish Council decisions.

What you could do:

- Come to Parish Council meetings and make your views known.
- Log on for weekly planning application e-mails.

4e. Our Community – Children

Of the households that responded to the survey, there are 47 children under the age of 16 in the village, which is 18% of the population. A recent estimate though put the actual number of children at 70+.

Despite the healthy proportion of children in the village, there are no organised recreational activities, and although there is a play area for children to meet and play in, there is no equipment in it.

There are however a few events aimed at children such as the Pancake party, the Christingle Service, and a mother and toddler group. There are also junior sections in the village flower show. There is always a good turnout to these events.



In the survey, responses were overwhelmingly about the lack of equipment and seating in the play area, lack of organised activities, and the need for safe cycle paths. The land on which the play area is situated is leased to the Parish Council from Sir Cameron Mackintosh for a peppercorn rent.

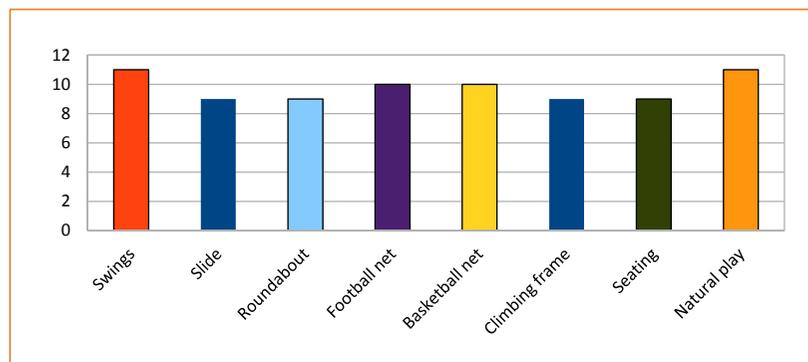
Of the children who completed the questionnaire 13 had visited the play area and 18 hadn't. 9 children who do use it said the facilities were poor.

In the household section 33 households said their children never use the play area and it was either because:-

- 5 said it was too far away
- 9 because it had no play equipment
- 6 because it had no seating
- 11 because they weren't interested



The type of equipment children would like to see in their play area



4e. Our Community – Children

There were further comments made at the consultation evening as follows:

5 comments were in favour of moving the play area to the village hall. However the Trustees of the hall feel that this would create problems when the hall was being hired for private use.

4 comments were made against installing equipment in the play area due to the cost, maintenance and health and safety issues.

16 comments were strongly in favour of installing equipment in the play area. Some interest was also shown in installing fitness equipment as well.



22 children who responded would like cycle paths to connect the village if it was possible

10 children would like training classes in the village hall.

10 children would like to take part in amateur dramatics

What the Parish Council could do:

Consider supporting improvements in the play area – to be investigated initially by a volunteer group.

What you and volunteer groups could do:

Short Term

Volunteers could organise activities in the village hall, and rounders matches etc in the play area in summer months.

Inform children, young people and parents of any new activities and events held within the parish, by word of mouth, notice boards and newsletters and the website.

Medium Term

Playground – investigate the cost to install equipment in the play area.

Research grants available, maintenance, health and safety issues, possible increase to the precept and present information to the village.

Long Term

To ensure the children have a variety of activities and recreational pursuits available to them on a regular basis.

Investigate the possibility of creating cycle paths to connect the village.

78% of residents would support an increase in the Parish Plan Precept to help finance locally-inspired projects such as improving the play area.

4f. Our Community – our village hall



In 1924, the old hall was a wooden hut in Barrow Lane which served as a social centre for the local community. After the Second World War, it was decided to build a new village hall as a Memorial for the men and women who left the village to serve in the two world wars and to the 12 men who gave their lives. In 1958 the new hall in Shalford Lane was opened.

After 50 years of use, the Trustees formed a committee to investigate updating and improving the hall. However, it was decided that there were too many uncertainties and a rebuild was the most favourable option. After a feasibility study and three years of fundraising and obtaining grants, the new hall was rededicated on Armistice Day 2010 and officially opened by Sir Cameron Mackintosh in December 2010.

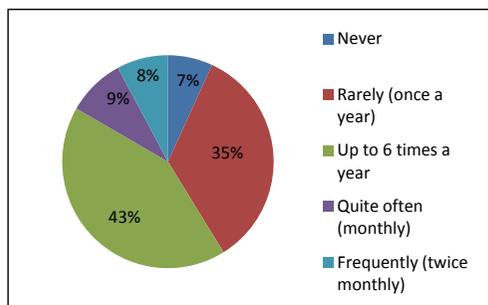
The design objective during the planning for the new hall was that it should be able to cater equally well for community events, family parties and weddings as well as smaller informal events and meetings. The hall is therefore very flexible with full height double oak doors between the meeting room and the main hall. These can be opened as required so that the two areas can function separately or together. The hall is fully licensed and also has a large enclosed child-friendly outside area.

The meeting room has a large boardroom table, projector, screen, flip chart stand and has Wi-Fi broadband connection. It has the capacity to seat up to 25 delegates. A hearing loop is available in both the hall and meeting room.

The kitchen is spacious and well equipped, with direct access to the main hall, meeting room and the car park making catering for large events much easier.

Villagers were asked how important to village life is the hall?

59% (170 people) said it was essential or very important



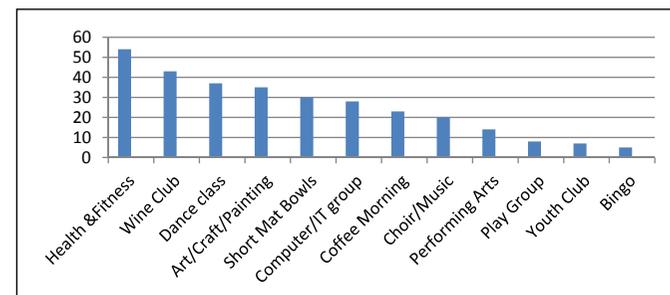
Villagers were asked how often they would use the new hall.

It was surprising there wasn't a more positive response. This could be because, at the time the questionnaire was completed, the new hall had only just been opened. For many years the old hall had been used infrequently due to its poor state of repair and inadequate heating and insulation.



4f. Our Community – our village hall and mobile library

There was a very positive response when residents were also asked what activities they would like to see in the hall.



Since the questionnaire was completed these activities have begun in the hall due to popular demand and are well attended:-

- Zumba classes – two levels of fitness one for older or less fit people (Monday evening)
- Pilates (Wednesday evening)
- Computers class (Thursday evening)
- Mothers and Toddlers (Wednesday mornings during term time)
- Coffee morning (3rd Friday in the month)
- Wine Club (quarterly)
- Dog training group
- Short Mat Bowls (twice a month)

Additional activities requested and comments made were:-

- Bridge club, film club.
- Language classes.
- Lectures, exhibitions, table top sales, charity events, dinners, charity events in the evening.
- Folk music and use of the village hall for a folk weekend. Social functions.
- "The village hall doesn't do its 'own thing' –the villagers can organise activities as they wish!"
- "The village needs a focal point in the form of a village green next to the village hall".

The mobile library

44% (80 people) said it was essential or very important to village life.

In February 2011 Somerset County Council, seeking a budget reduction, made cut backs to the library service and some routes of the mobile library were cut. A judicial review found these cuts unlawful and some library services were reinstated in November 2011. However the mobile library in our village has not been reinstated although the council is looking at ways to amend this. Further details can be found at www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries then click on mobile library services and then changes to the library service.

What you and volunteer groups could do:

- Support existing activities and start up further new activities in the village hall – particularly dance classes, further fitness classes, performing arts and music. There was also interest in starting a playgroup, a youth club and bingo.
- Lobby SCC for reinstatement of the mobile library service.

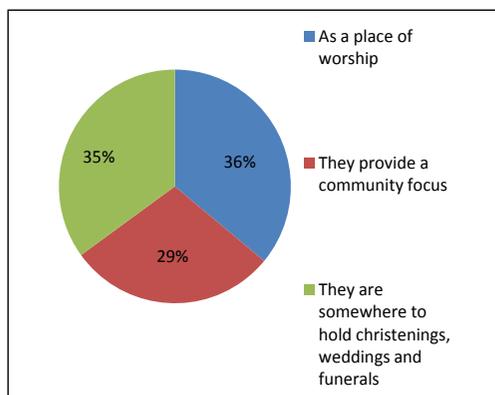
4g. Our Community - our Churches



The Parish Church of St Stephen in Rectory Lane, has stood on this site since the 13th century. Records from this time conclude that the chancel was the first part of the church to be built, the nave in the late 14th century and the tower in the 15th century. The tower houses three bells, the great bell, the middle bell and the smaller bell. St Stephen's is looked after by the rector, church wardens and the Parochial Church Council. The burial ground is no longer open.

St John's Church in Barrow Lane was built in the 19th century in memory of the Rev. Lewis Charles Davies. The church is built of stone and has a nave, chancel and southern bell tower. St John's is vested in the rector, church wardens and the PCC. It is not licensed for weddings. The graveyard surrounding St John's belongs to and is maintained by the Parish Council.

The Rectory in the village was sold by the church several years ago and an alternative house purchased in Cucklington.



The churches of St Stephen (Rectory lane) and St John (Barrow Lane) are important to the village for the reasons shown.

79% (150 people) felt that the church contributes to an inclusive community spirit e.g. Harvest Supper, Pancake Party etc.

88% (166 people) said it is very important or important that the churches remain available to continue their traditional roles

37% (66 people) thought there should be a church group for children with 55% having no opinion.

At the public consultation, people commented that we do need both churches and they are beautiful and important to the village. They are both used and are special in their unique ways. However there has also been a feeling and comments, made that having two churches divides rather than unites the village.

What you could do:

- Ensure the Rector and PCC know how important the churches are and how valued their events are.
- Promote the new monthly service called Growing Faith which has been established for younger children. The service rotates around the churches in the benefice.
- Encourage more positive support of both churches.

4h. Our Community - The Smithy Pub



There has been a beer house where The Smithy Inn is now, for 400 years. From 1859 it was known as the Red Lion until around 1980 when the name was changed to The Smithy. Another beer house stood on the east side on the B3081 on the southern boundary and was still in business in the early 20th century.

Two questions were asked in the questionnaire:-

In your opinion, how important to village life is The Smithy?

60% (109 people) said it was essential or very important

Should the Smithy be retained as a pub?

82% (155 people) said Yes



In the questionnaire, villagers expressed regret that there is not a good village pub which could be the heart of the community. They said it lacks atmosphere, is second rate and unappealing and in need of many improvements and freshening up. They did not feel welcomed or encouraged to return and it had been run down over many years. This was a major sadness and a missed opportunity by The Smithy's owners.

The Parish Council called a public meeting in October 2011 to inform the villagers that the landlords were considering applying for change of use from public house to residential use. A packed village hall was informed that the pub had been up for sale at £415,000 and if no purchaser was found within 2 weeks an application for change of use would be submitted.

Villagers were upset to hear this news and many had tried to support the pub in the past. It is also only open on very casual lines closing weekday lunchtimes (as specified in the sale advert). It had been difficult to locate the sale details on the internet and there has been no local advertising. People thought that the price seemed excessive in comparison to others locally for sale and the element of goodwill had been lost. A strong desire for a good welcoming local pub was very evident and villagers felt that it should not be allowed to shut and were concerned that if the village lost the pub they would never get another.

Planning application no 11/04779/COU was validated on 1st December 2011.

A petition to SAVE THE PUB was signed by 150 people and submitted to SSDC.

The application was refused by SSDC on 25th January 2012 and at the time of writing this plan we are not aware of any further developments.

What the Parish Council could do:

- Continue to keep parishioners informed of developments.
- Consider the idea of a community pub and possible sponsors.

5a. The natural environment - the countryside



Many residents commented that the best things about Charlton Musgrove are the lovely countryside and the peace and quiet of a tranquil rural area. The unspoilt views and beautiful scenery were highly rated. Views towards King Alfred's Tower and the deciduous woodland and coniferous forest – part of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Area of Outstanding Natural beauty were much appreciated.



Residents enjoy being in touch with nature and the seasons, the wildlife and the green fields with grazing animals and the mixed agriculture taking place in the village.

Another resident said the best thing was “no street lighting and a sky full of stars”!

87 people are interested in wildlife projects such as tree planting, hedge laying and putting up nest boxes.

136 people are in favour of planting native trees/flowers/bulbs to enhance the approaches to the village.

103 people say the laws on fly tipping/littering are not adequately enforced.

26 people are affected by pollution problems caused by surface water or road water drainage.



Several complaints were made about pollution in the village streams. This is in sharp contrast to the number of older residents who commented in the Charlton Musgrove history book about the exceptionally clean water there used to be in the village which enabled watercress beds to grow.

A comment was made about the annual cutting of hedges to the detriment of wildlife and loss of flowers and fruit.

What the Parish Council could do:

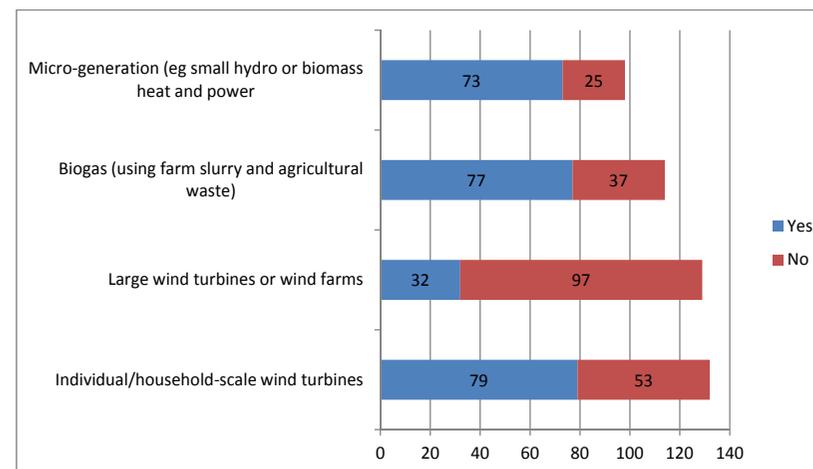
- Consider how our streams can be cleaned up.
- Ensure people are aware that they can report problems in their community on line at www.somerset.gov.uk or through the Parish Council

What you and volunteer groups could do:

- Explore the possibility of creating a community woodland scheme.
- Organise wildlife projects such as hedge laying and putting up nest boxes etc.
- Plant flowers and bulbs to enhance the village.

5b. The natural environment - renewable energy

The following graph shows the number of households in favour of each type of renewable energy.



Comments made by villagers at the consultation evening were overwhelmingly against wind turbines – “they are very intrusive” and “not very efficient” and “a blot on the landscape particularly in our beautiful countryside”. One comment however said “they can be part of the solution”.



What the Parish Council could do:

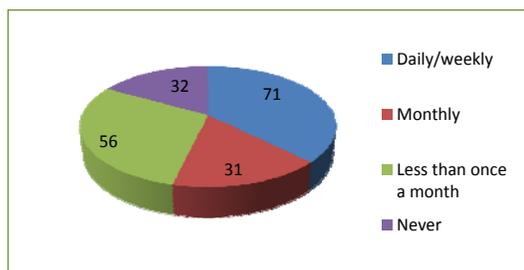
- Consider comments made in the parish plan regarding renewable energy when considering future planning applications.

What you could do:

- Make your views known on planning applications to erect wind turbines.
- Join a local action group and lobby your MP.

5c. The natural environment - rights of way

How often do you use public footpaths and bridleways in the parish?



102 villagers (56%) use the footpaths and bridleways in the parish at least on a monthly basis.

The main concerns, with many comments raised by villagers, are that footpaths are not well maintained and many routes are overgrown or ploughed over.

Signage is poor, and some signs have completely disappeared.

Dog walking is made difficult by impossible stiles and the lack of dog gates. Although access does not have to be provided for dogs in the Rights of Way Act, many villagers said they want to walk with their dogs.

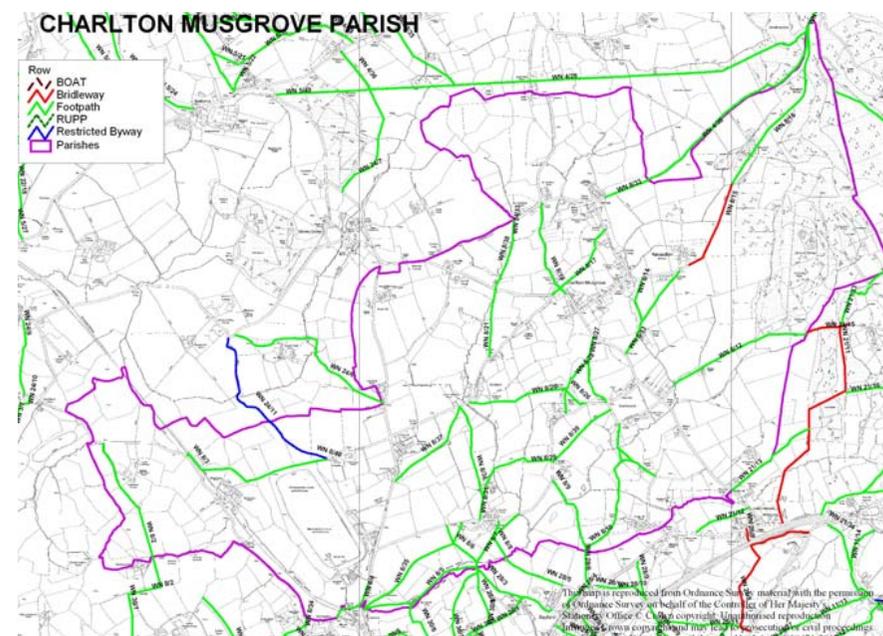
In contrast in the questionnaire 96 people said there were enough off-road routes for safe walking and that they were clearly signed and maintained but 51 said there weren't.



What you and volunteer groups could do:

- Create a volunteer group to ensure village rights of way are well maintained.
- Investigate grants for landowners to install dog stiles and also promote responsible behaviour when walking with dogs in the countryside especially where livestock are present.
- Explore the possibility of creating circular cross village routes to ensure safe passage across the community for all.
- Make sure villagers are aware the current village footpath officers are Steve and Sarah Jarrett sarajarrett@btinternet.com Any concerns can be raised with them or with the Rights of way team at South Somerset District Council via email: rightsofway@somerset.gov.uk

5c. The natural environment - rights of way



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This map will be available on our village website for you to download in a larger format if required.

38 horses and ponies are owned or looked after by villagers and there are **66** stables in the village.

There are only **2** bridleways in the parish.

The vast majority of riders agree there are not enough safe off-road routes within the parish and bridleways are overgrown and impassable in some places.

There are no circular routes through the village for walkers or riders avoiding highways. Comments were made asking if it was possible to have a link for horses, bikes as well as walkers between Rectory Lane/Shalford Lane /the hall/Barrow Lane.



What you and volunteer groups could do:

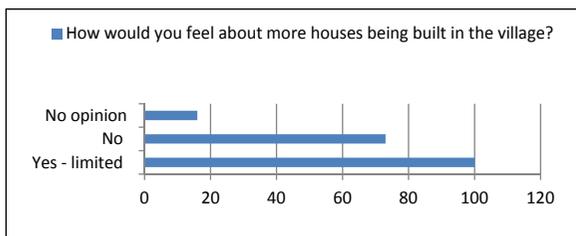
- Explore the possibility of some footpaths being upgraded to permissive byways which can be used by walkers, riders and cyclists.

6a. The built environment - housing

Charlton Musgrove has a wide variety of housing stock. It is fortunate in having 17, mainly grade II, listed buildings. Most of the homes are detached but there are semi-detached houses which were built as local authority homes though many are now privately owned. A few bungalows are scattered throughout the village.

Many of the old farmhouses have been converted into large family homes, some with no connection to farming and some with equestrian facilities. Recent development has involved a very limited amount of in-filling and re-development of older dwellings. Some redundant barns have been converted to residential use including holiday lets. The village is classed as Open Countryside by SSSC and new development is usually only allowed when there is a need for accommodation connected to a business.

The new planning laws are still evolving and there is no detailed guidance at the time of writing.



Comments recorded:-

Keep it as it is - undeveloped and rural

If it has to grow, keep it in character and on a very small scale

No unsightly buildings

Would not like to see any growth

Leave it alone and let it remain so

SSDC considers local towns with their extra facilities to be more suitable for sustainable improvements. Any expansion must be small scale and in keeping with the character of the village. Village properties are expensive for young people and there is an imbalance of village people across both social and age ranges.

Only 22% of respondents thought that extra 'employment development' opportunities were needed in the village. It is accepted that many residents will travel beyond the village for work but a surprising number work from home in many different careers.

Many commented that the village property location map needs to be amended. A display board is needed and the location will have to be determined to assist delivery drivers amongst others. General distribution should be possible to the village properties if funds can be made available. There is interest in a local business directory being developed and maintained annually. The information would be listed on the village web site, displayed in the village hall and in the churches and on the two notice boards.

What the Parish Council could do:

- Consider comments made in the parish plan regarding housing when discussing future planning applications.
- Develop and maintain a register of local businesses.
- Consider new opportunities and powers available to PC's as a result of the Localism Bill.

What you and volunteer groups could do:

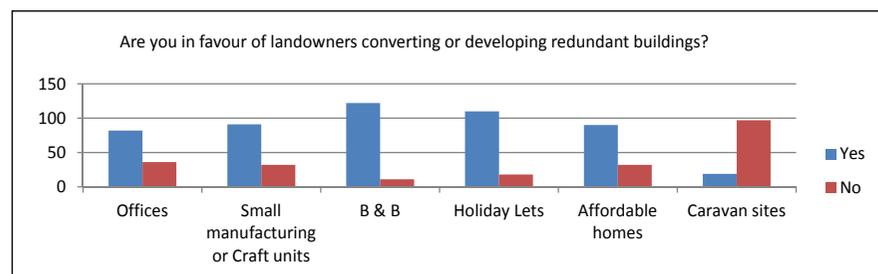
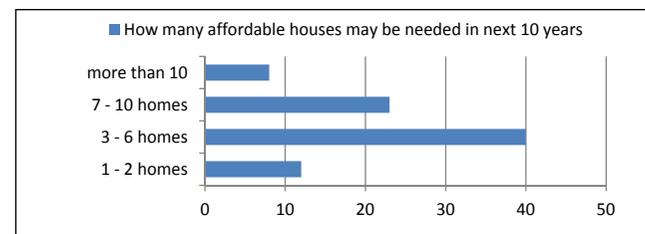
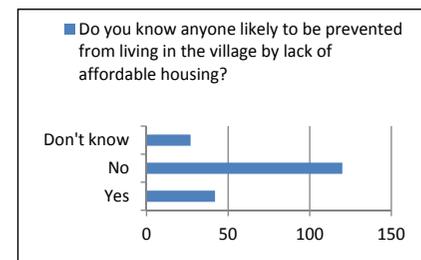
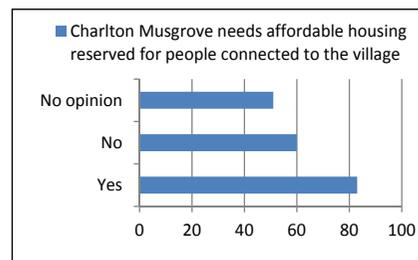
- Update village property location map and determine where it can be displayed.

6b. The built environment – Affordable housing

The topic of affordable housing has brought inconsistencies because the questionnaire may not have distinguished adequately between social and commercial affordable housing. Some residents believe there is a need but SSSC found no requirements for social affordable housing when they conducted a survey in the village.

Social affordable housing may be built in the village for deserving families from the surrounding rural area if a suitable site is identified. There is concern that unsuitable families could be moved in from urban areas and it was felt that such homes should be reserved for people from the village or with connections to the village.

There were comments regarding a need for cheaper commercial housing in the form of small detached or semi-detached character cottages for purchase by young families, couples or older residents down-sizing.



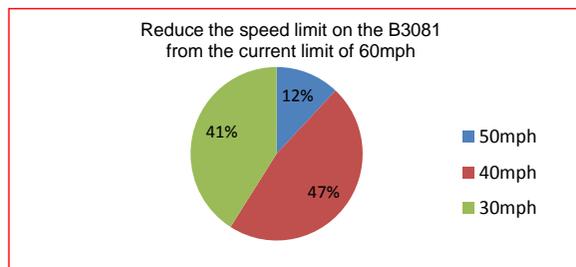
What the Parish Council could do:

- Keep the village informed of any developments in the Affordable (social) Housing situation and help identify possible locations in consultation with SSSC and landowners.

7a. Roads and traffic – speed limits and our lanes

The speed of traffic through the village on the B3081 and also around the village on Barrow Lane, Shalford Lane and also Rectory Lane was a cause of concern for many villagers, not only for motorists but also for horse riders, cyclists and walkers.

68% were in favour of a reduction in speed limit on the two main roads (B3081) through the village.



An accident or near miss in the last 3 years on the roads and lanes in the village were reported by:-

27% of motorists
12% of walkers/cyclists
30% of horse riders

21% (75 villagers) were in favour of reducing the speed limit in Rectory and Shalford Lane.

27% (97 villagers) in Barrow Lane.

When asked if the roads and transport in Charlton Musgrove would be improved by forms of traffic calming measures ie. chicanes, new road markings, speed cameras, community speed watch, police speed enforcement or pavements **very few villagers were in favour of any and more villagers were against.**

Although there were no specific questions relating to the Racecourse, numerous additional comments were made about the speed of race day traffic and the use of Rectory and Shalford lanes as short cuts.

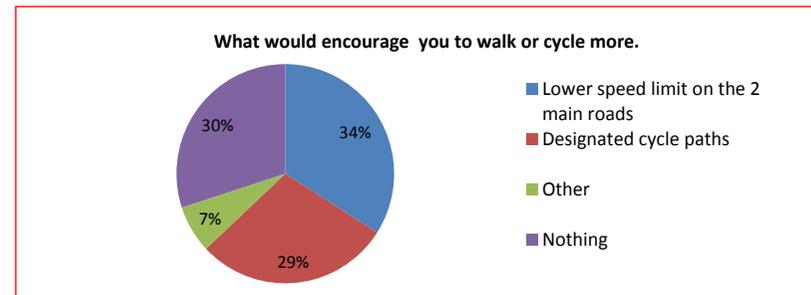
Following comments about the difficulty of walking to the village hall, the Parish Council asked SSDC some time ago to consider 'slow' signs for pedestrians on the B3081, particularly on the sharp corner near the Smithy pub. There was also an ongoing issue about the lack of village signs. Due to financial restrictions the two were put together on one sign. As a result there were many comments saying that the village signs are in the wrong place and are not on the edge of the village. There are also no signs at all on the higher B3081 which goes past the racecourse.

The amount of mud and slurry on the roads was a major cause of concern and also the apparent speeding of tractors and farm vehicles. Although one of the things villagers liked best was the countryside with mixed agriculture and grazing animals there were many comments asking that the tractors slow down and the lanes be cleaned up so they are safe for all road users.



7b. Roads and traffic – cycling and public transport

There are 148 bicycles in the village and there were many comments from both adults and children asking if there could be designated cycle paths to link together different areas of the village.



Public Transport

93% of all road journeys made from the village to get to work are by car so it isn't surprising that only 32% knew the bus timetable and 34% knew what public transport concessionary fares are available. However, even if the frequency of services was increased only 18% would use the buses more often.

50% thought the bus stops are in the right place but 45% didn't know. A request stop at the top of Barrow Water lane was suggested.

90% said they had no difficulties getting to places.

In addition the Slinky bus and Winibus run on request and provide a door-to-door service around Wincanton and the surrounding area for local organisations and elderly or disabled people who struggle to use public transport. Bookings for the Slinky bus can be made on ☎ 01963 33864. A new bus was recently purchased for Winibus after the team worked hard to secure fundraising. To make bookings contact the Balsam Centre ☎ 01963 34359.

What the Parish Council could do:

- Investigate the possibility of speed limits in the village bearing in mind that in the short term probably little can be done due to the tight budgetary restrictions imposed on Local Authorities.
- Display details about the community transport which is already available (ie Slinky bus and Winibus) on village notice boards and on the village website.
- Continue to engage with the Racecourse over possible measures to control and slow down racecourse traffic in our lanes.
- Talk to farmers/contractors/tractor drivers in conjunction with the advice given by the NFU.
- Consult with the village regarding where the existing and possible new village signs should be bearing in mind the expense of these.

What you and volunteer groups could do:

- Investigate the possibility of cycling/walking routes to safely link all sections of the village and consider holding a Parish Circuit day to raise money.

8. Summary of actions

4c. and 4d. Our Community - communications

What the Parish Council could do:

- Lobby SSDC and SCC for better broadband speeds.
- Circulate the agenda and minutes, other notices and information via e-mail and consider including a summary in the village news.
- Continue to ask SSDC to provide reasons for refusal/approval where there is conflict with PC decisions.
- Consider an increase in the Parish Precept to fund locally-inspired projects in the village - 78% of households said, in principle they would support an increase to help finance projects.

What you could do:

- Ask the Editor of the village magazine if we could include local advertisements.
- Let us have your e-mail address if you are not already on the data base.
- Contact your Internet Service Provider and tell them that your speed is well below the government's stated minimum speed (2mbps).
- Complete the on line survey.
- Come to Parish Council meetings and make your views known.
- Log on for weekly planning application e-mails.

4e. Our Community – Children

What the Parish Council could do:

- Consider supporting improvements in the play area – investigated initially by a volunteer group.

What you and volunteer groups could do:

Short Term

- Volunteers could organise activities in the village hall, and rounders matches etc in the play area. Inform children, young people and parents of any new activities and events held within the parish, by word of mouth, notice boards and newsletters and the village website.

Medium Term

- Playground – investigate the cost to install equipment in the play area.
- Research grants available, maintenance, health and safety issues, possible increase to the precept and present information to the village.

Long Term

- To ensure the children have a variety of activities and recreational pursuits available to them on a regular basis.
- Investigate the possibility of creating cycle paths to connect the village.

4f. Our Community – our village hall and mobile library service

- Support existing activities and start up further new activities in the village hall – particularly dance classes, further fitness classes, performing arts and music. There was also interest in starting a playgroup, a youth club and bingo.
- Lobby SCC to reinstate the mobile library service.

4g. Our Community - our Churches

- Ensure the Rector and PCC know how important the churches and their events are.
- Promote the new monthly service called Growing Faith which has been established for younger children - the service rotates around the churches in the benefice.
- Encourage more positive support of both churches.

4h. Our Community - The Smithy pub

What the Parish Council could do:

- Continue to keep parishioners informed of developments and support local opinion.
- Consider the idea of a community pub and possible sponsors.

8. Summary of actions

5a. The natural environment – the countryside

What the Parish Council could do:

- Consider how our streams can be cleaned up.
- Ensure people are aware that they can report problems on line at www.somerset.gov.uk

What you and volunteer groups could do:

- Explore the possibility of creating a community woodland scheme.
- Organise wildlife projects such as hedge laying and putting up nest boxes etc.
- Plant flowers and bulbs to enhance the village.

5b. The natural environment - renewable energy

What the Parish Council could do:

- Consider comments made in the parish plan when considering future planning applications.

What you could do:

- Make your views known on planning applications, join a local action group and lobby your MP.

5c. The natural environment - rights of way

What you and volunteer groups could do:

- Create a volunteer group to ensure village rights of way are well maintained.
- Investigate grants for landowners to install dog stiles and also promote responsible behaviour when walking with dogs in the countryside especially where livestock are present.
- Explore the possibility of creating circular cross village routes to ensure safe passage across the community for all.
- Explore the possibility of some footpaths being upgraded to permissive byways which can be used by walkers, riders and cyclists.
- Make sure villagers are aware the current village footpath officers are Steve and Sarah Jarrett. Any concerns can be raised with them or with SSDC via email: rightsofway@somerset.gov.uk

6a and 6b. The built environment – housing and affordable (social) housing

What the Parish Council could do:

- Consider comments made in the parish plan when discussing future planning applications.
- Develop and maintain a register of local businesses.
- Consider new opportunities and powers available to PCs as a result of the Localism Bill.
- Keep the village informed of any developments in the Affordable (social) Housing situation and help identify possible locations in consultation with SSDC and landowners.

What you and volunteer groups could do:

- Update village property location map and determine where it can be displayed.

7a and 7b. Roads and traffic

What our Parish Council could do:

- Investigate the possibility of speed limits in the village bearing in mind costs in the short term.
- Display details about the community transport which is already available (ie SLINKY bus and Winibus) on village notice boards and on the village website.
- Continue to engage with the Racecourse to control and slow down the traffic in our lanes.
- Talk to farmers/contractors/tractor drivers in conjunction with the advice given by the NFU.
- Consult with the village over the existing and possible new village signs bearing in mind costs.

What you and volunteer groups could do:

- Investigate the possibility of cycling/walking routes to safely link all sections of the village and consider holding a Parish Circuit day to raise money.

11. The red telephone box: Let the PC have your ideas and help take part in a rota to look after it.

9. What next and thank you!

Through public consultations, the questionnaire and several surveys, we have gathered together a large amount of data from our villagers. We have endeavoured to include the aspirations and also the concerns in our plan – one comment said “Leave it as it is!” In times of economic hardship and cut backs in government and council spending it is unrealistic to propose expensive actions in the short term and some may be a target for better times. Other actions may prove to be impossible to achieve for a variety of reasons. However, many things are undoubtedly achievable and we can try, as a community, with the support of the Parish Council to work together towards achieving benefits for the village.

It is too great a burden to expect the Parish Council to take forward all the actions we have highlighted in the plan and anyway this would not actively involve the community. Our proposal is therefore that the Steering Committee bring together small individual groups of interested people to help achieve some of these actions. These volunteer groups should be short-term arrangements with specific targets as identified within the Parish Plan which are not too onerous or too time consuming. They would report their progress to the Parish Council who may, or may not have a representative within the group and in some situations seek help from the Parish Council in their statutory capacity. We will also be able to draw on the support of SSDC, the Community Council of Somerset, the village hall trustees, members of the PCC and local wildlife groups and volunteers. Many grants are also available for community work and help can be sought to access financial assistance. Bringing many interested different people together in this way will help achieve some of our aims and also help continue to bring the community together.

The plan is intended to be an evolving document outlining what our community would like to happen over the next ten years, and includes an action plan detailing how these developments might be achieved. We suggest that the following small groups may be formed to help progress some of the actions:-

Suggested small volunteer groups:

- **Walkers, riders and cyclist group** - to try and improve rights of way in the village both for walkers and riders in conjunction with the Footpaths Officers. Also investigate the possibility of cycle paths and/or a parish circuit connecting different parts of the village.
- **Countryside Group** - to investigate the possibility of wildlife and conservation projects, native woodland and bulb planting and a possible focal point within the village.
- **Play area Group** - to take forward the development of the play area both in terms of activities and possible equipment.
- **Activities Group** - to research and start up new activities opportunities in the village hall and possible village outings.
- **Artists group** - to produce an information map of the village showing footpaths, bridleways and other interesting features and also update the village property location map.
- **Traffic** - actions to be considered by the Parish Council.

Our thanks go to:

- SSDC who funded the making of this Parish Plan and to Tim Cook at SSDC in particular for his support and advice which has been invaluable.
- Charlton Musgrove PC for commissioning and supporting the plan and assisting with funding.
- Tony Cole, our photographer who turned out numerous times to take more photos for us.
- Johnny Bingham, Sue Parroy and Brenden Adams who were members of the Steering Committee during the earlier stages with Johnny taking the Chair. Johnny also did a great job designing and producing the initial questionnaire for us.
- Everyone in the village who joined in and helped contribute to its creation.

10. Contacts and can you help?

Contacts:

South Somerset District Council: ☎ 01935 462462

CM Parish Council Chairman: Robin Bastable ☎ 01963 32317 email: bastablerobin@yahoo.co.uk

Parish Clerk: Vera Vebber-Ovsiannikova ☎ 01747 861576 email: charltonmusgroveclerk@gmail.com

Footpath Officers: Steve and Sara Jarrett - email: sarajarrett@btinternet.com

Neighbourhood Watch representative: Pene Volk ☎ 01963 32013

Local police number: PCSO Dan Arthur 7377 Wincanton Police station 0845 456 7000 (ext 62032)

Village hall committee chairman: Stephen Nathan ☎ 01963 31742

Village hall booking secretary: Chris Ring ☎ 07708 087005

Website editor: Steve Jarrett - email: stevejarrett351@btinternet.com

Rector: The Reverend Canon Joanna Penberthy ☎ 01747 840230 email: cmstbcrectory@btinternet.com
(admin queries Mon-Wed noon only – church wardens other times).

Church wardens: Veronica White ☎ 01963 32928 and Jonathan Hand ☎ 01963 828930

Village magazine editor: Alison Dixon ☎ 01963 32447 email: alison.dixon8@btinternet.com

The Steering Committee members are:

Sally Amery (Chair) ☎ 01963 31330 email: sally@amery.plus.com

Kevin Flint ☎ 01963 31002 Tom Kimber ☎ 01963 33446 Kate McCarry ☎ 01963 31433

Jean Sellick ☎ 01963 32174 Claude Teague ☎ 01963 32307 Veronica White ☎ 01963 32928.

Can you help?



There are lots of ways you may be able to contribute. If you would like to help carry forward some of the actions identified by our Parish Plan, by joining one of the volunteer action groups, or just by helping generally please complete this form and return it to:-

Mrs Sally Amery, Horseacres Farm, Barrow Lane, Charlton Musgrove, Wincanton,
Somerset, BA9 8HW or email sally@amery.plus.com

Name:

Address:

Phone no

Email

How would you like to help?

11. And finally...the red telephone box



The Parish Council has purchased the red telephone box from British Telecom for £1 and it has been decommissioned. At the last public consultation we asked what you would like to use it for. Your ideas were:-

Put shelves in and have a **good** book swap shop
Have a toy swap area
Any sort of swap area
Volunteer art gallery – changed twice yearly

Some communities even use them for heart defibrillators.

What you could do:

- Let the Parish Council have your ideas.
- Help take part in a rota to look after it.

Please return this form if you would like to help in any way to:

Mrs Sally Amery
Horseacres Farm
Barrow Lane
Charlton Musgrove
Wincanton
Somerset BA9 8HW