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## MELKSHAM WITHOUT PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk: Mrs Teresa Strange

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Monday 2nd September 2024

Dear Members

You are summoned to attend a **Full Council Meeting** of Melksham Without Parish Council which will be held on **Monday 9 September 2024 at 7pm** at **Melksham Without Parish Council Offices, First Floor, Melksham Community Campus, Market Place, Melksham, SN12 6ES** to consider the agenda below:

**TO ACCESS THE MEETING REMOTELY, PLEASE FOLLOW THE ZOOM LINK BELOW. THE LINK WILL ALSO BE POSTED ON THE PARISH COUNCIL WEBSITE WHEN IT GOES LIVE SHORTLY BEFORE 7PM.**

Click link here:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2791815985?pwd=Y2x5T25DRIVWVU54UW1YWWE4NkNrZz09&omn=81892086828>

Or go to [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us) or Phone 0131 4601196 and enter: **Meeting ID: 279 181 5985**  
**Passcode: 070920**. Instructions on how to access Zoom are on the parish council website [www.melkshamwithout.co.uk](http://www.melkshamwithout.co.uk). If you have difficulties accessing the meeting please call (do not text) the out of hours mobile: 07341 474234

Yours sincerely

Teresa Strange, Clerk

Serving rural communities around Melksham

## AGENDA

1. **Welcome, Announcements & Housekeeping**
2. To receive **apologies** and consider approval of reasons given.
3. **Invited Guests:**
  - a) Wiltshire Councillor **Nick Holder** (Bowerhill).
  - b) Wiltshire Councillor **Phil Alford** (Melksham Without North & Shurnhold).
  - c) Wiltshire Councillor **Jonathon Seed** (Melksham Without West & Rural). To note report.
4.
  - a) To receive **Declarations of Interests**.
  - b) To consider for approval any **Dispensation Requests** received by the Clerk and not previously considered.
5. To consider holding items in **Closed Session** due to confidential nature *Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting as required 7(b), 10(b&c), 11(b) as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.*
6. **Public Participation**
7.
  - a) To approve the **Minutes of the Full Council Meeting** held on 29 July 2024.
  - b) To approve the **Confidential Notes** to accompany the Full Council minutes of 29 July 2024.
8. **Planning**
  - a) To approve the **Planning Committee Minutes** of 19 August and 2 September 2024.
  - b) To formally approve the **Planning Committee** recommendations of 19 August and 2 September 2024.
  - c) **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Consultation.** To approve a response to the consultation  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system>
9. **Finance**
  - a) To note **Receipts & Payments** reports for July and August.
  - b) To seek **cheque signatories/online authority** for September payments.
  - c) To approve Bank Account and Fund Transfers.
  - d) To note if any members of public have exercised their right to inspect accounts (close of public rights 2 August).

e) **CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy):**

- i) To receive response from Wiltshire Council on **not** using CIL for expansion of Melksham Cemetery.
- ii) To note response from Wiltshire Council on what they have spent CIL on. (Finance Committee 20 May 2024 - Min 30(e)/24).
- iii) East of Melksham Community Centre. To receive update from Melksham Town Council and consider next steps with regard to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding transferred to them for the project. (Finance Committee 20 May 2024 - Min 30(e)/24).
- iv) To note current CIL reserves and budget spend agreed for 24/25.
- v) To note response from Melksham Town Council for request for Sharing Working Group.
- vi) To consider more RTI (Real Time Information) sites in bus shelters from CIL funding.
- vii) To consider a request for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding towards refurbishment of 11 Church Walk for a Community Hub.

**10. Staffing**

- a) To approve the Minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 2 September 2024.
- b) To approve Confidential Notes to accompany the minutes of 2 September 2024.
- c) To formally approve the Staffing Committee recommendations of 2 September 2024.
- d) **Local Government Pay Claim 2024/25.** To note update.
- e) To note guidance on Responding to Online Abuse.

**11. Asset Management**

- a) **Kestrel Court & Berryfield Play area transfers from Wiltshire Council.** To note finalised and signed and sealed by parish council.
- b) **Pathfinder Place Play Area Legal Transfer.** To receive update on legal transfer and consider Council's position on taking on the play area.
- c) **Hornchurch Road Play Area –** To note work starts on site 4 September for two weeks to resurface the play area.
- d) **Defibrillator outside Bowerhill Village Hall.** To approve quotation of £200 (ex VAT) for installation of plate to reinforce cabinet.
- e) **Rights of Way Interpretation Boards.** To note response from Rights of Way, Wiltshire Council on funding and consider a way forward on replacement of one, or all (four) boards.
- f) **Bowerhill Sports Field/Pavilion**
  - i) To consider latest update from youth organisation on booking arrangements.
  - ii) To note the Parish Council have been successful in receiving a grant from the Football Foundation Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund for pitch drainage.
  - iii) To approve a quotation of £1,678.00 + VAT to strip off all paint from the Pavilion doors.
- g) **Shurnhold Fields.** To receive update on car park/entrance improvement project and flood alleviation scheme and consider a way forward.
- h) **Community Action Shaw & Whitley (CAWS).** To note letter of thanks for donation

of sack truck/s.

12. **Highways**

- a) **Bus Stop, Telford Drive.** To note correspondence from Principal Engineer on Wiltshire Council's position on relocating the bus shelter and consider a way forward.
- b) **Local Cycling Walking Improvement Plans (LCWIP).** To consider priority of routes <https://calne-and-melksham-lcwip.commonplace.is/>
- c) **Speeding on Semington Road** (LHFIG Issue 9-24-09). To consider request from the Local Highway & Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG) on sites for Traffic Surveys.

13. **Community projects/partnership organisations:**

- a) **Wiltshire Explore App.** To receive update following recent meetings and consider way forward with the parish council involvement in the project.
- b) **Wiltshire Rail Strategic Study.** To consider a response to the study.
- c) **Rail Services.** To consider a request to write to the relevant bodies asking they restore Melksham's train service to operate at the level specified in First Group's contract.
- d) **HELP Counselling.** To consider a request for Trustees.
- e) **Project Gigabit.** To note Openreach have been appointed to build next generation gigabit capable infrastructure in Central and North Wiltshire and consider facilitating a response for the parish.
- f) **Future Cemetery provision.** To arrange members to join the Town Council Cemetery Provision Working Group.

## Teresa Strange

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**From:** Teresa Strange  
**Sent:** 03 September 2024 13:30  
**To:** adrienne.westbrook@melksham-tc.gov.uk  
**Subject:** FW: Thank you

Hi Adrienne

Thanks for this, it sounded a great event and I am amazed you are not catching up on sleep but sending these emails!!! We have a full council meeting on Monday evening, so I will put your thanks in the announcements at the start of the meeting.

All the best, Teresa

---

**From:** Adrienne Westbrook <adriennewestbrook@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** 02 September 2024 20:20  
**To:** Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Thank you

Good Evening Teresa

I just wanted to say thank you for the grant from Melksham without Parish Council for the Festival. The weekend was a huge success with about 5K visitors both days. As you know it is impossible to do these sort of events without support from grants like yours.

Please pass on our thanks to your councillors.

All the best  
Adrienne  
Festival Co-Ordinator

**Subject:** FW: WILTSHIRE COUNCILLOR NEWS FROM JONATHON SEED

---

**From:** Jonathon Seed <Seedjaa@jandlseed.co.uk>

**Sent:** 09 August 2024 08:19

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Cc:** ConservativeGroup <ConservativeGroup@wiltshire.gov.uk>

**Subject:** WILTSHIRE COUNCILLOR NEWS FROM JONATHON SEED

As we look back over a summer of political change we can also start to understand what that means for us locally. It is pretty clear that the majority of the Country, and looking at local analysis, local residents, decided that a change of Government was needed and voted for that change. In Melksham Without West and Rural we have a new Member of Parliament and I wish him well in what is a difficult and busy political job. How individuals cast their votes is a private matter but the effect of that voting is now being seen and is affecting all of us. This ranges from smaller to larger change and also covers a range of areas from personal finance to the environment in which we live. We will have to wait until the autumn to see how much our personal finances are to be changed.

We were aware of some of the changes being promised by the new Government but I cannot recall any mention of the abolition of the pensioners winter fuel allowance during the general election campaign and neither were we given detail of the fundamental changes to our environment that new planning regulations will mean.

Our Council in Wiltshire has done a pretty good job in managing local government finance and worked closely with the old central Government to protect our environment from speculative development by house builders in recent years. This is now going to change and the new Government has announced the abolition of existing local housing development targets which allowed for controlled development in Wiltshire. The stark reality and detail of the new policy is worse than we feared and the Government plans to raise house building targets here in Wiltshire by 81%. There will also be a restriction on our local powers to rationalise housing development together with a reduction in community input to that proposed housing development. The detail is that this year the Government has raised our mandatory Wiltshire Housing targets from 1917 to 3476 houses to be BUILT, and not just planned. The effects on all of us are that there is now little or no protection from any speculative building and we can expect uncontrolled building across the County, including the likelihood of building in and around our villages.

Policy changes are the result of how we voted in the General Election and we must learn to live with the new order. Personally, I will do my best as a member of the Western Area and Strategic Planning Committees to use my limited influence to control and regulate the effects of this massive building expansion on our local area.

[Jonathon.seed@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Jonathon.seed@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Tel. 07770774463

Facebook JSforWC

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**MINUTES of the Full Council Meeting of Melksham Without  
Parish Council held on Monday 29 July 2024 at Melksham Without Parish  
Council Offices, Melksham Community Campus (First Floor), Market  
Place, Melksham, SN12 6ES at 7.00pm**

**Present:** Councillors John Glover (Chair of Council), David Pafford (Vice Chair of Council), Alan Baines, John Doel, Martin Franks, Mark Harris, Shona Holt, Nathan Keates, Peter Richardson, Robert Shea-Simonds, Anne Sullivan and Richard Wood

**Officers:** Teresa Strange, Clerk and Lorraine McRandle, Parish Officer

**In attendance:** Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder (Bowerhill) (for part of meeting)

**141/24 Welcome, Announcements & Housekeeping**

Councillor Glover welcomed everyone to the meeting noting those present were aware of the evacuation procedures in the event of a fire. It was noted the meeting was being recorded and would be published on YouTube following the meeting and deleted once the minutes were approved.

The following announcements were made:

- a) Following the results of the General Election to consider writing a letter of thanks to Michelle Donelan and arrange a meeting with Brian Mathew MP.

**Resolved:** To write a letter of thanks to Michelle Donelan (to be circulated to Members prior to sending) and to arrange a meeting with Brian Mathew MP.

- b) To note the Planning Committee meeting on 12 August has been moved to 19 August 2024.
- c) To note the A36 at Limpley Stoke is closing on 12 August until Spring next year, with diversions for both HGV and non-HGV traffic being advised to go through Chippenham, the M4 and Melksham via the A350.
- d) To note the Amenities & Finance Officer no longer has to attend Jury service for the next fortnight, due to a fire in Swindon Crown Court and will be put back into the register in 2 years' time.

**142/24 a) To receive apologies and consider approval of reasons given**

The Clerk advised Councillor Chivers was not present as he had not been notified of the meeting as only accepted summons via post and not

electronic invites.

Apologies were received from Councillor Keates who would be arriving late as he was attending an on-line meeting of the Wiltshire Association of Local Councils (WALC) as the Council's representative.

**Resolved:** To accept Councillor Keates apologies for his lateness to the meeting and to approve Councillor Chivers reasons for absence.

## **143/2 Invited Guests:**

### **a) Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder (Bowerhill)**

Standing Orders were suspended to allow Wiltshire Councillor Holder to address the Council, who provided the following updates:

#### **A36 Diversion** (part of the National Highways network)

A diversion will be in place, in order improvement works to a bank can be undertaken. National Highways have been asked to produce a series of updates fortnightly and will forward these to the Clerk, in order to be kept up-dated on progress.

#### **Pathfinder Way Primary School (PL/2024/05921)**

Revised plans for the primary school have been submitted, with a minor comment from the parish council of supervision of access to the rear of the school. As a Wiltshire Council planning application, it will be put before a Strategic Planning Committee for a decision.

Frustration was expressed at the lack of communication by Taylor Wimpey regarding the public open space adjacent to the school, part of the Pathfinder Way development (16/01123/OUT) and the fact the area was still not open. Taylor Wimpey had been asked several months ago to complete the landscaping and re-seed the area, which was understood to have been undertaken. Therefore, Councillor Holder was seeking a site meeting with a Director of Taylor Wimpey, in order to understand the hold up in opening the public open space and would inform the Clerk once arranged.

Councillor Glover informed the meeting he had noticed earlier in the day the public open space was now a mass of weeds, one or two trees were dead and could not see the footpath through the site, as it was so overgrown.

Questions were invited from Members.

Councillor Glover sought an update on when the footpath to the rear of Melksham Oak would be installed, having understood it was due to be completed by September.



Wiltshire Councillor Holder explained there had been some significant conditions imposed on the Council by the Planning Authority regarding both the ecology and arboricultural surveys which had been carried out and concerns around the number of trees and hedgerow to be removed. Work on the footpath would start in the Autumn and be paused in the Winter and therefore would not likely be completed until the Spring.

Councillor Glover expressed frustration at the delay, noting there were some quite clear environmental aspects to take account of when the original documentation was submitted, which had not been taken forward by the appropriate department.

Councillor Pafford sought clarification if the Senior Leadership at Melksham Oak had been informed of the delay, with Wiltshire Councillor Holder being unclear if they had, noting the new Head had not started in post as yet.

Councillor Baines thanked Wiltshire Councillor Holder and the Highways Team for the works which had been carried out on the footway between Redstocks and Loves Farm, Bowerhill and whilst not perfect made a great improvement.

Having understood from the Planning Officer, an Environmental Impact Assessment for the proposed new Wiltshire Council Depot to the rear of the former Christie Miller Sports Centre at Bowerhill was not required Councillor Baines sought clarification from Wiltshire Councillor Holder on this.

Wiltshire Councillor Holder explained as far as he was aware no pre app had been submitted as yet and no discussion had taken place but agreed to look into it.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

**b) Wiltshire Councillor Phil Alford (Melksham Without North & Shurnhold)**

Apologies had been received from Wiltshire Councillor Alford.

**c) Wiltshire Councillor Jonathon Seed (Melksham Without West & Rural).**

Apologies had been received from Wiltshire Councillor Seed who was attending a meeting elsewhere.

#### **144/24 a) To receive Declarations of Interests**

Councillor Glover declared an interest in agenda item 11(d) regarding Bowerhill Sports Field and correspondence from a youth football organisation, as his grandson was employed by them.

#### **b) To consider for approval any Dispensation Requests received by the Clerk and not previously considered**

None received.

#### **145/24** To consider holding items in **Closed Session** due to confidential nature *Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting as required 8(b), 9(b), 11(c), 11(d)(i) & 15 as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.*

The Clerk explained there was no longer an item 15.

Items 8(b) & 9(b) related to confidential notes to accompany minutes and unless anyone wished to discuss them, there was no need to put these in closed session.

Item 11(c) related to legal transfers, which were nearly complete and unless there were any questions, these did not need to be discussed in closed session.

Item 11(d)(i) related to contractual matters and therefore needed to be discussed in closed session.

**Resolved:** For Items 8(b), 9(b), 11(c) & 11(d)(i) to be held in closed session for the reasons given.

#### **146/24 Public Participation**

No members of public were present.

#### **147/24 Standing Orders**

Standing Order 18(a)(v) had been amended at the Full Council meeting on 17 June 2024 to reflect the updated Financial Regulations and therefore were stood down for approval at this meeting.

‘whether contracts with an estimated value below **£40,000 excluding VAT** due to special circumstances are exempt from a tendering process or procurement exercise’.

**Resolved:** To approve changes to the Standing Orders

**148/24 a) To approve the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 17 June 2024**

**Resolved:** To approve and for the Chair to sign the Full Council minutes of 17 June 2024.

**b) To approve the Confidential Notes to accompany the Full Council minutes of 17 June 2024**

**Resolved:** To approve and for the Chair to sign the Confidential Notes to accompany the Full Council minutes of 17 June 2024.

**149/24 Planning**

**a) To approve the Planning Committee Minutes of 8 July and 22 July 2024**

The Clerk highlighted the recommendation under item 111(c)/24 of the 8 July Planning minutes should have been a resolution, therefore as there were no other recommendations there was no need to resolve to approve the recommendations of this meeting.

**Resolved:** To approve and for the Chair to sign the Planning Committee minutes of 8 July and 22 July 2024.

**b) To approve the Confidential Notes to accompany the Planning Committee minutes of 8 July 2024 and 22 July 2024**

The Clerk informed the meeting there were no Confidential Notes to accompany the Planning Committee Meeting of 22 July.

**Resolved:** To approve and for the Chair to sign the Confidential Notes to accompany the Planning Committee minutes of 8 July 2024.

**c) To formally approve the Planning Committee recommendations of 8 July and 22 July 2024**

The meeting was reminded there were no recommendations for approval relating to the 8 July Planning meeting.

**Resolved:** To formally approve the Planning Committee recommendations of 22 July 2024.

**d) To approve the recording of the Planning Committee meeting of 8 July being kept as evidence**

It was highlighted the Council's policy was to delete recordings of meetings once the minutes had been approved. However, the Clerk asked if the recording of the Planning Committee meeting of 8 July could

be kept as evidence for the current Planning Enforcement case until it had been resolved.

**Resolved:** To approve the recording of the Planning Committee meeting of 8 July being kept as evidence.

**e) Lime Down Solar proposal**

Councillor Glover explained as a statutory consultee, the parish council needed to approve a response to the Planning Inspectorate on the Scoping Document for the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report for the Lime Down Solar proposal.

It was suggested the parish council send what had previously been sent to the public consultation with the comments removed that were not environmental and to also send the comprehensive and excellent response by Community Action Whitley & Shaw (CAWS) separately as the community view. The Clerk to also look at a response from the point of view of the draft Neighbourhood Plan and draft Local Plan.

The Clerk asked if it was worth in the response to comment on how long the document was and how off putting it could be for people reading through it, which Councillor Glover felt was not appropriate.

Councillor Richardson felt it was deliberate the document was so long as to put people off. Having contacted Lime Down Solar to seek a response to various questions he had been informed the majority of his questions had been answered in the document, which is 845 pages long, however only a few questions had been answered and were spread throughout the document.

With regard to the scope of the EIA whilst issues such as flooding and contamination were raised with regard to the site itself, it did not include for example contamination and flooding off site to the surrounding area, as a consequence or being exacerbated by the site itself, which was a concern.

There were also a lot of inconsistencies in the document, such as the life of the battery plant in some parts of the document had been described as both permanent and temporary throughout the document. There were also inaccuracies within the document, with the site described as land at Melksham Sub Station which could lead people, not living in the area, to think the proposed battery storage location was a brownfield site adjacent to the sub-station, which it is not.

Councillor Pafford whilst he felt there was no point in objecting to the length of the document itself, suggested if the council's response related to the feelings expressed by Councillor Richardson to the disappointment that within 840 pages of the document, there was no mention of flooding,

health and safety and fire risk, to the surrounding area may be worth including in the response.

**Resolved:** As a statutory consultee, to approve the response as previously sent as part of the public consultation, with those aspects not relating to environmental issues removed and to give delegated powers to the Clerk to add any additional comments including those raised by Councillors Richardson and Pafford. To also send the response from CAWS separately as the community view.

Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder left the meeting at 7.32pm

## **150/24 Finance**

### **a) To note Receipts & Payments reports for June**

**Resolved:** To note the Receipts & Payments reports for June.

### **b) To seek cheque signatories/online authority for August payments**

**Resolved:** For Councillors Shea-Simonds and Doel to be cheque signatories/online authority for August payments.

### **c) To approve Bank Account and Fund Transfers**

The Clerk suggested moving £6,000 funds out of the Lloyds current account as it was now over the buffer amount of £5, 000 as the VAT reclaim had been paid and to transfer to the Unity instant access to earn interest. This was rather than moving it into the CCLA account as will probably have to transfer back out from there for the October/November pay run.

**Resolved:** To approve moving £6,000 from the Lloyds current account into the Unity Instant Access account.

### **d) Quarterly Reports for Quarter 1 April, May, June)**

#### **i) To note Budget vs Actual**

Councillor Glover noted whilst it was the policy of the Council to redact the salaries of employees in reports, noted when adding up the totals for allotments etc, the salaries for the Caretaker and Allotment Warden could be identified. Therefore, suggested an Admin Heading be used into which these figures could be subsumed, along with officer salaries.

The Clerk explained the reason for the Parish Caretaker and the Allotment Warden being listed separately was so the Caretaker came under the amenities budget heading and the Allotment Warden under the allotments heading, with a

separate cost code for their travel which is treated separately at year end. It was not clear how many hours they worked which would indicate an hourly rate.

**Resolved:** To note the Budget vs Actual Quarter 1 Report for April, May and June.

For the Clerk to speak to both the Parish Caretaker and the Allotment Warden to ascertain their views on their monthly pay being identifiable in the finance reports.

**ii) To note Bank Reconciliation**

**Resolved:** To note the Bank Reconciliation report.

**iii) To note VAT reclaim submitted**

**Resolved:** To note a £5,361.60 VAT reclaim had been received.

**e) To note if any members of public have exercised their right to inspect accounts**

The Clerk informed the meeting that no one to date had exercised their right to inspect the accounts, with the published public rights period closing on 2 August.

**151/24 Asset Management**

**a) To approve the Asset Management Committee minutes of 1 July 2024**

**Resolved:** To approve and for the Chair to sign the Asset Management Committee minutes of 1 July 2024.

**b) To formally approve the Asset Management Committee recommendations of 1 July 2024**

- Min 86(d)/24: Remedial works to Whitworth Play Area

Recommendation 3: Removal of hazel branches

The Clerk informed the meeting the hazel branches had already been removed as they posed a health and safety risk.

- Min 87(a)/24: QEII Jubilee Sports Field & Pavilion (known informally as Bowerhill Sports Field)

Recommendation 1: Marking out of an 11-aside pitch around the two existing 9-aside pitches

The Clerk explained this had been overtaken by events, as the youth football organisation had refused this and were looking for another site. However, the pitches needed to be marked out before the football season started in August and suggested approving the recommendation, in case the youth football organisation changed their mind if they could not secure a pitch elsewhere.

**Resolved:** To approve the recommendation that the council mark out an additional 11-a-side pitch around the two existing 9-a-side pitches in a different colour marking for the youth organisation to use as part of their weekend blanket booking, with an amendment '**if required**'.

- Min 87(f)/24: To approve quotation for the annual ventilation service

It was noted following confirmation there was no risk of a legionella outbreak relating to the ventilation system in the games room at Bowerhill Pavilion as the system does not contain any form of water, the cost of undertaking the annual ventilation service for just the locker room only would be £310.50 + VAT.

**Resolved:** To approve the quotation of £310.50 + VAT from Wiltshire Air Conditioning Services to inspect and service the extraction fans in the locker room.

- Min 88(e)/24: To review rules on keeping chickens and rabbits at the allotments

Councillor Holt queried if the council rules took account of the new Government ruling that people had to register every single kept bird before October.

Councillor Glover felt the rules were constantly changing and therefore suggested the allotment policy regarding the retention of chickens and any other animals should be kept in accordance with the law.

The Clerk suggested the wording of the policy could be amended to read 'Any National disease prevention and/or control programmes in force for the time being and current legislation regarding livestock must be adhered to by the allotment tenant.'

Councillor Wood queried if the Allotment Warden would be tasked to check every bird was registered.

The Clerk responded to say whilst the Allotment Warden had been tasked to check livestock was being kept in an appropriate manner during a bird flu outbreak for instance, policing if people had registered their livestock was different.

**Resolved:** To approve the recommendation to add additional clauses (as listed in the minutes) to the council's rules for keeping chickens and rabbits at the allotments, with the following amendment:

‘Any National disease prevention and/or control programmes in force for the time being **and current legislation regarding livestock** must be adhered to by the allotment tenant.’

- Min 91/24: Stabbing and bleed kits

The Clerk explained the village hall/community facilities group had met recently and the Clerk reported on a recent visit to the office from a volunteer setting up a service regarding Martyn's Law. The new law would require an event with more than 1000 people to have a kit available which included stabbing and bleed kits. At the meeting, it was suggested the Area Board be approached to see if they could provide/fund one lot of kit for the Melksham community area, which would move to each venue/event when necessary.

- Min 92(b)/24: Defibrillator inside of Bowerhill Village Hall

The Clerk explained there was a supplementary item later in the meeting and therefore suggested not approving this item and to discuss under item 11(b)(v).

- Min 93(a)/24: Happy to Chat bench project

Whilst members approved the recommendation to install some laminated 'Happy to Chat' bench signs on some benches around the parish, there was discussion on where these should be installed, as not everyone would be happy for people to speak to them, particularly if there were no other benches in the vicinity to sit on.

Councillor Richardson highlighted there were those in the community who were lonely and shy who wanted to meet people but who were nervous about doing it.

**Resolved:** To approve the recommendation to install some laminated 'Happy to Chat' bench signs on some benches around the parish.

- Min 94(b)/24: To note correspondence from Bowerhill Residents Acton Group (BRAG) regarding locations of outstanding benches still in storage

The Clerk asked if Members would be available to attend a site meeting, with Councillors Keates and Glover volunteering, to agree the exact location in the sites previously agreed.



**Resolved:** To formally approve the recommendations of the Asset Management Committee meeting held on 1 July 2024, except for recommendation 92(b)/24.

Councillor Keates arrived at the meeting at 7.57pm during this item.

**i) To note response from Shaw & Whitley Pre School on replacement of the springer play equipment at Shaw Play area (Min 85/24)**

Members noted the Pre-School Manager had responded to say she liked the car option for new play equipment. The Clerk explained unfortunately, the children had already broken up for the school holidays and therefore, had not provided their preferred choice of equipment and sought a preference from Members.

**Resolved:** To purchase the car piece of play equipment.

**ii) To note response from the Wiltshire Association of Local Councils (WALC) re clarification on procurement procedures in relation to Contract Finder (Min 86(b)(ii)/24)**

Members noted the parish council proceeded on this basis at the Asset Management meeting on 1 July 2024; which has subsequently been clarified by WALC as the recommended way forward.

**iii) To note response from Youth Football Organisation re additional marking out of 11 aside pitch. (Min 87(a)/24)**

At a recent meeting with the Finance & Amenities Officer a local football youth organisation had also asked if they could have exclusive use of the kitchen, a reduced rate for a long-term booking, a trophy cabinet and freezer in the games room. They were also prepared to undertake the cleaning in exchange for a reduced hire rate.

The Clerk asked for a decision on this request, prior to the footpath season starting in September.

Discussion ensued on the request for exclusive use of the kitchen and ways to get around storing their belongings, if other users also wished to hire the kitchen and the offer to undertake cleaning in exchange for a reduced hire charge rate. Concern was expressed at potential damage to the trophy cabinet and what insurance would be in place and who's insurance this would be under, if it were damaged.

**Resolved:** For a small group consisting of Councillors Pafford, Glover and Harris to meet with representatives of the youth organisation to identify a way forward and give delegated powers to the group to negotiate an appropriate booking rate.

**iv) To note response from Wiltshire Air Conditioning Services re Legionnaires query about the ventilation system in the games room in Bowerhill Pavilion (Min 87(f)/24)**

As noted earlier in the meeting, correspondence had been received from Wiltshire Air Conditioning Services confirming there was no risk of a legionellosis outbreak relating to the ventilation system in the games room at Bowerhill Pavilion.

**v) Defibrillator inside Bowerhill Village Hall. To consider taking this device offline (Min 92(b)/24)**

Confirmation had been received from Bowerhill Primary School that they now had their own defibrillator and therefore did not require the donation of the device currently located inside Bowerhill Village Hall.

Members were asked to consider taking this device offline, as it was outside the parish council's annual defibrillator maintenance package and therefore there would be an additional cost to the council.

The Clerk informed the meeting the defibrillator had previously been owned by a business on Bowerhill who had moved away and therefore donated it to the parish council some 8-9 years ago.

**Resolved:** To take the defibrillator inside Bowerhill Village Hall offline.

**c) To receive update on play area legal transfers and approve if received (Pathfinder Place, Berryfield, Kestrel Court)**

The Clerk explained she had received copies of the legal transfers relating to Berryfield and Kestrel Court play areas, but not the final versions. Whilst amendments had been made to some errors previously noted, the name of the parish council was still not correct, therefore, as these were legal documents, sought delegated powers to arrange for the signature and sealing of the legal transfers once the final correct versions had been received.

Regarding the Pathfinder Place play area legal transfer, the Clerk explained agreement was sought where the vehicular access to the play area should be located.

Frustration was expressed by several Members that the issue of trying to get the legal transfer completed and the vehicular access resolved with Taylor Wimpey had already taken several years and whether the time had come to consider the Council's position in taking on the play area.

It was understood in the transfer from Taylor Wimpey to the resident whose driveway vehicles would have to go across, included a right of access for vehicles to the play area and therefore the resident or their solicitor should know this.

It was noted in the current circumstances the parish council would be unable to maintain the play area as access was across Taylor Wimpey's land.

Councillor Glover noted signs were posted on the play area stating it was the responsibility of the parish council, which was not the case as the legal transfer had not taken place and therefore suggested these should be covered up for now.

The Clerk explained that she had sought advice on this, however, Councillor Glover felt it important the signs should be covered up as soon as possible.

**Resolved:** Pending errors being amended and checked by the Clerk, to approve, sign and seal the legal transfers for Berryfield and Kestrel Court play areas.

To place an item on the Full Council agenda on 9 September regarding the parish council taking on Pathfinder Place (Davey) play area and to inform local residents. In the meantime, the Clerk to review documentation held by the parish council and go back to Taylor Wimpey regarding the vehicular access.

#### **d)C Bowerhill Sports Field**

- i) To consider correspondence from youth organisation on booking arrangements.**

#### **HELD IN CLOSED SESSION**

**Resolved:** To arrange a meeting with representatives of the football youth organisation, the Clerk, Councillors Pafford, Sullivan, Harris and Franks to discuss a way forward and to prepare a statement, if necessary.

- ii) To note the parish council have been unsuccessful in their grant application to SUEZ and consider a way forward.**

Councillor Glover informed the meeting unfortunately the parish council had been unsuccessful in their grant application for gym equipment and drainage improvements of the football pitch.

**Resolved:** For officers to investigate other grant funding opportunities available.

#### **d) Shurnhold Fields**

Councillor Glover explained the parish council were to receive an update on the car park/entrance improvement project and flood alleviation scheme

and consider a way forward. However, whilst Wiltshire Council had sent a new drawing for approval, understood it would be appropriate to have a meeting of all parties, so everyone was on the same page prior to Wiltshire Council taking on the work.

It was noted both the town council and the parish council would need to agree finances with Wiltshire Council as well.

**e) Community Action Whitley & Shaw Community Emergency Group (CAWS CEG). To consider donating the parish council's sack truck to CAWS CEG**

The Clerk explained CAWS CEG volunteers were looking to buy a new sack truck, however, the parish council had one no longer in use and therefore suggested this could be donated to the group.

**Resolved:** To donate the Council's sack truck to CAWS CEG.

**f) Allotments**

A request had been received from a Berryfield allotment holder seeking permission to put chickens on a vacant plot which was overgrown, in order to keep the grass down.

It was unclear if the chickens would be kept in a pen or allowed to roam on the allotment plot.

It was noted, if a request had been received to keep chickens on a whole allotment this would be refused by the parish council, therefore, it was:

**Resolved:** To decline the request and to inform the allotment holder they could take on the allotment free of charge for a year if they wished, in order to bring it back into a good condition and to send them a copy of the allotment rules.

**152/24 Highways**

**a) To approve the Highway & Streetscene Committee minutes of 22 July 2024**

**Resolved:** To approve and for the Chair to sign the Highway & Streetscene Committee minutes of 22 July 2024.

**b) To formally approve the recommendations of the Highway & Streetscene Committee minutes of 22 July 2024**

Min 132(b)/24 Request for new kissing gate in Beanacre

Whilst the recommendation not to progress the request was approved, Councillor Baines informed the meeting the resident had suggested if

the stile was not fixed their horses could get out. However, the stile was only there to provide the users of the right of way a means to cross to another piece of land. The land should be fenced off by the landowner for their livestock and was not a requirement of the right of way access point to be the sole means of enclosing the private land.

The Clerk noted with regard to Min 132(c) and the request for a Brown Tourism sign, whilst this request was not progressed, it was not included as a recommendation in the minutes.

**Resolved:** To formally approve the recommendations of the Highway & Streetscene Committee meeting held on 22 July 2024.

**c) Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).**

The Clerk explained since the Highways meeting on 22 July she had re-looked at the comments and added some more, including those submitted by Councillor Glover.

Councillor Richardson commented on the quality of the document and if this should be fed back to Wiltshire Council, particularly as it had necessitated a lot of work in commenting on the document due to the number of errors included within it.

The Clerk informed the meeting some of the errors/inconsistencies had already been highlighted by the parish council as part of its response to the pre version of the document in February.

**Resolved:** To approve the response to the consultation, as circulated by the Clerk and included as an addendum to the minutes.

In feedback to Wiltshire Council to comment on the poor quality of the document and its value for money as a commissioned piece of work undertaken by consultants.

**d) Proposed Traffic Regulation Order Various Roads, Melksham & Melksham Without (40mph Speed Limit) Order 2024.**

Following the parish council seeking clarification on the correct naming of the road referred to in the Road Traffic Order, Wiltshire Council had confirmed that all legal paperwork correctly referred to the road as Eastern Way and not Rocket Way as referred to in some of the Traffic Order documentation received by the parish council.

**153/24 Community projects/partnership organisations:**

**a) Age UK. To receive update and consider Quarter 1 Report for 2024/25**

Councillor Glover noted the low number of people supported in the

parish and whilst appreciating the work was worthwhile, noted the parish council were subsidising the town residents. Therefore, this was something to bear in mind as the contract only had another year left.

The Clerk highlighted whilst the parish council were contributing 50% towards the costs of the project, the population was split 30/70 between the parish and the town.

**b) Wiltshire Explore App.**

Councillor Glover informed the meeting the project had gone live the previous week with a press release issued to Melksham News. The Town Council were still not involved but one of their staff had been working on the new Events aspect of the App and had access to the behind the scenes working of the App. The first trail (WWI) had been added, with a public art trail to be added next.

**c) Future Cemetery provision.**

Councillor Glover explained a response on future cemetery provision in the town had been received from Adrian Hampton at Wiltshire Council earlier in the day and had personally responded querying what would happen if the town or parish council decided not to proceed with taking on future cemetery provision in the town, as he understood whilst there was an ability to be a burial authority, the town or parish do not have to be one, however someone had to be a burial authority.

Councilor Glover sought a steer if the parish council wished to join the cemetery working group, following an invitation from the Town Council, bearing in mind if the parish council wished to have a cemetery and therefore be responsible for it. There would be costs involved, and another way forward could be to seek private cemetery provision or do nothing. The Chair queried if the council want to discuss thoughts now or go along to the working group with an open mind.

It was noted St Barnabas Church had confirmed the number of burial plots they had available were for anyone residing in (or with a link to) the parish. Councillor Baines clarified the parish related to the ecclesiastical parish and not the civil parish, which was different.

Wiltshire Council had confirmed Melksham Cemetery, which was run by them would be full by 2027, however, they did not intend to continue providing a cemetery in Melksham, stating other towns had taken on cemetery provision. It was noted there was room to expand into adjacent land which was available on the former rugby pitch.

Councillor Glover informed the meeting that there was no need for a cemetery as people could go to a crematorium or private facilities which existed, or buried elsewhere, such as Devizes who charged

double for non-Devizes residents. Therefore, the parish council needed to decide if it felt it wanted a cemetery and if not, there was no need to join the working group of the town council.

It was felt as this involved the Melksham community it was important to discuss future cemetery provision with the Town Council, in order to agree a consensus way forward and consider what the picture was regarding burial arrangements in the future across the Country.

The Clerk reminded the meeting Wiltshire Council had published their list of what they would spend their share of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding on, which included future expansion of Melksham Cemetery. However, this had not been answered in the response from Adrian Hampton and queried whether Members wished to pursue a response to this question.

**Resolved:** To accept the invitation from Melksham Town Council to join their Future Cemetery Provision working group.

To write back to Adrian Hampton, Wiltshire Council seeking clarification on what has been published in their Community Infrastructure Levy 'Infrastructure List' and to suggest they expand into the former Rugby pitch which they own adjacent to the cemetery.

**d) Wiltshire Police & Crime Commissioner Shaping Future Policing in Wiltshire.**

Councillor Glover sought a steer if Members wished to provide a response to the Wiltshire Police & Crime Commissioner's survey on Shaping Future Policing in the County.

**Resolved:** For Members to provide an individual response if they wished.

**e) Safety of Lithium-ion batteries and e-bikes and scooters.**

Correspondence had been received from Ron Bailey, researcher for The Rt Hon Lord Foster, seeking support for a House of Lords Bill on safety of lithium-ion batteries and their disposal.

**Resolved:** To support the Bill.

**154/24    What have we done to meet the Climate Friendly agenda**

**a)   Briefing Note 24-15, Local Nature Recovery Strategy 2.**

The Clerk informed the meeting the online map had been taken down and the webinars cancelled and therefore had queried with Wiltshire Council if the 9 August deadline for a response would be extended.

Meeting closed at 10.00pm

Signed:.....  
Chair, Full Council, 9 September 2024



Date: 08/07/2024

## Melksham without Parish Council Current Year

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Time: 10:38

## Cashbook 1

User: MR

## Current Account &amp; Instant Acc

For Month No: 3

## Receipts for Month 3

## Nominal Ledger Analysis

Receipt Ref	Name of Payer	£ Amnt Received	£ Debtors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount	Transaction Detail
Balance Brought Fwd :		12,938.90					12,938.90	
V3948-BACS	Banked: 03/06/2024	71.50						
V3948-BACS	Dick Lovett	71.50			1260	210	71.50	Inv.429- Hire of Kitchen & toi
V3949-BACS	Banked: 05/06/2024	105.00						
V3949-BACS	Melksham Town Council	105.00			1480	170	105.00	Inv.424- NHP additional suppor
V3950-BACS	Banked: 10/06/2024	440.00						
V3950-BACS	Future of Football	440.00			1210	210	440.00	Inv.423- Evening sessions May
V3951-BACS	Banked: 12/06/2024	115.50						
V3951-BACS	Future of Football	115.50			1210	210	115.50	Inv.425- Hire of 11 aside pitc
V3952-BACS	Banked: 17/06/2024	330.00						
V3952-BACS	Future of Football	330.00			1210	210	330.00	Inv.427 May half term camps
V3953-BACS	Banked: 19/06/2024	394.36						
V3953-BACS	Berryfield Village Hall	394.36			1470	142	394.36	Inv.430 BYF Share of insurance
V3954-BACS	Banked: 27/06/2024	40.00						
V3954-BACS	Staverton Rangers	40.00			1210	210	40.00	Inv.428- Hire of goals for tra
Total Receipts for Month		1,496.36	0.00	0.00			1,496.36	
Cashbook Totals		14,435.26	0.00	0.00			14,435.26	

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Date: 08/07/2024

## Melksham without Parish Council Current Year

Page: 214

Time: 10:38

## Cashbook 1

User: MR

## Current Account &amp; Instant Acc

For Month No: 3

## Payments for Month 3

## Nominal Ledger Analysis

<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>£ Total Amnt</u>	<u>£ Creditors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
15/04/2024	Alzheimer's Support	V3840-6169	-400.00			4610	170	-400.00	CANCELLED CHQ- Grant award
17/06/2024	Daisy (Onebill)	V3946-DD	45.29		7.55	4384	220	37.74	Inv.282- Pavilion WiFi
17/06/2024	Daisy (Onebill)	V3947-DD	45.29		7.55	4190	120	37.74	Inv.739-Office Wifi & Line
25/06/2024	Unity Bank	V3955-6189	9,000.00				220	9,000.00	Transfer from Lloyds TO Unity
<b>Total Payments for Month</b>			8,690.58	0.00	15.10			8,675.48	
<b>Balance Carried Fwd</b>			5,744.68						
<b>Cashbook Totals</b>			14,435.26	0.00	15.10			14,420.16	

Date: 08/07/2024

## Melksham without Parish Council Current Year

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Time: 10:38

## Cashbook 2

User: MR

## Unity Bank

For Month No: 3

## Receipts for Month 3

## Nominal Ledger Analysis

Receipt Ref	Name of Payer	£ Amnt Received	£ Debtors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount	Transaction Detail
Balance Brought Fwd :		7,073.53					7,073.53	
Banked: 21/06/2024		23,000.00						
V3944-TRAN	CCLA	23,000.00			240		23,000.00	Transfer to top up Unity
V3945-INTE Banked: 21/06/2024		1,848.24						
V3945-INTE	CCLA Investment Management Ltd	1,848.24			1080	110	1,848.24	Interest
Banked: 25/06/2024		9,000.00						
V3955-6189	Current Account & Instant Acc	9,000.00			200		9,000.00	Transfer from Lloyds TO Unity
Total Receipts for Month		33,848.24	0.00	0.00			33,848.24	
Cashbook Totals		40,921.77	0.00	0.00			40,921.77	

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Date: 08/07/2024

## Melksham without Parish Council Current Year

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## Cashbook 2

User: MR

## Unity Bank

For Month No: 3

## Payments for Month 3

## Nominal Ledger Analysis

Date	Payee Name	Reference	£ Total Amnt	£ Creditors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount	Transaction Detail
03/06/2024	Grist Environmental	V3941-DD	74.16		12.36	4770	220	61.80	Inv.683-B'hill waste away
07/06/2024	EDF Energy	V3942-DD	191.04		9.10	4302	220	181.94	Inv.011- Pavilion electricity
17/06/2024	Lloyds Bank PLC	V3943-DD	263.69		43.12	4120	120	2.10	Postage for Planning correspon
						4686	170	59.90	MCS Phone line costs
						4686	170	11.98	MCS Phone line costs
						4175	120	88.20	Office 365 subscription
						4190	120	36.90	Office phone costs
						4175	120	5.50	Council website domain
						4200	120	12.99	Meeting room subscription
						4140	120	3.00	Monthly Fee
27/06/2024	Office Right Business Solution	V3914-BACS	76.75		12.79	4150	120	63.96	A4 Copier paper x5
27/06/2024	Community Heartbeat Trust	V3915-BACS	121.14		20.19	4049	142	100.95	Inv.251673- Child pads Shaw
27/06/2024	Community First	V3916-BACS	50.00			4650	170	50.00	Village Hall association membe
27/06/2024	Alzheimers Support	V3917-BACS	400.00			4610	170	400.00	Grant Award 2024/25
27/06/2024	Avon Printing Services	V3918-BACS	78.00		13.00	4150	120	65.00	Inv.46354- Business cards
27/06/2024	Agilico	V3919-BACS	60.35		10.06	4130	120	50.29	Inv.346-Office photocopying
27/06/2024	Aquasafe Environmental Ltd	V3920-BACS	150.00		25.00	4212	220	125.00	Inv.507-PPM Visit May 24
27/06/2024	Aquasafe Environmental Ltd	V3921-BACS	444.00		74.00	4212	220	370.00	Inv.605- June PPM Visit & serv
27/06/2024	JH Jones & Sons	V3922-BACS	2,376.56		396.09	4402	320	69.47	4227- Allotment grass cutting
						4400	142	477.98	4227- Play Area grass cutting
						4780	142	187.84	4227- Play Area bin emptying
						4781	220	91.92	4227- JSF Bin emptying
						4401	220	856.84	4227- Pitch Maintenance
						4409	142	188.65	4227- Hornchurch Grass cutting
						4820	142	37.50	4227- SHF annual cut
						347	0	-37.50	4227- SHF annual cut
						6000	142	37.50	4227- SHF annual cut
						4405	220	49.44	4227- JSF Hedge Maintenance
						4402	320	20.83	4227- BSF Hedge cut
27/06/2024	JH Jones & Sons	V3923-BACS	231.60		38.60	4540	142	193.00	Inv.4248-SID 2 deployment
27/06/2024	JH Jones & Sons	V3924-BACS	1,110.00		185.00	4575	142	925.00	In.4264-Berryfield PA Trip haz
27/06/2024	Kennet Sign & Display	V3925-BACS	360.00		60.00	4721	220	37.50	Inv.014-Pavilion signage
						4722	320	150.00	Inv.014-Allotment signage
						4049	142	75.00	Inv.014-Defib signage
						4575	142	37.50	Inv.014-Play area signage
27/06/2024	Shaw Village Hall	V3926-BACS	60.00			4680	170	60.00	NHP drop in session room hire
27/06/2024	Solagen	V3927-BACS	252.00		42.00	4540	142	210.00	Inv.6444-Brackets for SID 1
27/06/2024	Trade UK (Screwfix)	V3928-BACS	19.92		3.32	4575	142	16.60	Bin liners for the parish

Continued on Page 220

Payments for Month 3				Nominal Ledger Analysis					
Date	Payee Name	Reference	£ Total Amnt	£ Creditors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount	Transaction Detail
27/06/2024	Workplace Wellness	V3929-BACS	450.00			4065	130	450.00	Employee Consultation
27/06/2024	Jens Cleaning	V3930-BACS	238.92			4381	220	238.92	Inv. 1081- Pavillion Cleaning
27/06/2024	Miriam Zaccarelli	V3931-BACS	165.00			4680	170	165.00	Inv.2403- NHP Support
27/06/2024	HM Revenue & Customs	V3932-BACS	2,464.47			4041	130	870.18	Period 3- June 2024
						4000	130	519.20	Period 3- June 2024-T
						4000	130	228.97	Period 3- June 2024-NI
						4020	130	206.40	Period 3- June 2024-T
						4020	130	92.83	Period 3- June 2024-NI
						4010	130	215.40	Period 3- June 2024-T
						4010	130	96.69	Period 3- June 2024-NI
						4460	142	192.60	Period 3- June 2024-T
						4800	320	11.80	Period 3- June 2024-T
						4070	120	30.40	Period 3- June 2024-T
27/06/2024	Wiltshire Pension Fund	V3933-BACS	2,174.79			4000	130	265.89	Period 3- June 2024
						4020	130	128.09	Period 3- June 2024
						4010	130	130.89	Period 3- June 2024
						4045	130	1,649.92	Period 3- June 2024
27/06/2024	John Glover	V3939-BACS	45.60			4070	120	45.60	Chairs Allowance- June 24
27/06/2024	Kanconnections	V3940-BACS	897.60		149.60	4049	142	748.00	Inv.1626- B'hill defib install
28/06/2024	Teresa Strange	V3934-BACS			38.47	4000	130		June 2024 Salary
						4155	120	11.65	Refreshments for meetings
						4150	120	100.60	Councillor ID badges
						4560	142	91.74	Flood Warden ID Badges
						4680	120	135.00	First Class Stamps- NHP Letter
28/06/2024	Lorraine McRandle	V3935-BACS			0.60	4020	130		June 2024 Salary
						4370	120	3.00	Cleaning materials-Office
						4155	120	3.70	Decafe Tea bags for meetings
						4155	120	2.85	Milk for meetings
28/06/2024	Marianne Rossi	V3936-BACS				4010	130		June 2024 Salary
28/06/2024	Terry Cole	V3937-BACS				4460	142		June 2024 Salary
						4050	142	47.50	Travel Allowance- June 24
						4051	142	41.40	Mileage x92 miles
28/06/2024	David Cole	V3938-BACS				4800	320		June 2024 Salary
28/06/2024	Unity Trust Bank	V3956-BANK	0.90			4140	120	0.90	Manual Handling Charge
30/06/2024	Unity Trust Bank	V3957-BANK	32.25			4140	120	32.25	Service Charge
<b>Total Payments for Month</b>			20,525.67	0.00	1,133.30			19,392.37	
<b>Balance Carried Fwd</b>			20,396.10						
<b>Cashbook Totals</b>			40,921.77	0.00	1,133.30			39,788.47	

Receipts for Month 3			Nominal Ledger Analysis					
Receipt Ref	Name of Payer	£ Amnt Received	£ Debtors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount	Transaction Detail
	Banked:	0.00						
		0.00					0.00	
Total Receipts for Month		0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00	
Cashbook Totals		0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00	

Continued on Page 124

Date: 08/07/2024

**Melksham without Parish Council Current Year**

**Page: 124**

Time: 10:38

**Cashbook 3**

**User: MR**

**Fixed Term Deposit**

**For Month No: 3**

**Payments for Month 3**

**Nominal Ledger Analysis**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>£ Total Amnt</u>	<u>£ Creditors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
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0.00

**Total Payments for Month**

0.00

0.00

0.00

0.00

**Balance Carried Fwd**

0.00

**Cashbook Totals**

0.00

0.00

0.00

0.00

Date: 08/07/2024

**Melksham without Parish Council Current Year**

**Page: 29**

Time: 10:38

**Cashbook 4**

**User: MR**

**Instant Access Unity 20476339**

**For Month No: 3**

Receipts for Month 3			Nominal Ledger Analysis				
Receipt Ref	Name of Payer	£ Amnt Received	£ Debtors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount Transaction Detail
Balance Brought Fwd :		8,834.76					8,834.76
V3958-INTE	Banked: 30/06/2024	271.53					
V3958-INTE	Unity Trust Bank	271.53			1080	110	271.53 Interest
Total Receipts for Month		271.53	0.00	0.00			271.53
Cashbook Totals		9,106.29	0.00	0.00			9,106.29

Continued on Page 30



Date: 08/07/2024

**Melksham without Parish Council Current Year**

**Page: 30**

Time: 10:38

**Cashbook 4**

**User: MR**

**Instant Access Unity 20476339**

**For Month No: 3**

**Payments for Month 3**

**Nominal Ledger Analysis**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>£ Total Amnt</u>	<u>£ Creditors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
0.00									
<b>Total Payments for Month</b>			0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00	
<b>Balance Carried Fwd</b>			9,106.29						
<b>Cashbook Totals</b>			9,106.29	0.00	0.00			9,106.29	

Date: 08/07/2024

Melksham without Parish Council Current Year

Page: 5

Time: 10:38

Cashbook 5

User: MR

CCLA

For Month No: 3

Receipts for Month 3

Nominal Ledger Analysis

<u>Receipt Ref</u>	<u>Name of Payer</u>	<u>£ Amnt Received</u>	<u>£ Debtors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
Balance Brought Fwd :		513,000.00					513,000.00	
Banked:		0.00						
			0.00				0.00	
Total Receipts for Month		0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00	
Cashbook Totals		513,000.00	0.00	0.00			513,000.00	

Continued on Page 6

Date: 08/07/2024

## Melksham without Parish Council Current Year

Page: 6

Time: 10:38

## Cashbook 5

User: MR

## CCLA

For Month No: 3

## Payments for Month 3

## Nominal Ledger Analysis

<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>£ Total Amnt</u>	<u>£ Creditors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
21/06/2024	Unity Bank	V3944-TRAN	23,000.00			220		23,000.00	Transfer to top up Unity
<b>Total Payments for Month</b>			23,000.00	0.00	0.00			23,000.00	
<b>Balance Carried Fwd</b>			490,000.00						
<b>Cashbook Totals</b>			513,000.00	0.00	0.00			513,000.00	

**MINUTES of the Planning Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council  
held on Monday, 19 August 2024 at Melksham Without Parish Council Offices  
(First Floor), Melksham Community Campus, Market Place,  
Melksham, SN12 6ES at 7.00pm**

**Present:** Alan Baines (Vice Chair of Planning); John Glover (Chair of Council); David Pafford (Vice Chair of Council); Martin Franks, Mark Harris and Peter Richardson

**Officer:** Teresa Strange, Clerk and Lorraine McRandle, Parish Officer

**Via Zoom:** Councillor Richard Wood

**Also in attendance:** Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder (Bowerhill Ward) and 11 members of public

Prior to the meeting starting 4 members of public left the meeting who had indicated they wished to speak to revised plans regarding 17 Park Road, Bowerhill (PL/2024/05437).

**155/24 Welcome, Announcements & Housekeeping**

Councillor Baines as Vice Chair of Planning chaired the meeting in the absence of Councillor Wood and read out the fire evacuation procedures for the building. He also informed those present the meeting was being recorded to aid the production of the minutes and would be uploaded to YouTube, then deleted once the minutes had been approved.

Councillor Baines informed the meeting that Gompels, Bowerhill had started work on their warehouse extension and had written to adjacent neighbours to inform them.

**156/24 To receive Apologies and approval of reasons given**

Apologies were received from Councillor Wood who was unwell and Councillor Chivers who was in hospital. Councillor Franks was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Chivers. Councillor Wood was in attendance via zoom at the beginning of the meeting, and understood he was not classed as “present” at the meeting.

**Resolved:** To accept and approve the reasons for apology.

**157/24 Declarations of Interest**

**a) To receive Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Pafford declared an interest in planning application PL/2024/05437 relating to 17 Park Road, Bowerhill, as he had been contacted by neighbours on how to lodge an objection.

**b) To consider for approval any Dispensation Requests received by the Clerk and not previously considered**

None received.

**c) To note standing Dispensations relating to planning applications**

To note the Parish Council has a dispensation lodged with Wiltshire Council dealing with S106 agreements relating to planning applications within the parish.

- 158/24 To consider holding items in Closed Session due to confidential nature** *Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during consideration of agenda items as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.*

The Clerk advised there were no items for consideration in closed session.

**159/24 Public Participation**

Standing Orders were suspended to allow both Members of public and Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder to speak to items on the agenda.

Several residents of Chapel Lane, Beanacre were in attendance to speak to their concerns regarding revised plans for planning application PL/2023/05883 and proposals for 3 dwellings to the rear of 52e Chapel Lane, Beanacre:

- Residents had not been aware of proposals for a turning head until informed by the Parish Council.
- How will vehicles, particularly larger ones, be able to turn around?
- Proposals take away an established hedgerow with its own ecosystem.
- The turning head will be adjacent to an existing property.
- The impact on Chapel Lane, which is a bridleway and already hazardous for vehicles.
- The impact on the storm drain, which runs down the lane. There is no acknowledgement in proposals of its existence and future maintenance.
- Impact on existing residents.
- Concern at the extra vehicles using the bridleway with dangerous exit/entrance onto the A350.
- If this application is approved it will set a precedent for further development off of the lane and to the rear of Westlands Lane.
- As residents have previously contributed towards the costs of re-surfacing the lane and the owner of the site has an interest in Chapel Lane, they should also contribute towards the maintenance of the

bridleway, particularly if there is any damage to it during construction.

Councillor Baines informed the meeting he had raised these proposals at a recent meeting of the Northern Area Flood Operations Working Group, including the previous revised plans which made 3 separate entrances where there is currently only one which would create 3 locations where the watercourse would be covered over and potentially cause flooding.

Residents were reminded to send their concerns relating to comments raised by various departments at Wiltshire Council to Planning and to include evidence which could challenge comments made.

**Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder** provided the following update:

### **17 Park Road, Bowerhill**

Having had a conversation with the Planning Officer, they were of a similar mind the original application would have been refused. The Planning Officer had met with the applicant's architect regarding the revised plans and understood these would be allowed under the rules of permitted development.

Councillor Glover informed the meeting the single storey extension did not fall within permitted development rights. Therefore, this aspect of the plan still required approval, noting the Planning Officer had written to the Parish Council earlier in the day confirming the two-storey extension on the rear of the elevation was within permitted development rights, with a 0.5m single storey extension to the rear and therefore, was heading to approve on this basis.

Wiltshire Councillor Holder explained he had not received this correspondence, with the Clerk agreeing to forward to him for information.

With regard to the 'Call in' Members noted as the two-storey extension was within permitted development rights a 'Call in' on this aspect could not remain, however, it needed to be borne in mind if a 'Call in' was required just for the single storey aspect of the proposals.

Councillor Baines felt there was no issue with the single storey aspect, as the Parish Council had previously commented they had no concerns with this aspect in the original plans.

### **Proposed Primary School, Land at Pathfinder Way, Bowerhill**

As a neighbour had raised an objection to an application that Wiltshire Council was an applicant for, this would have to be considered by a Wiltshire Council Planning Committee, with it now confirmed to be at the Western Area Committee on 4 September.

### **Pathfinder Way Development**

A meeting regarding an update on the public open space was arranged for Friday, 23 August at 10.00am, with the Senior Director of Taylor Wimpey and their Senior Contract Manager.

It was understood the parish council wished to have a conversation regarding the play area and Councillor Glover would be attending to represent the Parish Council.

### **Land South of Western Way**

No detailed planning application had been submitted as yet.

### **Snarlton Farm Development (300 dwellings)**

Wiltshire Councillor Holder explained a meeting had been arranged the following day with the Planning Officer regarding proposals for the site and therefore would attend the Planning Committee meeting of Melksham Without Parish Council on 2 September, in order to provide an update on discussions held.

Councillor Baines noted the application could not come forward until the Local Plan allocations had come forward, due to the lack of school places. Particularly as both the Blackmore Farm site and East of Melksham Oak sites in the Local Plan were providing a means of getting additional school places (one for primary and one for secondary) and if this application were to go ahead, there would be no school places available.

Wiltshire Councillor Holder explained the primary schools in Melksham, as well as Melksham Oak were not full at present, with places available.

Councillor Wood left the zoom at this point (7.47pm).

### **160/24 To consider the following new Planning Applications:**

**[PL/2024/06557](#)**: 4 Elm Close, Bowerhill. Side extension, works to front parking area and alter garage to accommodation.

**Comments:** No objection.

**[PL/2024/06422](#)**: 38 Hornchurch Road, Bowerhill. Proposed garden shed (retrospective). Applicant Marcia Cox.

**Comments:** No objection.

**[PL/2024/06272](#)**: 48-54 Blenheim Park, Bowerhill (Tesco). Proposed

modular extension.

**Comments:** Whilst the Parish Council have no objection to the application, they note there is an error in the application form. The applicant has ticked there is no addition/loss of parking spaces, however, parking spaces will be removed to accommodate the extension.

**161/24 Revised/Amended Plans/Additional Information:** To comment on any revised/amended plans/additional information on planning applications received within the required **timeframe (14 days)**.

**PL/2024/05437: 17 Park Road, Bowerhill.** Proposed Two Storey Rear Extension.

Correspondence had been received from the Planning Officer confirming the revised plans relating to the two-storey extension now fell within permitted development, with the applicant wishing to add a 0.5m single storey rear extension.

**Comments:** Members ask that the roof design on the two-storey extension at the gable end be altered to be at the same angle as the existing roof, in order to provide more light to neighbouring properties. If this proposal is not accepted, the Parish Council request the application be 'called in'.

The parish council also sought clarification on the accuracy of the measurements referred to in correspondence with the Planning Officer. Noting reference made to a 3ft extension being within permitted development rights, which should be 3m. Also, the single storey extension when looking at the scale included in the drawings is actually 2.5m and not 0.5m as stated.

**PL/2023/05883:** Land to the rear of 52e Chapel Lane, Beanacre. Erection of three dwellings, with access, parking and associated works

Given the concerns of drainage in Beanacre, particularly as Chapel Lane's existing septic tanks have their outfalls in various parts of the field and the consequences of adding a further 3 would have in creating further run-off which needed to be addressed properly. Councillor Baines informed the meeting as no further comments could be seen from Wiltshire Council's Drainage Team regarding the latest proposals, officers were chasing a response.



**Comments:** The Parish Council were only made aware of revised plans, which include a proposed turning head, after being contacted by a resident of Chapel Lane who had noted reference to a turning head in comments from Highways on the Planning Portal and contacted Wiltshire Council querying why the plans did not appear on the Planning Portal.

Having considered the revised plans, the Parish Council object to proposals and wish to reiterate their previous concerns, particularly regarding drainage, highway safety concerns and the removal of an established hedgerow, which will reduce the biodiversity for the area.

The Parish Council believe the introduction of a turning head does not alleviate concerns previously raised and will not accommodate larger vehicles, such as septic tankers turning around. They also suspect there is nothing preventing the proposed turning head from being an additional parking space and raise a concern who will make sure it is kept free. Members also raise a concern regarding who will ensure the boundary treatment does not exceed 900mm, in order to ensure visibility across the frontage, as suggested by Highways in their comments.

Given the Council's concern at the impact this development will have on drainage of the area, it was agreed to contact Wessex Water and the Environment Agency directly to make them aware of proposals and to ask they provide a response, as it does not look like Wiltshire Council took up the parish council's suggestion to consult them. To also contact Wiltshire Council Drainage team to chase a response to revised plans.

It was agreed to keep the current 'call-in' for the application, in order it is considered at a Wiltshire Council Planning Committee meeting.

Those members of public remaining left the meeting at this point.

**162/24 Lime Down Solar Farm**

**a) To note response from Nic Thomas, Director of Planning regarding Wiltshire Council's response to the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment.**

Members noted Wiltshire Council would be providing a response to the scope of the Environment Impact Assessment (EIA). The Clerk explained hopefully their response would be available to view on the Planning Inspectorate website, now the deadline of 14 August had passed.

Councillor Richardson explained he understood Wiltshire Council were looking for an extension beyond the 14 August, in order to submit their response.

Councillor Baines informed the meeting as Community Action Whitley and Shaw (CAWS) were not considered a statutory consultee by the Planning Inspectorate they did not accept the CAWS submission and therefore their comments had been incorporated into the response from the Parish Council, which had been submitted prior to the 14 August deadline.

Both the Clerk and Community Action Wiltshire (CAWS) were commended for putting together a comprehensive response, including highlighting the various inaccuracies within the document.

The Clerk informed the meeting the Parish Council's response had been submitted to Wiltshire Council by Wiltshire Councillor Alford for their information and hopefully they would take on board the comments raised.

Councillor Glover queried if run off from the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) had been included in the Council's response, if not, if it was too late to send this as an additional comment.

The Clerk informed the meeting unfortunately the deadline had passed but would check the response to see if this had been included.

**163/24 Current planning applications:** Standing item for issues/queries arising during period of applications awaiting decision.

- a) Blackmore Farm (Planning Application PL/2023/11188):** Outline permission for demolition of agricultural outbuildings and development of up to 500 dwellings; up to 5,000m<sup>2</sup> of employment (class E(g)(i)) & class E(g)(ii)); land for primary school (class F1); land for mixed use hub (class E/class F); open space; provision of access infrastructure from Sandridge Common; and provision of all associated infrastructure necessary to facilitate the development of the site.

The Clerk informed the meeting in the Wiltshire Council Education response to proposals it had stated the development could not go ahead until Melksham Oak had been expanded, as there were not enough places and therefore, would locate these comments for consideration of the Snarlton Farm planning application at the next Planning Committee meeting; as this was in contradiction to the information from Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder earlier in the meeting.

**i) To consider objections from Wiltshire Council Ecology on proposals.**

Members noted the objections from Wiltshire Council's Ecology Officer, which highlighted the disadvantages of the application, including a concern that the compression of the wildlife corridor, such as it is, from two sides would make it more or less ineffectual.

**Resolved:** To support the objections of Wiltshire Council's Ecology Officer.

**b) Proposed Primary School, Land at Pathfinder Way, Bowerhill. Reserved Matters application (PL/2023/08046)** pursuant to outline permission 16/01123/OUT relating to the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of the proposed primary school (including Nursery and SEN provision).

The Clerk asked if anyone wished to attend the Planning Committee meeting on 4 September to speak to the application.

**Resolved:** Not to attend the Planning Committee meeting on 4 September as no objections raised by the parish council at this point.

**165/24 Planning Enforcement:** To note any new planning enforcement queries raised and updates on previous enforcement queries.

**a) Pathfinder Way Development (16/01123/OUT), Pathfinder Way, Bowerhill.** To receive update on public open space.

As Wiltshire Councillor Holder explained earlier in the meeting, a site visit was due to take place on Friday, 23 August to discuss the public open space adjacent to the proposed new primary school.

**b) 489 Semington Road (PL/2021/06824 – garage with office above)**

The meeting was informed officers had contacted Planning Enforcement for an update, as the applicant had been given 14 days, which had now passed, to submit a decision on submitting a new planning application or move out of the garage.

Members noted Planning Enforcement were currently liaising with the applicant's agent, who had queried legislation regarding possible breaches of planning conditions in relation to the garage being used as a dwelling.

**c) Buckley Gardens, Semington Road (PL/2022/02749: 144 dwellings)**

Members were informed Planning Enforcement had been contacted following concerns from a nearby resident at construction work starting on site at 6.45am in the morning, which was against the conditions included in the Decision Notice regarding hours of construction.

**d) Townsend Farm (PL/2023/00808 – for 50 dwellings)**

Whilst not on the agenda, Members were informed Planning Enforcement had been contacted regarding potential breaches of planning conditions, relating to construction vehicles accessing the site from Berryfield Lane via the A350, as opposed to Semington Road as per planning consent, with Members raising concerns how dangerous this was.

The Clerk explained Planning Enforcement had responded to say there had been no breach of planning consent, however this may be due to the wrong planning number being given for the site and instead the planning number for 53 dwellings adjacent to the site being given in error, which had not received planning permission as yet, hence there was no breach of planning conditions, as consent had not been given as yet. Therefore, Planning Enforcement had been contacted in order to seek clarification why they felt there had been no breach of planning consent and to explain why.

Concern was expressed a hedgerow had been removed on Berryfield Lane, in order for construction lorries to gain access to the site.

The Clerk reminded the meeting that previously the Parish Council had not been allowed to use Berryfield Lane to access Briansfield Allotments with plainings from the A350 resurfacing because it was deemed not safe, and that was when the A350 had traffic management in place.

**166/24 Planning Policy**

**a) Melksham Neighbourhood Plan.**

The Clerk reminded the meeting the Regulation 14 consultation on Version B: June 2024 ended at midnight on 22 August.

Councillor Richardson asked if the various drop-in events had been well attended.

As Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, Councillor Pafford explained whilst the various drop in events were not as well attended as previously, this could have been due to the fact the Steering Group were only reconsulting on the major changes within the draft plan.

**b) Proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

**i) To consider feedback from the webinar on 14 August on initial thoughts**

Members who watched the webinar noted how important it was to provide feedback on proposed changes to the NPPF and the potential impact locally with regard to sustainable development, particularly as it was proposed Wiltshire would see an uplift of 81% in proposed new homes to be built to that already proposed in the draft Local Plan.

**ii) New Government Housing Targets**

Members noted concern raised by Councillor Clewer, Leader of Wiltshire Council on the proposed new Government housing targets.

**iii) To consider how to respond to the consultation**

Councillor Baines informed the meeting the deadline for commenting on the consultation was 24 September, therefore, there was an opportunity for the Planning Committee to consider a response at the 2 September and 23 September meetings and hopefully by then the Council would have sight of Wiltshire Council's response, in order to reinforce it or add a local feel to the response.

Councillor Glover felt some of the questions were outside the knowledge of the parish council and queried whether it would be worth asking the Neighbourhood Plan consultants for an appraisal of the more technical aspects of the proposals and on how it would impact the parish council area.

It was highlighted there should be a response to the consultation from both the Parish Council, Town Council and Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and that it would be helpful to engage with the planning consultants in order they could be briefed prior to responding to the consultation and make an informed response.

Councillor Pafford sought clarification how proposed changes would impact the Neighbourhood Plan, which was currently out for Regulation 14.

It was explained this was still unclear, with it understood when referring to plans in the consultation, this related to Local Plans. With it understood if Wiltshire's draft Local Plan were to be submitted for examination within the publication date of the changes to the NPPF, plus one month, Wiltshire Council could continue with the review. However, if the number of houses in it were materially different to the target, there was a requirement as soon as the Local Plan was made, for it be reviewed again in respect of the housing numbers.

The Clerk explained that given the NPPF consultation, production of the Neighbourhood Plan (JMNP2) needed to be as quick as possible as it needed to conform to the current NPPF as there did not appear to be any transitional arrangements for Neighbourhood plans. This was a query that needed to be raised in response to the consultation. The next Steering Group meeting had been arranged for 25 September which would be to approve the final version of the Plan following the collation and assessment of the responses from the current consultation.

**Resolved:** For the Clerk to approach Place, Neighbourhood Plan consultants with a view to obtaining costs/suggestions on how to review the proposed changes to the NPPF and liaise with the Town Council, with a view to sharing costs 50/50 as opposed to the normal 70/30 split.

To hold a dedicated Planning Committee meeting on 16 September, in order to consider a response to the NPPF changes, if needed.

### **c) South East Strategic Reservoir Option (SESRO)**

Correspondence had been received from Ken Oliver, Projects & Canal Officer regarding the South East Strategic Reservoir Option consultation and whilst the Wilts & Berks Canal Partnership had a neutral view about the reservoir, noted if constructed the opportunity to restore the Wilts & Berks canal on its historic route would be lost and invited a response to the consultation.

Councillor Harris explained the proposal was to build a reservoir between Swindon and Abingdon and pipe overflow from the reservoir to the River Thames, which meant it could not be used as part of the Wilts & Berks canal restoration project. However, if an open channel were installed, this could be part of the canal. The proposal would

have no impact on the canal link for Melksham, which was the first part of the link with the Kennet & Avon Canal.

**Recommendation:** Not to provide a response to the consultation.

**d) Semington Neighbourhood Plan**

The Parish Council had received notification the Regulation 16 consultation was currently taking place on Semington's Neighbourhood Plan, and that this would be an agenda item at the next Planning meeting to respond.

**167/24 S106 Agreements and Developer meetings: (Standing Item)**

**a) Updates on ongoing and new S106 Agreements**

**i) Pathfinder Place:**

As discussed earlier in the meeting by Wiltshire Councillor Holder, a site meeting had been arranged between himself and a Director of Taylor Wimpey and their contract manager on Friday, 23 August at 10.00am to discuss outstanding issues relating to Pathfinder Way development.

Councillor Glover informed the meeting he would be representing the parish council at the meeting.

The Clerk explained the Parish Council's solicitors had been made aware that in September the council would be considering whether to take on the play area or not, due to the several years delay in the transfer of ownership.

**ii) Buckley Gardens, Semington Road (PL/2022/02749: 144 dwellings)**

Councillor Baines informed the meeting there had been a recent article in Wiltshire Times which referred to a 187 dwelling development at Semington where houses were being snapped up. This was incorrect, noting they appeared to have added the 43 affordable homes to be built on the site to the overall 144 dwellings proposed for the site. They had also omitted the site was on Semington Road, Berryfield and referred to the site being located in Semington.

The Clerk suggested she contact Wiltshire Times regarding this article.

**iii) Land to rear of Townsend Farm for 50 dwellings  
(20/07334/OUT)**

Members were reminded earlier in the meeting it had been noted Planning Enforcement had been contacted regarding access to the site from Berryfield Lane via the A350 contrary to planning conditions.

The Clerk noted in the Appeal the Planning Inspector had set a condition that a bus stop be installed North bound. However, the Parish Council having met with a Highways Officer and as reported to a recent Highways meeting, were seeking a bus stop on the South bound carriageway near the Mobile Home Park, with an extra piece of pavement built to accommodate this, with the Highway Officer confirming there was available carriageway width to do this.

Having approached Highways regarding this, they had stated the planning condition would need to be changed and to contact Planning. However, having contacted Planning, the Planning Officer had left a message for the Clerk saying Planning could not change the planning condition without the agreement and request of the applicant. However, they would only do it, if Highways said it could be done. Therefore, the Clerk sought a steer from the Committee that they were happy for her to contact the developer to request the condition be changed, in order to provide a bus stop on the south bound side of Semington Road.

**Resolved:** For the Clerk to contact the developer seeking a change to the planning condition, in order to provide a bus stop on the South bound carriageway.

**iv) Land South of Western Way for 210 dwellings and 70 bed care home (PL/2022/08504)**

The meeting was reminded an update on this site had been provided earlier in the meeting by Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder.

**The Clerk informed the meeting as the site had now been included in the draft Neighbourhood Plan (JMNP#2) a response had been received from the developer as part of the Regulation 14B consultation and a meeting was being arranged to discuss proposals against Neighbourhood Plan policy.**

**b) To note any S106 decisions made under delegated powers**

The Clerk advised there were no S106 decisions made under delegated powers.



**c) Contact with developers**

The Clerk informed the meeting there had been no contact with developers.

Meeting closed at 21.08pm

Signed:.....  
Chair, Full Council, 9 September 2024

**MINUTES of the Planning Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council  
held on Monday, 2 September 2024 at Melksham Without Parish Council  
Offices (First Floor), Melksham Community Campus, Market Place,  
Melksham, SN12 6ES at 7.00pm**

**Present:** Alan Baines (Vice Chair of Planning); John Glover (Chair of Council); David Pafford (Vice Chair of Council); Martin Franks, Mark Harris and Peter Richardson

**Officer:** Teresa Strange, Clerk and Lorraine McRandle, Parish Officer

**Also in attendance:** Wiltshire Councillor Nick Holder (Bowerhill Ward) for part of meeting

**168/24 Welcome, Announcements & Housekeeping**

Councillor Baines as Vice Chair of Planning chaired the meeting in the absence of Councillor Wood and noted those present were aware of the fire evacuation procedures for the building. Also, the meeting was being recorded to aid the production of the minutes and would be uploaded to YouTube, then deleted once the minutes had been approved.

The meeting was informed the following planning application had been approved with conditions by Wiltshire Council:

[PL/2024/05437](#): 17 Park Road, Bowerhill. Proposed Two Storey Rear Extension.

The meeting was also informed the following planning application had been refused by Wiltshire Council due to insufficient evidence being submitted to the Local Planning Authority:

[PL/2024/04135](#): Kays Cottage, 489 Semington Road, Melksham. Certificate of lawfulness for existing separate annex.

Clarification was sought on what would happen with the annex now, particularly as tenants were living in the annex and had been for some time.

Councillor Baines understood as Planning Enforcement had been involved, they would be aware.

**169/24 To receive Apologies and approval of reasons given**

Apologies were received from Councillor Wood who was unwell. Councillor Baines as Vice Chair of the Committee was therefore chairing the meeting.

The Clerk informed the meeting officers had not heard from Councillor Chivers. Therefore, Councillor Franks was in attendance as his

substitute as previously arranged.

**Resolved:** To accept and approve Councillor Wood's reasons for absence.

**170/24      Declarations of Interest**

**a) To receive Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**b) To consider for approval any Dispensation Requests received by the Clerk and not previously considered**

None received.

**c) To note standing Dispensations relating to planning applications**

To note the Parish Council has a dispensation lodged with Wiltshire Council dealing with S106 agreements relating to planning applications within the parish.

**171/24      To consider holding items in Closed Session due to confidential nature** *Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during consideration of agenda items as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.*

The Clerk advised there were no items for consideration in closed session.

**172/24      Public Participation**

Standing Orders were suspended to allow Wiltshire Councillor Holder to speak to the Planning Committee on the following:

**Snarlton Farm. Application for up to 300 dwellings (PL/2024/07097)**

Having discussed the application with the Planning Officer, he had reiterated previous comments made, such as the application sits outside any of the allocated sites in both the draft Local Plan and Melksham Neighbourhood Plan NHP1 and draft revised plan NHP2. The Planning Officer has been informed if they are minded to approve the application, it will be called in for consideration at a Wiltshire Council Planning Committee.

**Blackmore Farm. Application for up to 500 dwellings  
(PL/2023/11188)**

No update and is still being considered by Wiltshire Council.

**Pathfinder Way Primary School (PL/2023/08046)**

The application will be considered at a Western Area Planning Committee meeting on 4 September and Councillor Holder will be in attendance.

**Pathfinder Way development**

A site meeting had taken place on 23 August with representatives from Taylor Wimpey, following which correspondence had been sent to them asking for confirmation on their schedule of activity in completing the public open space. Following discussions at the meeting it was understood the area would not be open until after Christmas given the amount of tree planting and landscaping to be undertaken.

With regard to the transfer of Pathfinder Place play area to Melksham Without Parish Council, it was understood the obstacles stopping the transfer would shortly be resolved.

Councillor Glover having attended the site meeting explained he had reiterated to Taylor Wimpey, having read the Engrossment Document provided, that he felt that it did not give the Parish Council the right for vehicular access over the private driveways, that was just for the Management Company. Therefore, they were going away to review the document, as this was not their understanding.

**Western Way/Burnet Close**

Having noted no response had been received from Wiltshire Council following correspondence from the Clerk seeking an update on when the footpath from Western Way to Burnet Close would be installed had written to the officer involved chasing this up earlier in day.

**Land South of Western Way**

No reserved matters planning application has come forward as yet.

**New Road Farm**

Have met with Bloor Homes to discuss proposals and suggested they also follow this up with Wiltshire Councillors Phil Alford and Mike Sankey, as their wards abutted the site. Pleased to note they have taken notice of the draft Local Plan with regard to various aspects of the proposal, including the provision of 40% affordable homes within the design.

Questions were invited from Members.

Councillor Glover reminded Wiltshire Councillor Holder of the concerns the Parish Council had with regard to having a no right turn into the Pathfinder Way School site and asked if it was too late to include a statement about this, noting in particular during the morning drop off it would be difficult to do a right-hand turn into the school, it would also be difficult for vehicles to do a right-hand turn out of the school.

Wiltshire Councillor Holder suggested the Parish Council submit these concerns to the Local Highway & Footway Improvement Group (LHFIG) for their consideration.

**173/24 To consider the following new Planning Applications:**

**PL/2024/07097: Land South of Snarlton Farm, Snarlton Lane.**

Erection of up to 300 dwellings (Class C3); land for local community use of building (incorporating Classes E(b), E(g) and F2(b) and (c)); open space and dedicated play space and service infrastructure and associated works on land South of Snarlton Farm (Outline planning application with all matters reserved except for two pedestrian and vehicle accesses (excluding internal estates roads) from Eastern Way) – Resubmission of PL/2023/07107). Applicant Catesby Estates Promotions Limited

The Clerk informed the meeting with regard to the 4.2 housing land supply figure for Wiltshire Council previously quoted by the Parish Council in response to the public consultation in July, the Planning Inspector at a recent Appeal Hearing for a site in Westbury the previous week, had quoted a housing land supply figure of 3.85. However, the current Neighbourhood Plan (NHP1) still had a 5-year housing land supply protection from July 2021, when the plan was ‘made’ due to National Planning Policy Framework Policy Paragraph 14 Protection.

Councillor Glover asked if the Parish Council should ask Wiltshire Council how they could go from a 4.8-year land supply figure a year ago to 4.2 in December 2023 and now 3.85.

The Clerk explained the response from Nic Thomas, Director of Planning explained whilst sites are approved the developers often do not build them in the timeframe (land banking) and therefore these housing figures do not count towards the housing land supply figure.

Members expressed frustration at the situation and the impact this had on communities.

With regard to previous comments relating to community facilities, Councillor Baines informed the meeting it appeared Melksham Town Council had made no progress in pursuing the site adjacent to Snowberry Lane Surgery, there was also the prospect of the Blackmore Farm site (PL/2023/11188) adjacent having a community centre and therefore potential for competing community centres; the Parish Council needed to think carefully how to approach the offer of space for a community centre within this prospective development.

Councillor Glover suggested the Parish Council ask for funding towards a prospective community centre East of Melksham, if the application were approved.

The Clerk reminded Members the S106 outline agreement was when land is agreed for this type of facility and if requesting just funding, the land would not be available as well and therefore land would have to be found somewhere else and it would depend which of the currently planning applications East of Melksham came forward first.

Councillor Pafford noted whilst there were concerns at the potential for having several community centres in the same area, felt having two community centres ie one at the Blackmore Farm site and one East of Melksham would be able to serve the number of residents in the area, which had increased over the years, from when the original East of Melksham Community Centre was proposed.

Councillor Glover expressed concern that the site originally proposed for a community centre East of Melksham was too small to accommodate a suitably sized community centre and therefore there was a requirement in the area for a community centre of a suitable size.

The Clerk suggested deferring commenting on the provision of a community centre for the Full Council meeting on 9 September, given the wider discussion on a Community Centre East of Melksham was on the agenda for discussion and to explain in the council response to proposals, comments on community facilities would be forwarded following the meeting.

**Comments:** The Parish Council **OBJECT** to this application and reiterate their previous comments as follows:

- Loss of Greenfield site.
- The development is in the open countryside, outside the Settlement Boundary of Melksham & Bowerhill, isolated and therefore unsustainable.
- This site equates to piecemeal development and is not plan led. Wiltshire Council's current Core Strategy, and its draft Local Plan do not include this site as a strategic allocation. There is no allocation for Melksham in the adopted Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (adopted February 2020) either. Melksham's made Neighbourhood Plan (adopted July 2021), does not include this site as a housing allocation; nor does it include it in its reviewed Plan which has recently been subject to a second Regulation 14 consultation (Version B: June 2024). This version of the Neighbourhood Plan has housing allocations for at least 483 dwellings across 5 sites. The emerging Local Plan has allocations for 845 dwellings across 3 sites. This gives a total allocation of 1,328 set against a residual figure in the Melksham area of 1,120 and 68 for Shaw and Whitley (as at 31 May 2023) as set out in the draft Local Plan. In addition, the current Core Strategy sets out policies until 2026, and the housing allocation for the Melksham area has been exceeded to date (refer to evidence documents for the draft Local Plan Reg 19: September 2023).

Following changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) announced at the end of 2023, current guidance means such development can be refused, as Wiltshire Council can prove they have a 3.85-year land supply and have met the condition to have undertaken a Regulation 19 Local Plan consultation within 2 years. In addition, the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan (adopted in July 2021) now has full Paragraph 14 protection until July 2026 and has recently been reviewed and a second Regulation 14 consultation completed in August 2024. In a letter to the parish council from Catesby Estates on the plans to be resubmitted, they explain that this change in policy context is why they withdrew their application,

however, there has been no further change in planning policy since then.

- As this site has not been allocated in the draft Local Plan and therefore this site does not form part of the strategic thinking with regard to housing and infrastructure requirements in Melksham. The site is not part of a wider strategic site bringing with it infrastructure, such as schools, medical facilities, community centre, highway improvements and a local centre etc.
- As an example of the lack of master planning across the wider area, the neighbouring site at Blackmore Farm has a current planning application for 500 houses (PL/2023/11188), with a primary school and Local Centre land with no accessibility from this proposed development. In addition, there is only one footway running along Eastern Way on its Western side and not adjacent to this development. Therefore, children wishing to access the proposed primary school at Blackmore farm will have to cross Eastern Way and cross back again.
- Proposals do not include 40% affordable housing as per the draft Local Plan requirement.
- Highway Safety Concerns:

There is the possibility of an Eastern Bypass and if the bigger highway scheme could not be afforded, Eastern Way could potentially be the Eastern route for the A350 bypass, therefore, isolating the site even further.

The impact this development will have on New Road, which is a single-track road and used as a 'rat run' to access Chippenham and the M4 via the National Trust village of Lacock including its medieval bridge which again is single track.

Consideration needs to be given to how this site could impact the new roundabout under construction in Spa Road as part of the East of Melksham extension. This route may potentially be the preferred route by drivers to access road infrastructures North and South.



Consideration needs to be given to the provision of a roundabout on the Southern entrance to the site, as opposed to traffic lights as previously proposed in planning application PL/2023/07107, particularly as this entrance serves the larger part of the site.

Eastern Way is not well served by bus routes and would result in the reliance upon the need for travel by car, which is contrary to Core Strategy Policies 60 and 61.

Members note in the Education response, they have stated the following and raise concern “if this development comes forward prior to the housing allocation within the draft Local Plan at Blackmore Farm (adjacent to the site) which includes a primary school, there will be insufficient primary school facilities for any future primary aged children. Wiltshire Council have already stated their objection to the planning application for 650 houses at neighbouring Blackmore Farm site as there are insufficient secondary school places until the Local Plan allocation south of Melksham Oak (Policy 19) is progressed.”

As part of the current review of the Neighbourhood Plan, AECOM has undertaken an independent Site Assessment and assessed SHELAA<sup>[1]</sup> site 3525, which includes this site, with the following comments:

- Impact on non-statutory environmental designations: The site is adjacent to public open space (playing field), Primrose Drive Nature Area and located along indicative green infrastructure corridor.
- The central part of the site along Clackers Brook is in Flood Zone 2 and 3. The site is proposed for more vulnerable uses (residential). The sequential test and a site level exception test would need to be applied before these parts of the site could be developed.
- Over 15% of the wider SHELAA site is affected by high risk of surface water flooding.

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<sup>[1]</sup> Strategic Housing & Employment Land Availability Assessment  
<https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-monitoring-evidence>

- The site is Grade 3 Good to Moderate Quality Agricultural Land. More detailed site surveys would be required to assess whether the site is Grade 3a Good Quality Agricultural Land. (The Parish Council note in terms of potential changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the land has been used for food production until recently, which is planned to carry more weight in the new NPPF amendments)
- The site includes Public Rights of Way MELW23 and MELW22.
- The site has several mature and semi mature trees within its boundary. Further arboricultural assessment would be required to understand their significance.
- Accessibility of the site in relation to facilities being within a 5-minute walk (400m). The following areas are over a 5-minute walk away:

Town/Local Centre/Shop:	>1200m
Train Station:	>1200m
Secondary School:	>1600-3900m
Cycle Route:	>800m

- The site falls within the Open Clay Vale Landscape Character Area of the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan Local Landscape Character Report 2020 and the West Wiltshire Landscape Character Area Report 2006. This area has a strong sense of openness with occasional deciduous copses and ancient woods to the east. The management objectives of this Landscape Character Area are to conserve and enhance the landscape setting of Melksham, screen visually intrusive urban edge of Melksham, conserve open views across the clay vale to distant down land ridges and conserve and enhance the existing hedgerow network.

The site contains some valued features including the Clackers Brook, continuous tree line along the Brook which provides an intimate setting and boundary vegetation. The site makes a significant contribution to the rural and tranquil landscape character of the area. Development on the site would represent a significant advancement into open countryside, beyond the current defined settlement edge formed by the Eastern Way.

- The site is visually open and has high intervisibility with the surrounding landscape. Development may adversely impact views of the surrounding open clay vale landscape, as well as from the Public Rights of Way crossing the site.
- The site strongly relates to the rural character and sense of openness of the area. Development of the site would contribute to a substantial urban expansion into open countryside.

The Parish Council also wish to submit the following comments in relation to comments published on Catesby's website [www.catesby-snarltonfarm.co.uk](http://www.catesby-snarltonfarm.co.uk) regarding proposals:

- Concern is raised at proposals to release surface water into the public sewer, which is understood is not permitted.
- Object to proposals for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds to be used for transport infrastructure, education, health, community facilities such as indoor and outdoor sports /leisure facilities, outdoor play areas etc and green infrastructure, as these are usually included within Section 106 Agreements. It is understood developers cannot dictate what local authorities or parish/town councils can spend their CIL funding on.

If the development were to go ahead, the Parish Council welcome the opportunity to discuss aspects of the application and be party to the s106 agreement. In addition, they would like to see:

- Adherence to Melksham Neighbourhood Plan policies and emerging Neighbourhood Plan policies and evidence documents including the Melksham Design Guide and Housing Needs Assessment.
- Circular pedestrian routes around the site.
- The Parish Council seek the provision of play equipment above that required by the West Wiltshire District Council saved Policy in the Core Strategy and wish to enter into discussions being the nominated party for any proposed LEAPs

(Local Equipped Area of Play)/Play area and seek the following:

- A maintenance sum in the s106 agreement
  - Safety Surfacing extended beyond the play area fence line (by at least 30 cm) and for the whole area to be surfaced as such, with no joins to prevent future expansion gaps, and no grass that will require maintenance
  - Tarmac paths provided not hoggin.
  - No wooden equipment provided.
  - Dark Green Metal bow top fencing provided.
  - Clean margins around the edges, no planting.
  - Bins provided outside the play area.
  - Easy access provided for maintenance vehicles.
  - Public access gates painted red.
  - No inset symbols provided in the safety surfacing, which should be one solid surface.
- Equipment installed for teenagers such as a teen shelter/MUGA and somewhere to kick a ball around.
  - Contribution towards playing fields.
  - The provision of benches and bins where there are circular pedestrian routes and public open space and the regular emptying of bins to be reflected in any future maintenance contribution.
  - Connectivity with existing housing development so not isolated.
  - There are practical art contributions and the Parish Council are involved in public art discussions.
  - Contribution towards improved bus services, which serve the area.
  - Any bus shelters provided are suitable in providing Real Time Information (RTI) ie, access to an electricity supply, WiFi connectivity and are an appropriate height or provided with RTI already included.
  - Speed limit within the site is 20mph and self-enforcing.
  - Proposed trees are not planted on boundaries of new/existing housing, but further into public open spaces.
  - The development is tenant blind.
  - If adjacent to existing dwellings the design is such that the layout is garden to existing garden.

- The road layout is such that there are no dead ends in order that residents and refuse lorries do not need to reverse out of roads.
- Contribution to educational and medical facilities within the Melksham area.
- There is visible delineation between pavement and roads so they are easily identifiable.
- The provision of bird (swift boxes), bat and bee bricks, reptile refugia and hibernacula within the development, in order to increase biodiversity.
- There are various Rights of Way in the vicinity, which could be improved/upgraded, including the provision of lighting via Section 106 contributions from this application if approved. The provision of a footpath to access Prater's Lane from Sandridge Common (MELW40); MELW30 becoming a bridleway to connect up bridleways at MELW40 & 41. Provision of kissing gates on the various bridleways between East of Melksham and Redstocks.
- Provision of allotments with access to parking and water supply.
- Provision of convenience store with free access cash point.
- Ground source heat pumps to be included in proposals.
- To include capacity for hydrogen heating in the future within proposals.
- Provision of solar panels and storage batteries for every house or group of houses/block of flats.
- Inclusion of lifebuoys, noticeboards and defibrillators. The maintenance of these items to be undertaken by the management company, unless the council decides that they would like to take on the asset.
- Any housing adjacent to a potential community centre should include sound proofing and insulation to not restrict the design and activities of the community centre.

If this application is to be approved by a Planning Officer, the Parish Council ask that the application be 'called in' for consideration at a Wiltshire Council Planning Committee.

**PL/2024/07506:** Roundponds Farm, Melksham. Variation of condition 2 of 13/06707/FUL (Construction of a Solar Park including the installation of solar panels, security fencing and cameras, landscaping and other associated works and

cable route/trenching) to bring about the cessation of use on site and deliver land restoration to its former condition on 8 June 2055 (rather than on the 25th year anniversary of the date following the first electricity generation).

**Comments:** To **OBJECT** to proposals due to the proliferation of solar/battery storage facilities already built or proposed in the area that will exacerbate the issue of cumulative impact.

Wiltshire Councillor Holder left the meeting at 7.38pm.

**PL/2024/07545**: 486a Semington Road, Melksham. Variation of condition 2 of PL/2021/07622 - To add a new front boundary wall to the landscaping of the site.

**Comments:** No objection.

**PL/2024/05016**: 35 Westlands Lane, Beanacre. To build 3-bedroom detached house.

**Comments:** No objection.

**174/24**     **Revised/Amended Plans/Additional Information:** To comment on any revised/amended plans/additional information on planning applications received within the required **timeframe (14 days)**.

None received for consideration.

**175/24**     **Lime Down Solar Farm**

Councillor Richardson informed the meeting Community Action Whitley & Shaw (CAWS) had written to Lime Down regarding proposals several times, as well as to other organisations regarding their proposals.

The Clerk informed the meeting whilst she had been made aware the Planning Inspectorate website had not been working, this had now been resolved and the Planning Inspectorate's response and statutory consultees' responses, including Wiltshire Council's, were now available to view and would send the link through to Members.

Councillor Richardson explained having read the Planning Inspectorate's report they had not agreed with the developer that certain things should be taken out of the scope of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), such as water and flooding issues, however, had agreed some issues were outside the scope of the EIA. They also shared the concerns of the Parish Council to proposals.

Councillor Richardson welcomed the Environment Agency's thorough

response on the water courses in the area which would be impacted, however, expressed disappointment in the submission from Wiltshire Council, particularly referring to Lime Down Solar generically as Land North of Hullavington which would upset the Whitley community who would be impacted by the potential battery storage facility north of the village.

## **176/24 Planning Appeals**

- a) Land West of Semington Road.** Outline permission for up to 53 dwellings including formation of access and associated works, with all other matters reserved (PL/2022/08155).

Councillor Baines reminded the meeting the Appeal Hearing would be taking place on 10 September at 10.00am at White Horse Enterprise Centre, the Parish Council's previous submissions to the application had been in the agenda pack and the Clerk sought a steer if Members wished to raise anything further at the Hearing.

The Clerk explained she had spoken to the Planning Officer who had mentioned the recent Appeal Hearing decision regarding an application in Westbury and the Planning Inspectorate quoting a land supply figure of 3.85. The Planning Officer felt it would be useful for the Parish Council to put forward any requests for conditions at the Appeal Hearing.

The Clerk explained earlier in the day she had received an email from Wiltshire Councillor Jonathon Seed explaining Nic Thomas, Director of Planning had held a meeting with Wiltshire Council's QC and it had been decided Wiltshire Council would not defend the planning application at the Appeal Hearing, with Members expressing disappointment at this decision.

Given the recent Appeal hearing planning officers had sought advice regarding the Planning Appeal on 10 September and the advice they had been given was the Westbury decision appeared to be well considered and even if there was an opportunity to unpick the conclusions the Inspector had reached and if they wanted to challenge the findings, there was insufficient time to do this for the Melksham Appeal. The strong advice from their QC was to write to the appellant and the Inspector to say Wiltshire Council would not be defending the Appeal.

The Clerk explained she had discussed this with the Neighbourhood Plan consultants who had explained that whilst they understood how Wiltshire Council found itself in a position not to be able to demonstrate of 4-year housing land supply figure, the explanation did not address Melksham's

Neighbourhood Plan (NHP1), and the updated Paragraph 14 protection regained, it was also part of the development plan and asked what their Counsel's advice was on this. They also felt Nic Thomas's letter should explain if and how Wiltshire Council and officers have given weight to the reviewed Neighbourhood Plan (NHP2) and Paragraph 14 protection and if it was not considered felt their decision not to defend the Appeal was potentially unsound.

As this correspondence had only just come through, the Clerk explained she had contacted Wiltshire Councillor Seed to say the Parish Council may have a view on this at the meeting that evening and sought a steer from Members if they wished for her to contact Nic Thomas the following morning, hopefully prior to them sending a letter to the appellant and the Planning Inspector and to ask why the made Neighbourhood Plan (JMNP#1) had not been considered and still had 5 year's protection from July 2021 under NPPF Paragraph 14 and the proposed changes to the NPPF have not taken place as yet.

Councillor Glover suggested if the Clerk had time, that the Council's response was sent to Nic Thomas that evening which the Clerk agreed.

The Clerk informed the meeting that having gone through the comments the Council had previously made and spoken to the Planning Officer, suggested the following requests be raised at the Appeal Hearing if the eventuality that the Inspector was minded to approve the application:

- Attention be drawn to the Melksham Design Code, which seeks quality buildings and the use of natural materials, for example for the adjacent site the developers wanted to use plastic porches, this had not been accepted and so the design should match that of the adjacent site the developer calls "Phase 1"
- The Construction Management Plan needs to be tighter and not unambiguous, particularly given recent events whereby construction traffic from Phase 1 (adjacent) has been using Berryfield Lane via the A350 to access their site.
- The provision of a play area particularly as one has not been provided in Phase 1.
- A footpath be installed from the site to give residents more direct access to the Parish Council allotments on Berryfield Lane.
- Footpath provided to Pathfinder Way school.
- Right of Way contribution to improve access to the river.
- Provision of informal incidental play.
- Homes should be affordable to run and include insulation



- heat pumps, solar panels and batteries.
- Contribution towards purchasing more land for allotments.

Councillor Baines highlighted the main concern was how children from the development get to a primary school as they would either have to cross the A350 to get to Aloeric School or they had to get to the proposed new primary school at Pathfinder Way which currently had no useable route.

The Clerk explained having attended a previous Appeal Hearing which was not defended by Wiltshire Council suggested the Parish Council let Wiltshire Council know they would like to be involved in any discussions regarding conditions attached to any planning approval prior to the hearing and to remind the Planning Inspectorate on the day.

**Resolved:** 1. To write to Nic Thomas, Director of Planning to ask why the made Neighbourhood Plan (NHP1) had not been considered as it still had 5 year's protection from July 2021 under NPPF Paragraph 14 and that the proposed changes to the NPPF have not taken place as yet.  
2. To approve the list of requests to raise at the Appeal Hearing on 10 September.

#### **177/24 Tree Preservation Order: Land off Littleworth Lane, Whitley.**

Members noted confirmation a Tree Preservation Order (TPO/2024/00011) had been made in relation to 13 oak trees and a woodland on land off Littleworth Lane, Whitley.

#### **178/24 Current planning applications:** Standing item for issues/queries arising during period of applications awaiting decision.

- a) Blackmore Farm (Planning Application PL/2023/11188):** Outline permission for demolition of agricultural outbuildings and development of up to 500 dwellings; up to 5,000m<sup>2</sup> of employment (class E(g)(i)) & class E(g)(ii)); land for primary school (class F1); land for mixed use hub (class E/class F); open space; provision of access infrastructure from Sandridge Common; and provision of all associated infrastructure necessary to facilitate the development of the site.

The Clerk informed the meeting Highways had provided a response and had not objected to proposals and would therefore include this on the Planning Committee agenda for 23 September.

- b) Proposed Primary School, Land at Pathfinder Way, Bowerhill. Reserved Matters application (PL/2023/08046)** pursuant to outline permission 16/01123/OUT relating to the appearance, landscaping, layout and scale of the proposed primary school (including Nursery and SEN provision).

Councillor Baines noted the application was being considered at a Western Area Planning Committee on 4 September given objections received from neighbours concerned at overlooking and parking. With regard to overlooking, noted these concerns had been satisfied by a condition a large window facing Maitland Place be obscured glass and the first floor windows in the proposed new primary school be narrow and therefore restrict the width of vision from the school.

Councillor Glover informed the meeting Wiltshire Council were going to fence off the land as soon as it was transferred to them.

Councillor Richardson felt Wiltshire Council needed to explain to residents who had objected to proposals what they intended to do, to alleviate concerns raised and where was a mechanism to do this.

With regard to the no right turn as raised earlier in the meeting, the Clerk asked if Members wished to still raise this at this point, or to submit this concern to the Local Highway & Footway Improvement Group (LHFIG) for their consideration.

Councillor Baines informed the meeting he felt this was not an issue for LHFIG, particularly as they would ask the Parish Council to contribute 50% towards the costs of any scheme.

Concern was raised at the number of vehicles which would be coming off of Spa Road roundabout and turning right into the school and the very limited space available and the potential for vehicles to back up along Pathfinder Way/Spa Road, as well as difficulties for vehicles wishing to turn right out of the school. Therefore, the potential for people to start parking in Maitland Place or Newall Road which would cause issues.

The Clerk asked whilst the Parish Council had previously indicated they would not be attending the meeting on 4 September, in light of the concerns which had been disregarded in the Planning Officer's report, if the Parish Council wished to make representation at the meeting.

**Resolved:** For Councillor Baines to attend the meeting on 4 September at 3.00pm at County Hall to raise the request for no right turns and to ask Wiltshire Council to write to inform those residents who had raised concerns on what they intended to do in order to alleviate their concerns.

- c) **52e Chapel Lane, Beanacre (Planning Application PL/2023/05883)**  
Erection of three dwellings, with access, parking and associated works including landscaping.

Members noted following officers contacting both the Environment Agency and Wessex Water for comments, both had stated they had not been asked to provide a response by Wiltshire Council and therefore would not be commenting on proposals, as they were not statutory consultees.

**179/24 Planning Enforcement:** To note any new planning enforcement queries raised and updates on previous enforcement queries.

**a) Pathfinder Way Development (16/01123/OUT), Pathfinder Way, Bowerhill.**

Councillor Glover having attended the site meeting on 23 August informed Members the hoggan footpath within the public open space would need to be taken up and re-done, due to the various trip hazards found and whilst most of the trees planted remained, there were a few which had died. At the meeting, he had asked when the Heras fencing on the road side was removed if the hedging would be the barrier or fencing would be installed, unfortunately there had been no clear guidance on this at the meeting and therefore, had asked if no barrier was to be installed were Highways aware they would be responsible for cutting back any overgrowing shrubs into the public open space.

Regarding the play area at Pathfinder Place he had raised the question of the Engrossment Agreement and the fact the parish council did not appear to be a party to it and therefore unless made a party would still not have vehicular access to the play area.

**b) 489a Semington Road.**

The meeting was informed there was no update on recent enforcement action regarding breaches of planning conditions relating to the recently built garage (PL/2021/06824) being used as a dwelling.

**c) Land West of Semington Road (Townsend Farm) - (PL/2023/00808 – for 50 dwellings)**

Members noted a Wiltshire Council Highway Technician had taken up the issue of construction traffic accessing the site from Berryfield Lane via the A350, with changes made to the developer's access. They had also agreed to do various aspects requested and the Highways Officer would continue to check daily what the developers/contractors were doing on site and whether they were complying to conditions set out in the Construction Management Plan, he had also stated he was happy for residents of Townsend Farm to contact him if he had any issues.

**a) Melksham Neighbourhood Plan**

Members noted the consultation deadline had expired with responses received currently being reviewed and uploaded to a spreadsheet with the draft responses. Work continued on making changes to the Plan in line with those responses to prepare a Submission version for approval

The Clerk, Councillor Pafford as Chair of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and Vaughan Thompson, Place Studio (Neighbourhood Plan consultants) were due to attend a meeting at Wiltshire Council on 5 September to discuss the Wiltshire Council response to the recent consultation.

**b) Proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (deadline 24 September)**

**i) To note correspondence from Planning consultants and Town Council (if received)**

The Clerk explained having contacted the Council's Planning Consultants, they were able to provide a response to the consultation at a 'day rate'; and had agreed with Place that one day's work was an appropriate response. She had also approached the Town Council regarding their thoughts on the consultation and contributing to a joint response but had not received a reply as yet.

Councillor Pafford raised concern that the Town Council needed to agree their contribution towards the costs of producing the report and the lack of support/continuity from Councillors at Officers at the Town Council and felt their Mayor needed to take a lead on this.

**ii) To note response from Councillor Nick Botterill, Cabinet Member for Finance, Development Management & Strategic Planning & Nic Thomas, Director, Planning, Wiltshire Council on how Wiltshire Council intend to respond to the consultation.**

Members noted whilst Wiltshire Council intended to respond to the consultation, they would not be sharing their response.

The Clerk informed the meeting she had found the response from Councillor Clewer, Leader of Wiltshire Council to changes to the NPPF and had received the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) response as well and would be reviewing these.

**c) Consultation on the pre-submission draft Gypsies and Travellers Development Plan Document.**

It was noted there had been two gypsy/traveller sites suggested in the parish, which were two farms in Forest owned by Wiltshire Council, however, these had been subsequently eliminated.

**Recommendation:** To support the elimination of the Forest farms for the reasons stated in the report.

**d) Semington Neighbourhood Plan.**

Melksham Without Parish Council had been contacted regarding Semington's Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 16 consultation which was taking place between 7 August-24 September, with the Clerk seeking a steer if Members wished to provide a response.

The Parish Council had previously responded supporting the following policies:

Policy 6: Green Blue Infrastructure and Nature Recovery, which included the Kennet & Avon Canal and brook corridor which now had an extra bit added regarding biodiversity net gain.

Policy 7: Protecting Semington's Actively Rural Landscape which was similar to Melksham's Neighbourhood Plan (JMNP#2) Green Wedge Policy.

Policy 10: Housing Allocation Policy, which included land to the West of Turnpike Close for approximately 40 dwellings to enable a local shop, with the Parish Council previously stating this was another proactive, plan led housing allocation to be supported rather than having speculative development in the area. This had now been enhanced with flood risk.

It was noted the plan now included a Design Code and Master Plan as well as a Policy on sustainable energy.

**Recommendation:** Support the 3 policies as previously and welcome the new additions to the plan.

**181/24 S106 Agreements and Developer meetings: (Standing Item)**

**a) Updates on ongoing and new S106 Agreements**

**i) Pathfinder Place**

Members noted with disappointment that despite the Clerk chasing Wiltshire Council they had not provided an update on progress of the footpath connecting Western Way with Burnet Close.

**ii) Buckley Gardens, Semington Road (PL/2022/02749: 144 dwellings)**

The Clerk informed the meeting officers had contacted Planning Enforcement following concerns from a resident that work had been starting on site earlier than stated in the Planning Decision.

**iii) Land to rear of Townsend Farm for 50 dwellings (PL/2023/00808)**

Further to the update provided earlier in the meeting regarding access to the site, the Clerk informed the meeting residents of Townsend Farm who had their outfall of excess sewage on the field to be built on had raised concern the sewage pipes had already cracked and were now lying on top of the earth. Also, the Drainage Plan which should have been shared with them had not been and this had been raised with Planning, as had residents' concerns regarding vibrations causing damage to outbuildings.

**iv) Land South of Western Way for 210 dwellings and 70 bed care home (PL/2022/08504)**

As noted earlier in the meeting there was no update regarding this application. However, the Clerk informed the meeting the land owners, Hallam Land had provided a response to the Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 consultation.

Councillor Glover informed Members at the site meeting on 23 August those present had viewed the access to this site which was inadequate, with a 90-degree right turn and narrow road leading to the site.

**v) Bowood View, Semington Road (16/00497(OUT))**

The Clerk informed the meeting the outstanding £3,800 public art maintenance S106 funds had now been paid to the parish council.

**b) To note any S106 decisions made under delegated powers**

None to report.

**c) Contact with developers**

**i) New Road Farm.**

The Clerk informed the meeting Bloor Homes had asked for a pre app meeting and had approached the Town Council for when their representatives would be available to attend.

Councillor Glover noted there had been an article on the news earlier in the day and whilst they had been discussing tower blocks, had mentioned the installation of wooden cladding, noting this was often installed on affordable housing and whether this something which needed to be taken account of in future when commenting on plans.

The Clerk sought suitable dates for the meeting when Councillor Wood, as Chair of the Planning Committee would be available.

**Resolved:** To arrange a meeting on 18 September during the day and to invite Wiltshire Councillors, Alford, Holder and Seed to the meeting as well as the Town Council representatives.

**vi) Land at Upside, Bath Road, Melksham.**

Both Councillors Pafford and Harris attended the Town Council Planning meeting on 27 August and provided an update following a presentation from representatives of Stantonbury on their proposals for the site which had been informative. It was noted the access to the site would be a 'T' junction onto the main road with no turning lanes or traffic control which was a concern. A small play area would be provided, as well as allotments, however, these were not marked out on the plan. There was also a proposed access for a footpath from Foundry Close.

At the meeting it had been raised how far the site was from doctor's surgeries with Town Councillor Graham Ellis providing a suggested solution in the reinstatement of one of the town buses which had stopped following Covid.

Councillor Harris noted whilst solar panels would be installed, batteries to store the energy would not be, which was disappointing.

The Clerk reminded the meeting a planning application had already been submitted and had been awaiting a decision from Wiltshire Council for over a year now as they had been waiting for the Environment Agency to comment on proposals.

It was explained assurances had been given at the meeting that concerns previously raised regarding drainage had been addressed and the Environment Agency were now happy with proposals.

Councillor Baines expressed concerns at the impact this application may have on flooding of the railway line adjacent to the site.

The Clerk explained having discussed this application with the Planning Officer previously they had explained the site was

allocated as a Principal Area of Employment in the draft Local Plan, therefore, there was a conflict of planning policy.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm

Signed:.....  
Chair, Full Council, 9 September 2024



### **Clerk's Note:**

Still a work in progress, Cllr David Pafford and the Clerk reviewed with Vaughan Thompson of Place Studio on Thurs 5<sup>th</sup> September, with additional notes in green, please see turquoise for input specifically still required from members.

The deadline for submission is Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September, so still time to add to, and for the Planning Committee to approve final draft at their next meeting on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> September.

### **NPPF Revisions 2024**

#### **Consultation**

#### **Draft Responses from Melksham Without Parish Council**

**Sept 2024**

#### **Place Studio**

### **Introduction**

This draft response follows the structure and questions in the full consultation document;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system/proposed-reforms-to-the-national-planning-policy-framework-and-other-changes-to-the-planning-system#chapter-5--brownfield-grey-belt-and-the-green-belt>

For each chapter and topic it extracts parts of the explanatory text with an emphasis on highlighting the proposed alterations to the existing NPPF.

All questions are copied into the document in topic order.

Questions that we consider most relevant to MWOPC and Melksham are highlighted in **red**. Other questions that are not highlighted are included to enable them to be answered.

We have provided an initial suggested response to questions highlighted in red. These commonly address strategic matters that have an implication for Melksham followed by reference to specific matters within the JMNP2 area.

The draft has contained itself to responding to the Government's consultation questions. However, it has not made general comments at this point on other aspects of the consultation (Q105 and 106). These are possibly best completed once Members have resolved responses to preceding questions. the NPPF itself or in planning practice guidance?

## Scope and Objectives

### Scope of consultation

**Scope of this consultation:** The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is seeking views on how we might revise national planning policy to support our wider objectives. Full details on the scope of consultation are found within chapter 1. Chapter 14 contains a table of all questions within this document and signposts their relevant scope. In responding to this consultation, we would appreciate comments on any potential impacts on protected groups under the Public Sector Equality Duty. A consultation question on this is found in Chapter 13

**The Government has made clear that sustained economic growth is the only route to improving the prosperity of our country and the living standards of working people.** Our approach to delivering this growth will focus on three pillars:

- stability,
- investment
- reform.

December 2023 changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) were disruptive to the sector and detrimental to housing supply.....Reforms to the NPPF..., growth-focused approach..... **changes we propose to make immediately.**

Government's commitments to achieve economic growth and build 1.5 million new homes.

- a. reverse other changes to the NPPF made in December 2023 which were detrimental to housing supply;
- b. make the standard method for assessing housing needs mandatory
- c. implement a new standard method and calculation.... manifesto commitment of 1.5 million new homes in this Parliament;
- d. broaden the existing definition of brownfield land, set a strengthened expectation that applications on brownfield land will be approved and that plans should promote an uplift in density in urban areas;
- e. identify grey belt land within the Green Belt, new "golden rules" for land released in the Green Belt to ensure it delivers in the public interest;
- f. improve the operation of 'the presumption' in favour of sustainable development, to ensure it acts as an effective failsafe to support housing supply, by clarifying the circumstances in which it applies; and, introducing

new safeguards, to make clear that its application cannot justify poor quality development;

- g. make wider changes to ensure that local planning authorities are able to prioritise the types of affordable homes their communities need
- h. deliver community needs to support society and the creation of healthy places; and
- i. support economic growth in key sectors, aligned with the Government's industrial strategy and future local growth plans, including laboratories, gigafactories, data-centres, digital economies and freight and logistics – given their importance to our economic future;
- j. support clean energy and the environment, including through support for onshore wind and renewables

## Chapter 2 – Policy objectives

**By fixing the foundations of our economy we can rebuild Britain and make every part of our country better off; decisive reform to the planning system is urgently needed to achieve that.**

**Our antiquated planning system delays too many of these projects, stymieing Britain's ability to grow its way to prosperity.**

**build what Britain needs.** - 1.5 million homes in England over the next five years, and crucial energy, water and commercial projects.

**take a brownfield first approach and then release low quality grey belt land**

**boost affordable housing, home ownership-extract more public value**

Issues;

New homes : planning permissions for new homes have fallen to a record low.

Clean energy ; average time taken to approve large infrastructure projects has grown to more than four years.

Economy; existing planning framework makes no reference to the specific types of development our modern economy needs.

### **A more strategic approach to planning**

**ensure communities continue to shape housebuilding in their areas,** demanding universal local plan coverage from all local planning authorities, while making full use of intervention powers to build the houses we need if this is not achieved;

**....development needed for a modern economy**

**....new sources of clean energy 2030**

**Delivering those objectives starts with local planning authorities planning for sufficient homes, commercial development and wider infrastructure in their local plan.** Local plans clearly spell out to developers and communities where development will and will not take place, bringing certainty to all parties. **They are also the mechanism through which local communities can have their say in how homes are built. It is unacceptable for local planning authorities to not make a local plan.**

**..... wider system in support of these objectives.** We are expanding the NSIP regime so that it can support our drive for more clean energy, as the first step of our NSIP reforms. We are reforming local plan intervention so that if plans are not in place, the Government can intervene to ensure housing delivery. We are reforming

planning fees so that local planning authorities are properly resourced to support a sustained increase in development.

### Chapter 3 – Planning for the homes we need

We are starting with how we plan for homes, because that is where we believe the system needs to start, and that is where our communities are feeling the inadequacies of our planning system most.

#### paragraphs 1 and 60

remove 'sufficient' in the context of providing for housing in paragraph 1, and revise the final sentence of paragraph 60. **These changes would make clearer the importance of planning to meeting housing needs.**

*"1. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied<sup>1</sup>. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans can provide for ~~sufficient~~ housing and other development in a sustainable manner. Preparing and maintaining up-to-date plans should be seen as a priority in meeting this objective."*

#### Paragraph 61

##### Standard methodology

Local planning authorities will be expected to make all efforts to allocate land in line with their housing need as per the standard method.....**removing reference to the exceptional circumstances in which the use of alternative approaches to assess housing need .....Removing these opt outs.**

**".....The overall aim should be to meet as much of an area's identified housing need as possible, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.**

### **Question 1**

Do you agree that we should reverse the December 2023 changes made to paragraph 61?

#### **Response**

Yes

It is reasonable and equitable that all LPA's plan to meet the identified housing need using a standard method. (See comments on revised standard methodology)

### **Question 2**

Do you agree that we should remove reference to the use of alternative approaches to assessing housing need in paragraph 61 and the glossary of the NPPF?

#### **Response**

Yes. As above.

Alternative approaches lead to a disparity of housing allocations and potential unmet or displaced need where this results in an undersupply.

## Urban Uplift

### Paragraph 62

This sets out that the urban uplift should normally be accommodated within the cities and urban centres

**We propose reversing this change and deleting this paragraph.**

First, the method we are consulting on (as set out in chapter 4) more appropriately distributes growth to a wider range of urban areas without the need for a specific urban adjustment.

Second, as set out later in this chapter, we are clear that urban centres should be working together across their wider regions to accommodate need.

### Question 3

Do you agree that we should reverse the December 2023 changes made on the urban uplift by deleting paragraph 62?

### Response

***Yes we do support the removal of the current uplift but No we do not support the removal of an uplift altogether***

The current urban uplift method does not respond to strategic city planning and has not delivered the required housing development.

In the sequential approach (advocated by NPPF), cities are the most sustainable locations for development as mixed use centres linked to multi-modal sustainable transport and contain the largest proportions of brownfield land.

Proposed revised national policy on the review, allocation and development of parts of the green belt are additional tools to facilitate a plan led approach to expanding city regions.

In the first instance, Strategic Development Plans should be required to meet higher levels of growth (a revised urban uplift) that harnesses the brownfield, Previously Developed Land and grey/green belt development opportunities.

The proposed standard methodology (with reduced requirements for city regions) has resulted in a redistribution of strategic housing growth to provincial settlements including Melksham. In principle, these are less sustainable locations for significantly higher levels of housing as are not matched by employment opportunities, sustainable transport or services.

Housing in Melksham Without will not be likely to generate the necessary values to support necessary infrastructure investments viably and deliver high quality housing (NB Land value benchmarking within Green Belt)



## Character and density (in assessing housing numbers)

### Paragraph 130

Current;

local character can be taken into account when local planning authorities consider their ability to meet their housing needs.

Local planning authorities are required to use authority-wide design codes to evidence the impact on character.

### Proposed

#### We propose reversing this change and deleting paragraph 130

~~130. In applying paragraphs 129a and b above to existing urban areas, significant uplifts in the average density of residential development may be inappropriate if the resulting built form would be wholly out of character with the existing area. Such circumstances should be evidenced through an authority-wide design code which is adopted or will be adopted as part of the development plan.~~

Aim; maximising the efficient use of land, especially in areas well served by transport  
**focusing on ensuring development plans support the efficient use of land at appropriate densities.**

**expectations that plans should promote an uplift in density in urban areas.**

**New focus local planning authority efforts on the preparation of localised design codes, masterplans and guides for areas of most change and most potential – including regeneration sites**, areas of intensification, urban extensions and the development of large new communities.

### Question 4

**Do you agree that we should reverse the December 2023 changes made on character and density and delete paragraph 130?**

Response

Yes

Previous clauses (revised NPPF 126 (d) and (e) address maintenance of character within planning for growth.

As stated above city regions should be expected to produce strategies for significant growth through localised master plan/Infrastructure Delivery Plans/coding to inform appropriate density and character.

At Melksham, the former Cooper Tires site (Brownfield 12.8 hectares at edge of town centre) is capable of supporting significant high density development with a new and distinct character without causing visual or amenity harm.

New strategic allocations at Melksham Without should be planned with higher densities associated with new facilities and transport.

#### **Question 5**

Do you agree that the focus of design codes should move towards supporting spatial visions in local plans and areas that provide the greatest opportunities for change such as greater density, in particular the development of large new communities?

Response

Yes

For Wiltshire, the county is too large and diverse and therefore the Wiltshire design guide is too broad to be of effective use as a Development Management tool or guide to area regeneration.

Master plans and codes are better suited to directing change over a longer term delivery program. Strategic resources would be better applied to this (see comments above). This includes master planning to enable viable delivery of brownfield land.

Eg Wilts Council has spent a vast amount on the Wilts Design Guide, but has not offered resources to support Cooper Tires and did a mediocre framework for Innox Mills. (Teresa to add in context here) JMNP2 had to secure resources to master plan the town centre.

However, locally produced character statements and design guides produced at the neighbourhood level should still be supported where local people wish to proactively guide incremental development to conserve or enhance character through development.

## **Strengthening and reforming the presumption in favour of sustainable development ('the presumption')**

### **paragraph 11 tilted balance**

It brings land into scope of potential development where it has not been specifically allocated for development (e.g. a site on the edge of existing settlements), or where land is allocated for another purpose (e.g. where housing may be proposed on a site allocated for employment uses). Additionally, it 'tilts the balance' towards approval

it is important that land that has not been allocated in a plan can be brought forward for development when needed, particularly in the short term.

Introducing more demanding targets and reinstating the requirement to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply at all times is likely to bring more local planning authorities into the scope of the presumption in the short-term. ....support our drive to deliver 1.5 million new homes over the next five years.

Currently, the presumption is triggered when there are 'no relevant development plan policies', or those which are 'most important for determining the application are out-of-date'.

**To bring clarity, we propose making clear that the relevant policies are those for the supply of land.**

**we are proposing changes to the presumption to add explicit reference to the need to consider locational and design policies, as well as policies relating to the delivery of affordable housing, when the presumption is engaged.** These safeguards will mean that schemes that rely on the presumption to secure approval will meet the high standards we expect of all development.

### **Question 6**

**Do you agree that the presumption in favour of sustainable development should be amended as proposed?**

#### **Response**

No. Alone the clause is of little benefit.

The majority of schemes consented on the tilted balance are outline with all matters reserved and/or are at Appeal. Location is already considered in addressing the principle. Matters of affordable housing and access are already addressed through cond/106. Design is reserved (and does not weigh in the decision in principle).

For this to have any effectiveness, applications for development of unallocated sites need to be required to be detailed or be submitted with design coding that is part of the approved material.

If owners intend to deliver the housing this should not be a problem.

## **Restoring the 5-Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS)**

The NPPF currently states that where a local planning authority has an up-to-date plan which meets certain criteria, it is exempt from having to continually demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply while that plan remains up-to-date. Where authorities are in the late stages of plan making, they need only demonstrate a 4-year housing land supply. We have heard concerns that these policies are undermining supply.

But this means that if circumstances change over the 5-year lifetime of an up-to-date plan, and allocations turn out not to be deliverable, it is harder for new development to come forward and there is no clear mechanism for making up the shortfall.

**we propose reversing these changes and re-establishing the requirement for all local planning authorities, regardless of local plan status, to continually demonstrate 5 years of specific, deliverable sites for housing.**

**We are also proposing to remove the wording on past oversupply in paragraph 77, which was introduced to set out that previous over-supply could be set against upcoming supply. Given the chronic need for housing we see in all areas, we should celebrate strong delivery records without diluting future ambitions.**

### Question 7

Do you agree that all local planning authorities should be required to continually demonstrate 5 years of specific, deliverable sites for decision making purposes, regardless of plan status?

Response

No

The link of the 5YHLS test is linked to the tilted balance which results in strategic levels of un-planned consents and development within the most financially rewarding locations, regardless of local need, infrastructure provision and impacts on sustainability.

It is a test that may be manipulated by land owners/developers to achieve the tilted balance.

Government should resolve a different way to incentivise and require LPA's to plan for and maintain developable allocated land that does not result in focuses of unsustainable patterns and levels of development.

Within the context of no 5YHLS Melksham is the target of tilted balance speculation and is unable to resist the Para 11 tilted balance due to the relative constraint -free context.

Decision makers should have full regard to Para 14 protection afforded to made NP areas including JMNP2. In addressing challenged to Para 14 protection, weight should also be given to NDPs in review that demonstrate an ongoing advanced positive approach to meeting emerging housing requirements, eg JMNP2.

The 5YHLS is for the whole of Wiltshire but Melksham taking the slack. - Vaughan to check if the removal from housing market areas to Wiltshire was NPPF change and not Wiltshire Council

There should also be something about them having to go to reserved matters within 1 or 2 years? and development has to commence within one year. You should have to apply for full rather than outline?

### Question 8

Do you agree with our proposal to remove wording on national planning guidance in paragraph 77 of the current NPPF?

Response

No

Housing requirements for a local plan area and settlements are set by the standard method in an adopted plan. That is the requirement.

Plan-led growth should be linked to infrastructure provision to deliver on the other NPPF objectives (community, health, employment, transport).

Oversupply of housing within a plan monitoring period will likely overstretch infrastructure and undermine other objectives. Following delivery periods should moderate plan led delivery in the affected place, eg Melksham to restore balanced sustainable development.

This should include excess development approved through the tilted balance if the 5YHLS is not demonstrated.

## **Restoring the 5% Buffer**

### **We propose reversing this change and reintroducing the 5% buffer**

Prior to December 2023, authorities were also required to include a buffer of 5% on top of their 5-year housing land supply, in order to account for fluctuations, or 10% where the authority wanted to confirm its 5-year housing land supply for a year through an Annual Position Statement or recently adopted plan.

#### **Question 9**

Do you agree that all local planning authorities should be required to add a 5% buffer to their 5-year housing land supply calculations?

#### **Question 10**

If yes, do you agree that 5% is an appropriate buffer, or should it be a different figure?

#### **Question 11**

Do you agree with the removal of policy on Annual Position Statements?



## **Maintaining co-operation and the move to strategic planning**

**the 'maintaining effective co-operation' section of the NPPF to ensure that the right engagement is occurring on the sharing of unmet housing need and other strategic issues where plans are being progressed**

### **Question 12**

Do you agree that the NPPF should be amended to further support effective co-operation on cross boundary and strategic planning matters?

### **Question 13**

Should the tests of soundness be amended to better assess the soundness of strategic scale plans or proposals?

### **Question 14**

Do you have any other suggestions relating to the proposals in this chapter?

## **Chapter 4 – A new Standard Method for assessing housing needs**

**Alongside reversing the previous Government's changes to the NPPF, including to restore the standard method for assessing housing needs as mandatory, we are proposing a new standard method.**

A revised method will support this Government's ambition to deliver 1.5 million homes over the next five years, underpin growth in all corners of the country, and provide greater certainty to the key stakeholders involved in planning for housing – including local planning authorities, communities, developers, and landowners.

Current;

A baseline of household projections (produced by the Office for National Statistics) which are then adjusted to take account of affordability. In some circumstances that figure is then capped to limit the increase, and finally an urban uplift (35%) is applied to our 20 most populous urban local planning authorities. It is designed to sum to 300,000 at a national level.

The use of household projections in the current standard method has attracted criticism from across the sector. Household projections are volatile, and subject to change every few years, making it difficult for local planning authorities to plan for housing over their Plan periods (10-15 years). To guard against regular shifts, the previous government opted to lock in 2014-projections, rather than updating the formula to incorporate more recent updates. This means the dataset is now ten years old and is no longer fit for purpose in reflecting current housing needs. By projecting forward past trends, household projections have also resulted in artificially low projections in some places, particularly where overcrowding and concealed households have suppressed household formation, which generally happens in the least affordable parts of the country.

**We are therefore proposing a revised standard method which aligns more closely with the Government's aspirations for the housing market.** This new method will provide stability and certainty for all stakeholders, seek to address the issues with the current approach, and support a more ambitious house building strategy.

**We therefore propose a new standard method that:**

a. uses a **baseline set at a percentage of existing housing stock levels**, designed to provide a stable baseline that drives a level of delivery proportionate to the existing size of settlements, rebalancing the national distribution to better reflect the growth ambitions across the Midlands and North;

**b. tops up this baseline by focusing on those areas that are facing the greatest affordability pressures, using a stronger affordability multiplier to increase this baseline in proportion to price pressures; and**

**c. removes arbitrary caps and additions** so that the approach is driven by an objective assessment of need.

**We propose 0.8% of existing housing stock in each local planning authority as the baseline starting point.** The most robust data source of stock levels is the annually published **Dwelling stock estimates by local authority districts**<sup>[footnote 31](#)</sup> **and the most recent data published at the time should be used.** On average, housing stock has grown nationally by 0.89% per year over the last 10 years. Using a figure of 0.8% therefore provides a level of increase in all areas that is consistent with average housing growth over time, a baseline which banks the average status quo level of delivery, to then be built on through affordability-focused uplifts

### Question 15

Do you agree that Planning Practice Guidance should be amended to specify that the appropriate baseline for the standard method is housing stock rather than the latest household projections?

Response

No

The consultation did not provide a case that the population projection method is unsound. It just said it was difficult and the last Government stopped trying to update it.

Population projections may be volatile and require constant monitoring, but they are representative of housing needs by location.

Local Plans need to be reviewed every five years. ONS are capable of five-year population projections. ONS are moving from census collections to online data-base projections.

Government can set the target of 1.5m (no evidence presented as to how this figure was arrived at). It can also set uplift criteria eg affordability. But the current method is more precise at national distribution. Government may also choose to positively discriminate on locational distribution should it wish to promote regional growth.

The new housing stock method has disproportionality impacted Wiltshire in principle. This will further disproportionately impact lower sensitivity settlements like Melksham when Wiltshire's areas of qualifying significant constraints are discounted.

Need to take account of local circumstances – MOD and army relocation for example in Wiltshire and influx of Ukrainians for example

Addition talking to Vaughan – objections to the old population system was about difficult to measure as volatile, but the Govt should harness new technology and data sets to access data more often than the 10 year census – try harder!

## Step 2 – Adjusting for affordability

This will be similar to the current approach, using **workplace-based median house price to median earnings ratio**<sup>[footnote 4]</sup>, but with two specific changes., we propose **increasing the significance of affordability** by revising the affordability adjustment. This would mean that the baseline stock figure is adjusted upwards in areas where house prices are more than four times higher than earnings: for every 1% above that 4:1 ratio, **the multiplier increases to 0.6%** (the current method multiplier is 0.25%). This will increase the importance of housing affordability in assessing needs which will help direct more homes to where they are most needed. Second, it is proposed that **average affordability over the three most recent years for which data is available** will be used. Using an average, rather than just the most recent datapoint, will help smooth out changes in affordability and will provide further stability and certainty in inputs and outputs of the method

Unlike the previous method, **the new standard method does not have a cap applied to limit the level of increase for individual authorities.**

**Question 16**

Do you agree that using the workplace-based median house price to median earnings ratio, averaged over the most recent 3 year period for which data is available to adjust the standard method's baseline, is appropriate?

**Question 17**

Do you agree that affordability is given an appropriate weighting within the proposed standard method?

**Question 18**

Do you consider the standard method should factor in evidence on rental affordability? If so, do you have any suggestions for how this could be incorporated into the model

**Removing the urban uplift.**

This adjustment to the method was added in 2020, to increase the need figures for local planning authorities with areas which contain the largest proportion of population of one of the top 20 major towns and cities.

**The** uplift is applied to the local planning authorities in each city with the largest population; for example, in Manchester the uplift is only applied to Manchester City Council and not the whole urban area of Manchester. This is at odds with the ways that cities work: urban cores do not function in isolation from their hinterlands

Second, focusing on a top 20 introduces an arbitrary cut off, with towns and cities important to our future growth, like Oxford and Cambridge, not on the list. For these reasons, we have developed a formula designed to raise ambition across a much longer list of urban authorities.

**An ambitious but credible target for London:** the existing formula loads a third of all national need in London, with a target of nearly 100,000 homes per annum. This is nearly three times the existing level of delivery. While we must significantly ramp up numbers in the capital, setting a target that is removed from reality just shifts numbers away from areas where they can be delivered.

**Supporting growth across the rest of the country:** the new formula increases targets across all other regions relative to the existing standard method. Currently, large parts of the north and midlands are set targets well below their existing delivery levels: in 37 local planning authorities housing delivery is at least double their targets. This does not make sense in a world where all but one local planning authority area has a house price to earnings ratio of more than four, putting a mortgage out of reach for the average earner. The new approach corrects this, increasing ambition across the board.

**Maximising delivery in urban areas:** the new formula increases targets by more than 30% across our Mayoral Combined Authorities, relative to the existing standard method.

#### Question 19

Do you have any additional comments on the proposed method for assessing housing needs?

Response

We don't understand how the large distribution figures for Wiltshire etc, with the above in mind. Are you conflating demand and need and therefore unsustainable development that is out of control and not plan led.

## **Chapter 5 – Brownfield, grey belt and the Green Belt**

### **Being clear that brownfield development is acceptable in principle**

#### **paragraph 124c**

reinforcing the expectation that development proposals on previously developed land are viewed positively. **This makes clear that the default answer to brownfield development should be yes.**

### **Making it easier to develop Previously Developed (Green belt) Land**

The first step when reviewing Green Belt land should be Previously Developed Land (PDL): it makes no sense to provide special protections for sites that have, for example, housed petrol stations or carparks. For that reason, we propose that we relax the restrictions that are currently applied to PDL and limited infilling in the Green Belt in paragraph 154g of the current NPPF, to make clear that development is 'not inappropriate' where it would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt. The requirements of our golden rules, set out later in this chapter, are intended to apply to release of PDL.



1. We have been clear that development must look to brownfield first, prioritising the development of previously used land wherever possible. To support this, we will make the targeted changes set out below, including making clear that **the default answer to brownfield development should be “yes”, as the first step on the way to delivering brownfield passports.**
2. But brownfield development alone will not be enough to meet our housing need. **To deliver the homes and commercial development this country needs, we are proposing the targeted release of grey belt land**
3. We propose to make changes to the NPPF to make clear that, where a local planning authority is unable to meet housing, commercial or other needs after fully considering all opportunities to make effective and efficient use of brownfield and wider opportunities, it should undertake a Green Belt review.

#### Question 20

Do you agree that we should make the proposed change set out in paragraph 124c, as a first step towards brownfield passports?

Response

Yes

#### Question 21

Do you agree with the proposed change to paragraph 154g of the current NPPF to better support the development of PDL in the Green Belt?

#### Question 22

Do you have any views on expanding the definition of PDL, while ensuring that the development and maintenance of glasshouses for horticultural production is maintained?

#### Defining the grey belt

To support **a consistent and transparent approach to identifying land, we propose inserting a new definition of grey belt land into the glossary of the NPPF.**

**Grey belt:** For the purposes of Plan-making and decision-making, grey belt is defined as land in the Green Belt comprising Previously Developed Land and any other parcels and/or areas of Green Belt land that make a limited contribution to the five Green Belt purposes (as defined in para 140 of this Framework) but excluding those areas or assets of particular importance listed in footnote 7 of this Framework (other than land designated as Green Belt).

We do not want our proposals to undermine existing protections for best and most versatile agricultural land. Our proposals do not remove the requirement for planning policies and decisions to recognise the benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and, where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality should be preferred.

#### **Question 23**

Do you agree with our proposed definition of grey belt land? If not, what changes would you recommend?

#### **Question 24**

Are any additional measures needed to ensure that high performing Green Belt land is not degraded to meet grey belt criteria?

#### **Question 25**

Do you agree that additional guidance to assist in identifying land which makes a limited contribution of Green Belt purposes would be helpful? If so, is this best contained in the NPPF itself or in planning practice guidance?

#### **Question 26**

Do you have any views on whether our proposed guidance sets out appropriate considerations for determining whether land makes a limited contribution to Green Belt purposes?

#### **Question 27**

Do you have any views on the role that Local Nature Recovery Strategies could play in identifying areas of Green Belt which can be enhanced?

#### **A sequential approach**

17. We remain clear that brownfield sites should be prioritised, and our proposed changes to developing PDL in the Green Belt (outlined above) reinforce this commitment. **To support release in the right places, we propose a sequential test to guide release.** This will ask authorities to give first consideration to PDL within in the Green Belt, before moving on to other grey belt sites, and finally to higher performing Green Belt sites where these can be made sustainable. As set out above, land that is safeguarded by existing environmental designations, for example National Parks, National Landscapes and Sites of Special Scientific Interest, will maintain its protections.

#### **Question 28**

Do you agree that our proposals support the release of land in the right places, with previously developed and grey belt land identified first, while allowing local planning authorities to prioritise the most sustainable development locations?

#### **Question 29**

Do you agree with our proposal to make clear that the release of land should not fundamentally undermine the function of the Green Belt across the area of the plan as a whole?

**Allowing Development on the Green Belt through Decision Making.** We propose to insert a new paragraph in the NPPF which will make clear that, in instances where a local planning authority cannot demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply or is delivering less than 75% against the Housing Delivery Test, or where there is unmet commercial or other need, **development on the Green Belt will not be considered inappropriate**

#### **Question 30**

Do you agree with our approach to allowing development on Green Belt land through decision making? If not, what changes would you recommend?

#### **Supporting release of Green Belt land for commercial and other development.**

21. In recognition of the important role commercial and other types of development play in supporting wider social and economic objectives, we propose supporting the release of Green Belt land to meet other development needs (alongside residential development) through both plan-making and decision-making routes.

#### **Question 31**

Do you have any comments on our proposals to allow the release of grey belt land to meet commercial and other development needs through plan-making and decision-making, including the triggers for release?

#### **Planning Policy for Traveller Sites**

We intend our proposals to support the release of Green Belt Land to address unmet needs for traveller sites.

#### **Question 31**

Do you have any comments on our proposals to allow the release of grey belt land to meet commercial and other development needs through plan-making and decision-making, including the triggers for release?

#### **Question 33**

Do you have views on how the assessment of need for traveller sites should be approached, in order to determine whether a local planning authority should undertake a Green Belt review?

### **Golden rules to ensure public benefit (in the green belt)**

23. The Government has committed to introducing 'golden rules' to ensure that major development on land released from the Green Belt benefits both communities and nature.

housing, at least 50% affordable housing, with an appropriate proportion being Social Rent, subject to viability;

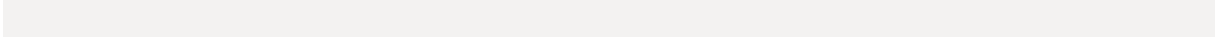
necessary improvements to local or national infrastructure, including delivery of new schools, GP surgeries, transport links, care homes and nursery places, to deliver well-designed, connected places, recognising that local leaders are best placed to identify the infrastructure that their communities need; and

c. the provision of new, or improvements to existing, local green spaces that are accessible to the public – where residential development is involved, new residents should be able to access good quality green spaces within a short walk of their homes, whether through onsite provision or through access to offsite facilities.

Are you producing a two tier system? why is it less important for 50% affordable housing outside Melksham (just because its not greenbelt, but still good agricultural land) than outside Manchester?

### **Delivering affordable housing**

24. The Government is proposing a target of 50% affordable housing on land released from the Green Belt for residential development. The Government is committed to delivering more genuinely affordable housing tenures, such as Social Rent. However, we also recognise that for the purposes of place-making, a balance of tenures is required. For that reason, we propose that the tenure split across affordable housing delivered under the golden rules should be for local authorities to decide.



### **Question 34**

Do you agree with our proposed approach to the affordable housing tenure mix?

Response

### **Question 35**

Should the 50 per cent target apply to all Green Belt areas (including previously developed land in the Green Belt), or should the Government or local planning authorities be able to set lower targets in low land value areas?

Response

NB Its still subject to viability, so it'll be challenged.

It should also apply to all 100% greenfield development outside all settlements. This could incentivise brownfield housing delivery and off-set viability issues.

## **Delivering improved public access to green space**

25. We are clear that release of 'grey belt' land must benefit communities and nature. We know that accessible green space is an integral part of making quality places so the **golden rules will include delivering access to good quality green spaces and nature**. We will bolster the environmental requirements that are already in place for new developments, such as Biodiversity Net Gain, by setting out additional requirements including an **objective for new residents to be able to access good quality green spaces within a short walk of their homes**.

27. Where authorities do not have specific policies in place, we propose to make clear that schemes in the Green Belt must provide quality green space which reflects relevant nationally-recognised standards.

### **Question 36**

Do you agree with the proposed approach to securing benefits for nature and public access to green space where Green Belt release occurs?

## **Green Belt land and Benchmark Land Values**

29. Approaches that government could take to ensure the appropriate use of viability include the following options.

**a. Government sets benchmark land values to be used in viability assessments.**

**Government sets policy parameters so that where land transacts at a price above benchmark land value, policy requirements should be assumed to be viable.**

**Government sets out that where development proposals comply with benchmark land value requirements, and a viability negotiation to reduce policy delivery occurs, a late-stage review should be undertaken.**

Benchmark land values are generally set as a multiple of agricultural use values, which are typically in the region of £20,000 - £25,000 per hectare

Government considers that limited Green Belt release, prioritising grey belt, will provide an excellent opportunity for landowners to sell their land at a fair price, while supporting the development of affordable housing, infrastructure and access to nature. Where such land is not brought forward for development on a voluntary basis, the Government is considering how bodies such as local planning authorities, combined authorities, and Homes England could take a proactive role in the assembly of the land to help bring forward policy compliant schemes, supported where necessary by compulsory purchase powers, with compensation being assessed under the statutory no-scheme principle rules set out in Part 2 of the Land Compensation Act 1961.

**Question 37**

Do you agree that Government should set indicative benchmark land values for land released from or developed in the Green Belt, to inform local planning authority policy development?

**Question 38**

How and at what level should Government set benchmark land values?

**Question 39**

To support the delivery of the golden rules, the Government is exploring a reduction in the scope of viability negotiation by setting out that such negotiation should not occur when land will transact above the benchmark land value. Do you have any views on this approach?

**Question 40**

It is proposed that where development is policy compliant, additional contributions for affordable housing should not be sought. Do you have any views on this approach?

**Question 41**

Do you agree that where viability negotiations do occur, and contributions below the level set in policy are agreed, development should be subject to late-stage viability reviews, to assess whether further contributions are required? What support would local planning authorities require to use these effectively?

**Question 42**

Do you have a view on how golden rules might apply to non-residential development, including commercial development, travellers sites and types of development already considered 'not inappropriate' in the Green Belt?

**Question 43**

Do you have a view on whether the golden rules should apply only to 'new' Green Belt release, which occurs following these changes to the NPPF? Are there other transitional arrangements we should consider, including, for example, draft plans at the regulation 19 stage?

**Question 44**

Do you have any comments on the proposed wording for the NPPF (Annex 4)?

**Question 45**



Do you have any comments on the proposed approach set out in paragraphs 31 and 32?

**Question 46**

Do you have any other suggestions relating to the proposals in this chapter?

**Why is this benchmarking just for the release of green belt land and not outside towns like Melksham?**

## **Chapter 6 – Delivering affordable, well-designed homes and places**

**This chapter seeks views on changes to planning policy to support affordable housing delivery.**

**This chapter is also seeking views on changes to further reform the NPPF in line with the Government’s objectives for the planning system.**

### **Delivering affordable housing**

#### **Delivering the right mix of affordable housing**

The Government believes that local areas are best placed to decide the right mix of affordable housing for their communities, including a mix of affordable homes for ownership and rent.

**we propose setting an expectation that housing needs assessments explicitly consider the needs of those requiring Social Rent and that authorities specify their expectations on Social Rent delivery as part of broader affordable housing policies**

**we propose removing the requirement to deliver at least 10% of the total number of homes on major sites as affordable home ownership, as set out in paragraph 66 of the current NPPF. We also propose removing the requirement that a minimum of 25% of affordable housing units secured through developer contributions should be First Homes**

**First Homes would remain** a type of affordable housing and an option for delivery where local planning authorities judge this to be appropriate for local needs, including through First Homes exception sites and through s106 developer contributions

**Question 47**

Do you agree with setting the expectation that local planning authorities should consider the particular needs of those who require Social Rent when undertaking needs assessments and setting policies on affordable housing requirements?

Response

Yes

Already addressed by WC?

**Question 48**

Do you agree with removing the requirement to deliver 10% of housing on major sites as affordable home ownership?

Response

Yes.

Agree that Housing Need Assessments by LPA's/NP's should set balance.

Local Planning Authorities should have regard to local housing needs assessments (Melksham NHP one dismissed by Wiltshire, as want a Wiltshire wide approach)

**Question 49**

Do you agree with removing the minimum 25% First Homes requirement?

Response

Yes

It was enforced by previous government without justification

Tenure should be decided at a more local level

**Question 50**

Do you have any other comments on retaining the option to deliver First Homes, including through exception sites?

Response



## Promoting mixed tenure development

To promote a delivery of mixed use sites, and the realisation of these benefits, we propose to introduce a new policy that expects local planning authorities to take a positive approach to them through both plans and decisions.

### Question 51

Do you agree with introducing a policy to promote developments that have a mix of tenures and types?

## Response

Yes

And tenant blind

## Supporting majority affordable housing developments

we also acknowledge that there will be circumstances where developments that are predominately (or exclusively) single tenure will be appropriate and should be supported. In particular, we want to make clear that development that delivers a high percentage of Social Rent

We are also seeking views on the best approach for supporting affordable housing developments within rural areas.

### Question 52

What would be the most appropriate way to promote high percentage Social Rent/affordable housing developments?

Response

Enable Councils and CLT led development. NB also housing to meet particular needs eg Melksham Library.

Gov't to engage long term investors in provision of social rented housing eg Guinness. No over reliance on developer contributions.

As long as not used as a way to get round planning rules – Townsend Farm

### Question 53

What safeguards would be required to ensure that there are not unintended consequences? For example, is there a maximum site size where development of this nature is appropriate?

Response

Dependent on;

Affordable mix eg shared ownership/social rent and range of dwelling types.

Site management in place.

Quality of design and community integration

Links to facilities

NB within overarching plan led approach to avoid unwanted cumulative impacts eg Townsend Farm.

### Question 54

What measures should we consider to better support and increase rural affordable housing?

Response

As proposed;

Reviewed exceptions criteria (more than 6)

Widening of community led development



## **Meeting the needs of looked after children**

To support the provision of this type of housing, we are proposing to include explicit reference to looked after children in paragraph 63 of the current NPPF, which sets out that the housing needs for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies

### **Question 55**

**Do you agree with the changes proposed to paragraph 63 of the existing NPPF?**

**Response**

**Yes**

**And what happens post 18 years old**



## **Delivering a diverse range of homes and high-quality places** **Strengthening support for community-led development**

Through the 2023 review of the NPPF, a number of amendments were made to enable planning authorities to support community-led housing. **We are proposing to strengthen those provisions by:**

**a. including within the definition of ‘community-led development’ housing that is developed by a group originally set up for a purpose other than housebuilding; and**

**b. removing the size limit for community-led exception sites, where an alternative limit is established through the development plan.**

### **Question 56**

**Do you agree with these changes?**

Response

Yes

We are also seeking views on whether changes are needed to the definition of ‘affordable housing for rent’ in the Framework glossary to make it easier for organisations that are not Registered Providers, for example community-led developers and almshouses, to develop new affordable homes. This is intended to inform our approach to National Development Management Policies.

### **Question 57**

Do you have views on whether the definition of ‘affordable housing for rent’ in the Framework glossary should be amended? If so, what changes would you recommend?

Response



## Making the small site allocation mandatory

Small and medium sized builders are essential to meeting our housing expectations and supporting local economies. They also build out the majority of small sites. Their business models often rely on identifying and securing small sites and building them out quickly. The Government is concerned that SME house-builders are not able to access the small sites that they need, and that local planning authorities are not bringing forward small sites in their plans to the level set out in the NPPF.

16. We know that most authorities preparing plans have been unable to identify enough small sites to reach the current 10% NPPF local plan allocation expectation, and the Government is concerned this is hindering local SMEs ability to identify sites to bring forward, build out, and for their businesses to grow. We would like to gather views on why authorities are unable to identify 10% small sites, welcoming views on measures to strengthen small site policy through the NPPF, and in particular:

- a. whether the 10% small site allocation should be required in all cases (removing the current caveat that there may be some places where strong reasons exist which mean this cannot be achieved);
- b. what would be required to implement this more stringent approach, if pursued;
- c. whether a definition distinguishing between small and medium sites would improve clarity; and
- d. whether requiring authority-specific small-site strategies would help implement the 10% allocation.

### Question 58

Do you have views on why insufficient small sites are being allocated, and on ways in which the small site policy in the NPPF should be strengthened?

### Response

Local authorities don't have the time and resources to allocate in Local Plans

It's the same process to allocate a site for 1 hectare or for 200 dwellings – it's the balance of resources against return.

Therefore do more at community level using volunteers in the community to work inside their communities via Neighbourhood Planning – you could look at the increase in small site allocations since the introduction of NHPs from the Localism Act in 2011

In Wiltshire 10% of housing allocations are expected to be allocated by NHPs

Strengthen and support NDP production – needs to access grant funding and tech support and continuity that funding and support available for several years, unlike current situation

Incentives for NP allocations (eg CIL/106)

Local Plan / NP collaborations (eg B&NES Placemaking Plan) – communities using a toolkit to assess SHELAA sites and then the local authority to allocate. Encourage more collaborative working between parishes and local planning authorities

## Requiring “well designed” development

We propose to **reverse the changes made in 2023 to the Framework that reference beauty and beautiful in relation to well-designed development.**

**20. We also propose to make small amendments to the changes made in 2023 to paragraph 138 of the existing Framework** to clarify the original intention for this wording to reflect that the National Model Design Code is now in widespread use and that the NMDC or where available local design guides and codes, prepared in line with the national guidance, is the primary means of assessing and improving the design of development.

### Question 59

Do you agree with the proposals to retain references to well-designed buildings and places, but remove references to ‘beauty’ and ‘beautiful’ and to amend paragraph 138 of the existing Framework?

Response

Yes

### **Supporting upward extensions**

To make very clear that national policy is strongly supportive of all upward extensions, including mansard roofs, we are consulting on amendments to paragraph 124(e). We propose to refer explicitly to mansard roofs within paragraph 124(e) as one appropriate form of upwards extension that national policy supports.

#### **Question 60**

Do you agree with proposed changes to policy for upwards extensions?

#### **Question 61**

Do you have any other suggestions relating to the proposals in this chapter?

## Chapter 7 – Building infrastructure to grow the economy

This chapter outlines how the proposed NPPF changes aim to help support investment and construction of key modernised industries to support economic growth. It also seeks views on whether to go further by reflecting these priorities in the NSIP regime.

Our proposed changes to the planning system are intended to provide particular support for the following key industries:

- a. Laboratories: Gigafactories
- b. Digital Infrastructure:
- c. Freight and Logistics:.

MWPC supports roadside facilities for lorry drivers – lorry parks, toilet, shower, refreshments

### Changes to the NPPF to support these modern economies

To support these key growth industries and others, **we are proposing updates to existing paragraphs 86b) and 87 of the existing NPPF.**

The proposed changes would create a positive expectation that suitable sites for these types of modern economy uses are identified in local plans.

#### Question 62

Do you agree with the changes proposed to paragraphs 86 b) and 87 of the existing NPPF?

#### Question 63

Are there other sectors you think need particular support via these changes? What are they and why?

#### Question 64

Would you support the prescription of data centres, gigafactories, and/or laboratories as types of business and commercial development which could be capable (on request) of being directed into the NSIP consenting regime?

**Question 65**

If the direction power is extended to these developments, should it be limited by scale, and what would be an appropriate scale if so?

**Question 66**

Do you have any other suggestions relating to the proposals in this chapter?



## Chapter 8 – Delivering community needs

This chapter seeks views on changes to the NPPF to support the provision of public infrastructure and to create sustainable, healthy communities.

There is a pressing need to improve the provision and modernisation of key public services infrastructure such as hospitals and criminal justice facilities. In recognition of that,

**we propose to add to the wording in NPPF paragraph 100 to make clear that significant weight should be placed on the importance of facilitating new, expanded, or upgraded public service infrastructure when considering proposals for development.**

### Question 67

**Do you agree with the changes proposed to paragraph 100 of the existing NPPF?**

Response

Yes

**That should translate into significant levels of investment in areas that are recipients of increased levels of housebuilding. The similar distribution of infrastructure funding to the distribution of housing growth**

**Proportionate levels of infrastructure – not just hospital but GP practice and NHS dentist etc**

## **Post-16 Education**

**We are proposing to incorporate reference to post-16 places to paragraph 99 of the existing NPPF to support the delivery of this type of education provision.**

## **Nursery education**

**To support this commitment and the provision of childcare facilities, we are proposing to include reference to early year places to paragraph 99 of the existing NPPF.**

### **Question 68**

**Do you agree with the changes proposed to paragraph 99 of the existing NPPF?**

**There is only one provider of post 16 in the whole of Melksham and lack of early years**

**Access issues to higher education, none in Wiltshire**

### **A 'vision-led' approach to transport planning**

It means working with residents, local planning authorities and developers to set a vision for how we want places to be, and designing the transport and behavioural interventions to help us achieve this vision.

**we are proposing to make amendments to paragraphs 114 and 115 of the existing NPPF. To support the implementation of this updated policy, we will publish updated guidance alongside the policy coming into effect.**

#### **Question 69**

**Do you agree with the changes proposed to paragraphs 114 and 115 of the existing NPPF?**

#### **Response**

Yes

LTP's at county level are too strategic **should also be done more locally**

Melksham Priority for People project may be an example of settlement/community area vision led transport planning that could compliment NP production linking local level planning and transport.

## Promoting healthy communities

We want to consider ways in which the planning system can do more to support the creating of healthy communities. This includes tackling obesity, encouraging active travel and supporting a healthy childhood, such as through more consistent approaches to controlling hot food takeaways near schools.

**As part of this consultation, we are seeking views on whether and how national policy could provide greater direction and clarity on the promotion of health through local plans and planning decisions.**

### Question 70

How could national planning policy better support local authorities in (a) promoting healthy communities and (b) tackling childhood obesity?

Any views from MWPC?

20 minute neighbourhoods – higher density – encourages more walking, cycling and public transport – to a point, as if too high density discourage use of public open space etc

Speculative, un planned, unsustainable development leads to people living in environments when they use a car and then they can't unlearn it

Great weight should be put on national documents like design codes,

Find a better way to do things than the tilted balance -

Response

### Question 71

Do you have any other suggestions relating to the proposals in this chapter?

Response

## **Chapter 9 – Supporting green energy and the environment**

**This chapter seeks views on revisions to the NPPF to increase support for renewable energy schemes, tackle climate change and safeguard environmental resources.**

Boosting the delivery of renewable energy is also vital to meet the Government's commitment to reaching zero carbon electricity generation by 2030.

Onshore wind and solar are cheap, efficient and quick to build technologies that are an important part of the energy mix. Between them, they account for over a half of renewable electricity generating capacity in the UK. We know that we will need more if we are to deliver on our clean power mission.

**That is why this chapter also considers what changes should be made to the NSIP regime to meet our ambitions to deliver green energy, supplementing those that will be brought forward through the Planning and Infrastructure Bill.**

**It is vital developers use the most efficient planning route to consent their energy projects so that we can make the UK a clean energy superpower**

### **Supporting onshore wind**

**On 8 July, the Chancellor announced that footnotes 57 and 58 to paragraph 163 of the existing NPPF, which placed additional tests on onshore wind schemes would no longer apply to decisions.**

### **Bringing onshore wind back into the NSIP regime**

**To fulfil this commitment, this consultation therefore proposes that onshore wind is re-integrated into the NSIP regime.**

#### **Question 72**

Do you agree that large onshore wind projects should be reintegrated into the NSIP regime?

### **Supporting renewable deployment**

#### **Strengthening the NPPF**

We are proposing amendments to existing paragraph 163 to direct decision makers to give significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation, and proposals' contribution to meeting a net zero future. In doing so, this aims to increase the likelihood of local planning authorities granting

permission to renewable energy schemes and contribute to reaching zero carbon electricity generation by 2030.

Further amendments to paragraph 160 seek to set a stronger expectation that authorities proactively identify sites for renewable and low carbon development when producing plans, where it is likely that in allocating a site, it would help secure development.

Development of renewables may be proposed in sensitive areas which may include valuable habitats that provide carbon sequestration, including peatlands which are critical for mitigation and adaptation, and provide key habitats for biodiversity. While these changes seek to promote the delivery of renewable energy schemes, proposals would still be subject to the policy requirements set out in the framework alongside other environmental safeguards.

### Question 73

Do you agree with the proposed changes to the NPPF to give greater support to renewable and low carbon energy?

Response

In principle and heavily qualified support

As with housing and economic growth, the commitment to achieve net zero by 2030 is a national priority and commitment.

The previous government published its Net Zero Strategy in 2021, which sets out how it will meet the target legislated in 2019 of reaching net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The Strategy includes the ambition for the UK to be powered entirely by 'clean electricity' (which includes from nuclear power as well as renewables), subject to security of supply, by 2035.

On wind power, the Government's British Energy Security Strategy of April 2022 includes an ambition for up to 50GW of offshore wind by 2030 (up from more than 10GW currently)

However, the new government has changed the strategy to increase reliance on on-shore renewable energy production. Unlike housing growth the NPPF demonstrates no new national generation target, locational strategy or design and mitigation requirements related to wind and solar infrastructure.

Whilst it has set a new increased threshold for schemes to be considered through the NSIP process, it leaves a very significant component of delivering national commitments to LPA's and the reactive DM process.

It suggests that significant weight should be given to the energy benefits of adhoc solar and on-shore wind renewable energy proposals, primarily because they are the

cheapest and fastest means to achieve targets. As with land allocations within the green belt, where land values should be capped.

This is leading to a “Clondyke” approach to provision, accumulating around existing and proposed grid connections and storage which is the opposite approach to all other types of plan led development and qualities assessment within the NPPF.

There is already harmful impacts on environments, well-being and food production as a result of the cumulative impacts of such activity in Melksham Without.

To achieve certainty of delivering its targets and appropriately balancing this with maintaining environmental, social and economic priorities in NPPF, Government must do more to provide a credible new strategy and guidance for achieving its renewable energy targets which must be reflected in the NPPF before support beyond the high level principle can be given.

Renewed National Renewable Energy Strategy

National Strategy to inform the vision, types, locations, amounts (generation capacity / land) , grid infrastructure and locations for renewable energy to 2030 target.

Financial strategy including community benefits/compensation for hosting national infrastructure.

NSIP resolution of National Grid Infrastructure

National guidance on expectations of renewable energy infrastructure installation and mitigation and nature recovery.

New Requirements of Strategic Planning for Renewable Energy

NPPF expectation of Local Plan sites allocation / broad areas to deliver proportionate share of generation strategy

Policy to manage proposals relating to all aspects of infrastructure including storage

Within the strategy, proportionate distribution within strategic plan areas

But should also include: solar panels on roofs on all new houses, warehouses, car parks, motorway corridors

MORE INPUT FROM PETER RE LIME DOWN THOUGHTS?

**Question 74**

Some habitats, such as those containing peat soils, might be considered unsuitable for renewable energy development due to their role in carbon sequestration. Should there be additional protections for such habitats and/or compensatory mechanisms put in place?

Response

Yes

But impacts on food production and locally valued countryside should be given weight in resolving a plan led approach prior to consideration of proposals.



## **Setting the NSIP threshold for solar generating stations and onshore wind**

The original intention behind the categorisation of certain projects as ‘nationally significant’ under the Planning Act 2008 was to identify the largest and most important projects and put them through the NSIP system rather than the local Town and Country Planning system. With the changes in technology that have taken place since, many small or medium-sized projects now exceed the existing ‘nationally significant’ threshold. This can be a barrier to the accelerated and streamlined deployment of these two cheap electricity generating technologies at scales below what most people would consider to be nationally significant.

There is evidence to suggest that, in the case of solar, this is causing a market distortion. Analysis of the Renewable Energy Planning Database shows that a large proportion of ground-mounted solar capacity entering the planning system is being clustered at a capacity just below the current 50MW NSIP threshold.<sup>[\[footnote 12\]](#)</sup> This is corroborated by our engagement with the industry, which indicates that solar projects are under-sizing their capacity to avoid the increased costs and timelines associated with determination through the NSIP regime.

Given that evidence, we are proposing to:

- a. set the threshold at which onshore wind projects are determined as Nationally Significant at 100MW; and
- b. increase the threshold at which solar projects are determined as Nationally Significant to 150MW.

This could ensure that projects are required to follow a proportionate process to secure consent. Potentially allowing projects that fall beneath these thresholds to move through the local planning system, given they are less complex and geographically spread out, could result in faster consenting, and at lower cost.

#### **Question 75**

Do you agree that the threshold at which onshore wind projects are deemed to be Nationally Significant and therefore consented under the NSIP regime should be changed from 50 megawatts (MW) to 100MW?

Response

No

NSIP must resolve a national infrastructure plan under which LPAs can resolve all schemes with community consultation.

It is not acceptable to “cherry pick” the largest schemes for NSIP resolution whilst leaving LPA’s and communities to address the cumulative impacts of the adhoc approach to individual schemes.

#### **Question 76**

Do you agree that the threshold at which solar projects are deemed to be Nationally Significant and therefore consented under the NSIP regime should be changed from 50MW to 150MW?

Response

No

See above

#### **Question 77**

If you think that alternative thresholds should apply to onshore wind and/or solar, what would these be?

Response

No

See above

## Tackling climate change

We are keen to understand the range of ways in which stronger action can be taken. We also know that putting our climate ambitions into practice is likely to pose some technical challenges: for example, the response to the NPPF consultation launched in December 2022 showed significant support in principle for the use of carbon assessments, but also raised questions about its delivery. We would like to use this consultation to gather further views on how climate change can be reflected in strengthened policy.

19. A key aspect of climate change adaptation is managing the increasing risks posed by flood events, whether at the coast or inland. We have heard that aspects of current planning policy for flood risk could be clearer or more proportionate, and so would welcome views on potential improvements.

### Question 78

In what specific, deliverable ways could national planning policy do more to address climate change mitigation and adaptation?

#### Response

Q78-81 demonstrate a high level of un-readiness to tackle climate change within a highly developed and immediate hugely increased development programme to be imposed from 2025.

These questions are not ones to be “brainstormed” by responses at this point. There must be firm environmental targets and climate change development actions that are provided targets, weight in considering decisions and clear guidance on their implementation.

Why are you asking this question now, it should have come first, and not ahead of the 1.5million houses being distributed across the country as transport is one of the biggest pollutants – what would have been the most sustainable way of distributing this housing should have been the methodology. Earlier questions were asking YES/NO and these are asking what the government should do. Tackling climate change should be a golden thread running through the NPPF

### Question 79

What is your view of the current state of technological readiness and availability of tools for accurate carbon accounting in plan-making and planning decisions, and what are the challenges to increasing its use?

#### Response

As above

**Question 80**

Are any changes needed to policy for managing flood risk to improve its effectiveness?

Response

As above

**Question 81**

Do you have any other comments on actions that can be taken through planning to address climate change?

Response

As above

## Availability of agricultural land for food production

We have been clear that food security is important for our national security, and that safeguarding Best and Most Versatile agricultural land is an important consideration. Prior to this addition national policy was already clear that, where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality

**22. We therefore propose removing the following text from the footnote:** “The availability of agricultural land used for food production should be considered, alongside other policies in this Framework, when deciding what sites are most appropriate for development.”

### Question 82

Do you agree with removal of this text from the footnote?

Response

Yes

See responses regarding renewable energy.

### Question 83

Are there other ways in which we can ensure that development supports and does not compromise food production?

Response

TBD

## Supporting water resilience

24. There is a growing gap in our water supplies that will rise to five billion litres a day by 2050. [\[footnote 13\]](#) Immediate action is required to make sure we are able to fill this gap. A twin track approach to improving water supply resilience is required.

## Improving the current thresholds for water resources developments in the NSIP regime

25. We are considering how we can provide water undertakers with greater certainty on the planning route for their new strategic water infrastructure, to support faster delivery, helping to address the issues we are increasingly seeing with water scarcity and quality.

**Question 84**

Do you agree that we should improve the current water infrastructure provisions in the Planning Act 2008, and do you have specific suggestions for how best to do this?

**Question 85**

Are there other areas of the water infrastructure provisions that could be improved? If so, can you explain what those are, including your proposed changes?

**Question 86**

Do you have any other suggestions relating to the proposals in this chapter?

## **Chapter 10 – Changes to local plan intervention criteria**

**This chapter seeks views on whether to update the local plan intervention policy criteria or to remove the criteria**

The Government is committed to taking tough action to ensure authorities have up-to-date local plans in place, supporting local democratic engagement with how, not if, necessary development should happen. Where authorities fail, the law provides powers for the Government to take action to ensure that plans are progressed and are in place.

**Currently, decisions on intervention are made in line with relevant legal provisions and on the basis of intervention policy criteria set out in 2017 Housing White Paper.** These criteria have been used on several occasions over the past seven years.

**3. We are considering updating them to better align with Government's priorities for planning to be a key driver for growth**

### **Question 87**

Do you agree that we should we replace the existing intervention policy criteria with the revised criteria set out in this consultation?

### **Question 88**

Alternatively, would you support us withdrawing the criteria and relying on the existing legal tests to underpin future use of intervention powers?

## **Chapter 11 – Changes to planning application fees and cost recovery for local authorities related to Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects**

This chapter seeks views on whether to raise planning application fees, and whether to introduce statutory cost recovery for local planning authorities for their role in applications for development consent under the NSIP regime.

**Current planning fee levels do not generate enough income to cover the full cost of some planning applications.** In December 2023, planning application fees were increased by 35% for major applications and 25% for all other applications. Despite this increase, it is estimated that there remains an overall funding shortfall for local planning authority development management services of £262 million, based on the most recent local government spending data.

**We want to reduce this funding shortfall by ensuring that planning application fees cover the estimated costs to local planning authorities of determining those applications.**

The current fee for householder applications is £258

**We therefore propose that the fee for householder applications should be increased to meet cost recovery levels.** We estimate that, to meet broad cost recovery levels, householder application fees should be increased to £528.

#### **Question 89**

**Do you agree with the proposal to increase householder application fees to meet cost recovery?**

Response

No

Whilst PD does increase householder scope for development without the need for consent, this is a huge and disproportionate fee increase that will likely lead to the lead to more unauthorised development and need for greater enforcement resources.

Have the impacts of this been assessed against types of development requiring permission and their relative cost, eg matters covered by article 4 directions? These should be returned to being free applications.

#### **Question 90**

**If no, do you support increasing the fee by a smaller amount (at a level less than full cost recovery) and if so, what should the fee increase be? For example, a 50%**

**increase to the householder fee would increase the application fee from £258 to £387.**

**If Yes, please explain in the text box what you consider an appropriate fee increase would be.**

Response

In line with inflation.



### Question 91

If we proceed to increase householder fees to meet cost recovery, we have estimated that to meet cost-recovery, the householder application fee should be increased to £528. Do you agree with this estimate?

Yes

No – it should be higher than £528

**No – it should be lower than £528**

No - there should be no fee increase

Don't know

If No, please explain in the text box below and provide evidence to demonstrate what you consider the correct fee should be.

### Proposed fee increase for other planning applications

We are interested in views on other application types (excluding section 73 and section 73B applications) where we have been told the current fee does not cover the cost to the local planning authority of processing and determining these applications, and on what the fee should be. It would be helpful if evidence, through benchmarking of fees and costs, can be provided in support of your response.

### Question 92

Are there any applications for which the current fee is inadequate? Please explain your reasons and provide evidence on what you consider the correct fee should be.

### Fees for applications where there is currently no charge

14. There are some applications which are not currently subject to fees. These include listed building consents, consent to undertake relevant demolition in a conservation area, and works to trees that are protected because they are located in a conservation area or by a Tree Preservation Order

We are interested in views on whether a fee should be charged for any of these applications, or any other applications which do not currently charge a fee.

### Question 93

Are there any application types for which fees are not currently charged but which should require a fee? Please explain your reasons and provide evidence on what you consider the correct fee should be.

### Question 94

Do you consider that each local planning authority should be able to set its own (non-profit making) planning application fee?

Please give your reasons in the text box below.

## **Localisation of planning application fees**

### **Question 95**

What would be your preferred model for localisation of planning fees?

Full Localisation – Placing a mandatory duty on all local planning authorities to set their own fee.

Local Variation – Maintain a nationally-set default fee and giving local planning authorities the option to set all or some fees locally.

Neither

Don't Know

Please give your reasons in the text box below.

## **Increasing fees to fund wider planning services**

### **Increasing fees to fund wider planning services**

Currently planning fees can only be charged at a level which covers the cost to a local planning authority in determining planning applications. However, there are wider planning services, for example plan-making and enforcement, heritage and conservation and design services, for which no fees are charged. These services therefore have to be funded through other council budgets. The costs to delivering these wider services was estimated to be approximately £384 million in 2022-2023.

We are interested in views on the principle of allowing planning fees to fund wider planning services and if so, what would an appropriate increase be and should this apply to all applications or, for example, just applications for major development. We are also interested in views on what functions within the wider planning services could be funded through planning fees.

### **Question 96**

Do you consider that planning fees should be increased, beyond cost recovery, for planning applications services, to fund wider planning services?

If yes, please explain what you consider an appropriate increase would be and whether this should apply to all applications or, for example, just applications for major development?

**Question 97**

What wider planning services, if any, other than planning applications (development management) services, do you consider could be paid for by planning fees?

**Cost recovery for local authorities related to NSIP**

**NA**

## Chapter 12 – The future of planning policy and plan making

### 1. This chapter sets out how local planning authorities should prepare local plans in response to this revised framework

Our objective is to drive local plans to adoption as quickly as possible, to progress towards our ambition of achieving universal plan coverage and ensure plans contribute positively to our ambition of delivering 1.5m homes.

We recognise the barriers to progress plan-makers have faced in recent years. **To ensure that we achieve complete coverage of up-to-date plans as soon as possible we re-affirm our commitment to supporting local planning authorities in responding to these proposed policy changes and getting plans in place.**

### Transitional arrangements for emerging plans in preparation

4. **We propose transitional arrangements to maintain the progress of plans at more advanced stages of preparation, while maximising proactive planning for the homes our communities need.**

. However, those with a more significant gap of over 200 dwellings per annum between the local planning authority's revised LHN figure and the emerging housing requirement will need to revise its plan in line with the revised NPPF before submitting the plan for examination no more than 18 months after the publication of the revised NPPF. **We recognise that these arrangements would require some local planning authorities to undertake unforeseen additional work and reopen engagement with communities. Therefore, the Government will provide direct funding support to help these authorities progress their plans to examination quickly**

#### Question 103

**Do you agree with the proposed transitional arrangements? Are there any alternatives you think we should consider?**

Response

No

Question 105: Do you have any other suggestions relating to the proposals in this chapter?

Response

To follow

Question 106: Do you have any views on the impacts of the above proposals for you, or the group or business you represent and on anyone with a relevant protected characteristic? If so, please explain who, which groups, including those with protected characteristics, or which businesses may be impacted and how. Is there anything that could be done to mitigate any impact identified?

Response

To follow

Monumental change to be done very quickly  
There is too much being proposed for an immediate implementation, and more thinking needs to be done on some of these things.  
Just keep to the need for more housebuilding, the standard methodology and the housing targets at.

This consultation doesn't mention Neighbourhood Planning but it does mention the future of future docs like the levelling up act etc – neighbourhood priority statements – what is the future of neighbourhood planning?

NPPF needs to have a strategic plan for the future of neighbourhood planning – it should not be silent on it – this document mentions a lot about giving clarity on the future and should therefore not be silent on NHPs. They have made a material contribution to development of small sites through local community action and therefore the NPPF should give clear action and commitment to NHPs.

Needs underpinning with funding and technical support

Receipts for Month 4				Nominal Ledger Analysis				
Receipt Ref	Name of Payer	£ Amnt Received	£ Debtors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount	Transaction Detail
Balance Brought Fwd :		5,744.68					5,744.68	
V3992-BACS	Banked: 02/07/2024	398.00						
V3992-BACS	Future of Football	398.00			1210	210	398.00	Inv.426- June evening sessions
V3993-BACS	Banked: 04/07/2024	10.00						
V3993-BACS	Dick Lovett	10.00			1210	210	10.00	Inv.432- Goal post hire- 7 Jul
V3994-BACS	Banked: 09/07/2024	440.00						
V3994-BACS	Future of Football	440.00			1210	210	440.00	Inv.431-Evening sessions July
V3995-BACS	Banked: 12/07/2024	50.00						
V3995-BACS	Gary Blackmore (Pilot FC)	50.00			550		50.00	Inv.434- Refundable deposit
V3996-BACS	Banked: 15/07/2024	5,361.60						
V3996-BACS	HM Revenue & Customs	5,361.60			105		5,361.60	VAT Refund-1.4.24-30.6.24
V3997-ALLO	Banked: 18/07/2024	35.00						
V3997-ALLO	Allotment Holder	35.00			1310	310	35.00	RELET BYF 5a
V3998-BACS	Banked: 22/07/2024	66.00						
V3998-BACS	K Dyckes (Staverton Rangers)	66.00			1210	210	66.00	Inv.435- Match 20th July 24
V3999-BACS	Banked: 26/07/2024	70.00						
V3999-BACS	Allotment Holder	70.00			1310	310	70.00	RELET- Rent for plot 14a BYF
V4000-BACS	Banked: 29/07/2024	1.96						
V4000-BACS	J Glover (British Girlguiding)	1.96			1130	110	1.96	Inv.436-Photocopying
V4001-BACS	Banked: 31/07/2024	50.00						
V4001-BACS	Staverton Rangers	50.00			1210	210	50.00	Inv.433- July Training session
Total Receipts for Month		6,482.56	0.00	0.00			6,482.56	
Cashbook Totals		12,227.24	0.00	0.00			12,227.24	

Payments for Month 4				Nominal Ledger Analysis					
<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>£ Total Amnt</u>	<u>£ Creditors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
01/07/2024	Water2Business	V3988-DD	54.06			4323	320	54.06	Inv.631-BSF Allotment water
01/07/2024	Water2Business	V3989-DD	61.54			4323	320	61.54	327-Berryfield allotment water
15/07/2024	Daisy (Onebill)	V3990-DD	45.29		7.55	4190	120	37.74	Inv.392-Office line & WiFi
15/07/2024	Daisy (Onebill)	V3991-DD	45.29		7.55	4384	220	37.74	Inv.393- Pavilion Line & WiFi
Total Payments for Month			206.18	0.00	15.10			191.08	
Balance Carried Fwd			12,021.06						
Cashbook Totals			12,227.24	0.00	15.10			12,212.14	

Receipts for Month 5				Nominal Ledger Analysis				
Receipt Ref	Name of Payer	£ Amnt Received	£ Debtors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount	Transaction Detail
Balance Brought Fwd :		12,021.06					12,021.06	
V4035-BACS	Banked: 05/08/2024	69.00						
V4035-BACS	Bath Road Wanderer	69.00			1210	210	69.00	Inv.440-4th Aug pitch hire
V4036-BACS	Banked: 05/08/2024	10.00						
V4036-BACS	The Stiffs	10.00			1210	210	10.00	Inv.444-Hire of goal posts
V4037-BACS	Banked: 05/08/2024	345.00						
V4037-BACS	Future of Football	345.00			1210	210	345.00	Inv.441- Camps 6, 7 & 8th Aug
V4038-BACS	Banked: 12/08/2024	3,503.93						
V4038-BACS	Wiltshire Council	3,503.93			1420	350	3,503.93	CIL-01559-178A Woodrow Rd 1of1
V4039-BACS	Banked: 12/08/2024	69.00						
V4039-BACS	Bath Road Wanderer	69.00			1210	210	69.00	Inv.440- 11 Aug match
V4040-BACS	Banked: 13/08/2024	345.00						
V4040-BACS	Future of Football	345.00			1210	210	345.00	Inv.441- Camps 13, 14 & 15 Aug
V4041-BACS	Banked: 19/08/2024	69.00						
V4041-BACS	Bath Road Wanderer	69.00			1210	210	69.00	Inv.447-18th Aug match
V4042-BACS	Banked: 19/08/2024	165.00						
V4042-BACS	Melksham Town Council	165.00			1480	170	165.00	Inv.442-NHP resource
V4043-BACS	Banked: 19/08/2024	345.00						
V4043-BACS	Future of Football	345.00			1210	210	345.00	Inv.441- Camps 21, 22 & 23 Aug
V4044-BACS	Banked: 20/08/2024	3,800.00						
V4044-BACS	Wiltshire Council	3,800.00			1470	142	3,800.00	BYF V Hall public art maintena
V4045-BACS	Banked: 27/08/2024	138.00						
V4045-BACS	Staverton Rangers	138.00			1210	210	69.00	Inv.438- 10th August match
					1210	210	69.00	Inv.438- 24th August match
V4046-BACS	Banked: 27/08/2024	345.00						
V4046-BACS	Future of Football	345.00			1210	210	345.00	Inv.441- Camps 27, 28 & 29 Aug
V4047-BACS	Banked: 27/08/2024	40.00						
V4047-BACS	Staverton Rangers	40.00			1210	210	40.00	Inv.443- August goal post hire
Total Receipts for Month		9,243.93	0.00	0.00			9,243.93	
Cashbook Totals		21,264.99	0.00	0.00			21,264.99	



Payments for Month 5				Nominal Ledger Analysis					
<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>£ Total Amnt</u>	<u>£ Creditors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
01/08/2024	Water2Business	V4030-DD	227.21			4322	220	227.21	Pavilion Water charges
14/08/2024	Unity Bank	V4027-TRAN	6,000.00				220	6,000.00	Transfer- Lloyds-Unity
15/08/2024	Daisy (Onebill)	V4031-DD	45.29		7.55	4384	220	37.74	Pavilion Line & WiFi
15/08/2024	Daisy (Onebill)	V4032-DD	45.29		7.55	4190	120	37.74	Inv.739-Office line & WiFi
Total Payments for Month			6,317.79	0.00	15.10			6,302.69	
Balance Carried Fwd			14,947.20						
Cashbook Totals			21,264.99	0.00	15.10			21,249.89	

Date: 01/08/2024

## Melksham without Parish Council Current Year

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## Cashbook 2

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## Unity Bank

For Month No: 4

## Receipts for Month 4

## Nominal Ledger Analysis

<u>Receipt Ref</u>	<u>Name of Payer</u>	<u>£ Amnt Received</u>	<u>£ Debtors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
<b>Balance Brought Fwd :</b>		<b>20,396.10</b>					<b>20,396.10</b>	
V3986-INTE	Banked: <b>02/07/2024</b>	<b>2,160.96</b>						
V3986-INTE	CCLA Investment Management Ltd	2,160.96			1080	110	2,160.96	Interest
	Banked: <b>23/07/2024</b>	<b>40,000.00</b>						
V3982-TRAN	CCLA	40,000.00			240		40,000.00	Transfer from CCLA TO Unity
<b>Total Receipts for Month</b>		42,160.96	0.00	0.00			42,160.96	
<b>Cashbook Totals</b>		<u>62,557.06</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>			<u>62,557.06</u>	

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## Payments for Month 4

## Nominal Ledger Analysis

<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>£ Total Amnt</u>	<u>£ Creditors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
01/07/2024	Grist Environmental	V3983-DD	88.92		14.82	4770	220	74.10	Inv.305-B'hill Waste away
01/07/2024	Grist Environmental	V3983-DD	-88.92		-14.82	4770	220	-74.10	ERROR-B'hill waste away
01/07/2024	Grist Environmental	V3983-DD	94.08		15.68	4770	220	78.40	B'hill Waste Away
08/07/2024	EDF Energy	V3984-DD	171.42		8.16	4302	220	163.26	Inv.012- Pavilion Electricity
16/07/2024	Lloyds Bank PLC	V3985-BACS	536.18		81.12	4120	120	4.80	Notices & Posters postage
						4120	120	3.30	Postage for 1x Planning agenda
						4575	142	90.77	Padlocks for parish, WD40
						4155	120	36.28	Refreshments for meetings
						4175	120	88.20	Office 365 subscription
						4190	120	36.90	Office phone costs
						4150	120	11.68	Pink paper
						4150	120	21.42	Calculator, clips & Magnets
						4150	120	3.26	Batteries
						4370	120	2.42	Carpet stain remover
						4150	120	7.44	Printer labels
						4120	120	2.10	Notices & Poster postage
						4680	170	90.00	NHP Website domain
						4175	120	5.50	Council website domain
						4200	120	12.99	Online meeting subscription
						4175	120	35.00	SSL Certificate renewal-MWPC
						4140	120	3.00	Monthly fee
25/07/2024	Instant Access Unity 20476339	V3987-TRAN	33,000.00			230		33,000.00	TRANSFER from current TO Insta
26/07/2024	Community Heartbeat Trust	V3959-BACS	198.00		33.00	4049	142	165.00	21971-Annual support Pathfinde
26/07/2024	Agilico	V3960-BACS	58.71		9.79	4130	120	48.92	Inv.590-Office photocopying
26/07/2024	JH Jones & Sons	V3962-BACS	472.20		78.70	4049	142	393.50	4279-Ground works-B'hill defib
26/07/2024	JH Jones & Sons	V3963-BACS	2,376.56		396.09	4402	320	69.47	Inv.4298-Allotment Grass cutti
						4400	142	477.98	Inv.4298-Play Area grass cutti
						4780	142	187.84	Inv.4298-Play Area bin emptyin
						4781	220	91.92	Inv.4298-JSF bin emptying
						4401	220	856.84	Inv.4298-JSF Pitch Maintenance
						4409	142	188.65	Inv.4298-Hornchurch Grass cutt
						4820	142	37.50	Inv.4298-SHF Annual cut
						347	0	-37.50	Inv.4298-SHF Annual cut
						6000	142	37.50	Inv.4298-SHF Annual cut
						4405	220	49.44	Inv.4298-JSF Hedge Maintenance
						4402	320	20.83	Inv.4298-JSF Hedge cut
26/07/2024	JH Jones & Sons	V3964-BACS	579.00		96.50	4540	142	482.50	Inv.4334-June SID deployment

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## Payments for Month 4

## Nominal Ledger Analysis

Date	Payee Name	Reference	£ Total Amnt	£ Creditors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount	Transaction Detail
26/07/2024	Lamplight	V3965-BACS	54.00		9.00	4686	170	45.00	Inv.28146-MCS Database June
26/07/2024	Wiltshire Age UK	V3966-BACS	3,000.00			4685	170	3,000.00	Inv.196-MCS Q2 July- Sept 24
26/07/2024	Wiltshire Publication	V3967-BACS	792.24		132.04	4230	120	130.20	Inv.137-B'hill Cllr vacancy ad
						4680	170	530.00	Inv.137-NHP consultation ad
26/07/2024	Community Heartbeat Trust	V3968-BACS	972.00		162.00	4049	142	135.00	Inv.226-Annual support-Beanacr
						4049	142	135.00	Inv.226-Annual support-JSF
						4049	142	135.00	Inv.226-Annual support-Pilot
						4049	142	135.00	Inv.226-Annual support-New Inn
						4049	142	135.00	Inv.226-Annual support-Shaw Ha
						4049	142	135.00	Inv.226-Annual support-WRR
26/07/2024	Andy Newman	V3969-BACS	48.82			4820	142	48.82	SHF Mower petrol reimburse
						347	0	-48.82	SHF Mower petrol reimburse
						6000	142	48.82	SHF Mower petrol reimburse
26/07/2024	EFA Training	V3970-BACS	84.00		14.00	4055	130	70.00	Inv.8218- Clerk first aid trai
26/07/2024	Wiltshire Pension Fund	V3971-BACS	2,102.90			4045	130	1,595.99	Period 4- July 2024
						4000	130	251.76	Period 4- July 2024
						4020	130	123.47	Period 4- July 2024
						4010	130	131.68	Period 4- July 2024
26/07/2024	HM Revenue & Customs	V3972-BACS	2,355.20			4041	130	832.40	Period 4- July 2024
						4000	130	480.40	Period 4- July 2024-T
						4000	130	212.35	Period 4- July 2024-NI
						4020	130	191.40	Period 4- July 2024-T
						4020	130	86.46	Period 4- July 2024-NI
						4010	130	218.00	Period 4- July 2024-T
						4010	130	97.79	Period 4- July 2024-NI
						4460	142	192.40	Period 4- July 2024-T
						4800	320	13.60	Period 4- July 2024-T
						4070	120	30.40	Period 4- July 2024-T
26/07/2024	Teresa Strange	V3973-BACS			177.18	4000	130		July 2024 Salary
						4680	170	457.50	Foamex Boards NHP Consultation
						4680	170	428.40	Printing for NHP consultation
26/07/2024	Lorraine McRandle	V3974-BACS				4020	130		July 2024 Salary
						4680	170	6.00	Land search for NHP
						4370	120	2.00	Bin bags for office
						4155	120	1.55	Milk for meetings
26/07/2024	Marianne Rossi	V3975-BACS			8.39	4010	130		July 2024 Salary
						4120	120	3.30	Postage for Asset agenda pack
						4150	120	13.15	ID Badge for Cllr

July Salaries

£7,085.42

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## Cashbook 2

User: MR

## Unity Bank

For Month No: 4

## Payments for Month 4

## Nominal Ledger Analysis

<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>£ Total Amnt</u>	<u>£ Creditors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
						4560	142	28.79	Flood Warden ID Badges
						4120	120	272.20	Stamps
26/07/2024	Terry Cole	V2976-BACS				4460	142		July 2024 salary
						4050	142	47.50	July Travel allowance
						4051	142	45.45	Mileage x101 miles
26/07/2024	David Cole	V3977-BACS				4800	320		July 2024 Salary
26/07/2024	John Glover	V3978-BACS	45.60			4070	120	45.60	July 2024 Chairs Allowance
26/07/2024	Allcott Commercial	V3979-BACS	1,134.00		189.00	4390	120	945.00	Inv.466- Shaw V Hall site surv
26/07/2024	Bowerhill Village Hall	V3980-BACS	42.50			4680	170	42.50	Room hire- NHP Drop in event
26/07/2024	Lamplight	V3981-BACS	57.00		9.50	4686	170	47.50	Inv.802-MCS Database July
<b>Total Payments for Month</b>			56,751.24	0.00	1,420.15			55,331.09	
<b>Balance Carried Fwd</b>			5,805.82						
<b>Cashbook Totals</b>			62,557.06	0.00	1,420.15			61,136.91	

Receipts for Month 5				Nominal Ledger Analysis			
Receipt Ref	Name of Payer	£ Amnt Received	£ Debtors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount Transaction Detail
Balance Brought Fwd :		5,805.82					5,805.82
V4048-BACS	Banked: 02/08/2024	2,104.34					
V4048-BACS	CCLA Investment Management Ltd	2,104.34			1080	110	2,104.34 Interest
	Banked: 14/08/2024	6,000.00					
V4027-TRAN	Current Account & Instant Acc	6,000.00			200		6,000.00 Transfer- Lloyds-Unity
	Banked: 23/08/2024	20,600.00					
V4028-TRAN	Instant Access Unity 20476339	20,600.00			230		20,600.00 TRANSFER-Instant access-Unity
Total Receipts for Month		28,704.34	0.00	0.00			28,704.34
Cashbook Totals		34,510.16	0.00	0.00			34,510.16

Payments for Month 5				Nominal Ledger Analysis					
Date	Payee Name	Reference	£ Total Amnt	£ Creditors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount	Transaction Detail
01/08/2024	Grist Environmental	V4033-DD	88.92		14.82	4770	220	74.10	Pavilion waste away
06/08/2024	EDF Energy	V4034-DD	169.94		8.09	4302	220	161.85	Inv.013-Pavilion electricity
16/08/2024	Lloyds Bank PLC	V4029-DD	364.23		53.94	4120	120	3.30	Planning agenda pack postage
						4175	120	61.00	MWPC Website domain
						4120	120	4.80	Notices & Poster postage
						4055	130	16.83	Diisocyanates training
						4175	120	88.20	Office 365 subscription
						4190	120	36.90	Office phone costs
						4650	170	55.00	Allotment association subscrip
						4175	120	5.50	MWPC Website hosting
						4200	120	12.99	Online meeting subscription
						4175	120	10.09	MCS Website domain renewal ann
						4055	130	12.68	Diisocyanates training
						4140	120	3.00	Monthly Fee
27/08/2024	Melksham Town Council	V4002-BACS	574.50			4680	170	574.50	Inv.56-NHP-Inv.6094
27/08/2024	Whitley Reading Rooms	V4003-BACS	216.34			4560	142	216.34	CAWS CEG Line & WiFi
27/08/2024	Colin Harrison Design	V4004-BACS	48.32		8.06	4680	170	40.26	Inv.4007-NHP domain 2 year fee
27/08/2024	Jens Cleaning	V4005-BACS	183.00			4381	220	183.00	Inv.1082-June & July pavilion
27/08/2024	Agilico	V4006-BACS	125.85		20.98	4130	120	104.87	Inv.096-Office photocopying
27/08/2024	Aquasafe Environmental Ltd	V4007-BACS	150.00		25.00	4212	220	125.00	Inv.704-July PPM Visit Pavilio
27/08/2024	Complete Weed Control	V4008-BACS	1,942.80		323.80	4500	142	1,619.00	Inv.699-Parish weedspraying
27/08/2024	GB Sport & Leisure	V4009-BACS	124.80		20.80	4575	142	104.00	Inv.15777-Play area spares
27/08/2024	JH Jones & Sons	V4010-BACS	2,376.56		396.09	4402	320	69.47	Inv.4364-Allotment grass cutti
						4400	142	477.98	Inv.4364-Play Area grass cutti
						4780	142	187.84	Inv.4364-Play Area bin
						4781	220	91.92	Inv.4364-JSF Bin empty
						4401	220	856.84	Inv.4364-JSF Pitch Maintenance
						4409	142	188.65	Inv.4364-Hornchurch grass cutt
						4405	220	49.44	Inv.4364-JSF Hedge Maintenance
						4820	142	37.50	Inv.4364-SHF Cut
						347	0	-37.50	Inv.4364-SHF Cut
						6000	142	37.50	Inv.4364-SHF Cut
						4402	320	20.83	Inv.4364-BSF Hedge cut
27/08/2024	JH Jones & Sons	V4011-BACS	463.20		77.20	4540	142	386.00	4405-SID Deploy 19 Jul & 2 Aug
27/08/2024	JH Jones & Sons	V4012-BACS	270.00		45.00	4590	142	225.00	4418-Removal- ROW Sign B'hill
27/08/2024	JH Jones & Sons	V4013-BACS	1,044.00		174.00	4575	142	870.00	4377-Whitworth P/A

Continued on Page 227

Payments for Month 5

Nominal Ledger Analysis

Date	Payee Name	Reference	£ Total Amnt	£ Creditors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount	Transaction Detail
									remedials
27/08/2024	Melksham Town Council	V4014-BACS	907.50			4680	170	907.50	Inv.20-NHP Inv.6105
27/08/2024	Melksham Town Council	V4015-BACS	453.75			4680	170	453.75	Inv.21-NHP share- inv.002
27/08/2024	Melksham Town Council	V4016-BACS	259.20			4820	142	259.20	Inv.18-SHF Caretaking QTR 1
						347	0	-259.20	Inv.18-SHF Caretaking QTR 1
						6000	142	259.20	Inv.18-SHF Caretaking QTR 1
27/08/2024	Wiltshire Council	V4017-BACS	2,843.25			4270	140	2,843.25	148-Office rent 1.4.24-30.6.24
27/08/2024	Wiltshire Council	V4018-BACS	3,009.01			4270	140	3,009.01	147-Office rent 1.7.24-30.9.24
27/08/2024	Wiltshire Publication	V4019-BACS	1,272.00		212.00	4680	170	530.00	Inv.76-NHP advert (861)
						4680	170	530.00	Inv.76-NHP advert (862)
27/08/2024	HM Revenue & Customs	V4020-BACS	2,494.06			4041	130	880.17	Period 5- August 2024
						4000	130	534.40	Period 5- August 2024-T
						4000	130	235.44	Period 5- August 2024-NI
						4020	130	215.20	Period 5- August 2024-T
						4020	130	96.55	Period 5- August 2024-NI
						4010	130	205.20	Period 5- August 2024-T
						4010	130	92.30	Period 5- August 2024-NI
						4460	142	192.60	Period 5- August 2024-T
						4800	320	11.80	Period 5- August 2024-T
						4070	120	30.40	Period 5- August 2024-T
27/08/2024	Wiltshire Pension Fund	V4021-BACS	2,194.05			4045	130	1,664.18	Period 5- August 2024
						4000	130	271.39	Period 5- August 2024
						4020	130	130.78	Period 5- August 2024
						4010	130	127.70	Period 5- August 2024
27/08/2024	John Glover	V4027-BACS	45.60			4070	120	45.60	Chairs Allowance 2024/25
28/08/2024	Teresa Strange	V4022-BACS			1.76	4000	130		August 2024 salary
						4190	120	8.84	June & July out of hours mob
28/08/2024	Lorraine McRandle	V4023-BACS				4020	130		August 2024 Salary
						4120	120	2.90	Side agreement postage
						4155	120	1.59	Milk for office
						4680	170	6.00	Land search for NHP
						4120	120	3.30	Postage for planning agenda pa
28/08/2024	Marianne Rossi	V4024-BACS				4010	130		August 2024 Salary
						4055	130	71.00	Football Grounds Maintenance c
28/08/2024	Terry Cole	V4025-BACS				4460	142		August 2024 Salary
						4050	142	47.50	August Travel Allowance
						4051	142	46.80	Mileage x104 miles
28/08/2024	David Cole	V4026-BACS				4800	320		August 2024 Salary

Total Salaries  
for August 2024  
£7,308.20



Total Payments for Month	29,118.77	0.00	1,381.54	27,737.23
Balance Carried Fwd	5,391.39			
Cashbook Totals	34,510.16	0.00	1,381.54	33,128.62

Receipts for Month 4		Nominal Ledger Analysis						
<u>Receipt Ref</u>	<u>Name of Payer</u>	<u>£ Amnt Received</u>	<u>£ Debtors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
	Banked:	0.00						
			0.00				0.00	
Total Receipts for Month		0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00	
Cashbook Totals		<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>			<u>0.00</u>	

Payments for Month 4				Nominal Ledger Analysis					
<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>£ Total Amnt</u>	<u>£ Creditors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
			0.00						
	Total Payments for Month		0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00	
	Balance Carried Fwd		0.00						
	Cashbook Totals		0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00	

Receipts for Month 5		Nominal Ledger Analysis						
<u>Receipt Ref</u>	<u>Name of Payer</u>	<u>£ Amnt Received</u>	<u>£ Debtors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
	Banked:	0.00						
			0.00				0.00	
Total Receipts for Month		0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00	
Cashbook Totals		<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>			<u>0.00</u>	

Payments for Month 5				Nominal Ledger Analysis					
<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>£ Total Amnt</u>	<u>£ Creditors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
			0.00						
Total Payments for Month			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00			
Balance Carried Fwd			0.00						
Cashbook Totals			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00			

Receipts for Month 4				Nominal Ledger Analysis				
Receipt Ref	Name of Payer	£ Amnt Received	£ Debtors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount	Transaction Detail
Balance Brought Fwd :		9,106.29					9,106.29	
Banked: 25/07/2024		33,000.00						
3987-TRAN	Unity Bank	33,000.00			220		33,000.00	TRANSFER from current TO Insta
Total Receipts for Month		33,000.00	0.00	0.00			33,000.00	
Cashbook Totals		42,106.29	0.00	0.00			42,106.29	

Payments for Month 4				Nominal Ledger Analysis				
<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>£ Total Amnt</u>	<u>£ Creditors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u> <u>Transaction Detail</u>
			0.00					
	Total Payments for Month		0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00
	Balance Carried Fwd		42,106.29					
	Cashbook Totals		42,106.29	0.00	0.00			42,106.29

Receipts for Month 5				Nominal Ledger Analysis				
<u>Receipt Ref</u>	<u>Name of Payer</u>	<u>£ Amnt Received</u>	<u>£ Debtors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
Balance Brought Fwd :		42,106.29					42,106.29	
Banked:		0.00						
			0.00				0.00	
Total Receipts for Month		0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00	
Cashbook Totals		42,106.29	0.00	0.00			42,106.29	



Payments for Month 5				Nominal Ledger Analysis					
<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>£ Total Amnt</u>	<u>£ Creditors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
23/08/2024	Unity Bank	V4028-TRAN	20,600.00			220		20,600.00	TRANSFER-Instant access-Unity
Total Payments for Month			20,600.00	0.00	0.00			20,600.00	
Balance Carried Fwd			21,506.29						
Cashbook Totals			42,106.29	0.00	0.00			42,106.29	

Receipts for Month 4				Nominal Ledger Analysis			
Receipt Ref	Name of Payer	£ Amnt Received	£ Debtors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount
Balance Brought Fwd :		490,000.00					490,000.00
Banked:		0.00					
			0.00				0.00
Total Receipts for Month		0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00
Cashbook Totals		490,000.00	0.00	0.00			490,000.00

Payments for Month 4				Nominal Ledger Analysis					
<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>£ Total Amnt</u>	<u>£ Creditors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
23/07/2024	Unity Bank	V3982-TRAN	40,000.00			220		40,000.00	Transfer from CCLA TO Unity
Total Payments for Month			40,000.00	0.00	0.00			40,000.00	
Balance Carried Fwd			450,000.00						
Cashbook Totals			490,000.00	0.00	0.00			490,000.00	

Receipts for Month 5				Nominal Ledger Analysis			
Receipt Ref	Name of Payer	£ Amnt Received	£ Debtors	£ VAT	A/c	Centre	£ Amount
Balance Brought Fwd :		450,000.00					450,000.00
Banked:		0.00					
			0.00				0.00
Total Receipts for Month		0.00	0.00	0.00			0.00
Cashbook Totals		450,000.00	0.00	0.00			450,000.00

Payments for Month 5				Nominal Ledger Analysis					
<u>Date</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>£ Total Amnt</u>	<u>£ Creditors</u>	<u>£ VAT</u>	<u>A/c</u>	<u>Centre</u>	<u>£ Amount</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
			0.00						
Total Payments for Month			0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00			
Balance Carried Fwd			450,000.00						
Cashbook Totals			450,000.00	0.00	0.00	450,000.00			

**EXTRACT FROM Finance Committee of Melksham Without Parish Council held  
on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at Melksham Without Parish Council Offices,  
Melksham Community Campus (First Floor), Market Place, Melksham,  
SN12 6ES at 7.00pm**

**30/24 Statement of Accounts & Accompanying Report 2023/24**

**e) To review and approve receipts and spend of CIL (Community  
Infrastructure Levy) for 2023/24**

Members reviewed the CIL receipts for 2023/24. It was noted that the parish council had to report to Wiltshire Council what CIL had been spent on during the year. Councillor Glover queried whether Wiltshire Council has to inform the parish council what they have spent the CIL that they have received from developments in the parish on. The Clerk advised that Wiltshire Council listed what their priorities were; however, she wasn't sure that they had to specifically say what they had spent it on. The Clerk explained that the reason why the parish council has to inform Wiltshire Council of what CIL receipts have been spent on is because the council has a legal duty to provide evidence of what it has been spent on. Members felt that Wiltshire Council should be contacted and asked what they have spent the CIL received for developments in the Melksham area on. This information should be provided within 28 days of the request.

It was noted that CIL monies had to be spent within 5 years of receipt, and it was queried whether the parish council had internal documents that could identify that the oldest CIL receipt had been spent first. The Clerk advised that the council had a spreadsheet that showed when each receipt had been received, so in effect, each time any CIL is spent, it will be from the oldest receipt. She went on to explain that, in some circumstances, Wiltshire Council gives longer for CIL monies to be spent. This was the case with the Berryfield Village Hall project, as the council could clearly show what the CIL money was going to be used for.

It was noted that the parish council had previously transferred over c£315k of CIL to Melksham Town Council for the east of Melksham Community Centre following the boundary review, which meant that this area was transferred into the parish of the town. Members were reminded that the parish council put a legal tie on the CIL transferred to the town council, which stated that it should be used for the provision of an East of Melksham Community Centre. Councillor Wood queried what the current situation was with this project, as it was acknowledged that the legal agreement that accompanied the transfer of the CIL was for three years. The Clerk advised that she had met with the Locum Clerk earlier in the day and reminded her that they were now 18 months into a three-year legal agreement with the parish council, and the council expected an update on the project. Members were concerned that there didn't appear to be much progress on this project, bearing in mind the fact that CIL had to be spent within 5 years of receipt. The Clerk advised that, as per the

legal agreement, the town council must come back to the parish council if they are unable to spend it within the three-year legal term or wish to spend it on something else other than a community centre. It was noted that the legal agreement stated that if the CIL had to be paid back to the parish council, it must include any interest that had been accrued. The Clerk confirmed that she had reminded the town council about this clause in the agreement. It was acknowledged that in the event that the town council transfers the CIL back to the parish council, the CIL timescale limit would still be applied, so this needed to be carefully considered. After a discussion, members felt that they needed an answer quite quickly from the town council on this project. As the parish council was currently waiting for an answer from the town council, members felt that this should be placed on the agenda in two months' time for members to consider, regardless of whether a response has been received by the town council.

It was noted that due to Melksham having an adopted joint Neighbourhood Plan, the parish and town council receives an additional 10% of CIL on any CIL receipts Wiltshire Council receives after the Neighbourhood Plan adoption date of 8th July 2021. This means that the amount of CIL payable to the parish council on any new developments after the plan adoption date is 25%. As the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan is a joint project between both the town and parish council, it has been agreed that the additional 10% of CIL received on developments will go into a sharing pot for joint projects mutually agreed upon by both councils. For the parish council, this is shown in a separate earmarked reserve.

For the 2023/24 financial year, the additional 10% of CIL applied to all developments the council received CIL monies for, and the breakdown is as follows:

<b>Development</b>	<b>MWPC share</b>	<b>10% sharing pot</b>
1 Eden Grove	£ 720.47	£ 480.31
Buckley Gardens	£49,396.30	£32,930.87
63 Shaw Hill	£ 900.00	£ 600.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£51,016.77</b>	<b>£34,011.18</b>

For clarity, this means that in the 2023/24 financial year £34,011.18 was transferred into the CIL 10% sharing reserve.

**Recommendation 1:** The parish council report the following CIL income and expenditure for 2023/24:

**CIL income received in 2023/24**

Land adjacent 1 Eden Grove (PL/2023/00625)	£ 1,200.78
Buckley Gardens (PL/2022/02749)	£82,327.17
63 Shaw Hill (19/00221/FUL)	<u>£ 1,500.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£85,027.95</b>

**CIL spent in 2023/24**

LHFIG Contributions	£ 4,460.36
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Replacing Wiltshire Council bins	£ 358.81
Drinking water fountain installation	<u>£ 875.00</u>
<b>Total spend from CIL</b>	<b>£ 5,694.17</b>

**Transfers to Earmarked Reserve:**

10% CIL Sharing pot with Melksham Town Council	£34,011.17
Berryfield Village Hall	<u>£12,558.69</u>
	<b>£46,569.86</b>

**CIL Reserve as at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023**

**£26,571.36**

CIL income received in 2023/24

£85,027.95 (25% CIL)

CIL spent in 2023/24

- £ 5,694.17

CIL transferred to Earmarked Reserves

- £46,569.86

**CIL Reserve as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024**

**£59,335.27**

**Recommendation 2:** The Clerk to contact Wiltshire Council and ask them to provide information on what they have spent the CIL they have received for the Melksham area on. The council requests that the information be received within 28 days of the request.

**Recommendation 3:** The Clerk to place the CIL that was transferred over to the town council for the East of Melksham Community Centre on an agenda in two months' time for consideration of next steps.



## Teresa Strange

---

**From:** Hampton, Adrian <Adrian.Hampton@wiltshire.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 30 July 2024 15:33  
**To:** Teresa Strange  
**Cc:** Noyce, Mary; Howell, Samantha; Holder, Nick; Barrah, James; Dawson, Mike; Alford, Phil; Reay, Tamara; locum@melksham-tc.gov.uk  
**Subject:** RE: Open Cemeteries

Teresa

Many thanks for your email and sorry for not detailing the CIL implications.

I trust you are well, and I realise the size of the considerations for the Parish Council with a Cemetery Service. My team are here with our experience if required, to assist.

I also know all your activities and the support you give to the local community.

I have now had time for discuss this with my team, and the CIL Reg 123 list remains published as it was drawn up in 2016.

Since that time, we have been unsuccessful in securing CIL for this purpose.

Spatial Planning have reviewed this and had policies approved for the prioritisation of CIL funding, as part of this the cemeteries now fall under place shaping infrastructure which has a low priority compared to essential infrastructure.

The latest Infrastructure Delivery Plan (September 2023) contains details of all infrastructure projects, whether they are to be funded by CIL or other means, and this has cemetery extensions in the appendix listing all potential infrastructure projects, with some indicative costs. This details that no funding is secured and the potential sources of funding are developer contributions and Wiltshire Council.

I trust this is of assistance.

Adrian

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**From:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 30, 2024 12:18 PM  
**To:** Hampton, Adrian <[Adrian.Hampton@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Adrian.Hampton@wiltshire.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Howell, Samantha <[Samantha.Howell@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Samantha.Howell@wiltshire.gov.uk)>; Noyce, Mary <[Mary.NOYCE@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Mary.NOYCE@wiltshire.gov.uk)>; Holder, Nick <[Nick.Holder@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Nick.Holder@wiltshire.gov.uk)>; Barrah, James <[James.Barrah@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:James.Barrah@wiltshire.gov.uk)>; Dawson, Mike <[Mike.Dawson@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Mike.Dawson@wiltshire.gov.uk)>; Alford, Phil <[Phil.Alford@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Phil.Alford@wiltshire.gov.uk)>; Reay, Tamara <[Tamara.Reay@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Tamara.Reay@wiltshire.gov.uk)>; Locum <[locum@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:locum@melksham-tc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: Open Cemeteries

Dear Adrian

Thank you for your response to the parish council's recent enquiry as to the future of Cemetery provision in Melksham.

Melksham Without Parish Council resolved last night to accept the invitation of Melksham Town Council to join a working party to look into future provision.

The parish council have however asked me to clarify with you the other part of the original question raised, regarding CIL, please see attached for the original email.

In your email below you explain that Wiltshire Council has no policy for the provision of cemeteries and yet Cemetery provision is listed in Core Policy 3 paragraph 4.42 (page 58) and in the published Appendix C of the Community Infrastructure Levy Infrastructure List it lists Melksham under the list for "New, or expansion of existing cemeteries" as a Place-shaping Priority. With reference to your statement below that says there is no provision for its expansion or new capital provision; this seems to be at odds to the published list of what CIL will be spend on, which is the published list to define the infrastructure in Core Policy 3.

Could you clarify this please?

With many thanks,  
Teresa

Teresa Strange  
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer  
Melksham Without Parish Council  
First Floor  
Melksham Community Campus  
Market Place, Melksham  
Wiltshire, SN12 6ES  
01225 705700  
[www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](http://www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)

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**Upcoming leave: 9<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> August returning to work Monday 19<sup>th</sup> August 024**

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Follow us on facebook: Melksham Without Parish Council or Teresa Strange (Clerk) for additional community news

On twitter: @melkshamwithout

On Instagram: melkshamwithoutpc

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**From:** Hampton, Adrian <[Adrian.Hampton@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Adrian.Hampton@wiltshire.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 29 July 2024 11:00

**To:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>

**Cc:** Howell, Samantha <[Samantha.Howell@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Samantha.Howell@wiltshire.gov.uk)>; Noyce, Mary <[Mary.NOYCE@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Mary.NOYCE@wiltshire.gov.uk)>; Holder, Nick <[Nick.Holder@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Nick.Holder@wiltshire.gov.uk)>; Barrah, James <[James.Barrah@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:James.Barrah@wiltshire.gov.uk)>; Dawson, Mike <[Mike.Dawson@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Mike.Dawson@wiltshire.gov.uk)>; Alford, Phil <[Phil.Alford@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Phil.Alford@wiltshire.gov.uk)>; Reay, Tamara <[Tamara.Reay@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Tamara.Reay@wiltshire.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** Open Cemeteries

Dear Melksham Without Parish Council

I am writing to confirm Wiltshire Council's position on providing cemeteries in the county.

Historically cemeteries were only provided in a handful of locations in the west of the county by Wiltshire Council, with the majority of the provision being undertaken by the local councils.

Wiltshire Council has no policy for the provision of cemeteries and there is no statutory duty on a local authority to provide burial space.

Wiltshire Council does have a policy to transfer its cemetery asset to local councils and this has been very successful with towns like Trowbridge and Bradford on Avon taking on the service, with Westbury Cemetery transferring in January 2025.

When Wiltshire Council's Melksham Cemetery becomes full there is no provision for its expansion or new capital provision.

Melksham Cemetery will no longer be able to take additional burials from 2027. Whilst there is the opportunity for an asset transfer or service delegation to the local council before that time, in 2027 the Melksham Cemetery will only be able to accept burials with a reserved right.

I trust having a clear position statement for 2027 will allow the local councils to make an informed decision on their priorities and time to plan for any new arrangements.

Adrian

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## Marianne Rossi

---

**From:** Francis, Luke <Luke.Francis@wiltshire.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 07 August 2024 16:00  
**To:** cilands106; Marianne Rossi  
**Cc:** Teresa Strange; Clampitt-dix, Georgina  
**Subject:** RE: Wiltshire Council CIL expenditure from developments in the Melksham Area

Dear Marianne,

Thank you for your email about CIL spend by Wiltshire Council.

Unlike with S106, money received by the Council through CIL payments is not spent directly on the area from which it is raised. Instead, CIL payments from across the County go into a central 'pot' and is then spent on projects identified on the Council's 'Infrastructure List' as approved by the Council's Cabinet. Some of these projects could be located in the Melksham area or elsewhere in the County.

Each year, at the end of December, we publish an Infrastructure Funding Statement, which includes the Infrastructure List, but also sets out the amount of CIL received and spent by the Council over the previous financial year. This document will help you to understand where CIL money has been and may/ will be spent by the Council.

The Infrastructure Funding Statement, as well as other information about how the Council collects developer contributions, can be found on our website at this page:

<https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/dmcommunityinfrastructurelevy>.

Taking a look at the most recent Infrastructure Funding Statement, published in December 2023, in February 2022, for example, £3,909,500 of CIL money has been allocated by the Council to the A350 Melksham Bypass project.

Other relevant projects identified on the Infrastructure List but that have not, as of now, been allocated CIL money include Trans Wilts Train Service Improvements, Improvements to Melksham Railway Station, and the Installation of capacity enhancement on the single track line through Melksham. A new or expansion of the existing cemetery in Melksham is also included on this List.

Furthermore, there may be other county-wide projects that include Melksham, such as pedestrian and cycle improvements through the Local Highways and Footpaths Improvement Groups (LHFIG) scheme or support for the Wiltshire Museums archaeological storage and Library provision.

Over time, subject to Cabinet approval, projects will get added to or removed from the Infrastructure List and further CIL funding approved.

I trust that this information is helpful to you and Parish Council Members. Please feel free to come back to me with any further queries.

Kind regards,

Luke

## Lorraine McRandle

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**From:** Teresa Strange  
**Sent:** 28 August 2024 10:13  
**To:** Lorraine McRandle  
**Subject:** FW: East of Melksham Community Centre

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**From:** Committee Clerk <committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 27 August 2024 15:10  
**To:** Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Locum <locum@melksham-tc.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: East of Melksham Community Centre

Hi Teresa.

The only certainties I have are as follows.

Linda instructed architect to put in planning application.

Architect needed clarification on some things before planning could go in. By that time Linda was not available. Hugh did what he could but that was not enough for planning application to be made. Matter was then lost until the meeting last week. I have no idea whether Linda had sight of a legal transfer or not, which is why, at the request of Tracy, I have been trying to find out what happened.

The only certainty is that the resolution of full council indicates they wish to go ahead with the proposed site.

Since the new proposal is mostly in MWPC I assume the proposed site of the community hall would be as well. Would it therefore be available to the residents of the existing developments which are now on the town?

Andrew

Andrew Meacham  
**Committee Clerk**



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E: [committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk)  
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**From:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 27, 2024 2:42 PM  
**To:** Committee Clerk <[committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: East of Melksham Community Centre

The town council would have signed a legal agreement for the land transferred to them – has that been done?

---

**From:** Committee Clerk <[committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 27 August 2024 13:24  
**To:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: East of Melksham Community Centre

Ah! I was talking about the planning application!

From minutes of 19/8:-

It was proposed by Councillor S Crundell, seconded by Councillor Hubbard and UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED that

- The Clerk will move the matter on by responding to questions from the architect, with reference to Full Council if required
- Authority is delegated to the Clerk to employ professional support as she sees fit.
- East Melksham Community Centre will be a standing item on Full Council agenda.

I have been trying to find out if the land has been transferred to us yet but without a postcode, Land Registry is not that helpful. Mike Sankey has suggested a contact and I have emailed them today.

Andrew Meacham  
**Committee Clerk**



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E: [committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk)  
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**From:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 27, 2024 1:11 PM  
**To:** Committee Clerk <[committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: East of Melksham Community Centre

Yes, it's the information on the community centre I am after.....

---

**From:** Committee Clerk <[committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 27 August 2024 12:27  
**To:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: East of Melksham Community Centre

East Melksham Community Centre was but not the planning application.

Andrew Meacham  
**Committee Clerk**



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**From:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 27, 2024 11:59 AM  
**To:** Committee Clerk <[committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: East of Melksham Community Centre

It was on the agenda at your recent Full Council meeting

---

**From:** Committee Clerk <[committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 27 August 2024 11:23  
**To:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: East of Melksham Community Centre

Hi.

Not that I remember but I can't search as the link is down.

Andrew

Andrew Meacham  
**Committee Clerk**





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E: [committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk)  
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**From:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 27, 2024 11:20 AM  
**To:** Committee Clerk <[committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk)>; Locum <[locum@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:locum@melksham-tc.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Lorraine McRandle <[office@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:office@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: East of Melksham Community Centre

Thanks Andrew, was unaware and Lorraine on leave today.  
Was it not on an agenda recently?  
T

---

**From:** Committee Clerk <[committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 27 August 2024 11:08  
**To:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>; Locum <[locum@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:locum@melksham-tc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: East of Melksham Community Centre

Good morning.

I have previously confirmed with Lorraine that I was putting it on the agenda for tonight.

The agenda/minutes page on our website is currently unavailable. Civica are working on it.

Andrew

Andrew Meacham  
**Committee Clerk**



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**From:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 27, 2024 10:52 AM  
**To:** Locum <[locum@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:locum@melksham-tc.gov.uk)>; Committee Clerk <[committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** FW: East of Melksham Community Centre

Hi Tracy/Andrew  
Melksham Without Parish Council will be considering the application for 300 houses at Snarlton Farm on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September, have you had chance to consider this request please.  
Many thanks, Teresa

---

**From:** Teresa Strange  
**Sent:** 01 August 2024 12:10  
**To:** Locum <[locum@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:locum@melksham-tc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** FW: East of Melksham Community Centre

As discussed earlier....

---

**From:** Teresa Strange  
**Sent:** 12 July 2024 15:07  
**To:** [locum@melksham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:locum@melksham-tc.gov.uk)  
**Subject:** FW: East of Melksham Community Centre

Hi Tracy  
Are you able to update Melksham Without Parish Council on where the town council are with the project to build a new East of Melksham Community Centre please.  
The parish council gave some £315k funding for the project. There was a time stipulation under the terms of the legal agreement for the transfer of funds and so we wanted to review it in December as part of our annual processes.

There is a planning application about to be submitted for 300 dwellings east of Melksham (in the parish) and they are showing land for a community centre (as requested by the parish council some time ago).  
I understand from Andrew that the town council are not submitting any comments to the public consultation on it (deadline this Sunday). <https://www.catesbyestates.co.uk/land/land-south-of-snarlton-farm-melksham>  
The parameter plan shows a site for a community centre, and a size of 400sqm with parking, landscape and display. Does that fit the design that the town council have? we have never been able to get an answer, or glean from town council minutes as to whether the town council submitted a planning application off Angelica Avenue or not? <https://www.catesbyestates.co.uk/uploads/files/Snarlton%20Farm%20Development%20Parameter%20Plan%202024.pdf>

There has never been an intention to have lots of community centres to the east, just the one, so the parish council just want to know what progress there is with the one you have funding for. There was £500k index linked to be drawn down too from Wiltshire Council by the town council under the s106 agreement. Has that been done?

A general update of where you are with the project would be very useful, as the parish council will need to consider how they address the offer of community facilities in this planning application coming very soon, and the current one for 500 dwellings, just to the north at Blackmore Farm.

## **EXTRACT FROM FINANCE COMMITTEE JANUARY 2024 DETAILING CIL BUDGET AND FIGURES FOR 2024/25**

In the 2024/25 financial year it is anticipated that the parish council will receive the second tranche of the CIL funds for the Buckley Garden development (Land at Semington Road). The total amount of CIL expected in the 2024/25 financial year for this development is £96,048.35.

CIL income estimated to year end 2024/25 (parish council's 15% share)

Land at Semington Road known as Buckley Gardens (PL/2022/02749)

£57,629.01

**£57,629.01**

CIL income anticipated to year end 2024/25 for 10% Sharing pot

Land at Semington Road known as Buckley Gardens (PL/2022/02749)

£38,419.34

**£38,419.34**

**Total amount of CIL Income expected to year end 2024/25**

**£96,048.35**

The Clerk highlighted to members that the agreement for the 10% CIL sharing pot was a reciprocal one between the parish and town council. While the parish council had a separate reserve for the 10% share of the CIL, it didn't appear that Melksham Town Council had the same arrangements in their accounting records. The Clerk advised that she had briefly looked at the town council's finance committee agenda pack that had recently been published and noted that whilst the town council had a CIL reserve, there was not any other reserve listed for the 10% share of CIL. This would suggest that the CIL has been put into one reserve and not split out as per the agreement in place. Members expressed concern about this, as this may mean that the town council unknowingly spend CIL income that should have been allocated to the 10% sharing pot for joint projects as agreed by both councils. Equally, CIL must be spent within five years of it being received; otherwise, it has to be returned to Wiltshire Council, so all parties need to be aware of how much CIL is available for joint projects so that its expenditure can be planned accordingly.

Similarly, for the Shurnhold Fields car park improvement project there did not seem to be a specific reserve earmarked for this project. Both the town and parish council are to pay 50% towards this project and the town council had recently confirmed that they had funds in place for this project.

The Clerk confirmed that the money transferred to the town council for the East of Melksham Development was held in a separate reserve. There was also a query about whether any interest accrued on money held for joint projects was put back into the project funds. The Clerk advised that this had been a query that had come up at the Shurnhold Fields meeting regarding the S106 maintenance contribution

that the parish council were holding in reserves. While this was quite difficult to calculate due to the council putting money away for different terms etc, this was something that could be investigated. The Clerk did suggest to the town council that if the parish council was to feed interest received back into the Shurnhold Fields maintenance reserve, the parish council would expect this to be reciprocated for funds they held for joint projects.

There were concerns raised that the East of Melksham Community Centre project did not appear to be moving forward at this time, and as discussed above, CIL had to be paid back if it was not used within a certain timeframe. Members reviewed the legal agreement on the CIL transferred to Melksham Town Council for the specific use of the East of Melksham Community Centre. Upon looking at the agreement, it was noted that if the parish council requested the money back as the project had not progressed within 3 years, it would be plus any interest accrued from the c£315k that was transferred to the town council. This means that any interest that has been accrued on this money must be put back into the pot for the project. The Clerk advised that looking at the town council's current reserve list, it did not appear that any interest was being put back into the reserve for this project.

**Recommendation 1:** To request a meeting with Melksham Town Council to discuss the use of the CIL sharing pot for joint projects.

**Recommendation 2:** To make the town council aware that, as per the legal agreement in place for the money transferred over to the East of Melksham Community Centre, interest accrued from these funds should be allocated back into this project reserve in the event that the parish council requests that the fund be transferred back to them.

**Recommendation 3:** Officers investigate allocating interest accrued on money held by the parish council for joint projects with the town council.

**a) To note parish council's agreed uses of CIL and to consider more project specific spend for current and next financial year**

It was noted that all of the expenditure included in the CIL spreadsheet were based on principles that the council had already set for the CIL spend. Unlike funding such as s106 where the money has to be spent within the development, CIL monies do not need to be spent in the area of the development it came from. As CIL was a finite amount and had to be spent within 5 years of receipt it is much better for it to be used on one off capital items rather than for ongoing maintenance which solar farm funding was more suited to as had longevity.

For the 2023/24 financial year, it is expected that for LHFIF schemes (Local Highway and Footway Improvement group) £4,581 will be spent. This is for the A350 Beanacre weight limit of £500, Bowerhill dropped kerbs £3,226.37 and Bowerhill Portal Road gate £855.40. For the next financial year, £10,300 has been anticipated to be spent on LHFIF schemes. Members were presented with a list of requests at the meeting and agreed to put provisions in the budget for the following: waiting restriction requests on various roads, A350 gateway and

resurfacing/ road markings Berryfield Lane. The requests will go on the Highways agenda next week for the council to consider the schemes further.

In the 2024/25 financial year it is expected that the Shurnhold Fields car park and entrance improvement project will take shape. Although most of the spending for the project is coming out of the Shurnhold Fields capital reserve, £2,500 has been shown as coming from CIL.

A few years ago, the council purchased a drinking water fountain for the Bowerhill Sports Field which came from CIL; however, there had been some issues with the installation of the fountain so it was unable to be installed at that time. Following many obstacles to it being installed, in this financial year the council was able to arrange for it to be installed in December. The cost of the installation was £875 which has been shown as being spent from CIL. Although the spend for the installation was not directly a capital item as per the above principles set by the parish council, it has always been the intention of the parish council for the installation of the fountain to come from CIL.

Wiltshire Council have a policy of not replacing any of their destroyed or damaged bins; therefore, the parish council have agreed that they will replace bins on request as long as they can still be emptied on Wiltshire Council's bin emptying schedule. In the current financial year, £1,000 is being shown as being spent from CIL for the replacement of Wiltshire Council bins.

Following consultation with the residents and other users of Bowerhill Sports Field, the parish council are looking at putting some gym and calisthenics equipment on the field and will be applying to Suez for some grant funding. The budget cost following a an estimate obtained in mid 2023 has been uplifted to reflect inflation, and a grant application is expected to be for some £19,375 for 50%. The 50% match funding has been shown as coming from CIL rather than Precept as part of the post meeting double check of the spreadsheet calculations.

**Recommendation 1:** The parish council revise their original budgeted spend from CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) for 2023/24 to be as follows:

	<b>2023/24 Budget Provision (agreed Jan 2023)</b>	<b>2023/24 anticipated expenditure (up to 31.03.24)</b>
Contribution to LHFIG schemes	£10,000	£4,581
Shurnhold Fields Capital project	£ 3,500	£ 0
Replacement of Wiltshire Council bins	£ 2,000	£1,000
Drinking Water Fountain Installation	£ 0	£ 875
	<b><u>£15,500</u></b>	<b><u>£6,456</u></b>

**Recommendation 2:** The parish council spend from CIL (Community Infrastructure

Levy) for 2024/25 to be as follows:

**2024/25  
Budgeted Expenditure**

Contribution to LHFIG schemes	£10,300
Shurnhold Fields Capital project	£ 2,500
Bowerhill Sports Field enhancement	£20,000
	<b><u>£32,800</u></b>

The balance of CIL funds at the end of each financial year is put into a Reserve as the funds are restricted to funding community infrastructure only and to aid tracking the expenditure, which has to be annually reported to Wiltshire Council. Transfers from the CIL Reserve have been made to other earmarked Reserves, as detailed below.

Total in CIL reserve at end of 2022/23	£ 26,571.51
Expected CIL income for 2023/24	£ 85,027.95

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£111,599.46</b>
--------------	--------------------

Anticipated Expenditure from CIL for 2023/24	£ 6,456.00
--	------------

Transfer CIL into dedicated project/ ringfenced reserve

CIL Sharing with MTC Reserve (extra 10% CIL due to NHP)	£ 33,411.18 (Transfer 11)
--	---------------------------

Berryfield Village Hall reserve	£ 13,952.80 (Transfer 10)
---------------------------------	---------------------------

<b>TOTAL in CIL reserve at end of 2023/24</b>	<b>£ 57,779.33</b>
---	--------------------

Total in CIL reserve at end of 2023/24	£ 57,779.33
CIL income anticipated for 2024/25	£ 96,048.35

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£152,327.85</b>
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Anticipated expenditure from CIL for 2024/25	£ 32,800.00
--	-------------

Transfer CIL into dedicated project/ ringfenced reserve

CIL Sharing with MTC Reserve (extra 10% CIL due to NHP)	£ 38,419.34 (Transfer 13)
--	---------------------------

<b>Total in CIL reserve at the end of 2024/25</b>	<b>£ 82,608.34</b>
---	--------------------

**Note:** Transfer 12 is shown on the CIL spreadsheet for CIL to transfer into the Berryfield Village Hall reserve; however, as members recommended at the meeting to pay off the loan early there is no requirement to move any more CIL into this reserve. The transfer is therefore showing as £0.

## Teresa Strange

---

**From:** Teresa Strange  
**Sent:** 02 September 2024 14:11  
**To:** Councillor John Glover (john.glover@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)  
**Subject:** FW: Real Time Information in bus shelters in Melksham Without

---

### Latest on the RTPIs....

**From:** Rose, Martin <[martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 31 July 2024 09:49  
**To:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: Real Time Information in bus shelters in Melksham Without

Thanks Tersea,

In order to get the ball rolling I will ask Laura to request that R2P undertake site assessments of the first 3 on the list.

Once we have their report, we can discuss how best to take these forwards.

Regards

Martin Rose IEng, FIHE, MCIHT, CMgr MCM  
Principal Engineer – Traffic Engineering  
Highway Asset Management and Commissioning  
Wiltshire Council ,  
County Hall, Bythesea Road  
Trowbridge BA14 8JN



Email: [martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk)  
Web: [www.wiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk)

Highways Fault? Report it here:  
<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/mywiltshire-online-reporting>

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**From:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 31, 2024 9:26 AM  
**To:** Rose, Martin <[martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Lorraine McRandle <[office@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:office@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: Real Time Information in bus shelters in Melksham Without

Morning Martin  
Thanks for coming back to me so quickly.

They are in numbered order of priority, so the first two would be good as in Berryfield and Whitley so in different parts of the parish.

The members spent quite a bit of time prioritising these, and in which direction the bus is travelling, what the community suggested etc.

Hope that helps, Teresa

---

**From:** Rose, Martin <[martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 31 July 2024 08:58

**To:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** RE: Real Time Information in bus shelters in Melksham Without

Teresa,

The RTPI budget for 24/25 is very tight and there is the a high demand on this budget from other town and parish councils..

I'm happy to speak to Laura about further funding opportunities, but it would be useful if you could filter your list down to say 2 or 3 priorities from the 9 shown.

As you suggest, there may be some opportunity for partner funding through the LHFIFG process.

Regards

Martin Rose IEng, FIHE, MCiHT, CMgr MCMi  
Principal Engineer – Traffic Engineering  
Highway Asset Management and Commissioning  
Wiltshire Council ,  
County Hall, Bythesea Road  
Trowbridge BA14 8JN



Email: [martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Web: [www.wiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk)

Highways Fault? Report it here:

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/mywiltshire-online-reporting>

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**From:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, July 30, 2024 4:31 PM

**To:** Rose, Martin <[martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk)>

**Cc:** Lorraine McRandle <[office@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:office@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>; Gosling, Laura <[Laura.Gosling@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.Gosling@wiltshire.gov.uk)>;

Alan Baines <[alan.baines@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:alan.baines@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** FW: Real Time Information in bus shelters in Melksham Without

Hi Martin

Further to Laura's email below, the parish council are keen to press on with the next set of RTI in the parish, especially as Laura indicates that there may be some match funding!

The parish council are more than happy to match fund new devices, and it looks like there could be some LHFIFG funding too.



How do we proceed? Do you need to do anything for the next LHFIG meeting?

The parish council have consulted local community groups and councillors and agreed last night the following list in order of priority.

Some of these will require the battery model, rather than electricity, we eagerly await when this will be signed off for use by Wiltshire Council.

Here is the list:

1. New bus shelter at the New Inn, Semington Road, Berryfield
2. The bus stop opposite the Pear Tree, Top Lane, Whitley
3. Bus stop, western side, Corsham Road, Whitley
4. Bus stop opposite Beltane Place, Shaw Hill, Shaw
5. New bus shelter in layby, Beanacre (near Westlands Lane) on the A350
6. Bus shelter on western side of Pathfinder Way, Bowerhill
7. Bus shelter at Beaufort Close, Bowerhill
8. North bound bus shelter near Halifax Road/Pathfinder Way roundabout.
9. Falcon Way (new bus shelter if installed)

With kind regards, Teresa

Teresa Strange  
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer  
Melksham Without Parish Council  
First Floor  
Melksham Community Campus  
Market Place, Melksham  
Wiltshire, SN12 6ES  
01225 705700  
[www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](http://www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)

**Wellbeing Statement** I may send emails outside office hours but never with any expectation of response. Please just get back to me when you can within your own working hours. Thank you.

**Upcoming leave: 9<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> August returning to work Monday 19<sup>th</sup> August 024**

Want to keep in touch?

Follow us on facebook: [Melksham Without Parish Council](#) or [Teresa Strange \(Clerk\)](#) for additional community news

On twitter: [@melkshamwithout](#)

On Instagram: [melkshamwithoutpc](#)

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**From:** Gosling, Laura <[Laura.Gosling@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.Gosling@wiltshire.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 18 June 2024 21:58  
**To:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>

**Cc:** Holder, Nick <[Nick.Holder@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Nick.Holder@wiltshire.gov.uk)>; Rose, Martin <[martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** RE: Real Time Information in bus shelters in Melksham Without

Hi Teresa,

Great to hear you are so interested in the implementation of RTPI across your area. Unfortunately, the information outlined below is not something that we readily have to hand within the team, and we would need to request the boarding information for each stop from each of the bus operators in the area. As you can no doubt appreciate, this is large amount of data to collect and then analyse on a stop by stop basis. As such, please could you be little more specific on which stops you might be particularly interested in and then we can look into this further for you.

Unfortunately, we only have a small allocation of funding for RTPI in our 2024/25 budget, but we would certainly look favourably on any requests that could be matched by the LHFIG or other funding streams.

Kind Regards

Laura

**Laura Gosling**  
**National Bus Strategy Manager**  
Passenger Transport  
Highways and Transport

**Wiltshire Council**

01225 713481

[laura.gosling@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:laura.gosling@wiltshire.gov.uk)

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---

**From:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, June 18, 2024 11:55 AM

**To:** Gosling, Laura <[Laura.Gosling@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.Gosling@wiltshire.gov.uk)>

**Cc:** Holder, Nick <[Nick.Holder@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Nick.Holder@wiltshire.gov.uk)>; Rose, Martin <[martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** RE: Real Time Information in bus shelters in Melksham Without

Hi Laura

Thank you for this, its useful for us.

To enable us to work with this, we need the information that you describe, and that is what we have been trying to obtain for some time.

Can you provide for us the data for the number of boardings at the stops in Melksham Without and Melksham Town please, if you have the other information you describe such as the number of routes at the stops etc then that would be useful rather than us working it out with local knowledge.

With regards to the bit at the bottom on match funding, is that available for any others that we purchase in 2024? In which case we can start to push through LHFIF? We have funding in place, just want to prioritise based on the passenger data and other factors.

With many thanks,

Teresa

---

**From:** Gosling, Laura <[Laura.Gosling@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Laura.Gosling@wiltshire.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 13 June 2024 11:42

**To:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>

**Cc:** Holder, Nick <[Nick.Holder@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Nick.Holder@wiltshire.gov.uk)>; Rose, Martin <[martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** RE: Real Time Information in bus shelters in Melksham Without

Hi Teresa,

Sorry for the delay in getting back to you on this. We are in the midst of drafting a new Bus Service Improvement Plan for 2024 at the moment; as part of that, our revised approach to RTPI is set out below:

#### Real-Time Passenger Information

The provision of additional RTPI information at stops will be defined when setting new standards for stops. When Real Time passenger Information was initially installed in the south of Wiltshire it was on the basis of provided displays at every bus stop in the scheme area. Since then, times have changed and many people now have web-enabled devices which can receive real time bus information, so our focus for expansion of the display network has changed from "whole route" to provision where passengers will benefit the most. This will include:

- Locations with high numbers of boardings
- Locations where passengers are likely to interchange between routes/modes

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Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024

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- 
- Locations where RTPI will allow passengers to make informed decision on whether to catch the imminent 'all stops' bus or wait for the fast/express bus, due a little later
  - Locations where travel choices from/to new developments (residential and other) can be influenced from initial occupation, by RTPI.

We also consider applications from town and parish councils, based on their local knowledge and requests from their residents. Usually, these requests are made on the basis of match-funding from Wiltshire's Local Highway and Footway Improvement Group.

I hope this helps.

Laura

**Laura Gosling**  
**National Bus Strategy Manager**  
Passenger Transport  
Highways and Transport

**Wiltshire Council**

01225 713481

[laura.gosling@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:laura.gosling@wiltshire.gov.uk)

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## Teresa Strange

---

**From:** Teresa Strange  
**Sent:** 28 August 2024 10:05  
**To:** Hannah Thomson  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: potential CIL fund contribution to community hub

Hi Hannah

Many thanks for your email.

I will put it to the council when they next meet, on 9<sup>th</sup> September. They may decide that it needs to go through their annual grant process which has already taken place for this financial year.

Grant applications for 25/25 have a deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> January and will be awarded at the beginning of the financial year around April time.

You have made contact with Melksham Without Parish Council, and the council legally can only spend funds on things that “directly benefit the residents of Melksham Without”.

For this to be considered, can you please send some details on this please? <https://www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk/index.php?page=ward%20map>

Our office is very close to your site, we are based in the Campus on the first floor, if you would prefer to drop in for a cuppa?

I might be able to point you in the direction of other potential funders? Friday afternoon or next week? Monday or Tuesday next week?

With kind regards, Teresa

Teresa Strange  
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer  
Melksham Without Parish Council  
First Floor  
Melksham Community Campus  
Market Place, Melksham  
Wiltshire, SN12 6ES  
01225 705700  
[www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](http://www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)

**Wellbeing Statement** I may send emails outside office hours but never with any expectation of response. Please just get back to me when you can within your own working hours. Thank you.

**Upcoming leave: From the 22<sup>nd</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> August**

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**From:** Hannah Thomson <hannah@melksham.church>  
**Sent:** 27 August 2024 22:29  
**To:** Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** potential CIL fund contribution to community hub

Hi Teresa,

My name is Hannah and I am leading a project refurbishing a historic building in Melksham to become a community hub.

It's a property on Canon Square - our 2 main aspirations are **conservation** (looking after this beautiful old building in the oldest part of Melksham) and **community** serving (we want to offer affordable housing in part of the building and offer community rooms and spaces that charity partners offering support in spaces not currently on offer in Melksham. I've detailed more on this, the context, our monitoring & evaluation, financial plan etc. in the attached project detail doc.

We are a really critical point in the project - we have planning permission, we have a significant portion of the funds secured, we have just had confirmation there is no CIL liability on our part... so we are just looking for some final funding to help get us over the line.

I have been recommended to get in touch with you to ask if you hold any CIL funds that you might be willing to make a contribution to help get this community hub up and running please?

I'd be happy to pop in for a chat in person if that would be at all helpful. We'd really love to carry on the conversation - we are passionately trying to get this over the line to serve the people of all of Melksham town.

Thank you so much for your consideration,  
Hannah

[REDACTED]

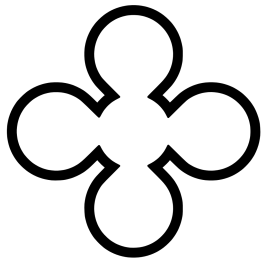




# **Melksham Church** **'Building To Serve' project**

*To purchase & refurbish 11 Canon Square for church & community use*





# Building To Serve: Proposal for Funding

## Executive Summary

['Building to Serve'](#) is a project that Melksham Team Ministry are currently running to try and raise funds to renovate 11 Canon Square - a grade II listed building that sits in the oldest part of Melksham - for community use and to see local lives transformed.



11 Canon Square is in a conservation area just behind the war memorial. The property dates back to before the 1900s, and is a wonderful characterful building of limestone, sash windows and a cotswold stone tile roof. These photos show it firstly in the 1900s brimming with life, and subsequently what the property looks like today having fallen into disrepair. This historic building has sadly been derelict for many years leading to difficulties with squatters, anti-social behaviour and drug raids.



Our vision is to use it to host and offer much needed community services that will serve the lives of all who live in Melksham - and in the mean-time restore and preserve one of the town's oldest houses.

### Summary of costs: £492,000 cost, £457,500 secured

- Renovate the newly acquired 11 Canon Square property
- Create additional spaces for children/youth groups, pastoral meetings (high numbers of funerals and weddings happen at the church mainly for those who are not otherwise connected to the church), office space (hot desks for charity partners using the space, parish staff team etc.)

- Provide rentable community space; host local partnership services; offer affordable residential units to benefit local tenants and for income generation to make the property self-sustaining.

This vital project will restore a deteriorating historic building to facilitate community outreach. With £34,500 still needed to fully fund this project, we are currently amidst a fundraising campaign and humbly request your support. *(more detailed costs in following sections)*

## More of the story

The Canon Sq property spans 3 floors, and is currently configured as 4 x 1-bed flats having been a house of multiple occupancy in more recent years. In Autumn 2023, the property was purchased for intent to serve the community - The PCC released historic investments to purchase this building in November 2023 after a successful online auction, recognising it as a unique opportunity to rescue a valuable asset for the community. Ownership is now held in trust by the Diocesan board of finance on behalf of the trustees (PCC) of the Melksham Team Ministry (charity number 1138038).

The vision behind this purchase is to ***Serve the Community*** by offering better facilities for local groups; and ***Serve the Future*** by enabling generations to come to benefit from the regeneration and restoration of this historic building. Serving the community in a holistic way is at the heart of renovating this project. We want to create a vibrant and flexible multi-use space that will benefit the Melksham community in a myriad of ways.

Once fully renovated, the ground floor and rear cottage of 11 Canon Square will be converted into flexible spaces serving multiple purposes - parish office space, rentable meeting rooms, capacity to host community groups and dedicated areas for children and youth groups. In addition to providing these much-needed facilities, the renovation aims to maintain some of the current residential set up, and offer two affordable (20% below market rate) one-bedroom homes, addressing the demand for such housing in central Melksham.

## The Need in our Area

Melksham is in the top 10% most deprived parishes nationally according to the indices of multiple deprivation, and faces significant economic and social challenges.

- 11% of 0-19-year-olds in Melksham are living in sub standard settings - higher than the Wiltshire average. 57% of local children achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of primary school; lower than the Wiltshire average of 64%.



- Melksham has a higher % of Lone-parent households than our country average
- A distressingly high proportion of adults ages 65+ feel they do not have as much social contact as they would like
- The Melksham landscape for mid-week youth activities is sparse with increasing issues with this age cohort causing damage around the town
- Anxiety and mental health challenges are spiking in our town and the availability of services and support provision cannot keep up with the demand

**Overall, these modernised, versatile facilities that Canon Square will enable, will serve and transform lives in Melksham, an expanding town of over 30,000 residents, whose 'Community Area Strategic Needs Assessment' includes town priorities that this building project directly responds to e.g. reducing anti-social behaviour, access to health services and caring for our local history and environment.**

## **Community Impact and partnerships**

- Existing community groups already run by the Church would have more space to grow - eg our mid-week youth offering, mid-week retirement cafe, wednesday free lunch etc. And new groups such as after school homework club and 'tea and treat' for single parents to connect and encourage one another would have a cosy home.
- The renovations will enable sustainable income generation via affordable rental units and meeting rooms while improving the town centre through the restoration of the historic Canon Square property. The project prioritises accessibility and inclusion with new WCs, open layouts, and welcoming environments for those with additional needs and special requirements.
- Further charity partnerships we are in conversation with that I I Canon Square space could be used for that would offer unique services -
  - [Growing Hope](#) - a charity supporting children and families with additional needs - whilst this space wouldn't enable them to set up a clinic as they have in some communities, the space that a renovated canon sq would offer would enable us to host/run some of their courses including '[When Dreams Change](#)' (counselling for parents of children with additional needs) and [Sibling Support Groups](#) - there is nothing like this on offer in Melksham.
  - [Safe Families](#) - a charity aimed at supporting vulnerable families, particularly single parents - coming alongside them and meeting to offer befriending support and encouragement. Our space would enable these meet ups in a safe and soothing

environment and given lone-parent households account for around 72% of all households in our county of Wiltshire this feels incredibly fitting. Additionally we could offer hot desk space for their roaming team in Wiltshire.

- We'd also like to offer our support to charities operating locally who are often looking for more space eg [Melksham Community Larder](#) (reducing food waste and expanding into clothes swap shop)
- As well as regionally run initiatives such as [CAP money support and free debt advice](#) and [Resurgo](#) charity's [Spear course](#) (an employability course aimed at coaching young people into work) - these are charities are ones that we as leaders and team have previously been involved with in other locations and would love to partner again as they meet a real need in Melksham

### ***Case study spotlight: Free counselling for those in need in Melksham***

[HELP Counselling Services](#) (established in the 1980s to address substance abuse and mental health issues) has been awarded a significant one-year grant from the Council to provide free counselling in the deprived Forest area of Melksham. They're looking for a safe, accessible and private town-centre location to host their services, addressing a crucial gap in the counselling provision in Wiltshire. Melksham, in particular, has sparse counselling services compared to other parts of Wiltshire. A refurbished 11 Canon Square would be able to provide the necessary space for HELP Counselling to deliver this essential service, enhancing community support and well-being, as well as provide an ongoing home for them to continue to deliver much needed counselling to all of the town.

Additionally, a member of our staff team has been invited to sit on the board of trustees to help steer and guide the charity on how it can serve Melksham most effectively.

The charity's CEO says *'Melksham is in such need of a free counselling service - we have struggled to find a home in Melksham but the partnership with the team and Canon Square hosting space would enable us to offer sessions that people desperately need. This Canon Square property is the perfect place to host and welcome people for their sessions and we feel welcomed by the Melksham team already'*.

#### **Testimonials from clients who have received counselling through the HELP charity:**

*"The service was excellent. I always felt welcomed and actually looked forward to my sessions. I have gained confidence, self worth and happiness. I feel like a different person"*

*"I have made a significant breakthrough and I feel much better equipped to make healthy choices"*

## Heritage & Conservation

11 Canon Square sits in the oldest part of Melksham and in many ways is at the heart of the town - from being the place where the entire town gather at the war memorial to honour those who fought for us, to being in prime spot in the hustle and bustle of everyday life from those walking to the campus, visiting the post office or the nature reserve or visiting the graveyard.

To have such a derelict building sitting empty and rotting in such a prominent part of town is a shame on so many levels - we have a vision to turn this around and return it to its former glory in a way that transforms lives today.

These pictures give a flavour of the inside and show the extent of the refurb that is required.

The property requires significant renovation work to bring it up to usable condition, including addressing structural issues, adhering to listed building regulations, and making the necessary repairs



and improvements. Initial efforts have been made to clean and prepare the least derelict areas for temporary use are being used as much as we can by children and youth for groups mid week and at the weekend, however this is not a long term solution.

We have built a project team that has experience and expertise dealing with this age and nature of building, and have conducted due diligence in ensuring we have commissioned condition reports from the architect to keep any building plans and materials compliant, as well as liaising with building

control to sense check our proposals - which have informed our planning and listed application (no external work proposed, permission being sought to take down stud walls and one internal brick wall to open up space so it's more versatile for community use and re-open a previous door that has been blocked up - **current status of application is approved**).

## Project outcomes and monitoring progress

### 1. Community transformation:

- **Outcome:** Host 3 community partnerships per week (eg counselling, sibling support sessions for families with additional needs - ref our community partnership section for more detail).
- **M&E:** This would be monitored by maintaining active relationships with our community partners who are using the space; offering it free where services require space but lack budget; working with community partners and local charities to track how many people they are serving through the sessions hosted at Canon Square; as well as continuing to audit local needs to ensure these partnerships directly meet the needs of those in Melksham.

### 2. Heritage and conservation:

- **Outcome:** to restore and preserve this grade II listed house - preserving its historic fabric so we honour its past and can enable it to serve generations to come
- **M&E:** working with local experts to ensure the historic fabric of the building is well cared for eg stone masons (Sandridge Stone), Grade II expert architects (Concept Design and Drawing) Structural Engineers (Giraffe) - all of whom are already part of the team consulting on the building and are helping prepare appropriate proposals.

### 3. Offer affordable housing:

- **Outcome:** as per Government guidance, this would be rent available at 20% below market rate. Central town housing is limited with so much development happening mainly around the town edge, that affordable accommodation in town is much sought after.
- **M&E:** tracking market trends and rental rates to ensure our rent offer was indeed 'affordable', and log how many tenants benefitted from this over the years to come.

## How much will it cost?

House purchase	£330,000
Plumbing	£44,000
Carpentry	£26,000
Electrics	£16,000
Windows	£27,000
Stone masonry	£10,000
Labour & management	£24,000
Contingency	£15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£492,000</b>

## Fundraising Plan

Income stream	Anticipated	Secured	Notes
Church contribution	£330,000	£330,000	Funds from reserves to purchase property
Trust & Foundations	£75,000	£20,000	Grant making bodies
Local fundraising	£50,000	£57,500	A recent donation drive generated a further £57.5k from the congregation
Major donors	£37,000	£50,000	Individuals
Totals	£492,000	£457,500	
Shortfall		£34,500	This is the current shortfall for the known costs

## The team

The team overseeing this project and subsequent safe running of the building and it's community initiatives consists of those with property and management experience, as well as using external consultants to bring in expertise where knowledge gaps exist.

- *Project management: Hannah Thomson.* Head of Marketing Strategy for Compassion (international development charity) - she has years of experience of managing complex 6-figure projects and large teams, as well as demanding and commercial clients in former roles (eg Google, Microsoft, Unilever).

- *Strategic lead: Tim Just.* Head of Portfolio for 'Innovate UK' (AI company) - commercial experience of delivering large scale projects as well as personal experience of renovating listed buildings.
- *Financial Lead: Susan Shi.* Susan is the parish treasurer and Project Manager by trade delivering large scale projects.
- *Consulting roles:*
  - *Ian Firth* - 'critical friend' (by trade Ian is a structural engineer - he has led high profile international projects)
  - *Concept Design & Drawing* - architect partner for Canon Square property
  - *Giraffe Ltd* - structural engineer partner for Canon Square property
  - *Building partners* - we have tendered the refurbishment out to 4 local companies to ensure we are getting a fair price - all would be partnership with local skills and experts who would adhere to the listed and planning requirements

This team has a successful track record of project completion, recently raising the funds for the renovation and refurbishment of the church\* clock (£7,500); the construction of a log cabin to provide interim extra space for children & youth work (£12,500); the augmentation of the church's bells from 8 to 10 (£47,200) etc., and so we hope we can prove ourselves efficient and trustworthy with any funding you are able to equip us with to finalise this project.

This team would be delighted to carry on a conversation as to whether you can help with this project, and can come and meet with you to present this or any other information you need (eg more detailed builder quotes, our accounts etc.)

*\*St Michael and All Angels Church - the oldest building in Melksham*

## Local Endorsements

*"It is fantastic news that this team have completed the purchase of 11 Canon Square; a historic building that has been derelict in Melksham for a long time. I know from my conversations with Rev Charlie Thomson that the team has excellent plans to bring the building back to life"*

**- Michelle Donelan MP**

*"11 Canon Square has been a rather depressing backdrop for our Remembrance parade for several years now; I wish this project team every success in restoring it for the benefit of the wider community"*

**- Air Vice-Marshal David Couzens, Deputy Lieutenant for Wiltshire**

*"The building's prominent position in the oldest part of Melksham means restoring it to its former glory is critical - it's such a shame to see this beautiful building crumble unless*

*something like this project can save it”*

**- Peter Maslen, Secretary for Melksham & District Historical Association**

*“It is so encouraging to see such exciting plans that serve families, buildings and individuals - there’s not many projects that can do that”*

**- Patrick Wintour, chair of Wiltshire Historic Churches Trust**

*“I have made a significant breakthrough and feel better equipped to make healthy choices”*

**- HELP Counselling testimonial, current client**

*“Our regular trips to St Michael’s are a much appreciated highlight - we’re excited to see the facilities being improved for the benefit of local groups like us”*

**- Tim Just, leader 1st Bowerhill Scouts**

*“We are so pleased to have you as our new neighbours at number 11 - we know it’s going to be a great success”*

**- Annie Benham-Taylor, Canon Square resident**

*“There’s not much for youth in Melksham - something mid week and on Sundays gives them friends and keeps them off the streets and away from bottles at the skate park”*

**-Local teacher, parent of teen** *(name redacted for privacy reasons)*

*“Everyone is welcome here - we love having our own space, but now our group is growing we need more room as it’s getting a bit cramped in the ‘den’.”*

**- 14 yo male, youth group member** *(name redacted for privacy reasons)*

# Local Government Pay Claim 2024/25 – Update

🕒 1 August 2024

You may recall that on 15 July we set out that while one union (GMB) had accepted this year's offer, it had been rejected by the two other unions, UNISON and UNITE.

Both organisations are now moving to a ballot for industrial action of their members. UNITE have advised that their ballot will begin on 27 August and end on 15 October while the UNISON ballot will start on 4 September and finish on 16 October.

Therefore, the pay award from 1 April 2024 will AGAIN be delayed until mid to late October at the earliest.

The national employers advise very strongly against imposing any pay offer before the collective bargaining process has concluded. To do so would not only fragment the unity of the employers' position but would also leave councils vulnerable to questions being asked by auditors about why, in the absence of a national collective agreement, expenditure has been unnecessarily incurred. There are also legal considerations and previous caselaw on this question.

Earlier this week the government announced a pay increase for the public sector of 5.5%, this being the figure recommended by various pay review bodies. However, this level of pay increase cannot be imposed on local government and the process for agreeing the 2024/25 pay award will remain as above, irrespective of what happens in other parts of the public sector.

## Article categories

Local Government Pay

- All >
- Applicable in England only >
- Applicable in Wales only >
- Civility & Respect >
- Climate Change >
- Commercial News >
- Consultations >
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) >
- Elisabeth Skinner's Blog >
- Funding >
- General Election >
- General Sector News >
- Government Announcements/Legislation >
- IIMC >
- Local Government Pay >
- Planning >
- President's Blog >
- SLCC Training and Updates >



# New Guidance: Responding to Online Abuse

🕒 12 August 2024

We've recently added standby statement templates to our advice library to assist members in addressing online abuse when interacting with the media, colleagues, or community members.

We understand that receiving defamatory emails or social media posts can be extremely distressing and challenging. Our new advice emphasises the importance of not responding immediately. Instead, we recommend staying calm and taking time to process the information before taking action. The advice note outlines specific steps members should take, and the templates cover the following scenarios:

1. Responding to issues outside your council's jurisdiction, raised via email
2. Responding to issues outside your council's jurisdiction, raised on social media
3. Responding when something IS your fault
4. Responding when the content is abusive
5. Responding when the content is defamatory

[View the templates here.](#)

## Article categories

General Sector News

- All >
- Applicable in England only >
- Applicable in Wales only >
- Civility & Respect >
- Climate Change >
- Commercial News >
- Consultations >
- Coronavirus (COVID-19) >
- Elisabeth Skinner's Blog >
- Funding >
- General Election >
- General Sector News >
- Government Announcements/Legislation >
- IIMC >
- Local Government Pay >
- Planning >
- President's Blog >
- SLCC Training and Updates >

**Email:** info@kanconnections.com  
**Web:** www.kanconnections.com  
**Tel:** 01225 808185



### Quotation

**To:** Mrs Teresa Strange  
 Melksham Without Parish Council  
 First Floor Melksham Community  
 Campus  
 Market Place, Melksham  
 SN12 6ES

<b>Quote No:</b>	Q821
<b>Date:</b>	11/08/2024
<b>Your Ref:</b>	

DESCRIPTION	
<p><b>Installation of plate to reinforce defibrillator cabinet outside Bowerhill school</b></p> <p>The previous defibrillator cabinets we have fitted have been metal and are very sturdy when mounted to a pole.</p> <p>The one for this job was different and plastic.</p> <p>We feel it is not strong enough mounted directly to the pole, a way to make it stronger would be to put a stainless steel reinforcing plate behind it.</p> <p>Supply stainless customer reinforcing plate and fitment</p>	
<b>Total (EX VAT)</b>	<b>£200.00</b>

***Prices Subject to VAT at the current rate***



**KANConnections** – Unit 8 Manor Estate – Sandridge – Melksham – Wiltshire – SN12 7QT

## Teresa Strange

---

**From:** Millard, Paul <Paul.Millard@wiltshire.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 08 August 2024 13:36  
**To:** Teresa Strange  
**Cc:** Marianne Rossi  
**Subject:** RE: Funding for rights of way interpretation boards

Hi Teresa I remember them well,  
I think Tim Chinnock was involved in these, Sadly no funds are available from the Public Rights of Way budget (I've checked with my line manager as my role doesn't currently have a budget). The Area Board may be a good source of funding as well.  
Sorry to not be much help on this.

Kind regards  
Paul

Paul Millard  
Countryside Access Development Officer  
Rights of Way and Countryside  
Local Highways  
Wiltshire council  
Telephone: Internal 12821 External +44 01225 712821  
Email: [paul.millard@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:paul.millard@wiltshire.gov.uk)  
[www.wiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk)

---

**From:** Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 8, 2024 12:05 PM  
**To:** Millard, Paul <Paul.Millard@wiltshire.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Marianne Rossi <admin@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Funding for rights of way interpretation boards

Hi Paul

We have 4 of these such Rights of Way boards that were a joint project of Wiltshire Council and the Parish Council back in 2010, they are beginning to be on their last legs, and this one opposite the Tesco in Bowerhill needs removing as the pole is becoming unstable.

Just wondered if there was any RoW funding that could be accessed in the future for replacement? Like the old PIGS scheme? Or might be a candidate for some s106 funding from new development for the ones in Bowerhill and Berryfield?

Just worth asking the question!

We have one in each village, and although I don't have the original artwork and the company that made them are no longer trading, I do have A3 colour prints of the artwork (they are framed and up in the meeting room).

All the best, Teresa



Teresa Strange  
 Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer  
 Melksham Without Parish Council  
 First Floor  
 Melksham Community Campus  
 Market Place, Melksham  
 Wiltshire, SN12 6ES  
 01225 705700  
[www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](http://www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)

**Wellbeing Statement** I may send emails outside office hours but never with any expectation of response. Please just get back to me when you can within your own working hours. Thank you.

**Upcoming leave: From the 9<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> August (except 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> August)**

Want to keep in touch?  
 Follow us on facebook: Melksham Without Parish Council or Teresa Strange (Clerk) for additional community news  
 On twitter: @melkshamwithout  
 On Instagram: melkshamwithoutpc

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 We do not guarantee that any email is free of viruses or other malware.

Marianne Rossi  
**Melksham Without Parish Council**  
First Floor, Melksham Community Campus  
Market Place  
Melksham  
Wiltshire  
SN12 6ES

08/08/2024

### Offer Letter

Ref: G-227841

Dear Marianne,

#### **Melksham Without Parish Council: Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund (QUEEN ELIZABETH II DIAMOND JUBILEE FIELD (MELKSHAM)) - Football**

I am delighted to inform you that your application to the Football Foundation for a grant has been successful. We have agreed to award you a six-year revenue grant of **68.43%** of a total project cost of **£84,480** subject to a maximum payment of **£57,812** to Melksham Without Parish Council. This funding is to be used towards the enhanced grass pitch maintenance works, as set out within your PitchPower Report.

For the purposes of this offer letter, this is known as the "Project". The details, aims, objectives and targets of the Project are as set out in your Application.

#### **Terms and Conditions**

The grant is to be used specifically for the delivery of the Project and is subject to our Grass Pitch Maintenance Fund Terms and Conditions which you'll be able to review through your online account.

These T&Cs set out your formal agreement with the Foundation, including your grant acceptance, payment and monitoring requirements as well as other key information. Please take the time to read these carefully.

Your grant is also subject to the following specific condition(s):

#### **Pre-Claim**

- That a minimum of two representatives from the Organisation complete a Grounds Management Association Level 1 Football Groundsmanship course (ONLINE) and evidence of completion is provided to the Foundation, before any payments are released.



Further information on the Grounds Management Association Level 1 Football Groundsmanship course (ONLINE) can be found at <https://www.thegma.org.uk/learning/training>

## Ongoing

- That the Organisation provides the Foundation with Monitoring information in respect of the condition of each of the grass pitches at your site for the period of claw-back. Pitch assessment data must be submitted at least twice per year using the PitchPower tool <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/pitchpower> within the following window (1) 1st November – 31st March (essential) and within at least one of these windows; (2) 1st April – 30th June or (3) 1st July – 31st October.

Whenever pitch assessment data is submitted, it is important that there is at least one month between the readings. On receipt of the data, the Pitch Advisory Service will provide a PitchPower Report from which the recommendations identified are to be undertaken in order to improve and maintain the grass pitches at your site to at least the Pitch Quality Standard (PQS) of 'Good'. Visit the GMA website for information on the Grounds Management Framework and to see what 'Good' means <https://thegma.org.uk/GMF>

The payment schedule for your grant is as follows:

	Year 1 / Claim 1	Year 2 / Claim 2	Year 3 / Claim 3	Year 4 / Claim 4	Year 5 / Claim 5	Year 6 / Claim 6	Total
<b>Cost</b>	£14,452	£14,452	£14,080	£14,080	£13,705	£13,705	<b>£84,480</b>
<b>Foundation Grant</b>	£14,452	£14,452	£9,636	£9,636	£4,818	£4,818	<b>£57,812</b>
<b>Applicant contribution</b>	£0	£0	£4,444	£4,444	£8,888	£8,888	<b>£26,668</b>

## What happens next?

First of all, you need to formally accept your grant offer! You can do this easily via your Football Foundation Account. Please note that, in line with our General Terms and Conditions, you have **one month** from the date of this letter to accept your grant offer.

Once you have accepted your grant, and discharged any pre-claim conditions that may apply, you will need to complete our online claim form to claim your year 1 project costs. This is paid upfront to help cover your maintenance costs for the year.

A few essential pointers here:

- You will need to provide a bank statement in the Organisation name as shown on your Offer Letter.
- The works should be procured by the Organisation named on the award Offer Letter, this should be the name shown on any invoices.

A guide on how to complete and submit your claim is available here: <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/support-with-claims>

Once this has been checked and approved by our Grant Assessment Team, your year 1 payment will be paid and you will then be able to start your Project.

For subsequent claims in the following years, the Organisation will be required to evidence the total spend for works completed at the site. The total cost of the works is outlined in your Payment Schedule.

If you have any questions about this stage and what happens next, please contact [enquiries@footballfoundation.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@footballfoundation.org.uk).

### ***What happens then?***

Any works covered by the Project should align to the recommendations in your PitchPower report and be completed by an external contractor/supplier.

Please note funds must not be used for:

- Routine maintenance such as grass cutting or line marking.
- The repair, servicing or maintenance of machinery.
- The payment of in house/internal club grounds team or volunteers.

For further information on the criteria of the Fund and what is eligible, please see: <https://footballfoundation.org.uk/grant/grass-pitch-maintenance-fund>

### ***Publicity***

We imagine you're as keen as us to shout about your funding success. Once you've formally accepted your grant offer, you'll be sent an email with a link to our Funding Publicity Portal. Here, you'll find the resources and guidance you need to share the good news.

If you have any questions around grant publicity, please don't hesitate to get in contact using the [Contact Us](#) page on our website.

Congratulations on your funding success and best of luck with your Project!

With best wishes,



**Dean Potter**

**Director of Grant Management**



## Marianne Rossi

---

**From:** Tony Jones <tony.jones@jonesdevelopments.co.uk>  
**Sent:** 20 August 2024 17:03  
**To:** Marianne Rossi  
**Cc:** Teresa Strange  
**Subject:** Re: Quotation to remove paint from pavilion doors

Hi Marianne

Our decorator got back to us with a cost for the doors and to strip all paint off and supply and install sticker numbers will be in the region of £ 1, 678.00 + VAT.

Kind regards,

Michelle

---

**From:** Marianne Rossi <admin@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 06 August 2024 15:19:28  
**To:** Tony Jones  
**Cc:** Teresa Strange  
**Subject:** RE: Quotation to remove paint from pavilion doors

Hi Michelle,

As you will see I am just following up on a few things 😊

The earliest that a quote can be considered for the doors isn't until September now and I know at the time when I requested a quote for the below you said that you would need to get someone to go and have a look before you could provide a quote. Is this something that could be arranged, please?

Many thanks

Best Wishes,  
Marianne

Marianne Rossi  
Finance and Amenities Officer  
Melksham Without Parish Council  
First Floor  
Melksham Community Campus  
Market Place  
Melksham  
SN12 6ES  
01225 705700  
[www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](http://www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)

Want to keep in touch?

Follow us on facebook: [Melksham Without Parish Council](#) or [Teresa Strange \(Clerk\)](#) for additional community news



## Lorraine McRandle

---

**Subject:** FW: A note of thanks - sack trucks

---

**From:** Jonathan Rumens <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 3:42:26 PM  
**To:** John Glover <[john.glover@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:john.glover@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** A note of thanks - sack trucks

Dear John

I'm writing to you to acknowledge the kind donation by MwPC to this group, of sack trucks.

As you know, we are active in Shaw and Whitley, and are well equipped with generators and the like. These sack trucks will be invaluable for moving (heavy) things around the villages - saves wear and tear on our knees and hips.

Thank you very much.

Best regards

Jonathan Rumens  
[REDACTED]  
Shaw & Whitley Community Emergency Group

## Lorraine McRandle

---

**Subject:** FW: Bus shelter Query - Telford Drive / Semington Road, Melksham, Wiltshire

---

**From:** Rose, Martin <[martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 02 September 2024 11:49  
**To:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: Bus shelter Query - Telford Drive / Semington Road, Melksham, Wiltshire

Thanks Teresa,

I do accept that in an ideal scenario the shelter would be better relocated within a new footway area further back from its current position.

Unfortunately, as explained, we do not have an available budget to undertake this work. As such we must take a decision to try and improve the current situation, and we feel this is best achieved by replacing the full width panel with a ¼ width panel.

Regards

Martin Rose IEng, FIHE, MCIHT, CMgr MCMl  
Principal Engineer – Traffic Engineering  
Highway Asset Management and Commissioning  
Wiltshire Council ,  
County Hall, Bythesea Road  
Trowbridge BA14 8JN



Email: [martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk)  
Web: [www.wiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk)

Highways Fault? Report it here:  
<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/mywiltshire-online-reporting>

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**From:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 28, 2024 12:35 PM  
**To:** Rose, Martin <[martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Rogers, Gareth <[Gareth.Rogers@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Gareth.Rogers@wiltshire.gov.uk)>; Alan Baines <[alan.baines@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:alan.baines@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>;  
Seed, Jonathon <[Jonathon.Seed@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Jonathon.Seed@wiltshire.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: Bus shelter Query - Telford Drive / Semington Road, Melksham, Wiltshire

Hi Martin  
Thank you for letting us know.

The parish council do not feel that the speed and volume of traffic on Semington Road is relatively low, hence our LHFIFG issue raised at the recent meeting reflecting the material change of the new and pending housing development on the road.

The parish council think that the £1,700 could, and should, be spent on something that benefits the community related to the Bowood View development – as intended by the s106 – and Real Time Information at this stop would be a better benefit to the community as was the parish council's request all along.

Putting right the correct location and site of the bus shelter (not in the visibility splay as per the planning permission), should be at the cost of Wiltshire Council.

Regards, Teresa

Teresa Strange  
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer  
Melksham Without Parish Council  
First Floor  
Melksham Community Campus  
Market Place, Melksham  
Wiltshire, SN12 6ES  
01225 705700  
[www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](http://www.melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)

**Wellbeing Statement** I may send emails outside office hours but never with any expectation of response. Please just get back to me when you can within your own working hours. Thank you.

**Upcoming leave: From the 22nd to 27<sup>th</sup> August**

Want to keep in touch?

Follow us on facebook: [Melksham Without Parish Council](#) or Teresa Strange (Clerk) for additional community news

On twitter: [@melkshamwithout](#)

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---

**From:** Rose, Martin <[martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 27 August 2024 15:19  
**To:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Rogers, Gareth <[Gareth.Rogers@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Gareth.Rogers@wiltshire.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: Bus shelter Query - Telford Drive / Semington Road, Melksham, Wiltshire

Hi Teresa,

I'm not disputing the views of the parish council in this instance. We simply do not have a budget available to go back and relocate the shelter as you are seeking.

In this instance we feel the both the speed and volume of traffic on Semington Road is relatively low and as such the overall risk to traffic exiting Telford Drive is reduced. We will therefore, as a highway authority, take an executive decision and replace the current end panel with a ¼ width panel. I appreciate this is not

the outcome you were looking for, however we need to move this issue forward.

Regards

Martin Rose IEng, FIHE, MCIHT, CMgr MCMI  
Principal Engineer – Traffic Engineering  
Highway Asset Management and Commissioning  
Wiltshire Council ,  
County Hall, Bythesea Road  
Trowbridge BA14 8JN



Email: [martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk)  
Web: [www.wiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk)

Highways Fault? Report it here:  
<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/mywiltshire-online-reporting>

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**From:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 27, 2024 1:09 PM  
**To:** Rose, Martin <[martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Alan Baines <[alan.baines@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:alan.baines@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: Bus shelter Query - Telford Drive / Semington Road, Melksham, Wiltshire

Hi Martin

The council are pretty resolute that the right solution should have been provided in the first place, and if it was a developer that had put in that position, that Wiltshire Council too would be insisting it should be in the right place.  
T

---

**From:** Rose, Martin <[martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 27 August 2024 12:47  
**To:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Alan Baines <[alan.baines@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:alan.baines@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** FW: Bus shelter Query - Telford Drive / Semington Road, Melksham, Wiltshire  
**Importance:** High

Hi Teresa,

Please see below.

I'm conscious we find ourselves at a bit of stalemate on this issue. I do appreciate the position of your council and the view the existing shelter should be taken up and relocated further back. I'm also conscious we are entering the time of year when the end panel will start to mist up and the complaints will invariably return.

In this regard are you happy for me to instruct GW shelters to return to site and replace the full end panel with the ¼ panel.

Once installed we can take a look and monitor the outcome for a period. If the problems / complaints persist, we can look again with a view to possibly seeking a contribution from the LHFIG to relocate the shelter.

Regards

Martin Rose IEng, FIHE, MCIHT, CMgr MCMI  
Principal Engineer – Traffic Engineering  
Highway Asset Management and Commissioning  
Wiltshire Council ,  
County Hall, Bythesea Road  
Trowbridge BA14 8JN



Email: [martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk)  
Web: [www.wiltshire.gov.uk](http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk)

Highways Fault? Report it here:  
<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/mywiltshire-online-reporting>

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---

**From:** Rose, Martin  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 30, 2024 4:09 PM  
**To:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Lorraine McRandle <[office@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:office@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>; Alan Baines <[alan.baines@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:alan.baines@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>; Rogers, Gareth <[Gareth.Rogers@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Gareth.Rogers@wiltshire.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: Bus shelter Query - Telford Drive / Semington Road, Melksham, Wiltshire

Hi Teresa,

Thank you for your email. I fully understand your council's position, however that of Wiltshire Council also remains unchanged.

As I have already alluded, there isn't the budget available to facilitate the construction of the new hand standing and relocation of the existing bus shelter.

As you will recall we have £2,450.00 of S106 money remaining which is not sufficient to cover the required costs indicated below.

I note you comment the suggested ¼ panel replacement may not resolve all the visibility issues, however it would significantly reduce the reported problems caused by the misting of the full width panel and as such I feel this remains the best compromise and can be delivered in advance of the approaching autumn/ winter period.

Regards

Martin Rose IEng, FIHE, MCIHT, CMgr MCMI  
Principal Engineer – Traffic Engineering  
Highway Asset Management and Commissioning  
Wiltshire Council ,  
County Hall, Bythesea Road

Trowbridge BA14 8JN



Email: [martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk)

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Highways Fault? Report it here:

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/mywiltshire-online-reporting>

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**From:** Teresa Strange <[clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, July 30, 2024 3:46 PM

**To:** Rose, Martin <[martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.rose@wiltshire.gov.uk)>

**Cc:** Lorraine McRandle <[office@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:office@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>; Seed, Jonathon <[Jonathon.Seed@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Jonathon.Seed@wiltshire.gov.uk)>; Alan Baines <[alan.baines@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk](mailto:alan.baines@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** RE: Bus shelter Query - Telford Drive / Semington Road, Melksham, Wiltshire

Hi Martin

Melksham Without Parish Council met last night (as you will have seen from the flurry of emails you have had today!)

They are still of the firm conviction that the bus shelter should be relocated to the correct position as per the drawing agreed as part of the planning permission; and that should be at the cost to Wiltshire Council and not the parish council.

Even if the end panel was changed, the residents waiting for a bus in the shelter still obscure visibility.

With kind regards,

Teresa

Teresa Strange

Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer

Melksham Without Parish Council

First Floor

Melksham Community Campus

Market Place, Melksham

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**Wellbeing Statement** I may send emails outside office hours but never with any expectation of response. Please just get back to me when you can within your own working hours. Thank you.

Upcoming leave: 9<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> August returning to work Monday 19<sup>th</sup> August 024

Want to keep in touch?

Follow us on facebook: Melksham Without Parish Council or Teresa Strange (Clerk) for additional community news

On twitter: @melkshamwithout

On Instagram: melkshamwithoutpc

# EXTRACT FROM LOCAL HIGHWAY & IMPROVEMENT GROUP MEETING

Final Meeting Notes for Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> August at 18:00 hrs

6.	New Requests and ongoing Issues		
a)	<p><b>Issue 09-24-08</b></p> <p>Various Roads Hunters Wood, Melksham</p>	<p>Request for parking review to be undertaken on Various roads on hunters moon estate incl. <b>Mint Grove, Chervil Road, Anise Rd, Catnip close, Oregano Close, Nasturtium Close, Bay Gardens.</b></p> <p>Request for new signs / road markings in area.</p> <p><a href="https://www.google.co.uk/maps/">https://www.google.co.uk/maps/</a></p>	<p><b>15/08/24</b> – Hunters Moon estate currently unadopted and is split into the Bloor and DWH parcels. Adoption not expected until 2026. Unable to make parking changes on unadopted roads</p> <p><b>Agreed</b> – Cllr Sankey and other local representatives to assess problem areas on estate and discuss with Development control / Developer to agree a way forward.</p>
b)	<p><b>Issue 09-24-09</b></p> <p>Great Hinton Village</p>	<p>Request for 20mph limit assessment in Great Hinton</p> <p><a href="https://www.google.co.uk/maps/">https://www.google.co.uk/maps/</a></p>	<p><b>15/08/24</b> – Speed survey undertaken in April 24. Average speed 22.6mph.</p> <p><b>Agreed</b> – proceed with 20mph assessment for Great Hinton and report back to group.</p>
c)	<p><b>Issue 9-24-10</b></p> <p>Semington Road (Melksham without)</p>	<p>Request for review of traffic calming including consideration of additional traffic calming measures, such as speed cushions, road humps due to the speeding traffic and the material change to the road, due to new housing developments that are already occupied (Bowood View) and in construction (Buckley Gardens) and development with planning permission (to the rear of Townsend Farm).</p> <p><a href="https://www.google.co.uk/maps/">https://www.google.co.uk/maps/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.google.co.uk/maps/">https://www.google.co.uk/maps/</a></p>	<p><b>15/08/24</b> – No Speed survey undertaken. 5 years collision Data over length of Semington Road 4no. collisions 3no. 'slight', 1no. 'Serious'.</p> <p>Note - Existing traffic calming concentrated both north and southern ends of road.</p> <p>Agreed – Establish speed monitoring sites with MWTC and report back results to group at next meeting before agreeing next step.</p>

## Lorraine McRandle

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**Subject:** FW: Network Rail Wiltshire Strategic Rail Study - draft  
**Attachments:** wilts\_statagic\_rail\_202407.pdf

---

**From:** Graham Ellis <[REDACTED]>

**Sent:** 14 August 2024 14:04

**To:** Committee Clerk <committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk>; Locum <locum@melksham-tc.gov.uk>; Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>; Lorraine McRandle <office@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>

**Subject:** Network Rail Wiltshire Strategic Rail Study - draft

Hi, Folks

Please find attached a draft of the Network Rail Wiltshire Strategic Rail Study dated 17th July. Some very interesting and potentially significant data in here. Comment was requested by 7th August.

I have been copied on a circulation list of several dozen consultees, but don't see any at town / parish level, nor either of our local rail user groups in West Wilts (the Kennet ones are). Is this something we should usefully be involved with and commenting on, should our councillors be aware for information, or am I jumping the gun and should we be waiting for a final report?

Graham

P.S. The report is generally useful in my view in showing the limitations of rail to / from / though Melksham and local journeys to destinations to and from the station within the Town and Parish and pointing towards what is needed to be improved - good base data on what should be implemented.

Graham Ellis

[REDACTED] - [REDACTED]  
<http://grahamellis.uk> - [REDACTED]

My emailing policy: <http://grahamellis.uk/email>



# Wiltshire Rail Strategic Study

## Draft Report

**Date: 17/7/24**

**VERSION: 0.1**

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## Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of the Wiltshire Rail Strategic Study, led by Network Rail in collaboration with partner organisations and stakeholders including: Western Gateway STB, Wiltshire County Council, Swindon Borough Council, Great Western Railway (GWR) and South Western Railway.

The study makes recommendations for development of rail services required to support planned growth in Wiltshire, in answer to the headline question *How can rail best support sustainable economic and housing growth in Wiltshire?*

The report and its recommendations are intended to inform decisions by strategic planners and funders considering the further development of rail passenger and freight services in the Wiltshire area to 2030 and beyond. Recommendations are developed in line with the strategic priorities and objectives identified in local, regional and industry strategies and in line with the outputs of the Greater Bristol Strategic Study (GBSS) and Devizes RYR Interim Feasibility Study (IFS).

### Context:

Wiltshire is a relatively rural region in the West of England which spans two Network Rail routes – Western and Wessex.

It is experiencing significant growth supported by Wiltshire and Swindon's existing and emerging local plans for investment in housing and economic development. The considerable forecasted growth will continue to put pressure on an already constrained railway.

Combined with local policies to meet government net-zero targets and the market for rail freight through Wiltshire forecasted to grow, accelerated by DfT's freight growth targets for 75% growth in freight carried by rail by 2050, the reliance on rail will increase and Wiltshire needs a reliable and robust railway to support forecasted levels of housing and economic growth.

The study also identified that on a significant number of flows the current rail provision does not provide the required levels of connectivity, with infrequent and irregular services.

The rail network in Wiltshire is based around three main lines that radiate from London and therefore cross the area in an east-west orientation: the Great Western Main Line in the north of the area, serving Swindon and Chippenham; the Berks & Hants Line, serving Westbury in the centre of the county; and the West of England Line, in Wessex Route, serving Salisbury in the south of the county. These lines feature predominantly high-speed, long-distance services that provide relatively good connectivity to key regional hubs. Therefore, each of these four stations (Swindon, Chippenham, Westbury, and Salisbury) has an important interchange function for onwards local connectivity, with Westbury also serving as an important hub for freight services.

North-south connectivity along the TransWilts corridor from Swindon to the North to Westbury to the South is limited and is served by slower, stopping services. These infrequent and irregular service present significant challenges to local connectivity within Wiltshire.

Figure 1 below illustrates the stations and corridors within the study scope.

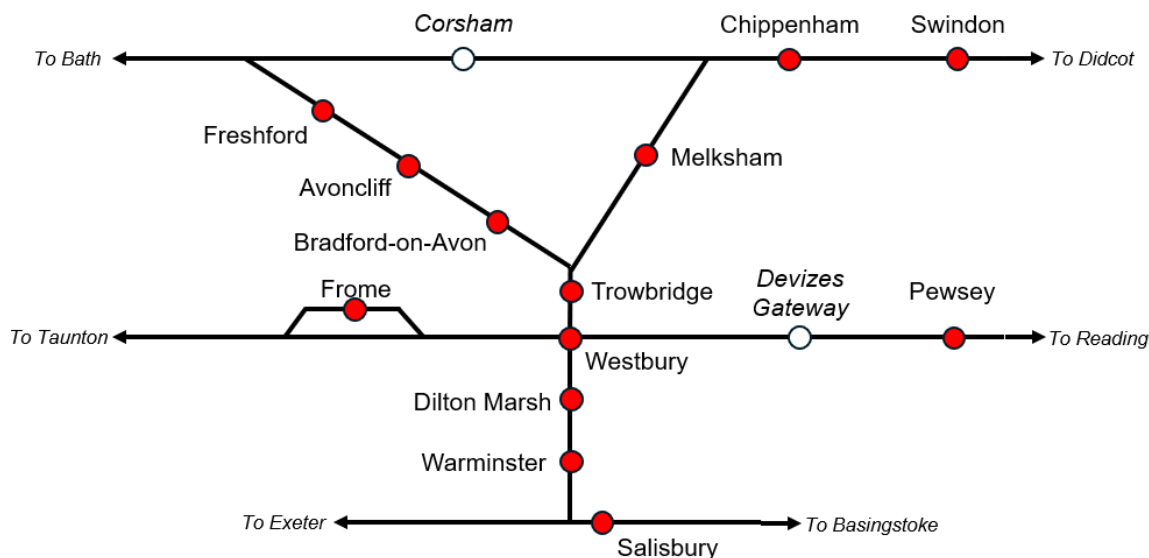


Figure 1 - Key stations in the study area. (Not to scale).

While there is good east-west connectivity providing strong regional links, there is little rail connectivity for journeys to the south and east of the area and the limited north-south connectivity that is provided is restricted the west of the county. Connectivity towards Bath and Bristol is good, but stations in the area lack direct connectivity to Oxford and the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, Birmingham and the West Midlands, the East Midlands, the North West, or the North East. Connectivity within the county is also limited.

Furthermore, the mix of services that utilise the network each serve different markets and have different characteristics, which can bring challenges associated with capacity and calling patterns.

## Recommendations:

The Wiltshire Rail Strategic builds on existing recommendations from the rail industry, including outputs from the Devizes Gateway Restoring Your Railway scheme, to consider what additional improvements could be delivered for the Wiltshire rail network in the future, taking into account stakeholder aspirations. The study provides a recommended course of action and next steps to address the key strategic question.

This strategic study will help to inform decisions for investment in an incremental, integrated development programme to deliver passenger and freight benefits within Wiltshire to 2030 and beyond.

It delivers a suite of service recommendations, as shown in Table 1 below, supported by timetable and economic analysis, to be delivered incrementally.

The recommendations present stakeholders with choices for enhancements which will support planned growth in Wiltshire. The agreed choices will be taken forward for further detailed analysis and will inform the relevant development plans and business cases.

Delivery	Service type	Service Enhancement	Tph	Intervention required?	Recommended
Stage 1	Regional	Paddington - Westbury	1	Y	Y
	Regional	Bristol Temple Meads - Oxford	1	N	Y
	Local	Swindon - Westbury	1	N	Y
Stage 2	Local	Swindon - Salisbury	1	N	Y
	Local/ Regional	Swindon – Frome/ Taunton*	*	Y	Y
	Regional	Swindon – Southampton#	#	N	Y
Stage 3	Regional	Paddington - Exeter	1	Y	Y
	Regional	Bristol Temple Meads - Oxford	2	N	Y
Not recommended	Regional	Cardiff Central – Portsmouth Harbour	2	N	N

\* Is an option to alternate with/instead of Swindon – Salisbury service

#Would be an extension of Swindon – Salisbury service

Table 1- Recommended services

## Interventions required.

Table 2 below shows the recommendations for infrastructure interventions, supported by timetable analysis. Economic assessment of infrastructure options has not been considered in this study and will need to be included as the options are progressed for further development.

Proposal	Required	Stage intervention is triggered	Services which trigger intervention
<b>Melksham loop</b>		Stage 1	Westbury – Swindon passenger and freight services
<b>Platform 0</b>		Stage 1	Hourly Paddington – Westbury service
<b>Loop/Platform at Frome</b>		Stage 2	Extension of hourly Swindon – Westbury service to Frome/Taunton
<b>Signalling and Headway improvements at Westbury</b>			Will need to be considered in the longer-term to enable continued growth and alignment to route objectives.
<b>Southcote Jn</b>			
<b>Berks &amp; Hants capacity improvements - Electrification</b>			
<b>Station Accessibility</b>			
<b>Level Crossing upgrades</b>			
<b>Stabling facilities at Westbury/Salisbury</b>			

The assessment indicates that the rail system must prioritise enhancements to the local, TransWilts service to improve connectivity within the county itself and to the key interchange hubs to strengthen onwards connectivity to regional economic and educational hubs. New service opportunities are also required to provide new, direct journey opportunities to between Wiltshire and key regional hubs while supporting the case for new stations in Wiltshire including Devizes and Corsham, increasing accessibility and patronage to rail and supporting growth and modal shift.

### Next steps:

The outputs of the Wiltshire Rail Strategic Study have been endorsed at a cross-industry Steering Group and should be considered as the bases of strategic rail planning for Wiltshire. The outputs provide an opportunity to inform and influence the development of infrastructure programmes including Westbury Platform 0 and Melksham loop, and of new aspirations, such as the new services and station proposals at Devizes and Corsham.

The next steps are to test a refined ITSS and develop a portfolio of service and infrastructure interventions, that can enter the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline to secure a decision to progress to the next stage and the development of Strategic Outline Business Cases.

This study will also support and inform future strategic rail programmes.

Continued engagement with the stakeholders for the proposed programme of investment is essential and consideration should be given to how they can support the case for investment, including by identifying opportunities for third party funding.

# 1. What Strategic Questions does the study seek to answer?

## Introduction

This report presents the findings of the Wiltshire Strategic Study, led by Network Rail in consultation with partner organisations and stakeholders.

It looks at the Wiltshire area as it is today and builds on existing recommendations from the rail industry, including outputs from the Devizes Gateway Restoring Your Railway scheme, to consider what additional improvements could be delivered for the Wiltshire rail network in the future, taking into account stakeholder aspirations. The study provides a recommended course of action and next steps to address the key strategic question.

This strategic study will help to inform decisions for investment in an incremental, integrated development programme to deliver passenger and freight benefits within Wiltshire to 2030 and beyond. To meet this objective, the study proposes train service improvements and associated infrastructure interventions.

## What is the strategic question?

The Wiltshire Strategic Study answers the headline strategic question:

***How can rail best support the sustainable economic and housing growth in the Wiltshire area?***

To do this, the study addresses the following supporting questions:

- What are the capacity and connectivity requirements for key markets operating within, into and out of Wiltshire?
- What interventions are necessary to deliver the rail capacity and connectivity required to help deliver growth in the Wiltshire area?
- How can rail provide improved connectivity within, into and out of Wiltshire, to support modal shift?

## Why are we asking these questions?

The work done by Network Rail on the Devizes Gateway Interim Feasibility Study (IFS) in 2023 highlighted the need to develop a holistic plan for rail investment and enhancement in Wiltshire that encompassed local aspirations for new stations and improved services. The current study is a recommendation from the IFS.

Sub-national Transport Bodies, Train Operators, and Local Authorities represent Network Rail's key partners in the development of the study. The Headline Strategic Question and set of supporting questions were formed based on stakeholder aspirations and we have worked with stakeholders to ensure their regional and local priorities were reflected in the work. The strategic questions reflect growth on the key routes serving Wiltshire and the aspirations of stakeholders for further development of the rail network.

## How has the study been undertaken?

### Study Process

This study develops the work carried out for the Devizes Gateway Restoring Your Railway (RJR) scheme. The outputs and recommendations of the Interim Feasibility Study (IFS) form a baseline for this study, including timetable and infrastructure interventions. This study builds on that base to develop further recommendations to respond to the headline question of how rail can best support sustainable economic and housing growth in the Wiltshire area.

The key stages and components in the development of the study are:

- Inclusion of outputs of Devizes IFS in core service proposition. This informs Phase 0 Indicative Train Service Specification (ITSS).
- Collective of various stakeholder and industry led studies relating to the Wiltshire area and stakeholder engagement which forms the agreed ITSS and approach.
- Capacity testing for ITSS options and associated interventions.
- Economic analysis of ITSS options.
- Recommended approach with evidence and next steps.

### Study Scope

The geographical scope of the study has been agreed in consultation with stakeholders. It includes all passenger and freight services serving transport markets to, from and within the Wiltshire area. It covers the Berks & Hants line from Southcote Junction (near Reading) to Cogload Jn (near Taunton), the Great Western Main Line between Swindon, Bath Spa, and the Melksham single line and Heart of Wessex lines running from north to south.

The West of England line from Basingstoke to Exeter and the route from Salisbury to Romsey are not included in this study. They are subject to a separate piece of work being led by Network Rail Wessex route.

The geographic scope of the study is shown below in Figure 2.



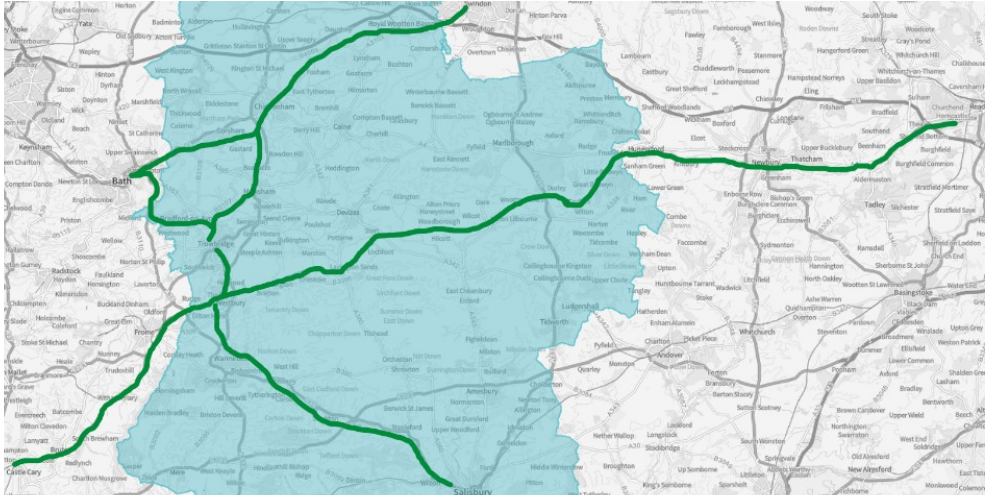


Figure 2 - Map of Wiltshire and railway corridors within study scope boundaries

For the purpose of analysis, the ITSS focuses on services in Wiltshire and to/from key markets outside the Wiltshire area, including services between the following locations:

- Bristol Temple Meads
- Exeter
- Oxford
- Paddington
- Salisbury
- Swindon
- Westbury

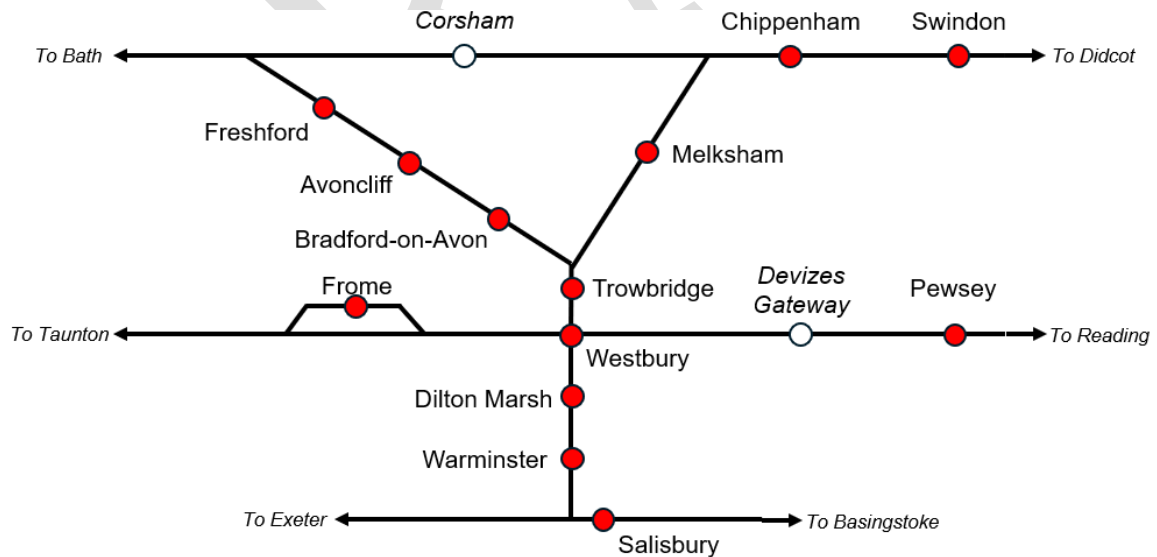


Figure 3 - Key stations in the study area. (Not to scale).

Figure 3 above shows a simple schematic of the corridors and stations within the study scope.

The study does not provide recommendations for interventions needed outside the study boundaries but will highlight where there are known constraints outside the area that need to be addressed.

Key stakeholders have been engaged to develop an ITSS comprising their aspirations. A steering group consisting of representatives from relevant stakeholders have directed development of the study. Organisations represented include Great Western Railway, South Western Railway, Wiltshire Council, TransWilts Community Rail Partnership, Bedwyn Trains Passenger Group, Pewsey Vale Rail User Group and Western Gateway sub-national transport body.

In addition to steering group engagement, working groups have been established with GWR, SWR and the Network Rail route freight team along with specialists from the relevant areas within NR for purposes of in-depth analysis into timetable interventions and economic analysis.

The support and assistance provided by the above-named organisations through the course of the study is gratefully acknowledged.

## **What role has economic analysis played?**

Quantification of the current and potential markets for rail in the corridor is critical in shaping and supporting the study recommendations. This includes:

- a) The development of forecast scenarios and the identification of rail demand growth rates, including a local population driven scenario (housing and jobs)
- b) Quantification of benefits delivered by the chosen ITSS option, to inform choices within it.
- c) Collation of a final recommended ITSS which optimises user benefit whilst delivering against stakeholder objectives.
- d) Assessment of General Journey Time Improvements.
- e) Socio-economic assessment of the Wiltshire area

This analysis supports development of the recommended ITSS, detailing additional services which meet the identified connectivity gaps, whilst balancing journey times and calling times to maximise user benefit. Recommended services are conditional on operational feasibility, affordability, value for money and an assessment of agreed wider socio-economic criteria.

## **What role has timetable analysis played?**

The Indicative Train Service Specification (ITSS) is assessed and tested against the base system capability in order to understand whether the new and improved passenger and freight provision outlined in the ITSS options could be accommodated.

The December 2023 timetable has been used as the baseline with the addition of the committed Mendip Quarry freight service changes. The Phase 0 ITSS is formed of the necessary service and infrastructure changes to enable the delivery of Devizes Gateway station (removal of Bedwyn shuttle, hourly Paddington-Westbury service and Westbury Platform 0) plus an additional GWR aspiration, for which an SOBC is

currently being development, for an additional Bristol – Weymouth service. The timetabling work assesses a 3-hour window in the off-peak hours between 1100-14:00.

Rolling stock assumptions include IETs (Class 80x, DMU (Class 153,158,165)

The timetable analysis considers interventions that have been previously identified in response to other known operational challenges in this route section (e.g. Old Oak Common new station), and any other necessary interventions. The analysis considers future service reliability and resilience, alongside direct operational needs.

DRAFT

## 2. What is the Wiltshire area like today?

### The Wiltshire area

The Wiltshire area comprises two unitary authorities – Wiltshire Council and Swindon Borough Council. As shown below in Figure 4, the Wiltshire area sits in South-West England and is bordered by Oxfordshire to the north-east and Gloucestershire to the north-west, Dorset to the south, Somerset, Bath and Bristol to the west, Berkshire to the east, Hampshire to the south-east.



Figure 4 - Wiltshire area and neighbouring authorities

Wiltshire has an area of approximately 3,485km<sup>2</sup> and is a largely rural area comprising of market towns, service centres, urban areas and tourist, leisure and business hubs. The largest settlements in Wiltshire include Swindon and Chippenham in the north, Salisbury in the south and Trowbridge in the west. The area is home to the significant training area for the British Army on Salisbury Plain, key national sites such as Stonehenge and several other historical landmarks which attract tourism.

It is a region that is experiencing significant growth, and demand needs to be supported by the development of the railway to ensure the growth is sustainable. With population growth at 8.4% for Wiltshire and 11.6% for Swindon, higher than the England average of 6.6%, the region population is growing at an above average rate, making transport improvement a key priority.

### Population and housing

The Wiltshire area has seen population growth of 17.2% between 2002 and 2020, which is faster than the national average of growth at 13.5% in England and Wales. The steady rate of growth continued in 2021, making the total population at the time of the 2021 National Census approximately 744,000 combined. The Wiltshire Council area covers approximately 1,257 square miles and is home to a population of roughly 510,400 people. This is an 8.4% increase from 2011 (471,000) and is forecasted to grow a further 22% by 2031, making Wiltshire Council the 9<sup>th</sup> largest local authority in England and highlighting the significant

opportunity for growing rail usage. Population density in Wiltshire is generally low, with approximately 1 person per football pitch sized area, reflecting the largely rural nature of the county.

Swindon has a population of 233,400 (11.6% increase from 2011 (209,200) but covers a much smaller area than Wiltshire Council at 89 square miles and is therefore ranked 76<sup>th</sup> largest of all local authorities in England. The population has seen an above average level of growth in the past decade and is forecasted to grow by a further 8% between 2023 and 2046. However, population density in Swindon is higher than in Wiltshire Unitary Authority, with approximately 7 people per football pitch sized area, reflecting its more urban nature.

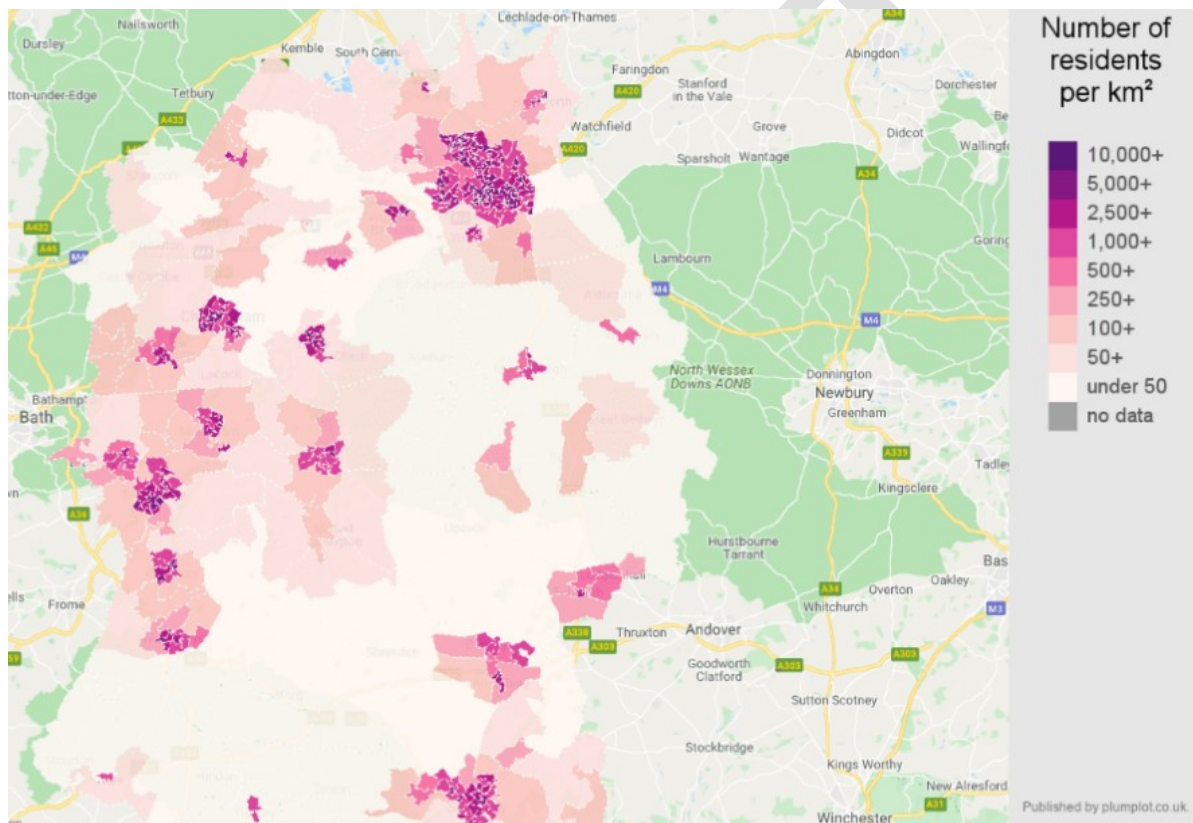


Figure 5 - Population density heatmap, 2020

This is illustrated in the heatmap above which illustrates population density in the Wiltshire area in 2020. The map shows a higher number of pink and purple areas concentrated in Swindon. Population density in Wiltshire is primarily concentrated around Chippenham, Trowbridge and Salisbury with other small clusters concentrated around the east of the county, and roughly follows the road and rail network. The area has 310,943 houses combined, with 95,862 households in Swindon and 215,081 in Wiltshire. There is significant population growth proposed in both areas which will be supported by a forecasted 14% growth in housing in Swindon and an additional 36,740 houses in Wiltshire by 2038.

On average house prices in the Wiltshire area are £338k compared to the national average of £351k making it 20<sup>th</sup> most expensive place to buy out of all 55 counties in England and Wales. With house prices lower than the national average, and lower than that of its neighbouring counties, they can be an economically attractive option to buy a property, but good transport links are vital to support commuting.



The graph below shows the house-price-to-earnings ratios for Swindon and Wiltshire, compared to the national average. The ratio of 7.5 for Swindon is lower than the national average of 8, whilst the ratio of 9.3 for Wiltshire is significantly higher than the national average.



Figure 6 – Wiltshire house price to earnings ratio comparison, 2022

While deprivation is generally low, there are pockets of deprivation in some areas, including Salisbury and Trowbridge. The average salary in Wiltshire is significantly lower than both Swindon and the national UK average, which can adversely impact local spending and can reflect the challenge of accessibility to higher education and high-skilled jobs. Along with pockets of deprivation, there is an evident need to provide improved access to higher paying jobs and upskill residents through access to higher education facilities.

## Economy

The area is relatively productive, with a combined Gross Value Add (GVA) of £21bn in 2019, contributing 15% to the South West region. Swindon has seen above average growth rates in GVA and generates almost half (45%) of the total output. Growth zones in Wiltshire are focused around Chippenham, Trowbridge and Salisbury, demonstrating the demand for strong transport links to support proposed economic growth.

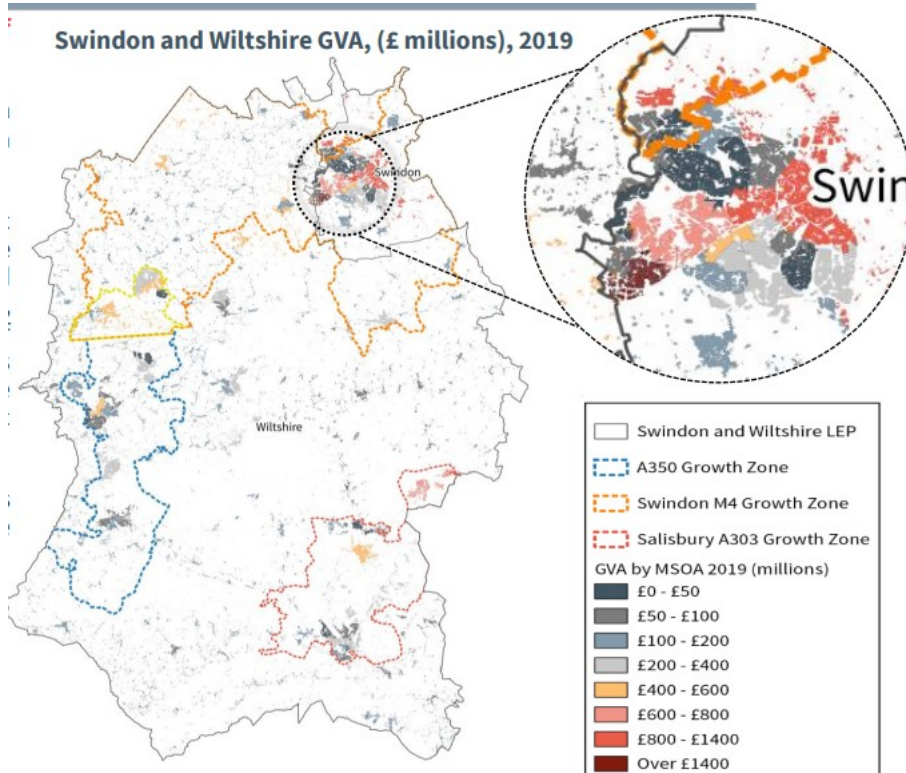


Figure 7 - Swindon and Wiltshire Gross Value Added (GVA), 2019

The growth rates identified in the map above generally have higher employment catchments and are supported by good transport links to rail and the M4 corridor, demonstrating the importance of strong transport links and improved connectivity to support proposed economic growth.

Employment rates are relatively strong too, with 78.1% of Swindon's residents in employment (ONS 2021), an increase of 0.8% from the previous year. 82.5% of Wiltshire's residents are in employment, which is above the national average. Forecast average annual rate of employment growth to 2038 is between 0.1% and 0.7%, which is lower than recent decades, demonstrating the pivotal role that rail will need to play to support sustainable employment growth.

Average salaries in Wiltshire and Swindon are below the national average at £37.9k and £41.4k respectively as shown in Figure 8 below. Swindon's higher figure reflects its proximity to key universities and high-value business hubs.

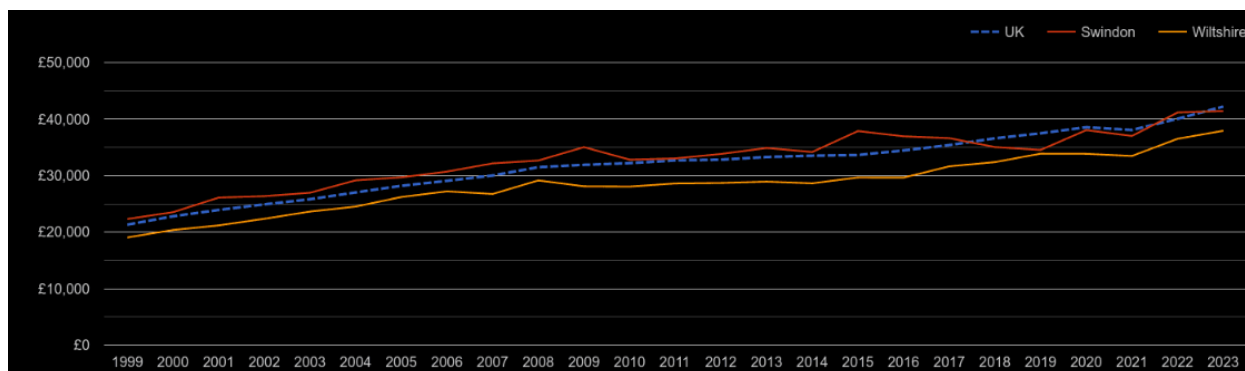


Figure 8 - Wiltshire average salary comparison, 2023

The combination of lower-than-average salaries, large numbers of jobs, and higher than average productivity in Swindon is attractive for employers and businesses and demonstrates Swindon's pull factor for Wiltshire and wider South West residents. High quality transport links are an essential component.

Average earnings paid by workplaces in Wiltshire are below the average earning of Wiltshire residents. This discrepancy reflects the composition of the job market in Wiltshire, with the Army the largest local employer, and a higher proportion of lower-skilled jobs. It also reflects a strong outward commuting market, to Bristol and to hubs in the South East particularly.

Good public transport links are required to support sustainable commuting both within and to and from the area. They can also help grow the high-skilled jobs market in the Wiltshire area and reduce out-commuting.

## Education

Wiltshire's share of working age (16-64) residents qualified to NVQ4+ level was 40% in 2020. This is in line with the South West but below the national average of 43%. There are local aspirations to increase the number of residents who are in high-skilled jobs or Higher Education level STEM training to support growth in advanced engineering and high-tech digital innovation.

With few business hubs in Wiltshire providing high-skilled jobs and no universities in the immediate area, residents rely on access to those available elsewhere. Key business hubs are located in Reading, London, Bristol and Oxford, with the closest universities located in Oxford, Bath, Bristol and Exeter, demonstrating the need for strong transport links to provide improved connectivity to regional science, tech, business and educational facilities.

## Existing Transport Network

The Wiltshire area is largely rural and therefore links to proximate economic hubs are crucial. As well as Swindon itself, these include Bath, Bristol, Southampton, Oxford and London. These large towns and cities surrounding Wiltshire provide a wider range of employment, leisure and cultural opportunities and drive significant travel flows from the Wiltshire area.



Figure 9 below shows commuting patterns for Swindon and Wiltshire have a net outflow of commuters of 16,500.

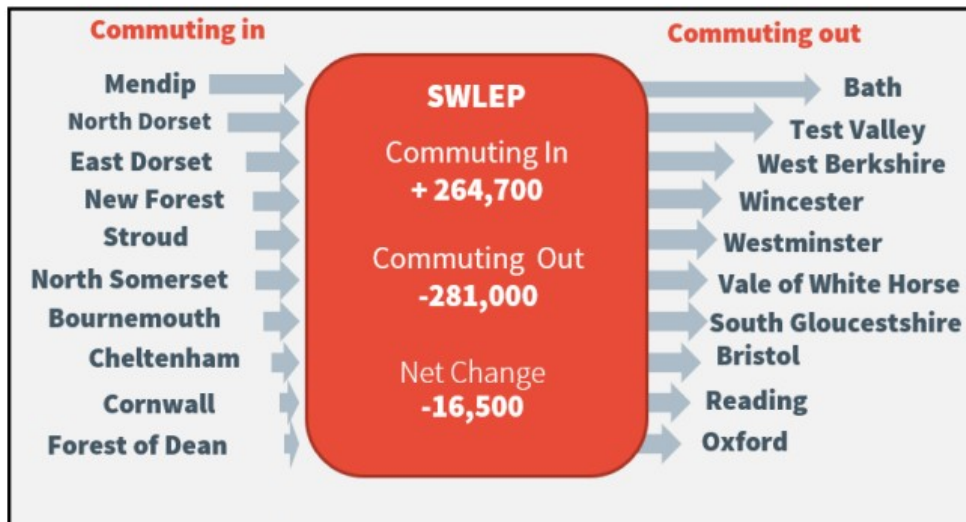


Figure 9 - Commuting origin / destination patterns

Inward commuting is significant however, with key drivers being Swindon and smaller hubs in south and west Wiltshire, in particular from neighbouring areas that have lower productivity, fewer jobs, or lower salaries. The Wiltshire area's cultural offerings and leisure opportunities also drive inflows from these areas and from much further afield.

#### Mode share

Reflecting its rural nature, reliance on car travel is relatively high in the Wiltshire area. Approximately 85% of households own one or more cars – nearly 10% above the national average. Encouraging modal shift is a major opportunity as well as a significant challenge.

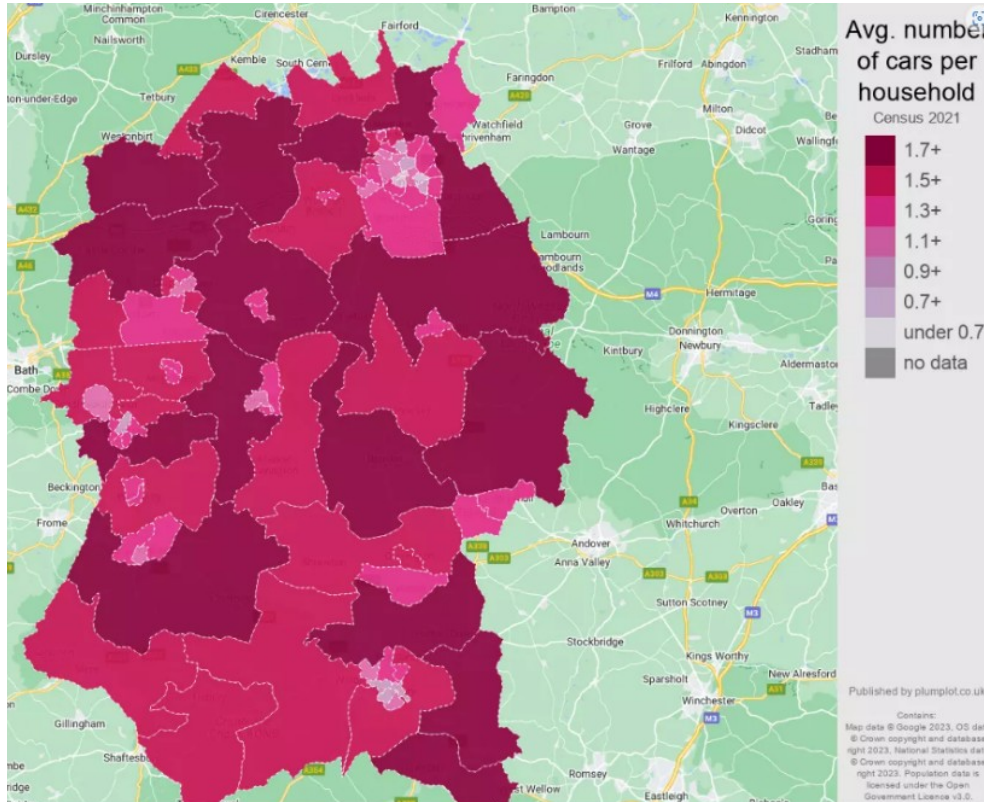
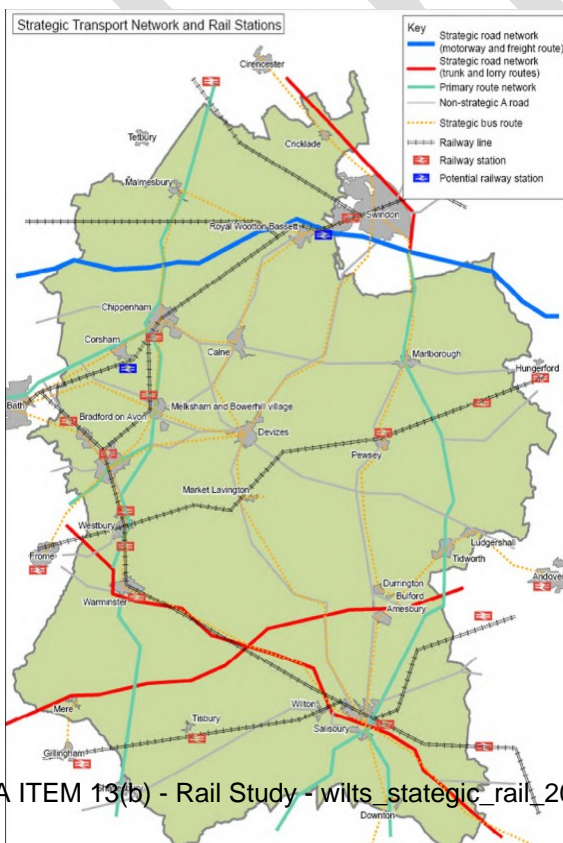


Figure 10 - Car ownership per household heatmap, 2021

The map above illustrates the density of car ownership per household, showing the significant reliance on cars to travel. Comparison of this map to the population density map shows that car ownership is higher in those areas where population density is lower, i.e. the more rural parts of the county. Hubs are concentrated along the key rail and road transport corridors which provide the local and inter-regional connectivity for Wiltshire to the rest of the UK.



The map to the left shows the strategic road, rail and bus networks that serve Wiltshire.

The networks are concentrated to the north of the area, around Swindon, a western corridor around Bath, and the

south, around Salisbury. Central and eastern Wiltshire are notably less well served. The M4 corridor runs through the north of Wiltshire, passing through Swindon and Chippenham.

The rail network includes three main lines that cross the area east to west. However, the limited north-south connectivity that is provided is restricted to the west of the area. There is little rail connectivity for anything other than east – west journeys in the south and east of the area.

These networks dictate the location of key hubs and growth areas, with the north of the area seeing a much higher employment catchment which are further supported by key hubs such as Bristol, Bath, Oxford and Gloucestershire within a 45-minute journey.

*Figure 11 - Wiltshire's Strategic Transport Network and Rail Stations*

## The Road network

The M4 corridor is the key route on the Strategic Road Network that connects the Wiltshire area to Reading, London, and the South East, and Bristol, the South West and Wales.

Other strategic roads include the A350 and A303. All support large freight volumes, which are critical to Wiltshire's economy, with a high proportion of manufacturing and industrial services. Highlighted in red in the map above, strategic routes primarily focus on movement of people and goods between Westbury and the south and off the M4 up towards Oxford, Birmingham and the north.

In 2022 4.79 billion vehicle miles travelled on roads in Wiltshire and Swindon and this number is increasing. Congestion is a common occurrence, leading to slower bus and car journeys, and increased carbon emissions.

The map below shows average traffic speed on weekdays and highlights areas of significant congestion, with areas of red representing higher levels of congestion. Congestion is concentrated around the key settlements and hubs including Swindon, Chippenham, Frome, Trowbridge, Salisbury, Devizes and towards Bath. All of these locations, with the exception of Devizes, currently have railway stations and the TransWilts corridor is connected by rail services, meaning rail can be a viable alternative to journeys on the congested road network.



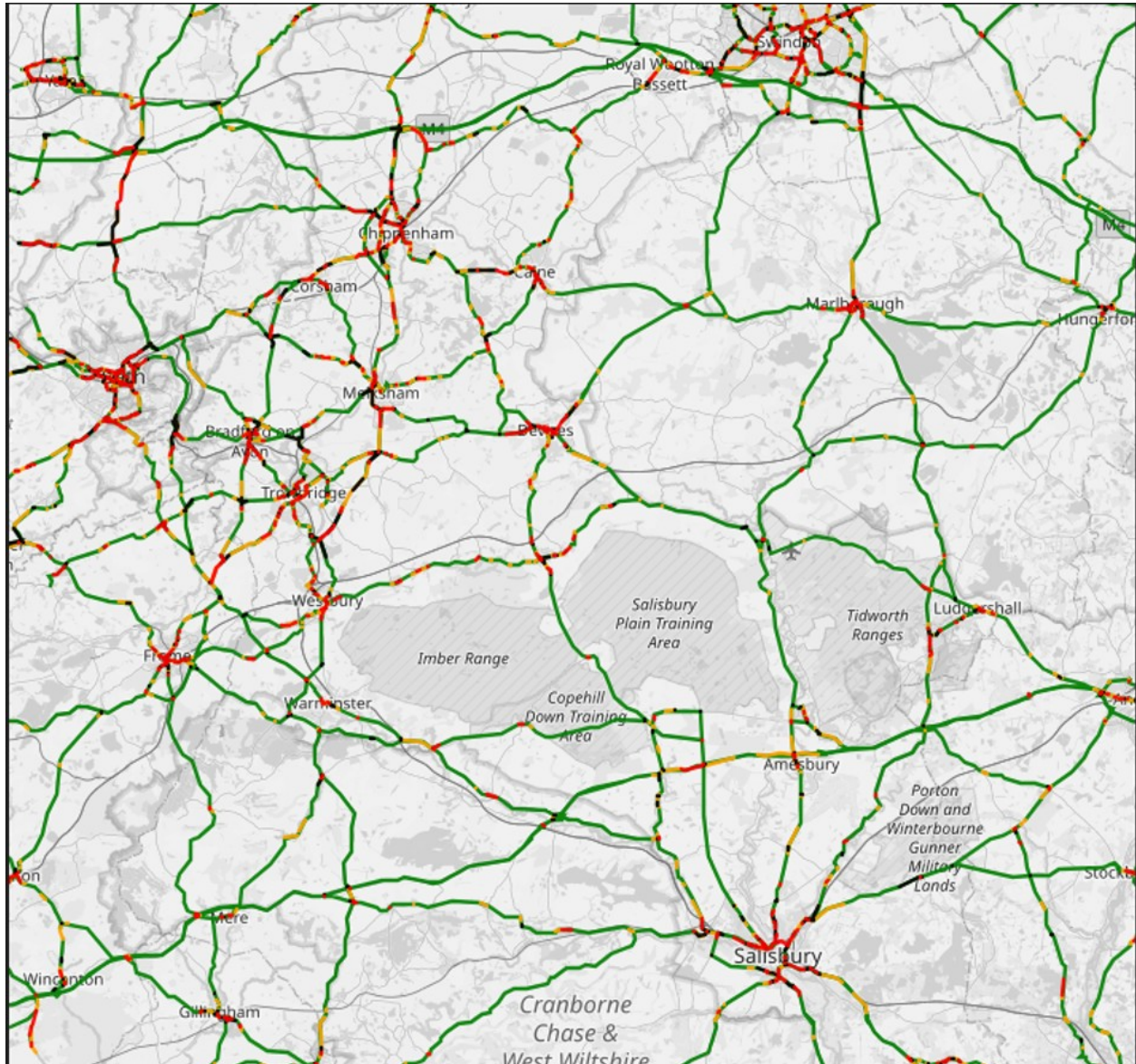


Figure 12- Average traffic speed, 2019

Many of the destination hubs also experience significant congestion, slow journey times, and – increasingly – restrictions on car usage. As well as London and Bristol this includes Reading, Bath, and Oxford. Rail options exist for these journeys and can play a greater role in inducing modal shift.

## What are rail services like?

The Wiltshire area spans two Network Rail routes – Western and Wessex. It features three main lines that radiate from London and therefore cross the area in an east-west orientation: the Great Western Main Line in the north of the area, serving Swindon and Chippenham; the Berks & Hants Line, serving Westbury in the centre of the county; and the West of England Line, in Wessex Route, serving Salisbury in the south of the county. These lines feature predominantly high-speed, long-distance services that provide relatively good

connectivity to key regional hubs. Therefore, each of these four stations (Swindon, Chippenham, Westbury, and Salisbury) has an important interchange function.

North-south connectivity is provided by the Heart of Wessex line between Bristol and Weymouth which serves all stations between Bath Spa and Westbury, the TransWilts service between Swindon and Westbury which serves Melksham and Trowbridge, and the Wessex Main Line which connect Westbury and Salisbury. These routes deliver local connectivity alongside longer journeys. However, connectivity is constrained by variable connection times and irregular or low frequency of services partially owing to limitations with capacity and infrastructure.

Despite being served by the two key corridors in the route, local connectivity in Wiltshire is relatively poor, and is focused to the west of the county. Whilst connectivity between stations on the Heart of Wessex line is good, connectivity between these stations and Swindon is poor, due to infrequent and irregular services on the TransWilts single line via Melksham. Poor connection times between certain services at Westbury limit the attractiveness of journeys via this station and hinder its ability to fulfil its potential as a significant hub for public transport within Wiltshire.

Westbury is, however, a significant hub for freight services, with heavy aggregate trains from the Mendip quarries at Whatley and Merehead in Somerset being regulated here. The station is also a significant location for Network Rail's supply chain operations (SCO), with regular trains of track materials and ballast in and out of the yards to the west of the station. Frequent shunting between these yards is time consuming.

The rail network through Wiltshire accommodates several of the key flows in the South West, including freight, long-distance high speed, inter-regional and local passenger services. Each serve a different market and have different characteristics, which can bring challenges associated with capacity and calling patterns. Freight services run at a significantly lower speed than many passenger services due to their length and weight, meaning they consume a lot more capacity than a passenger service and often provide a point of constraint in the timetable that has to be worked around. The higher-speed inter-regional passenger services aim to provide long-distance connectivity at relatively low journey times, meaning they often only call at a small number of key locations. While this does provide some long-distance connectivity for Wiltshire it does not provide the local connectivity that is needed to respond to the needs of Wiltshire's markets. Furthermore, reliable and frequent rail services which call at the local stations are required to transport local residents to the key markets and interchange stations for onwards travel.

In summary, Wiltshire enjoys strong regional rail links, with many population centres being within commutable distance of London, Bristol, Swindon, South Wales, and the south coast. However other than the Great Western Main Line corridor, journey times are relatively slow and connectivity to the north is limited. Stations in the area lack direct connectivity to Oxford and the Oxford-Cambridge Arc, Birmingham and the West Midlands, the East Midlands, the North West, or the North East. Connectivity within the county is also limited. The Wessex Main line provides regular journeys between Bath Spa and Salisbury but does not serve Swindon, and the TransWilts service between Swindon and Westbury is irregular and infrequent.

### **Key rail corridors:**

- Great Western Main Line – runs from Paddington to Bristol and South Wales via Swindon. Carries key inter-regional passenger and freight flows.
- Berks & Hants Line – runs between Reading and Taunton via Westbury and is a key freight route between the Mendip quarries and the South East as well as the fastest route for passenger services between London and the South West.
- West of England line – runs from Basingstoke to Exeter via Salisbury. Carries inter-regional passenger services to London Waterloo and intersects the Heart of Wessex line at Yeovil.
- Melksham Single line – runs from Swindon to Westbury and is known as the TransWilts line. It is a key freight route for aggregates from the Mendip quarries to the Midlands and North. It is the only direct rail connection between Swindon and the south of the Wiltshire area. It joins the two key interchange locations of Swindon and Westbury, which provide onward connectivity to Oxford from Swindon, the South West from Westbury and London/Bristol from both. It is also an important diversionary route for passenger and freight services when the Berks & Hants is blocked.
- Heart of Wessex line – runs from Bristol Temple Meads to Weymouth via Westbury and Castle Cary. Carries inter-regional passenger services as well as providing local connectivity in west Wiltshire.
- Wessex Main Line – runs between Westbury and Southampton.

Figure 13 below shows a simple schematic of the existing calls and services for each key corridor in the study area.

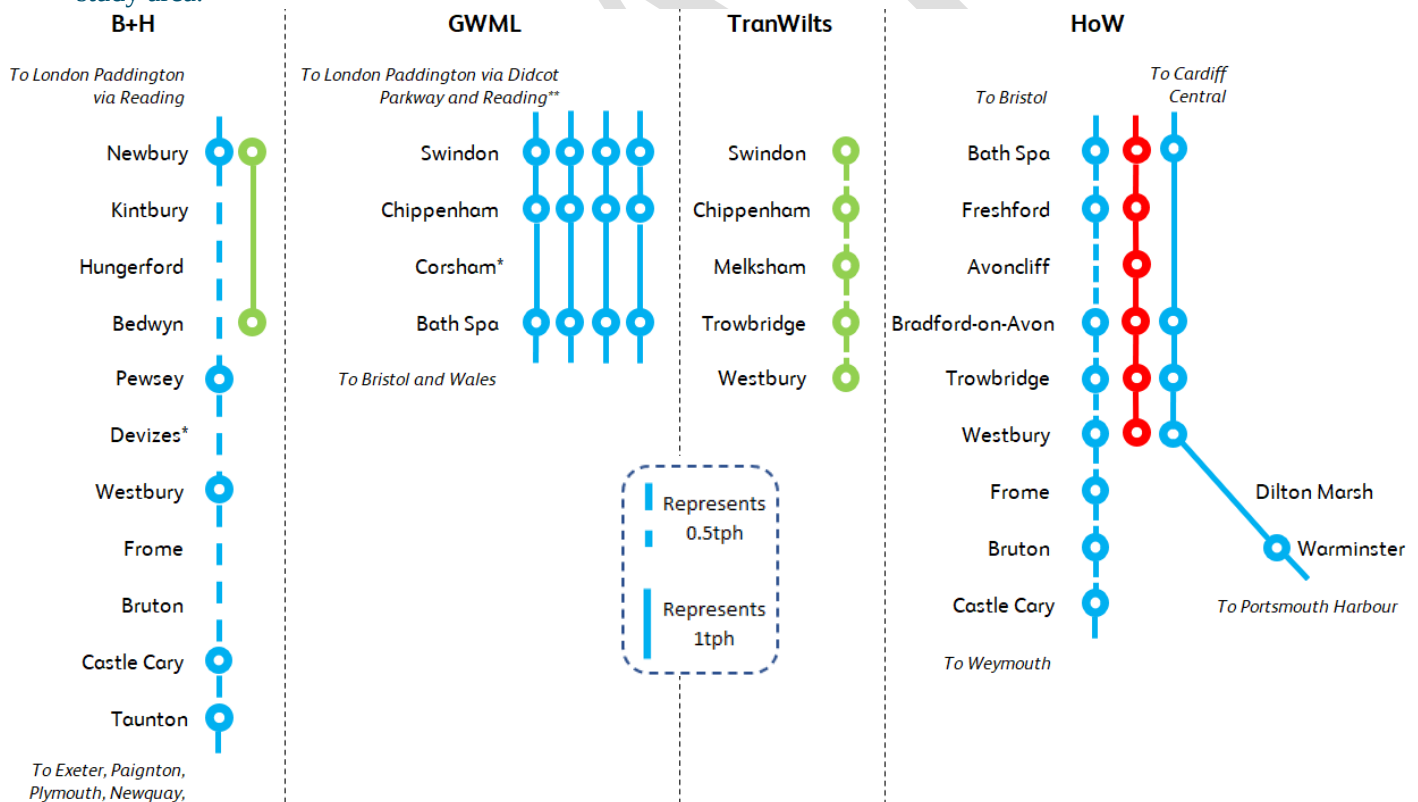


Figure 13: Simplified schematic showing existing services and station calls within study area.

#### Passenger services

Passenger services that use the railway within this area are listed below. The majority are operated by Great Western Railway, with South Western Railway operating services in the south of the county.

Passenger services in the Wiltshire area can be divided into three categories: inter-regional, regional and local.

Inter-regional services are fast, limited stop services that cover large distances across the country. Regional services are also fast, limited stop services that primarily link regional hubs. Local services call at all or nearly all stations and offer slower end-to-end journey times.

Table 3 below shows the service type and frequency of off-peak services that serve Wiltshire as per the December 2023 timetable.

Service type	Origin	Destination	Calls in scope area	Tph
Inter-regional	Paddington	Exeter/ Plymouth/ Paignton	Westbury	0.5
Inter-regional	Paddington	Bristol	Swindon, Chippenham, Bath	2
Inter-regional	Paddington	South Wales	Swindon	2
Inter-regional	Cardiff Central	Portsmouth Harbour	Bath Spa, Bradford-on-Avon, Trowbridge, Westbury, Warminster	1
Inter-regional	Bristol Temple Meads	Weymouth	Bath Spa, Avoncliff, Bradford-on-Avon, Trowbridge, Westbury	0.5
Regional	Bristol Temple Meads	Westbury	Bath Spa, Avoncliff, Bradford-on-Avon, Trowbridge, Westbury	1
Local	Swindon	Westbury	Chippenham, Melksham, Trowbridge	0.5
Inter-regional	Yeovil PM	Waterloo	Warminster, Westbury, Frome, Bruton, Castle Cary	<0.5
Local	Bedwyn	Newbury	Bedwyn	1

Table 3 - Current service level and type of services in study's geographical scope (December 2023, standard hour)

## Freight services

The Wiltshire area has many key freight flows running through it. Examples of regular rail freight movements in Wiltshire include the following:

- Mendip Quarries – transporting aggregates to London and the South East, and some smaller flows to the South West. includes some of the heaviest freight trains on the network.



- Intermodal services from Southampton to Midlands and the North.
- Westbury yard. Hub of activity for Network Rail Supply Chain Operations (SCO)
- Container trains between Southampton and South Wales via Salisbury, Westbury and Bristol – and also between East Anglian ports and South Wales via Swindon and Bath/Badminton.
- China clay from Cornwall sometimes runs via Westbury and trains of fuel from West Wales run to Theale via the B&H.
- MOD traffic from Warminster runs only sporadically.

### Westbury

Westbury is a significant hub for freight traffic and engineering trains. The Network Rail Supply Chain Operations (SCO) waste ballast facility and DB Cargo-leased sidings are adjacent to the south side of the railway (Down side); the SCO new ballast facility, rail recycling facility and stabling yard are on the north (Up side) of the railway. Ad-hoc (untimetabled) freight shunt moves take place from Down-side to Up-side frequently and irregularly during the day.

Propelling moves are undertaken at walking pace (4mph) with a shunter walking in front of the train and maintaining communication with driver using hand-held radios. This is time consuming, with moves taking 20-60 minutes.

Freight trains to and from the quarries regularly halt at Westbury on the Up and Down Reception lines to effect crew changes and/or await an onwards path. As the Down sidings are leased to DB Cargo and the Mendips traffic is now operated by Freightliner, these services do not routinely go into the yard at Westbury. Some services use the former cement works sidings to recess and run round, depending on their routing. Movements fluctuate throughout the day, but on average there are two freight services an hour in each direction along the Berks & Hants.

In December 2023, Freightliner undertook a major recast of their Mendip freight paths. Involving the replacement of older, low-speed wagons, this was done with the aim of making the operation of these services more efficient. The removal of Class 7 (45mph limited) freight paths, which is due to complete by the end of 2025, has the benefit of reducing the amount of time the B&H route is occupied by freight services, which take longer to traverse the route than faster and quicker accelerating passenger services.

In addition to the aggregates traffic, there is also a regular intermodal (container) flow through Westbury from Southampton to South Wales. A greater number of these services run along the GWML, in addition to petroleum trains from South Wales.

### Station usage

There are 14 stations in the Wiltshire area, 10 of which fall in the study scope. Table 4 below lists the stations in the study scope alongside annual usage for 2022/2023.

Stations	Annual demand – Entries and Exits (2022/23)	Interchanges	Station facility owner	Accessibility
Avoncliff	23,402	0	GWR	B



Bedwyn	81,534	0	GWR	C
Bradford on Avon	426,700	6,234	GWR	B
Chippenham	1,444,874	26,946	GWR	A
Dilton Marsh	12,076	0	GWR	B
Melksham	64,206	0	GWR	A
Pewsey	181,100	0	GWR	B
Salisbury	1,621,562	217,777	SWR	B
Swindon	2,588,014	189,382	GWR	A
Trowbridge	734,768	36,255	GWR	B
Warminster	295,452	12,008	GWR	B
Westbury	518,996	246,705	GWR	A

Table 4 - Station usage, facility owner and accessibility rating

Swindon sees the highest annual usage in the study area, followed by Salisbury and Chippenham. Local hubs such as Trowbridge and Bradford on Avon also see high station usage per year despite having fewer services, showing strong demand for rail at these locations.

Westbury is key hub for passenger as well as freight services and sees the highest level of interchange, followed by Salisbury and Swindon. Connection times at Westbury are therefore vital to improving the journey attractiveness.

## Accessibility:

All stations are categorised for their level of accessibility:

- A: This station has step-free access to all platforms / the platform
- B: This station has a degree of step-free access to the platform, which may be in both directions or in one direction only.
- C: This station does not have step-free access to any platform

All stations within Wiltshire are category A or B.

The 2021 Census showed that Wiltshire's population is ageing. 21.8% of people are aged 65 and over (compared to 18.4% in England), with 3% aged 85 and over. Wiltshire was one of only three local authorities in the South West whose 65+ population grew by more than 30% between 2011 and 2021.<sup>1</sup> There is therefore an increasing need for the rail network to become more accessible to enable an increasingly older population to use the railway. Doing so will help reduce reliance on private car usage.

Based on their level of usage, it is recommended that accessibility improvements are prioritised for Bradford-on-Avon, Trowbridge and Warminster:

<sup>1</sup> Source – [Local and national context - Wiltshire Council](#)

**Bradford-on-Avon** – whilst there is step-free access to both platforms, access to Platform 1 from the station building can only be achieved by an indirect route via local roads, of circa 325 meters. An accessible footbridge would remove this issue. As the station is Grade 2 listed, consideration will need to be given as to if and how step free access can be delivered within the constraints this imposes. The station also currently lacks full tactile paving to aid those with visual impairments, which should also be addressed.

**Trowbridge** – as with Bradford-on-Avon, both platforms have step-free access, but step-free access between one side of the station and the other is only possible via a circa 360 meter journey via local roads. An accessible footbridge would remove this issue. Toilet facilities are available at Trowbridge, but not an accessible toilet. Provision of one should be considered alongside proposals for a footbridge. Given the relatively high level of interchange for such a station (over 31,00 per annum), and the potential for this to increase if TransWilts services are improved, accessibility between platforms is an important consideration here.

**Warminster** – there is step-free access to both platforms, but no step-free access between platforms via the footbridge. For step-free access, passengers must make a circa 190 meter journey via the road to the station car park. Unlike Bradford-on-Avon and Trowbridge, there is no consistent paved route that can be followed all the way, meaning the accessibility gap is greater here than at the other two stations. An improved pedestrian route via the road would provide some improvement in the short-term. Longer term, an accessible footbridge would resolve the issue. Toilet facilities are available at Warminster, but not an accessible toilet. Provision of one should be considered alongside proposals for a footbridge.

Network Rail Western Route is developing an Accessibility Strategy. A theme of the strategy is that when making improvements at a station all aspects of accessibility should be considered holistically and opportunities for complimentary improvements identified. In addition to the points raised above, we would therefore recommend that a comprehensive appraisal is made of options for improving accessibility at any stations in Wiltshire when works are planned to be carried out at them. Opportunities for making complimentary enhancements at the same time can then be considered.

## First and Last mile

### Bus

As part of this study, analysis has been undertaken to look at the current levels of connectivity between bus and rail services. It is important that opportunities for people to make sustainable journeys end-to-end, are considered, and not merely rail travel in isolation.

All stations in the Wiltshire area are considered to have good proximity to bus stops, with the farthest (Warminster) being circa 250 meters away. For most stations there are sizable populations within 15 minutes of a rail station by bus, as shown in table 3 below. The percentage of users from the population who could access a station by bus will be influenced by a number of factors, including frequency of bus and train services, how complimentary bus and rail timetables are, whether the bus route mirrors some of the journey options that could be made by train etc. Specific locations therefore need to be considered in more detail to understand the full picture, but the figures nonetheless highlight some points of note.

Station	Population within 15 min by Bus	Population within 15-25 min by Bus	Ratio: Daily users / population in 15min bus reach
Bradford-on-Avon	21,131	16,225	6%
Chippenham	29,421	7,511	15%
Dilton Marsh	3,932	9,764	1%
Melksham	22,696	41,698	1%
Salisbury	10,834	2,019	47%
Swindon	55,718	55,805	17%
Trowbridge	48,657	20,586	4%
Warminster	1,710	13,439	60%
Westbury	4,497	11,638	37%

Table 5 - Ratio of daily users to population in bus station proximity

Melksham, Bradford-on-Avon, Trowbridge and Dilton Marsh stand out as having a particularly low ratio of users to population within 15 minutes by bus. In the case of Trowbridge, this may be due to it being a local hub for employment and commerce, meaning people make fewer journeys away from the town than might be the case elsewhere.

In the case of Dilton Marsh, it is likely there is significant overlap with the population for Westbury, and that many of those who could use Dilton Marsh use Westbury instead; given its greater range of service options, Westbury is probably a more popular choice. The same is likely to be true of Bradford-on-Avon, where there may be some overlap with the catchment for Trowbridge.

Melksham appears to be the outlier, with less obvious overlap with neighbouring rail-connected settlements. Figure 14 below shows how Melksham suffers from a lack of effective bus connectivity, with the area immediately to the north and east of the town shown as 'Disconnected, unable to reach the station by bus', and the town itself shown as having high waiting times between bus and train, undoubtedly linked in part to the current irregular train service. This highlights the limited public transport offering in that area and suggests there is scope to improve bus/rail interchange opportunities here.

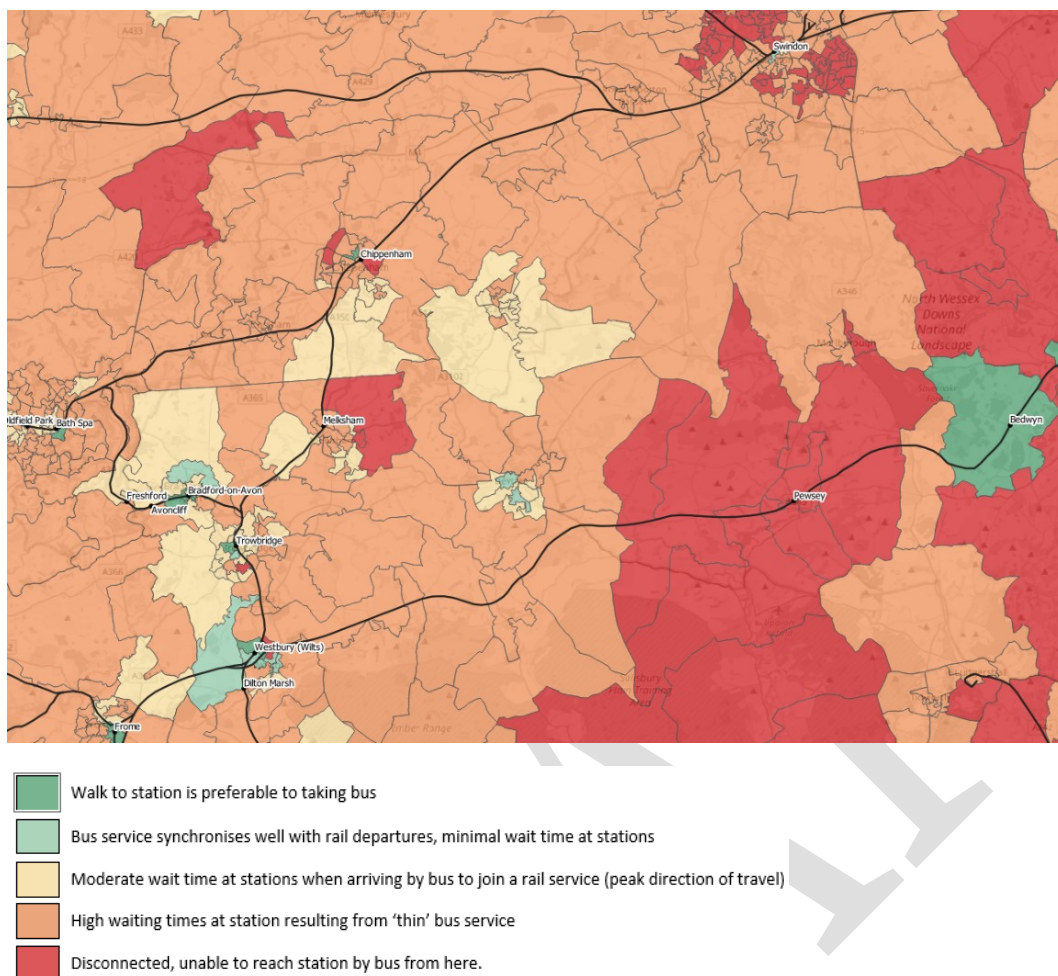


Figure 14 - Level of bus / rail interchange opportunities

It is also notable from Figure 14 that there are a number of 'disconnected' clusters to the north and south of Swindon, and on a much smaller scale around Chippenham. Given these more urban areas are likely to already have a well-developed bus network, mobility as a service solutions or on-demand bus services may be a better way of connecting these areas to the rail network.

### Active travel

Table 6 below shows the car and cycle parking provision at each of the Wiltshire stations (excluding Salisbury). Warminster and Bradford-on-Avon have a high number of daily users per cycle parking space. Consideration could be given to whether more spaces could be provided to meet/encourage cycling demand. At Bradford-on-Avon, consideration could also be given to providing covered accommodation, to make the option of parking a bike there more attractive.

### Car parking

From Table 6 below, Melksham, Trowbridge and Swindon stand out as having a high number of daily users per parking space. This is unsurprising for Swindon and Trowbridge, given these are fairly large urban areas where many users may access the station through active travel or by bus. The ratio for Melksham is more notable; this may be linked to the presence of private parking near the station which enables more people to

drive to the station than the figures suggest. Given the likely increase in patronage that would be expected to follow an improvement in the train service, it is still recommended that consideration be given to enhancing parking provision here, alongside efforts to encourage accessing the station by other means.

Station	No. of car parking space	Daily Users per car space	No. of cycle spaces	Daily Users per cycle space	Cycle storage covered?	Storage CCTV?
Avoncliff	0	0	4	16	N	Y
Bedwyn	40	6	10	22	Y	Y
Bradford-on-Avon	180	6	28	42	N	Y
Chippenham	640	6	106	37	Y	Y
Dilton Marsh	0	0	8	4	Y	Y
Melksham	10	18	8	22	Y	Y
Pewsey	115	4	20	25	N	Y
Swindon	591	12	197	36	N	Y
Trowbridge	117	17	70	29	Y	Y
Warminster	112	7	16	51	Y	Y
Westbury	321	4	68	21	Y	Y

*Table 6 - Provision of car and cycle parking spaces at each station in Wiltshire*

## What are the strategic transport problems?

Sustained population growth in the Wiltshire area has posed significant strategic transport challenges. Increasing demand for transport across and through the area creates strain on existing systems, and the well-established relationship between transport connectivity and economic activity means that improved strategic transport provision – and in particular public transport provision – is fundamental to supporting deliver of local and regional objectives and sustainable economic and housing growth.

### Growth

With population growth higher than the national average the strain on the transport system will increase. Provision of reliable and accessible transport will also be necessary to increase accessibility and connectivity between key local and regional business and education hubs to provide opportunities for employment and education. Improved transport connections can also encourage in-commuting which will further attract employers to invest in the local area, as can be seen in Swindon and Chippenham. This will subsequently support the economy.

### Modal shift

With many key regional hubs experiencing high levels of road congestion and emission-controlled zones, road journey times and costs are set to increase; therefore, public transport needs to provide an attractive and



reliable alternative. Increased reliance on cars will also mean that it will be more difficult to reduce overall carbon emissions and achieve net-zero targets.

The rural nature of Wiltshire poses a significant challenge for modal shift to rail transport. With car usage expected to rise from 17% to 28% by 2038, and existing rail offering providing infrequent and irregular local services along the TransWilts corridor to the West of Wiltshire, residents, particularly those in the more rural areas, have few alternative options for sustainable transport.

Population density in Wiltshire is relatively low and concentrated in key hubs such as Swindon, Trowbridge, Salisbury and Chippenham. The population density map shows the more densely populated areas broadly follow the main road and rail network, whereas a large proportion of the county has areas of low density and is poorly connected by the transport network. For residents living in these areas, there will be a higher reliance on cars, and despite improvements to the rail network there are still parts of the county that will experience poor connectivity and modal shift will continue to be a challenge for the region.

Intermodal planning to develop improved bus links between the stations and rural areas will improve accessibility to the rail network and can support development of rail stations as mobility hubs for Wiltshire, giving those in rural populations viable and attractive options for sustainable transport. Improved bus links will reduce the reliance on cars to get to a station and improved rail connectivity will reduce reliance on cars to travel to key local and regional markets.

### Service offering

Constraints on the existing transport network have resulted in limited alternative and attractive options for rail travel across and through Wiltshire. Current journey options provide suboptimal connectivity, journey times and frequencies. This results in a sustained reliance on cars and can affect Wiltshire's attractiveness as a place to live but also to visit and work, negatively impacting the local economy.

Table 7 below highlights a selection of connection times in a typical off-peak hour at Westbury during the December 2023 timetable.

From	To	Waiting time
Warminster/Dilton Marsh	Paddington	45 minutes
Warminster/Dilton Marsh	Swindon	50 minutes +
Frome	Salisbury	25 minutes
Swindon	Salisbury	17 minutes +
Paddington	Trowbridge	18 minutes
Trowbridge	Paddington	42 minutes

*Table 7 - Connection times in an off-peak hour at Westbury (December 2023 timetable)*

The TransWilts route offers the only direct connection between Swindon / Chippenham and Melksham, Trowbridge, and Westbury, but it is currently irregular and infrequent. There are gaps between services of 2 – 2.5 hours in the morning and 4 – 4.5 hours in the afternoon, making the service unattractive to those

travelling for leisure. The route is also an important diversionary route in the event that the Berks & Hants Line is shut for engineering works or during unplanned disruption. The diversion of main line services sees the local service being withdrawn, due to the limited capacity over the route.

Chippenham and Swindon play a similar role to Westbury in terms of interchange for inter-regional journeys, offering fast and regular services to Reading and London, Bristol, and (from Swindon) South Wales. However, there are notable inter-regional connectivity gaps from these stations, including Birmingham and Oxford. Despite its proximity to Swindon, Oxford can only be accessed by interchange at Didcot or Reading.

## What are the key capacity and capability constraints?

### Linespeed

Although a key main line route, the Berks & Hants line between Southcote Junction (Reading) and Cogload Junction (Taunton) does not allow for consistent high speed running. Linespeed is as high as 110mph in places, but there are sections (such as Kintbury – Bedwyn) where speed drops to between 75 and 90mph. This is linked to the geography of the route, which is difficult to overcome; previous work (the Speed to the West project in 2016) identified significant, costly earthworks and realignment would be needed to enhance linespeeds. However, the mix of fast passenger and slower freight services on this route means the benefits of line speed enhancements would be limited in any case, due to the faster trains catching up the slower ones.

### Signalling

Signalling headways are also a limit on capacity within the study area. Headway is the minimum amount of time that must be allowed between one train following another in the same direction. A typical headway for a fast main line would be 3 minutes. On the Berks & Hants, headway is 3.5 minutes, but can be as much as 5 or 6 minutes if a freight train is being followed. West of Castle Cary, towards Salisbury and towards Bath, Absolute Block headway applies, which is more restrictive from a capacity point of view. Re-signalling could reduce these headways and create additional capacity.

### Electrification

The Berks & Hants line is electrified from Reading as far as Newbury. The route beyond to Cogload Junction was identified as a high priority for electrification in the Network Rail Wales & Western Regional Traction Decarbonisation Strategy (2022). Of six tranches, of decreasing priority from 0 – 5, Newbury to Cogload is identified in tranche 1. The routes northwards from Westbury are also in tranche 1, on the basis that they provide diversionary routes for the key freight flows. Given the heavy freight on the route there is likely to be a strong case for continuous electrification – at least as far as East Somerset Junction – despite the industry trend towards hybrid rolling stock. This would enable the heavy quarry traffic to be electric-hauled, which would bring improved pulling power and therefore release capacity.

There is an increasing focus on hybrid battery electric rolling stock for decarbonising both freight and passenger services. Such a concept could most effectively be delivered at network level by charging batteries via overhead line equipment (OLE), and doing so at key network hubs, where most services pass through and therefore have the opportunity to charge. The Westbury area may be an ideal location for

charging via OLE and consideration should be given to the benefits for all services, including freight, in developing options for to decarbonise specific passenger fleets.

### **Gauging**

The Berks & Hants has limited capability to take intermodal (container) freight, being cleared to W8 gauge from Reading to Westbury, but only being cleared to W7 gauge from Westbury to Cogload Junction. For carrying modern container traffic, a minimum clearance of W9 or greater is desirable. Container traffic can only be carried on routes with more restrictive gauging if special wagons, of which there are a limited number, are used. Whilst a limited amount of container traffic does pass through Westbury between Bristol and Southampton via Salisbury, greater use of the route could be made for this traffic if a higher level of gauge clearance was possible.

The route between Bradford Junction and Bathampton Junction is currently published as clear to the standard W6a freight gauge. This offers very limited opportunities to move 9' 6" high containers over the route, with only one wagon type, the 'pocket' wagon, able to achieve this, whilst specialised wagons are required even to transport 8' 6" high boxes over this route. It is, however, the shortest route between the Port of Southampton and intermodal rail freight terminals in Bristol and South Wales. As a result of the poor gauge clearance of the Bradford to Bathampton route, the favoured route for traffic over this axis is via Reading West, Didcot, and the Great Western Main Line. The gauge on this route is W10 between Southampton and Didcot, reducing to W8 between Didcot and Bristol and Cardiff. This superior gauge-clearance means that this is the preferred route despite being significantly longer, with the route via Bradford Junction saving up to a third of the distance. A strategic outline business case (SOBC) has been prepared for gauge enhancing this route to achieve W8 clearance, along with the option of additionally clearing W10 gauge.

### **Track Capacity**

The single line between Bradford Junction (Trowbridge) and Thingley Junction (Chippenham) via Melksham is a critical point of constraint for services using that route, as only one train at a time can pass through the circa 9 mile long section. This significantly limits the number of services that can run over that route. This is highly problematic when the line is used as a diversionary route for the Berks & Hants, when the local TransWilts service has to be withdrawn. The single line also limits introduction of new services in the corridor, both as an absolute capacity constraint and by making timetabling less flexible.

Although out of scope for this study, Southcote Junction is a point of constraint for services coming on/off the Berks & Hants route. A separate Network Rail study has identified that up to one additional path per hour each for passenger and freight in each direction may be accommodated across Southcote Junction. Some short-term growth can be accommodated, but capacity could be filled by the CrossCountry fleet upgrade and through increased freight path utilisation. A long-term intervention is required between Southcote Junction and Oxford Road Junction to achieve forecast growth, which may include grade separation. This will need to be borne in mind when considering additional services to/from London, such as the hourly West of England semi-fast service or freight growth.

Sections of 2-track railway along the Berks & Hants line between Westbury Line Junction (Reading) and Westbury presents a challenge for capacity to accommodate future growth of passenger and freight services



along the route. This is a particular challenge given the need to accommodate a mix of fast inter-regional services alongside slow freight service and limited opportunities to hold freight services to enable passenger services to pass.

### Level crossings

There are 63 level crossings of various types on the rail network within the area of Wiltshire covered by this study, with a further 19 on the Berks & Hants in Somerset and 17 in Berkshire (as of June 2024). These range from footpath and farm crossings with no warning systems, to conventional road crossings with barriers and lights. These represent a hazard that is carefully managed and is sensitive to changes in service levels. Level crossings inherently present risk which extends to passengers, railway staff and members of the public. They may also determine lower line speeds in some locations on safety grounds; enhancement of a level crossing may therefore help improve journey times as well as improving safety. The impact of new services operating over these level crossings will need to be assessed and, potentially, mitigations identified and funded.

Area	Number of level crossings	Crossings with risk rating A-C
Southcote Jn – Westbury	39	28
Westbury – Cogload Jn	25	14
Bathampton – Bradford Jn (near Trowbridge)	16	11
Thingley Jn – Westbury (Melksham Single)	14	6
Swindon – Bristol main line	4	3
Westbury – Warminster	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>62</b>

Table 8 - Level crossings in study scope by area with associated risk rating

Table 8 shows that more than two thirds of the crossings in the study area are rated relatively high risk for users, under Network Rail's standardised approach to crossing risk management known as the All Level Crossings Risk Model (ALCRM). The risk rating for each crossing is represented by a code comprising a letter and number:

- The letter is for the 'individual risk' which applies only to crossing users. The score is presented as a letter ranging from A to M where A is the highest value and M is the lowest.
- The number is for 'collective risk' which considers the total risk for all people who use the crossing, including pedestrians, road vehicle drivers, train staff and passengers. The score is presented as a number ranging from 1 to 13 where 1 is the highest value and 13 is the lowest. For example, crossings with a risk score of 'M13' have been assessed as having zero risk.

### 3. What could the Wiltshire Area be like tomorrow?

#### What are the rail plans and growth opportunities?

##### Stakeholder strategies

The study must align with and support key stakeholders' aspirations and objectives. Stakeholders' strategies for the Wiltshire area highlight both its growth potential and the potential for rail to play an even more significant role in moving people and goods throughout the study area and across the wider network.

The Wiltshire area study needs to play its role to mitigate Wiltshire's 6 key strategic challenges:

- **Economic development:** reducing levels of out commuting
- **Climate Change:** adaptation and mitigating measures
- **Providing new homes:** planning for sufficient new homes
- **Planning for resilient communities:** dealing with the varied nature of Wiltshire
- **Environmental quality:** safeguarding high quality environments whilst accommodating increased growth
- **Infrastructure:** ensuring adequate and timely services and infrastructure meet a growing population and economy

**Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) Rail Strategy (2019)**

The SWLEP are the Local Enterprise Partnership covering the area. The organisation's core objective is to support economic growth in the area and their 2019 Rail strategy highlighted the pivotal role that rail could play in supporting their objectives. Their vision for rail included:

- A rail network that supports the economy and improves quality of life for residents and businesses within Swindon & Wiltshire
- A rail network with enhanced connectivity to other key regional centres
- Improved access to the rail network for residents and businesses through new stations and better integration
- Maintaining and improving existing links to key regional and national centres

The study made several key recommendations for further development which are accounted for in the development of the ITSS for this study, including journey time improvements, improved service frequency, new stations and improved local and national connectivity (Paddington -Westbury, Oxford-Southampton/Bristol and Cambridge)

**Restoring Your Railways (RJR)**

In January 2020 the Department for Transport (DfT) launched the Restoring Your Railways (RJR) programme to reopen old railway lines and stations that were closed following the publication of the Beeching Report in 1963. There have been several RJR bids within Wiltshire, but this study accounts for Corsham and Devizes Gateway as bids that were successful in progressing to Strategic Outline Business Case.

**Greater Bristol Strategic Study**

The Greater Bristol Strategic Study (GBSS) 2022 makes recommendations for development of rail services required to support planned growth in the Greater Bristol Area. The study includes improvements for freight growth, extension of Bristol – Westbury services to Weymouth and highlighted the importance of Westbury as a corridor and interchange station.

**Western Gateway**

Western Gateway are a Sub-national Transport Body (STB) that focus on supporting improvements to the regions transport network.

The Strategic Transport Plan (2020-2025) and Western Gateway Rail strategy identified 5 key themes for areas of focus for the railway:

- Choice
- Decarbonisation
- Social Mobility
- Productivity
- Growth

Priorities within these themes included improved frequency and improved rail journey times and new and direct journey offerings.

Their Rail strategy identified key journey improvements which have been accounted for in this study including:

- A Gap for services in Cardiff – Southampton and Exeter-Reading. Both via Westbury.

- Service frequency between Westbury – Chippenham, Westbury – Taunton, and Weymouth – Bristol, regular Westbury – Salisbury.
- Longer than desired interchange times at Westbury.

Western Gateway have an aspiration for increasing rail freight and rail freight terminals at Westbury. This study has not looked at provision of new freight terminals, but has considered how freight can be accommodated, including more services to Westbury.

### **Devizes Gateway Interim Feasibility Study (IFS)**

The Devizes IFS provided additional analysis to bolster the original Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) for Devizes Gateway, a new station proposal as part of the Restoring Your Railways (RJR) programme. The proposal explored options for an hourly service which serve the station and the preferred option for the reinstatement of the hourly Paddington – Bedwyn service (an existing aspiration for GWR) was identified. The analysis showed that there were a number of difficulties the prevented the introduction of the hourly service which could be addressed by changes to freight operations and wider changes driven by the introduction of Old Oak Common station.

To enable the reinstated service to call at Devizes, the service would need to extend to Westbury, which would deliver connectivity benefits, but would also require an additional platform (Platform 0) at Westbury to accommodate and turn-around the service. The service and infrastructure recommendations of this IFS have been taken forward into “Phase 0” of the ITSS.

The Devizes IFS concluded that the development of Devizes Gateway needed to be considered in a broader context and as part of a wider range of changes and interventions for the route. It recommended that Network Rail lead a Wiltshire Rail Strategic Study to consider Devizes Gateway alongside other aspirations for the Wiltshire rail network, with this work building a strategic case for investment in the area and identifying which other service enhancements would benefit from a new platform at Westbury.

The changes required for Devizes Gateway prompted discussions into additional benefits that could be delivered to maximise the additional platform capacity at Westbury and the Old Oak Common / and freight changes.

### **Freight growth**

The Reading – Newbury and Salisbury – Bathampton/Thingley Junction route sections are in the top 10 route sections for forecast freight train mile growth, with Newbury – Cogload Junction in 12th place (out of 44 route sections).

With the Mendip quarries already representing a nationally significant freight flow, and with several year’s worth of aggregates remaining to be exploited in the quarries, it is inevitable that there will be further growth in this market. This may partly be achieved through the running of longer trains, but it can be assumed that additional services will also run.

Renewed growth in the intermodal (container) market is already being driven through a Modal Shift Programme incentive scheme run by DP World for business through its Southampton site. The incentive was initially set at £70 per applicable container for the period between 1st September 2023 and 31st

December 2023. Starting from 1st January 2024, the Incentive was increased to £100 per applicable container. From 1st April 2024, the MSP Incentive was reduced to £80. This trial runs until September 2024, and has seen rail services uptake at Southampton increase from 21% (January to June) to 27% (September to December) last year. This traffic is most relevant to the GWML through Swindon and, to a lesser extent, the route from Salisbury – Bath.

There is potential for parcels/light logistics rail traffic to commence in the near future to locations along the GWML, such as Swindon and Bristol. The Panattoni development in Swindon has potential to act as a railhead for such traffic, subject to private investment in the necessary facilities at the site.

In December 2023 the DfT released its rail freight growth target, outlining aims for at least 75% growth in freight carried by rail by 2050. Network Rail has subsequently published a plan of how this will be achieved over the coming control periods. 6.9% growth is targeted in Wales and Western region by 2029.

It is envisaged that growth will be realised through delivering a more reliable railway, thus giving greater certainty and confidence to users, and through increased network efficiency, development of terminals and enhancements, where funding is available.

For Wiltshire, this is likely to be reflected in the running of both more, and longer, aggregate trains from the quarries, as well as new traffic opportunities developing on the GWML, such as express parcels traffic to Swindon and/or Bristol and scrap traffic to South Wales.

## Population growth

Table 9 below focuses on growth forecasts of the primary settlements served by the stations and highlights the proposed growth in population, housing and employment by 2038 for each of the settlements.

Settlements	Population	Housing growth forecast	Forecast Employment land supply per (HA)
Bradford-on-Avon	10,405	140	-
Chippenham	36,548	5,850	42.5
Corsham	10,888	360	-
Dilton Marsh	1,958	61	-
Melksham	27,898	2,160	5.5
Pewsey	18,113	137	-
Salisbury	41,820	4,500	12.3
Swindon	233,400	13,420	20
Trowbridge	43,744	4,420	27.4
Warminster	18,173	1,780	5.6

Westbury	16,404	1,400	16.7
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Table 9 - Housing and employment growth forecasts by settlement

The table shows that population is concentrated around Swindon and principal settlements of Trowbridge, Salisbury and Chippenham.

Swindon, Chippenham, Salisbury, Trowbridge have the highest levels of forecasted growth in housing and employment, followed closely by Melksham, Trowbridge and Westbury, demonstrating the need to meet a growing demand and improve connectivity to and between these regions. The key areas highlighted for growth are linked primarily by TransWilts services and include three of the main interchanges for services in Wiltshire to wider regions, demonstrating a significant opportunity to increase patronage and modal shift.

Improvements to service frequency will improve generalised journey times and attract more passengers to rail with more rail services connecting Swindon, Westbury, Bristol, London and the South-West.

## 4. How could stakeholder aspirations be met for tomorrow's railway?

Evidence-based research and stakeholder consultation of the Wiltshire area carried out as part of this study highlighted aspirations for the Wiltshire area and key challenges in achieving the relevant aspirations. Of those aspirations and challenges, this study explores how the railway can address the strategic transport problems identified and support Wiltshire in delivering their aspirations through a set of proposed service enhancements to the existing rail network.

Workshops were held with relevant stakeholders to identify their aspirations for future passenger service changes and enhancements. Freight growth forecasts were also consulted to understand what provision would need to be made for additional freight trains. The outcome of this was the agreed Indicative Train Service Specification (ITSS) that has been used for the Wiltshire study.

Findings and recommendations from the Devizes IFS have also been considered and included for identification of priority flows which warrant further analysis as part of this study which will contribute towards building a strategic case for investment in the area and identifying which other service enhancements would benefit from a new platform at Westbury.

The four key themes that came from discussions with stakeholders were:

### 1. Improved connectivity within Wiltshire

The provision of an improved (ideally hourly) TransWilts service is a long-standing aspiration for local stakeholders. This would be an important link in strengthening connectivity within the county and for Melksham in particular.

## **2. Improved regional connectivity.**

As well as improving connectivity within the county, stakeholders have highlighted a desire for improved connectivity to other regional centres, with the South West, south coast and Midlands highlighted. An hourly Paddington – Exeter semi-fast service would improve connectivity to the west (as well as aligning to aspirations for improved connectivity in Devon); an improved TransWilts service would have the potential to be extended to Southampton, subject to capacity being available on the Wessex route; and the introduction of a Bristol – Oxford service would give improved connectivity from Swindon towards the Midlands, with further connectivity opening up to the east once East West Rail is opened.

## **3. Improved connections at Westbury**

Poor connections at Westbury have been consistently raised as a concern for stakeholders. Increasing the frequency of services on the TransWilts and B&H routes would naturally reduce connection times and make interchange more feasible and attractive. Timetable analysis has shown that there is scope to provide improved connection times; the nature of the improvements will depend on the mix of train service enhancements taken forwards.

## **4. Freight growth**

Preserving capacity for future growth, whilst optimising operations, is a key consideration for freight traffic. There will be challenges in accommodating both freight and passenger growth on the B&H, both locally to Wiltshire and further afield. Some of these challenges can be addressed through timetabling solutions, but infrastructure enhancements will also be necessary.

# **Overview of the train service development options**

## **Baseline enhancements**

The study's baseline specification assumes five key improvements to services and infrastructure in the study area which will improve service provision and capacity in the area. These have been identified through schemes which are currently committed and in progress or priority schemes which have been identified in the Devizes IFS and form 'Phase 0'. They will have been fully delivered or assumed to be fully delivered prior to delivery of the aspirations highlighted in the ITSS and were therefore integrated in the timetable prior to the incremental assessment of services in the ITSS.

Scheme	Status	Anticipated Railway output
Mendip freight services recast	Committed To be fully operational 2025	The Mendips recast will achieve consistent paths at 60mph from the quarries by replacing wagons limited to 45mph and double-heading (using of two locomotives) some services. This will improve freight journey times as well as providing a more consistent timetable,



		making it easier to accommodate additional passenger services.
Hourly Bristol - Weymouth	Proposal Assumed operational for this study	The hourly Bristol - Weymouth was a recommendation of previous NR strategic studies and there is ongoing development of an SOBC to support its introduction, making it a more advanced proposition than other services in the ITSS.
Westbury Platform 0	Proposal Assumed operational for this study	Westbury platform 0 was proposed as part of the Devizes Interim Feasibility Study. The platform will serve the hourly Paddington – Westbury service and provide additional platforming capacity.
Hourly Paddington – Westbury	Proposal Assumed operational for this study	1tph service provided by GWR. The re-instated service would serve a new Devizes Gateway station and provide an hourly service between Paddington and Bedwyn, Pewsey, and Westbury, increasing service frequency from the current 0.5tph service level.
Devizes Gateway station	Proposal Assumed operational for this study	The station would be served by the hourly Paddington-Westbury service.
Corsham station	Proposal Assumed operational for this study	The station could be served by a new hourly Bristol-Oxford service.

*Table 10 - Committed or assumed schemes accounted for in the study.*

These enhancements will improve rail capacity and connectivity in the Wiltshire area. However, there remains an opportunity to further improve services and address specific connectivity issues that may remain. This study looks at how the proposed/existing enhancements in the area will support additional service improvements that will deliver the connectivity benefits and solve the transport problems identified. The study has also identified further options which will inform choices around how any proposed services will be developed and delivered.

This includes delivering a balance between the need to accommodate inter-regional connectivity improvements – strengthening connections between educational and business hubs – and to provide better local connectivity in light of the largely rural area, poor north-south connectivity, and need to encourage modal shift.

## The ITSS

An Indicative Train Service Specification (ITSS) was developed in conjunction with local stakeholder, train operator and freight teams' input, taking account of their aspirations for future passenger service changes and enhancements. Recommendations from other relevant rail studies (such as the Greater Bristol Strategic Study) and the recommendations from the Devizes Gateway Initial Feasibility Study were also considered



and included Having identified the services for inclusion, an initial prioritisation was proposed and agreed by stakeholders and taken forward for analysis.

The services have been grouped into 4 phases depending on the level of priority agreed with stakeholders. The outputs of the Devizes RYR feasibility study and Mendips freight service recast have been incorporated into the base timetable, as “Phase 0” as it is assumed these changes will be delivered as a minimum. The subsequent three Train Service Specification (TSS) phases which form part of the Wiltshire area Strategic Study analysis delivers service improvements in incremental stages and was formed with proposed industry service changes (e.g. growth forecasts/freight/TOC) alongside stakeholder aspirations.

The ITSS options focus only on the pathing requirements within the study area. This means that paths for flows which originate/terminate beyond the study’s geographical scope have not been assessed in detail but, where relevant, has been considered as part of the Wessex routes Salisbury masterplan and Western Route’s Greater Exeter strategic study. Development of Southcote Junction has been recommended by the Reading area study and any interface will be further explored at the next stage where relevant.

**Phase 0** – These are assumed as delivered for the development of options in this study.

Service Enhancement	Test	Calling Pattern	Source	Rationale for ranking
Bedwyn - Newbury	Remove service	N/A	GWR / Devizes SOBC	Removed as it is being replaced by Paddington – Westbury
Paddington – Westbury	New service – 1tph	Newbury, Kintbury, Hungerford, Bedwyn, Pewsey, Devizes, Westbury	GWR / Devizes SOBC	Reinstatement of the Paddington – Bedwyn service, extended to Westbury is the preferred option to deliver Devizes.
Bristol - Weymouth	Make regular hourly	Bradford-on-Avon, Trowbridge, Westbury, Frome, Bruton	GWR	GWR and Wessex route aspiration.

### Phase 1

Service Enhancement	Test	Calling Pattern	Source	Rationale for ranking
Taunton - Newbury	Two return paths in study window	N/A	GBSS / Freight	Route identified as priority route for freight growth in the shorter term.
Paddington – Exeter	Uplift of service frequency from 0.5tph to 1tph.	Newbury Westbury, Castle Cary. Hungerford and Pewsey calls have been removed.	Devizes SOBC	Aspirations for an uplift in service frequency for the semi-fast. The Devizes IFS concluded that the intermediate calls could be removed from the semi-fast service as they would be served by the hourly Paddington – Westbury service.
Cardiff Central – Portsmouth Harbour	Uplift of service frequency from 1tph to 2tph	Bradford-on-Avon, Trowbridge, Westbury, Warminster, Salisbury	GBSS / Western Gateway Rail Strategy.	GBSS identified aspiration of faster journey times between Cardiff and Bristol which could be achieved by increasing service frequency to 2tph.
Swindon - Westbury	Uplift service frequency	Swindon, Chippenham,	TransWilts CRP /	Improves North-South connectivity in Wiltshire.

	from 0.5tph to 1tph with a regular pattern.	Melksham, Trowbridge, Westbury	SWLEP Rail Strategy, Wiltshire Council LTP3.	Recognising that both stations are key interchange stations, there is strong aspiration to increase service frequency and reliability.
Taunton – Westbury / Swindon	New open access service	Swindon, Chippenham, Melksham, Trowbridge, Westbury, Frome, Bruton, Castle Cary	Go-Op	Service proposal is a long-standing aspiration by Go-Op, an open access operator. Service provides improved connectivity across Somerset and Wiltshire.

## Phase 2

Service Enhancement	Test	Calling Pattern	Source	Rationale for ranking
Westbury – Warminster / Frome	Extention of hourly Swindon – Westbury service	Dilton Marsh and Warminster OR Frome	TransWilts	Provides improved connectivity and frees up platform capacity at Westbury.
Westbury – Bristol	One return path in study window.	N/A	GBSS / Freight forecasts	Freight forecasts have indicated long-term growth on this route
Bristol Temple Meads – Oxford	A new service 1tph service.	Bath Spa, Corsham, Chippenham, Swindon	GBSS / RYR / ORCS / SWLEP	Various studies across the region highlight the aspiration for direct service and supports the case for a new proposed station serving Corsham.
Westbury – Swindon	One return path in study window.	N/A	GBSS / Freight forecasts	Freight forecasts have indicated long-term growth on this route
Westbury – Salisbury	One return path in study	N/A	Freight forecasts	Freight forecasts have indicated long-term growth on this

	window			route
Westbury Downside/ Upside	Timetabled shunt move to / from Up-Down sidings	N/A	Operational inputs	With increasing services through Westbury, there is a need to protect opportunities to shunt between the Up and Down yards.

### Phase 3

Service Enhancement	Test	Calling Pattern	Source	Rationale for ranking
Bristol Temple Meads – Oxford	Uplift of service frequency from 1tph to 2tph.	Bath Spa, Corsham, Chippenham, Swindon	GBSS	Aspiration to deliver service at a 2tph frequency to realise the maximum benefits. Test relies on delivery of the 1tph service.
Salisbury – Yeovil Pen Mill	0.5 tph for diverted WoE services	Salisbury - Yeovil Pen Mill	SWR	Gives operational flexibility, but not a franchise requirement

Table 11 - Proposed ITSS

Table 12 below summarises the key changes to the December 2023 service level and type in the study's geographical scope.

Service type	Origin	Destination	Tph	Change
Inter-regional	Paddington	Exeter/ Plymouth/ Paignton	0.5	Uplift to 1tph
Inter-regional	Cardiff Central	Portsmouth Harbour	1	Uplift to 2tph
Inter-regional	Bristol Temple Meads	Weymouth	1	Standard hourly path
Regional	Bristol Temple Meads	Westbury	1	-
Local	Swindon	Westbury	0.5	Uplift to 1tph
Inter-regional	Yeovil PM	Waterloo	0.5	
Inter-regional	Paddington	Westbury	1	New service picking up calls removed from semi-fast
Inter-regional	Bristol Temple Meads	Oxford	1-2tph	New service - Corsham
Shuttle	Bedwyn	Newbury	1	Removed and replaced by Pad-Westbury

Table 12 - Changes to the December 2023 service level and type in study's geographical scope

## What are the options for improvements other than to train service specifications?

### Decarbonisation

Future rolling stock changes should reflect the decarbonisation proposals for the Wiltshire area in the Western Route Traction Decarbonisation Strategy. Whilst the rail industry may be moving towards bi-mode battery electric units and locomotives as a way of decarbonising that avoids the cost of full electrification the solution needs to be fit for all services including freight. Wiltshire's railways, and particularly the B&H, may warrant full (continuous) electrification to permit electric-only freight haulage and the improved capability this provides. Any mainline electrification could be utilised by existing IET rolling stock, whilst continuous electrification of the B&H could permit the proposed Paddington – Westbury service to be a fully electric operation. Decarbonisation strategies must include collaboration with operators to understand which decarbonisation technologies are likely to come forward. Opportunities to use solar and wind energy as a sustainable power source at stations should be considered in future work streams.

### Station Accessibility

Three stations – Bradford-on-Avon, Warminster and Trowbridge – have been highlighted as having poor connectivity between platforms for those with mobility issues. This could be addressed with, as a minimum,

provision of clearly signed and lit, level walking routes. Preferably, and subject to funding availability, accessible footbridges could be provided, with Trowbridge being a priority due to the level of interchange seen there.

### First & Last Mile

Improved first/last mile connectivity could be delivered through enhancing cycle parking provision where a need has been identified (with Bradford-on-Avon and Warminster being priorities for consideration). The signage between stations and bus stops, including the provision of real time bus service information at railway stations, should be reviewed and improved where necessary. Consideration of whether bus/rail interchange can be improved at Melksham in the short term is highly desirable, to help maximise the public transport options available there. Connectivity between rural settlements and their nearest railway station, via either bus or 'on-demand' services, has the potential to develop stations as mobility hubs for their surrounding rural hinterland. Coordination of bus and train times will be key to making this an attractive option for people to use.

## What is the new evidence on demand for passenger services change?

Analysis of each proposed passenger service demonstrates the value of each change and its potential contribution to the capacity and connectivity challenges established. The analysis focuses on three overarching objectives, shown below in Figure 15 informed by stakeholder consultations, local and regional plans, and wider policy and socio-economic factors:

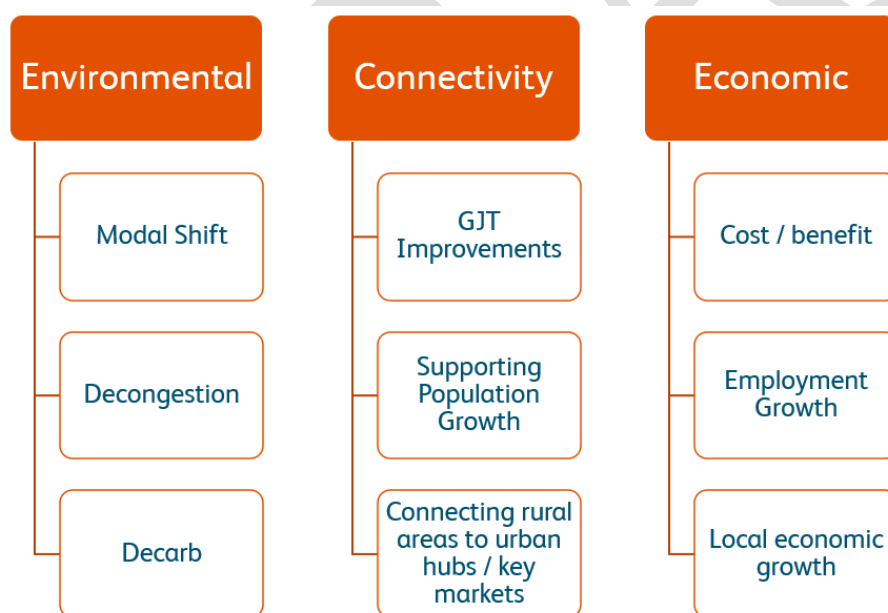


Figure 15 - Economic analysis themes and objectives

The proposed services identified in the ITSS are assessed against each of the objectives. The analysis comprises of three different elements:

- Economic and environmental benefits based on demand forecasting – using MOIRA (a rail timetable model which can compare the demand and revenue impacts of different rail timetables)
- Generalised Journey Time (GJT) improvements – considering connectivity and overall journey time improvement.
- Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) considering wider potential socio-economic benefits including connectivity and economic growth.

The recommendations are based on a composite of all three methods of analysis which have equal weighting. Any significant timetable or infrastructure interventions proposed following the timetable analysis will also be considered for the recommendations.

### MOIRA assessment

The outputs for the service enhancements are improved connectivity including: reduced journey times, increased service frequency or removal of interchanges. The benefits included in the assessment are:

- Value to users from improved connectivity
- Value to non-rail users from taking cars off roads including reduced road congestion, carbon emissions etc...
- Additional rail revenue from more people travelling as a result of improvements to connectivity.

While there will also be improvements in capacity resulting in crowding relief, it has not been considered as part of the economic assessment for this stage.

The benefits and revenue generated by the improved connectivity are estimated using the established industry modelling tool MOIRA and exogenous growth was based on the DfT's DDG demand generator framework.

This assessment considers the operational cost of providing the service but not the capital cost of any associated interventions in order to indicate which best address the identified objectives.

Table 13 captures the output of the MOIRA assessment and ranks each service in order of potential economic benefit.

Service Enhancement	Test	Economic Analysis Ranking
Swindon – Frome	Extension of hourly Swindon – Westbury service	1
Bristol Temple Meads – Oxford	A new service 1tph service.	2
Bristol Temple Meads – Oxford	Uplift of service frequency from 1tph to 2tph.	3
Swindon – Warminster	Extension of hourly Swindon – Westbury service	4
Swindon – Westbury	Uplift service frequency from 0.5tph to 1tph with a regular pattern.	5
Taunton – Westbury/ Swindon	New open access service	6
Cardiff Central – Portsmouth	Uplift of service frequency from 1tph to 2tph	7

Harbour		
Paddington – Exeter	Uplift of service frequency from 0.5tph to 1tph.	8
Swindon – Southampton	Extension of hourly Swindon - Westbury	9

*Table 13 - MOIRA assessment outputs*

Extension of the Swindon Westbury service to Frome offers the most benefits compared to costs, followed by the Bristol – Oxford service.

Introduction of a direct Swindon – Frome service will provide a regular connectivity between Swindon and Westbury but also provides a new direct service beyond Westbury to Frome. A Bristol – Oxford direct service provides a new option for direct connectivity to Oxford for Chippenham and Swindon while improving service frequency to Bath and Bristol. The new rail offerings will serve and attract new markets which will bring in new revenue opportunities and increase rail patronage.

The proposed uplift in frequency and new journey opportunities delivered by the TransWilts and Bristol – Oxford services will also improve rails options for existing users and provide attractive sustainable options for travel to / from the key regional and local growth hubs. Local employers will benefit from improved connectivity benefits, attracting investment, economic development, and employee retention.

Modal shift and decarbonisation benefits are also considered in the MOIRA assessment. The TransWilts services has the most notable benefits. The changes proposed can also provide a faster alternative to using the road network and could encourage modal shift to meet Wiltshire’s decarbonisation targets and present decongestion benefits to non-rail users.

Whilst the inter-regional services also presented high benefits, the costs to operate the longer end-end journey outweigh the benefits presented and result in a less valuable change for Wiltshire compared to the TransWilts services. While the longer-distance services provide connectivity to some of Wiltshire’s priority regional locations, high operating costs incurred over longer distances can impact the economic value.

### **GJT improvements**

A key metric in the assessment is the General Journey Time (GJT) improvement for each service proposition. GJT is a measure that captures journey attractiveness by accounting for in-vehicle time (e.g. time on train), frequency of services, and any requirement to interchange. This enables identification of the proposed services that result in improved journey times and therefore improved connectivity.

Table 14 below outlines the weighted GJT change (by journeys) and ranks each option in order of largest GJT improvement. The GJT has been calculated based on the stations impacted by the option.

Service Enhancement	Test	GJT improvement %
Bristol Temple Meads – Oxford	Uplift of service frequency from 1tph to 2tph.	*tbc



Bristol Temple Meads – Oxford	A new service 1tph service.	-26
Swindon - Frome	Extension of hourly Swindon – Westbury service	-6.72
Swindon – Warminster	Extension of hourly Swindon – Westbury service	-6.17
Swindon - Westbury	Uplift service frequency from 0.5tph to 1tph with a regular pattern.	-5.48
Cardiff Central – Portsmouth Harbour	Uplift of service frequency from 1tph to 2tph	-3.92
Swindon - Southampton	Extension of hourly Swindon - Westbury	-3.78
Taunton – Westbury/ Swindon	New open access service	-2.16
Paddington – Exeter	Uplift of service frequency from 0.5tph to 1tph.	-1.95

*Table 14 - GJT improvements and ranking of economic assessment.*

The Bristol – Oxford direct service shows by far the largest GJT improvement of 26% as it will eliminate the need for an interchange at Didcot Parkway. Next, the TransWilts service improvements and extension options show sizable GJT improvements.

The longer distance services including Cardiff – Portsmouth, Swindon – Southampton and Paddington – Exeter see smaller GJT improvements as these services generally serve a larger market end-end compared to the local TransWilts services, therefore the percentage change applied to a larger market results in a higher absolute figure of passengers that would benefit from the GJT improvement. However, this assumes the majority of passengers will be making the full end-end journey which is more unlikely for the inter-regional services compared to the local TransWilts services, and it can be assumed that the GJT changes for the TransWilts services will result in a more notable benefit, particularly for Wiltshire residents, while the inter-regional services deliver broader benefits on a regional level.

The improvement in generalised journey times will encourage modal shift from road to rail and increase accessibility to key employment, academia and leisure hubs. Reduction of GJT will lead to an increase in demand and encourage new passengers and modal shift, particularly on the TransWilts and Bristol – Oxford corridors and existing passengers will benefit from the time saved.

### **Multi-Criteria assessment**

The multi-criteria assessment (MCA) is an evidence led appraisal of the impact of service enhancements against the identified objectives using local socio-economic and transport data. It offers another, more sensitive appraisal of the growth and connectivity benefits for Wiltshire. The MCA assesses and ranks each passenger service proposed in the ITSS against the following criteria:

- Population of Settlements served by stations.
- Forecasted housing growth.
- Forecasted employment growth.
- Current demand by station catchment area.

Each service is assessed by the sum of the respective criteria of each settlement served and given a RAG status depending on the number of criteria met.

The criteria also include local and regional locations, which Wiltshire Council identified as priorities for improved connectivity. Services which provide improved connectivity to a higher number of the identified locations receive a higher score. Table 15 below shows the outputs of the MCA.

Service Enhancement	Test	MCA Ranking
Swindon – Frome	Extension of hourly Swindon – Westbury service	
Swindon - Warminster	Extension of hourly Swindon – Westbury service	
Swindon - Westbury	Uplift service frequency from 0.5tph to 1tph with a regular pattern.	
Taunton – Westbury/ Swindon	New open access service	
Swindon - Southampton	Extension of hourly Swindon - Westbury	
Bristol Temple Meads – Oxford	A new service 1tph service.	
Bristol Temple Meads – Oxford	Uplift of service frequency from 1tph to 2tph.	
Cardiff Central – Portsmouth Harbour	Uplift of service frequency from 1tph to 2tph	
Paddington - Exeter	Uplift of service frequency from 0.5tph to 1tph.	

*Table 15 - Multi Criteria Assessment outputs*

Similar to the outputs of the MOIRA assessment, the TransWilts services have ranked the highest in the MCA. They provide the most benefit across the majority of the criteria, with the exception of long-distance connectivity.

The inter-regional services demonstrate fewer benefits to Wiltshire against the criteria as they serve fewer Wiltshire stations compared to the TransWilts services. However, they do provide key regional connectivity required to Wiltshire’s priority regional locations Furthermore, paired with improvements to local services which connect the two key interchange stations within Wiltshire, inter-regional services can support accessibility for Wiltshire’s population to key facilities for higher education and better paid “knowledge-jobs” whilst also attracting inwards investment for growth in housing and employment.

While the inter-regional services serve fewer Wiltshire stations and provide and serve limited connectivity to Wiltshire’s key growth and employment hubs outside of Westbury, they do provide key regional connectivity required to Wiltshire’s priority regional locations and support broader strategic benefits beyond Wiltshire.

## Connectivity

Following the introduction of Metro-west south, Bristol-Oxford and East West Rail, improved levels of connectivity will be provided to some of Wiltshire’s priority inter-regional locations, including Cambridge,

Birmingham and Oxford, while improvements to the TransWilts services proposed in this study will improve local connectivity.

Error: Reference source not found and Figure 17 below shows the comparison between current and future (assuming all services proposed in this study are delivered) service level and number of interchanges required for journeys by rail from Wiltshire stations to key local and inter-regional locations identified by

	Bradford-on-Avon	Chippenham	Dilton Marsh	Melksham	Pewsey	Salisbury	Swindon	Trowbridge	Warminster	Westbury
Chippenham	1		1 or 2		1 or 2	1		1	1	1
Melksham	1		1		1	1			1	
Westbury		1					1			
Salisbury		1	1	1	1		1 or 2			
Swindon	1		1		1 or 2	1 or 2		1	1	1
Trowbridge		1			1		1			
Oxford	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	2 or 3	1 or 2
Taunton	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Birmingham	1	1 or 2	1	2	1 or 2	1	1 or 2	1	1	1
Southampton		1	1	1 or 2	1		1 or 2			

Figure 16 - Current service and interchange level for rail journeys from Wiltshire to priority stations  
Wiltshire.

	Bradford-on-Avon	Chippenham	Dilton Marsh	Melksham	Pewsey	Salisbury	Swindon	Trowbridge	Warminster	Westbury
Chippenham	1		*		1	*		*	*	*
Melksham	1		*		1					
Westbury		*				*	*			
Salisbury		*	*	*	1		*			
Swindon	1		*		1*	*		*	*	*
Trowbridge		*			1	*				
Oxford	1	*	1	1	1	1	*	1	1	1
Taunton	1	*	1	*	1	1	*	*	1	
Birmingham	1	1 or 2	1	2	1 or 2	1	1	1	1	1
Southampton		*	*	*	1		*			

Average number  
of trains per hour  
(9:00-17:00)

3tph>
2tph
1tph
0.5tph

\*Indicates through journey now available, but previous levels of indirect journey opportunities remain

The proposed ITSS delivers considerable connectivity benefits with introduction of services which provide direct journey opportunities, reducing the number of interchanges needed. Service frequency is also improved, particularly for services along the TransWilts corridor, demonstrating considerable benefit to Wiltshire's residents.

## How could new services be accommodated?

Timetable analysis has been carried out to assess whether the existing timetable structure and infrastructure has the capacity to facilitate the proposed services without interventions and identify at which point a service enhancement will cause constraints and identify high level solutions to facilitate them.

Figure 17 – Potential future service and interchange level for rail journeys from Wiltshire to priority stations

Table 16 below explains the outputs of the timetable analysis for each service and whether or not it can be accommodated. Where this hasn't been possible, the constraints have been highlighted followed by the recommended intervention to resolve the constraints.

### Phase 0

Service Enhancement	Timetable Outputs
Paddington - Westbury	Uses platform 0. 20-minute dwell time in Westbury
Bristol - Weymouth	There were some orphan paths which were incorporated into other services.

### Phase 1

Service Enhancement	Timetable Outputs
Taunton - Newbury	ITSS amended to compromise 1tph freight between Merehead Quarry and London formed of 2x class 66 hauling 4400 tonnes and 2 freight services in each direction between Taunton and Reading formed of single class 66 hauling 2200 tonnes. Paths found for 1ftph between Merehead Quarry and London by extending existing Westbury-London paths to/from Merehead. Requires reconciliation with existing paths to/from Merehead Quarry as challenges with operating proposed regular path with existing irregular services. Paths found for two freight services an hour, one being a Mendip quarry service and one a Class 6 from Taunton. Tonnage of Class 6 had to be reduced from 2200 to 1600 to be accommodated.
Paddington – Exeter	Line will be at capacity once this is implemented
Cardiff Central – Portsmouth Harbour	Possible to find 1tph between Cardiff and Salisbury. Path hasn't been validated beyond Salisbury – thought unlikely that there is capacity at Portsmouth, so Southampton would be the likely destination. Some minor retiming is needed for services between Cardiff and Severn Tunnel Jn.
Swindon - Westbury	Possible to find regular 1tph path but intervention is needed in form of passing loop at Melksham. Previously identified Old Oak Common interventions may allow different service path to operate.
Taunton – Westbury/ Swindon	Not been possible to operate to Swindon due to constraints with single line around Bradford and Thingley Jn. Extension of Swindon-Westbury service to Taunton has been explored and is found possible. Operational capability of Frome North Loop will need to be tested if this is to be taken forwards.

### Phase 2

Service Enhancement	Timetable Outputs
Westbury – Frome	Not been possible to path due to conflicts with Bristol - Weymouth (via Frome) service at Westbury. Moving the Swindon-Westbury service around the clockface would allow this service to operate.
Westbury – Warminster	Reliant on proposed loop at Melksham and minor re-timings there. Only has 3 minutes turnaround time if terminating at Warminster, which is insufficient time to shunt between platforms. Further extension to Salisbury is feasible, although services don't match up well with Romsey services.
Bristol Temple Meads – Oxford	It has been possible to find a return path, however, the corridor between Swindon and Didcot has been identified as a congested section of the route and there are a small number of conflicts with freight services which will require further analysis to resolve them.
Westbury Swindon -	There is already a freight path between Westbury and Swindon in each hour. These would have to be substituted by retimed paths identified in the study. Only one path available owing to other freight services operating on the route.
Westbury Salisbury -	It has been possible to find a return freight path, but there may be challenges with finding a path on a regular hourly pattern.
Westbury Downside/ Upside	Paths have been found for shunt moves between Westbury Up TC and Westbury Down TC, and between Westbury Down TC and Westbury Up TC in each hour during the study period, but not at standard intervals due to the irregular pattern of other services, particularly freight in the Westbury area. Further analysis will be required to understand operability due to the complexity of movements at the yard.
Swindon Southampton -	As above

### Phase 3

Service Enhancement	Timetable Outputs
Bristol Temple Meads - Oxford	In the hours where the Westbury – Bristol freight service operates, it has not been possible to find a second path. In the other hours, it has been possible to find a path in the opposite half hour to the 1tph Bristol – Oxford service, however, there are challenges with pathing between Swindon and Thingley Junction and Bathampton Junction and Bristol which require further analysis.
Salisbury – Yeovil Pen Mill	It has been possible to find 2 paths in each direction between Salisbury and Yeovil Junction, however, there may be challenges with platforming at Westbury.

Table 16 - Outputs of timetable analysis

### Freight growth:

Two significant findings from this study are:

- a) the need to re-time existing freight services into standardised paths
- b) the fact that additional freight paths on the B&H were not possible without the assumed benefits of electrification.

It should be noted that in practice, re-timing of freight services can only be undertaken with input and agreement from the relevant freight operating company. The timetabling work at this stage has proven a concept, but in the next stage of development it will be necessary to consider the practicalities of this in more detail with freight operators.

In the context of growth, it is untenable that freight growth will not be accommodated on the Berks & Hants, therefore electrification, whilst not needed in the short term to enable passenger service uplifts, should be considered as a definite long-term requirement. As freight growth could potentially come in advance of developing/delivering a passenger uplift, electrification should not be considered as purely a freight enabling scheme, but rather a way of enabling more capacity for both passenger and freight services over the route. As noted elsewhere, this will need to be done in conjunction with increasing capacity at Southcote Junction.

## 5. What is the recommended course of action?

The study looks at a range of service enhancements to address the identified challenges. Recommendations are informed by the outputs of the timetabling and economic analysis as well as assessment of the wider socio-economic benefits. They also consider wider changes to the railway system, its resilience, and accessibility and informs an incremental programme for development which supports sustainable housing and employment growth in the Wiltshire area.

The recommendations for train service improvements are based on the following principles:

- **Support demand, economic and housing growth in the Wiltshire area** – recommendations are based on the service options that will provide improved opportunities to travel to/from the key employment, economic, and leisure hubs and key areas for growth/development (population, demand, housing).
- **Providing improved local and regional connectivity** – with multiple railway corridors serving the Wiltshire area improved frequency and a wider range of direct connections will improve the rail offering for local and regional travel. Wiltshire also has multiple stations that provide good interchange opportunities. Improving services to these stations, including increased frequency which will improve connectivity times for onwards journeys.
- **Support government targets for freight growth** – the DfT announced a rail freight growth target for the UK at the end of 2023. With key freight corridors passing through Wiltshire, growth forecasts need to be incorporated to ensure network capability and capacity for sustainable freight growth on these corridors alongside passenger growth, without compromising the resilience of the railway.

Train service recommendations are supported by infrastructure recommendations, where these are required to accommodate new services. There are critical wider system enablers that must be considered, including rolling stock, and depots and stabling provision.

A key consideration for new services is the availability of rolling stock. There are opportunities to align service changes to wider procurement of new stock and as such there is a link to operators' emerging fleet strategies. Most of the diesel multiple unit trains operating in the Wiltshire area are due for replacement in the early 2030s.

### What service improvements are we recommending?

The recommendations have been split into three stages to build an incremental programme of development as shown in Table 17. Allocation of the services in Stage 1, 2, or 3 are determined by outputs of the economic appraisal, stakeholder priorities, and level of timetable or infrastructure requirement identified by



the timetable analysis. Services recommended in Stage 1 will be prioritised for progression to further development, followed by stage 2 and finally stage 3.

Bristol-Weymouth hasn't been included in the recommendations as a full SOBC is currently being progressed for the service.

Delivery	Service type	Service Enhancement	Tph	Intervention required?	Recommended
Stage 1	Regional	Paddington - Westbury	1	Y	Y
	Regional	Bristol Temple Meads - Oxford	1	N	Y
	Local	Swindon - Westbury	1	N	Y
Stage 2	Local	Swindon - Salisbury	1	N	Y
	Local/ Regional	Swindon – Frome/ Taunton*	*	Y	Y
	Regional	Swindon – Southampton#	#	N	Y
Stage 3	Regional	Paddington - Exeter	1	Y	Y
	Regional	Bristol Temple Meads - Oxford	2	N	Y
Not recommended	Regional	Cardiff Central – Portsmouth Harbour	2	N	N

\* Is an option to alternate with/instead of Swindon – Salisbury service

#Would be an extension of Swindon – Salisbury service

Table 17 - Recommended services

The economic analysis shows TransWilts services and Bristol Oxford amongst the top 3 across all 3 methods included in the appraisal and have therefore been prioritised for further development.

## Stage 1

### New direct hourly service between London Paddington and Westbury (calling at Bedwyn and Pewsey)

This new service would provide a direct hourly connection between London and Bedwyn, Pewsey and Westbury, providing some local connectivity and additional inter-regional connectivity to London and Reading. In the longer-term it could also serve Devizes Gateway. The current offering is the 0.5tph 'semi-fast' service between Paddington and Exeter, or interchange at Newbury for Bedwyn only. A new hourly service will provide improved connectivity between communities through the centre of Wiltshire on an east-west axis and improve interchange opportunities at Westbury, helping make rail a more attractive option for travel. It will also enhance connectivity to Reading and London. If combined with enhanced bus or on-demand services linking to the stations, this service could improve rail connectivity to the rural central – eastern portion of the county, which does not currently enjoy good connectivity.



Introduction of this service would permit existing calls at Hungerford and Pewsey to be removed from the semi-fast Paddington-Exeter service whilst still doubling the level of service at these stations. Whilst journey times between London and these stations would be increased slightly by the additional stops in the new service, and direct connections to the South West would be lost, the doubled level of service and improved local connectivity outweigh these disbenefits. Options can be explored to retain the calls in the semi-fast services at peak times, recognising stakeholder concerns about impacts on established commuting flows.

Infrastructure constraints and rolling stock availability mean that this service is not immediately deliverable but is considered a high strategic priority that should be introduced as soon as is reasonably practical.

#### **New direct hourly service between Bristol and Oxford (calling at Chippenham and Swindon)**

This service has been a long-standing industry aspiration and also provides significant benefit to the Wiltshire area with minimal intervention. The service also ranked highly across the economic appraisal. A Strategic Outline Business Case for the service is being developed.

There is currently no direct connectivity between Oxford and Swindon or Chippenham, with journeys requiring an interchange at Didcot Parkway or Reading. Journeys further south into the Wiltshire area require two interchanges. Introduction of the new Bristol-Oxford service would provide regular, reliable and direct hourly connectivity between Oxford, Swindon and Chippenham, reducing overall journey times and connecting the Wiltshire area to Oxford which was highlighted as one of the priority regional locations due to business and education opportunities. Improved accessibility to and from Oxford will encourage modal shift and encourage pursuit of higher education and employment in STEM based roles. Direct connectivity will also make Swindon and Chippenham more attractive for housing growth. It will also provide improved journey opportunities eastwards once East West Rail services are introduced, negating the need to travel into London to access Milton Keynes, and ultimately Bedford and Cambridge.

Once introduced, this service may offer an opportunity for serving the proposed new station at Corsham, which cannot be accommodated in existing services.

#### **Direct hourly service between Swindon and Westbury**

The existing TransWilts service, running approximately every two hours, provides vital north-south connectivity in the Wiltshire area. It is the only service connecting Westbury and north Wiltshire and Swindon, with the current offering limited in terms of frequency and regularity, with approximately one train every two hours at an irregular pattern. Increasing the service to run every hour is a long-standing aspiration for Wiltshire Council, Swindon Borough Council and the TransWilts Rail User Group.

The improved service would provide regular and reliable connectivity between the north and south of the area via Melksham, providing local connectivity for Wiltshire's residents between key local growth and employment hubs and also to the 2 key interchange stations which provide inter-regional connections via the GWML at Swindon and B+H line at Westbury. Improved connections will support Wiltshire's planned housing and employment growth by increasing accessibility to key employment hubs and attracting investment. Analysis supports the significant benefits of such a service.

## Stage 2

### Extension of the direct hourly Swindon Westbury service

There are different options for extending the hourly Swindon-Westbury service (stage 1 recommendation) to further improve local connectivity across the Wiltshire area. These include: Frome, Taunton, Warminster, Salisbury and Southampton. These extension options offer benefits but require further interventions and should be regarded as a stage 2 recommendation. Extensions of the direct service provide entirely new service offerings, serving a larger market and providing new rail opportunities to connect Wiltshire and encourage modal shift and planned growth.

#### - To Salisbury

The first of the extension options recommended for development in stage 2 is extension of the Swindon-Westbury service to Salisbury. The original ITSS tested for timetable and economic analysis included a TransWilts service from Swindon – Warminster, rather than Salisbury. Analysis of this option is amongst the highest scoring in the economic analysis and further timetable analysis suggested that Salisbury could be a viable destination for TransWilts services from Swindon with minimal intervention required, and we have therefore concluded that while running to Warminster demonstrates a good benefit, running to Salisbury would be even stronger. This would provide direct connectivity between the major Wiltshire area hubs of Swindon, Chippenham and Salisbury, providing a degree of north-south connectivity which is currently lacking. This would have the potential to generate modal shift for those travelling between these key hubs; the journey time between Salisbury and Swindon would be circa 1h 15m, saving 10-15 minutes on making the journey by car. It would also improve onward connectivity to the south coast. Development of this service would need to align with the outputs identified in the Salisbury Area Strategic Study, led by Wessex Route.

#### - To Frome / Taunton

The second extension option is to Frome. A Frome service is amongst the highest scoring options in the economic analysis.

Although sitting outside of Wiltshire, Frome has close links with the county and would benefit from direct connectivity to the key hubs of Chippenham and Swindon. This service would also give improved connection opportunities to access Salisbury by rail. As an area seeing significant housing growth, an enhanced rail service will be important in promoting sustainable transport for the town.

It should be noted that an hourly Swindon – Frome service is an alternative option to the more easily introduced Swindon – Salisbury service. Stakeholders will need to consider which direct connectivity they would value more. One option could be for the service to alternate between Salisbury and Frome every other hour. With improved interchange options at Westbury this would still give a much-improved level of connectivity to both locations.

Go-Op intend to introduce open access services between Taunton and Westbury service with some services extending to Swindon. It is assumed that should the Taunton - Swindon services be introduced they will run in place of the TransWilts service in the relevant hours. This would result in the same number of paths

required on the Melksham single line. However, this would further constrain capacity along the Melksham line and we have concluded that an hourly TransWilts service provides sufficient frequency to meet current demand.

- **To Southampton**

The third extension option is to Southampton (via Salisbury). This option scored relatively poorly in the economic analysis owing to the high operational costs associated with the longer distances. However, it provides new direct connectivity between Swindon and Southampton where current journeys require two interchanges (Westbury and Salisbury). Southampton is identified by Wiltshire Council as a key location for improved regional connectivity. This option could function as an extension of a Swindon-Salisbury service, being developed as a service extension once the core service is established.

As well as regular hourly extensions there may be opportunities to deliver extensions to more than one of the options, including at a less than hourly frequency. High level timetable analysis indicates opportunities to deliver all of the options:

- a) Extend the hourly TransWilts service to Frome and Salisbury in alternate hours.

This option provides regular hourly connectivity between Swindon and Westbury and also provides direct connectivity between Swindon-Salisbury in one hour and Swindon-Frome in the alternate hour. A loop at Frome would still be necessary and a trade-off would be required which would result in direct connectivity between Salisbury and Swindon reduced to 0.5tph as opposed to 1tph.

- b) Retain the hourly Swindon-Salisbury service and provide alternative connectivity between Westbury and Taunton (via Frome)

Timetabling analysis suggests this option is feasible but further analysis is required to understand the operational capability at Frome and will likely require an additional loop at Frome. Further analysis will also determine if delivery of a loop at Melksham will support Go-Ops proposal of 3 services per day between Taunton and Swindon.

- c) An alternative option enables Westbury to be used a hub for the required interchanges.

This option will require timetable intervention to allow coordination of arrivals at Westbury to provide easy interchange between services. This option would extend one of the three Bristol-Westbury service to Salisbury on an hourly basis and deliver a direct hourly service between Swindon and Frome.

There is ultimately a choice for stakeholders as to where they would most value directly linking to Swindon. Network Rail's recommendation is that strategically there is a strong case for an hourly Swindon to Salisbury service, giving a strong north – south link across the county.

## **Stage 3**

### **Hourly 'semi-fast' service between Paddington and Exeter**

This option provides increased frequency and journey times to/from Exeter and Paddington hence improving regional connectivity benefits. Although the economic appraisal of the service didn't

demonstrate the level of benefits compared to the other services, it does deliver benefits beyond financial value and delivers broader strategic benefits beyond Wiltshire. Furthermore, once improvements to local connectivity have been delivered, the opportunity to improve inter-regional connectivity will improve the connection times at Westbury between the inter-regional service and the local TransWilts services.

In addition to the low ranking from the economic appraisal, delivery if this service is reliant on Westbury Platform 0 and the hourly Paddington-Westbury service being delivered, and has therefore been listed as a stage 3 recommendation.

#### **Increase to half-hourly service between Bristol and Oxford (calling at Chippenham and Swindon)**

This option builds upon 1tph to deliver increased, direct service frequency between Bristol and Oxford. Delivery of this service would rely on the 1tph service being delivered successfully would also require further timetable analysis.

#### **Not recommended**

An additional service every hour between Cardiff and Portsmouth (i.e. a half-hourly service) was assessed but is not recommended. Economic analysis suggests that the operational costs mean it would have a poor case. Any further consideration of this service should focus on a more local service with lower operating costs. Whilst sections of this new journey may deliver local connectivity benefits – e.g. between Bristol and Bath Spa – introduction of a new service between Bath Spa and Westbury is not recommended unless operational constraints dictate it is necessary. Other higher priority service recommendations make use of available capacity around Westbury, whilst extending the TransWilts service to Southampton would provide enhanced connectivity from Wiltshire to the south coast.

### **What Infrastructure interventions are we recommending?**

The mix of services and constraints imposed by the busy network 2 track or single-track railway means capacity for enhanced services is quickly exhausted, triggering the need for infrastructure interventions to accommodate the recommended ITSS. The proposed interventions shown in Table 18 below can be delivered incrementally to support the phased service enhancements and have been suggested through a mix of recommendations from previous studies or through this study, with the support of timetable analysis to determine the most appropriate intervention that will release the additional capacity required.

Proposal	Required	Stage intervention is triggered	Services which trigger intervention
Melksham loop		Stage 1	Westbury – Swindon passenger and freight services
Platform 0		Stage 1	Hourly Paddington – Westbury service
Loop/Platform at Frome		Stage 2	Extension of hourly Swindon – Westbury service to Frome/Taunton
Signalling and Headway improvements at Westbury			Will need to be considered in the longer-term to enable continued growth and alignment to route objectives.
Southcote Jn			
Berks & Hants capacity improvements - Electrification			
Station Accessibility			
Level Crossing upgrades			
Stabling facilities at Westbury/Salisbury			

### Melksham loop

A new loop along the Melksham single will provide additional capacity on the significantly constrained corridor. Any additional services beyond existing freight and a regular 1tph TransWilts service will require additional infrastructure. Extension of the timetable analysis beyond the 3-hour scope of this study may identify the need for this intervention to support the hourly TransWilts service given the additional constraints presented by freight services and the capability of the corridor for use as a diversionary route.

High level analysis undertaken in this study identified 2 potential locations for the loop:

- a loop at Melksham station, as shown in Figure 18, which allows the hourly passenger service to pass. This option is a smaller intervention which allows provision of 1tph Swindon-Westbury but doesn't provide much additional capacity for further freight and passenger growth. The station site at Melksham is constrained; whilst there is space for a loop, there is insufficient space for a second platform to serve passenger trains heading towards Swindon. For these reasons, this option is not recommended.

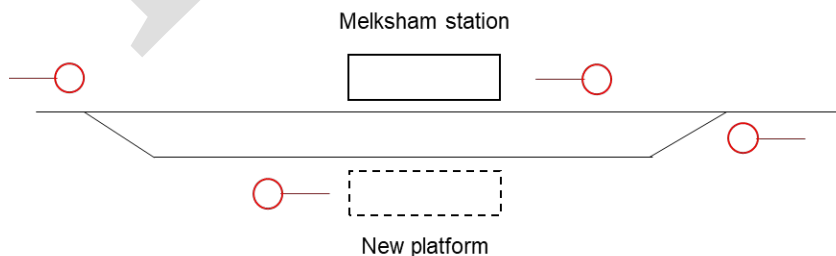


Figure 18 - Proposed loop at Melksham

- a longer section of redoubling at the Thingley Junction end, to provide a dynamic loop. This option is a larger intervention but provides the additional capacity required for the hourly passenger service and an hourly freight or diverted passenger services, ensuring a more resilient and robust timetable. It could be extended up to Thingley Junction if desirable.

Although not done as part of this study, separate work by Network Rail has also previously identified a site for a potential loop towards the southern end of the line, between 102m 0220y – 103m 0198y.

It is also recommended that signals are added at Melksham station that will enable trains to be turned back there in the event of disruption further along the route. They will also have the benefit of splitting the long block section, creating more capacity.

### Platform 0 at Westbury

Delivery of a new platform at Westbury was recommended in the Devizes IFS to enable delivery of the hourly Paddington-Westbury service. Currently there is no available capacity at Westbury to hold the service for the required dwell time of circa 20 minutes. High-level assessment and design work, shown in Figure 19 below, has been included as part of the Devizes IFS. Timetable analysis of this study also indicated that Platform 0 is required for a Swindon-Westbury service depending on which timetable option is progressed.

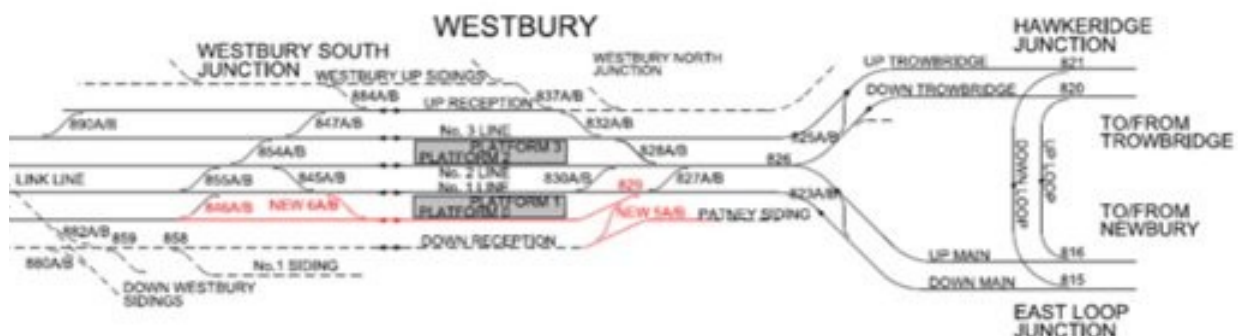


Figure 19 - Proposed Platform 0 at Westbury station

There are two pathing options for the enhanced TransWilts service. The first is based on the existing timetable and requires a new loop along the Melksham single line to accommodate the new service alongside existing freight paths. The second is an alternative path in the timetable (falling at a different point in the hour). Initial assessment for this study suggests this may not require a new loop but may be achievable with retiming other services. However, this would not allow for flexibility and growth in the timetable.

The second option utilises Platform 0 at Westbury, but further analysis may show that the existing platforms offer sufficient capacity. This analysis will also need to consider a full day timetable, with particular consideration to the impact on the Melksham single line being used in a diversionary capacity every 6

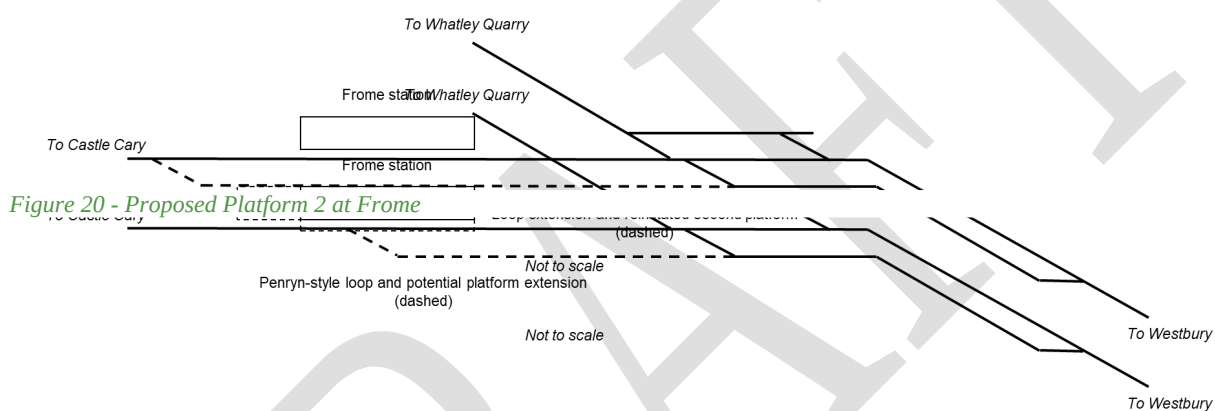


weeks. It may be that a new loop on the Melksham single line is required for either option of this service to support resilience and network capability.

Further analysis and development will identify the two should take priority for detailed development.

### Loop at Frome

Intervention would be required at Frome to accommodate the extended Swindon - Westbury service to avoid holding the train for 10 minutes outside Frome, which reduces the benefits of the service and also offers poor passenger experience. It would also conflict with increased volumes of freight traffic. This could be avoided by reintroducing platform 2 at Frome and providing an accessible footbridge as shown in Figure 20. Another option could be to add a loop to allow the existing platform at Frome to be used as two platforms as shown in Figure 21. The concept would be as per the loop at Penryn in Cornwall. Further analysis is required as a next phase of development.



### Headways and signalling improvements.

Improvements to headways and signalling, particularly around Westbury, will release additional capacity and support aspirations for future growth and increase the level of resilience for the future timetable. Analysis did not identify a hard requirement for these improvements, but it is likely they will be needed to support a robust and reliable timetable in future. Specific locations will be considered in future assessment of recommended ITSS.

### Berks & Hants capacity

There is limited additional capacity on the B&H Line to accommodate future growth. It is recommended that, in line with Network Rail's Traction Decarbonisation strategy, the route from Newbury to the Mendip quarries be prioritised for electrification. This would enable electric freight trains with improved acceleration, which would free capacity over the route and enable more freight services in addition to the recommended improvements to passenger services. It would also permit electric operation of the new Paddington-Westbury service. Electrification would provide general capacity and decarbonisation benefits and is not specifically a freight scheme.

The Traction Decarbonisation strategy also had the sections of route from the Mendip quarries to Taunton and Westbury to Bath and Swindon as priorities for electrification. This study does not change that view, but

highlights that for the purposes of delivering the service enhancements covered here, the Newbury-Mendip section is key.

Aside from capacity over the B&H itself, separate studies have identified there is limited capacity for additional trains through Southcote Junction. Therefore, any work to enhance capacity over the B&H must be done in conjunction with development of a scheme for unblocking this bottleneck, to ensure that benefits from schemes designed to increase capacity on the B&H can be realised.

### Accessibility

This study highlights constraints in accessing the rail network in the Wiltshire area, both in terms of getting to stations via public or active transport and in terms of accessing services at stations.

Specific multi-modal integration recommendations:

- connectivity between bus and rail services at Melksham should be reviewed and enhanced where appropriate, both regarding signage/wayfinding and timing of services.
- the number of cycle parking spaces at Warminster and Bradford-on-Avon should be reviewed and increased if appropriate. At Bradford-on-Avon consideration should also be given to providing covered cycle parking. It may be appropriate to review facilities at other stations once the Western Gateway STB's Cycling Strategy is released to ensure alignment with this.

Specific accessibility recommendations:

- improvements to accessibility between platforms are made at Bradford-on-Avon, Warminster and Trowbridge. As a minimum these should ensure there is a well surfaced, signed and lit accessible route between platforms, preferably also an accessible footbridge between platforms. At the same time, consideration should be given to any complimentary improvements that could be made, e.g. provision of tactile paving or an accessible toilet.
- of the three stations, Trowbridge should be a priority for a new bridge due to the levels of interchange recorded there, as well as it having the longest step-free distance between platforms.
- overarching station improvement plans should be developed for these stations that encompass the above recommendations and consider other improvements that could reasonably be delivered as a package of works.

### Level crossing upgrades

There are 63 level crossings of various types on the rail network within the area of Wiltshire covered by this study, with a further 19 on the Berks & Hants in Somerset and 17 Berkshire. Increases in train service levels will alter the risk profile of these crossings and potentially drive a need for additional protection to be provided, e.g. installing miniature stop lights (MSLs) at footpath crossings. With one train service potentially traversing a large number of crossings over the course of its journey, there is a need for the Network Rail Route Level Crossing team to be engaged at an early stage when developing service proposals so any requirements for mitigations can be understood early on. It is recommended that this information is sought from the level crossing team as part of the next steps from this study, based on the recommended ITSS.

The interventions suggested will require further timetable and economic analysis development which should be carried out in conjunction with Network Rail and key industry partners.



**Stabling facilities**

Although not within scope for this study, at a later stage of development the implication of train service changes on stabling requirements at Westbury will need to be considered. There are some existing constraints around this which are being captured as part of a separate Depots & Stabling strategy.

The introduction of new services may drive the need to stable more trains overnight at Westbury – a location where stabling options are already limited. As a future train service specification is developed in more detail, consideration will need to be given as to where additional trains can be stabled and whether this will require new facilities at Westbury. There are efficiencies to be explored in GWR stabling units at a redeveloped Salisbury depot, as is being considered through the Salisbury area study being conducted by Wessex route. As well as avoiding duplication of facilities, this option could also tie in well with the delivery of a regular Swindon – Salisbury service.

Improvements to local connectivity are recommended, which will be delivered by providing a regular 1tph service between Swindon and Westbury (with extension options to Frome / Warminster / Salisbury). Connectivity between the two key interchange hubs are improved, with each hub providing inter-regional connectivity via the GWML, B+H line and HoW line.

The recommendations for service enhancements and proposed infrastructure interventions will require further development work to establish the cost and viability for delivery.

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## 6. What is the answer to the headline Strategic Questions and the sub-questions?

The strategic question set out at the beginning of the study aims to identify how rail can best support sustainable economic and housing growth in the Wiltshire area.

### *How can rail best support the sustainable economic and housing growth in the Wiltshire area?*

To do this, the study addressed the following supporting questions:

- What are the capacity and connectivity requirements for key markets operating within, into and out of Wiltshire?
- What interventions are necessary to deliver the rail capacity and connectivity required to help deliver growth in the Wiltshire area?

### *How can rail best support the sustainable economic and housing growth in the Wiltshire area?*

The Wiltshire area is served by a number of key rail corridors which provide good opportunities to connect local hubs to each other as well as to further, regional locations. However, the study demonstrates that the Wiltshire area currently experiences challenges with rail connectivity and capacity.

Considerable forecasted growth will continue to put pressure on an already constrained railway. Combined with local policies to meet government net-zero targets, the reliance on rail will increase and Wiltshire needs a reliable and robust railway to support forecasted levels of housing and economic growth.

The study identifies that on a significant number of flows the current rail provision does not provide the required levels of connectivity, with infrequent and irregular services. Paired with the largely rural nature of the Wiltshire area rail's mode share is low.

Service frequency and irregularity also impacts interchange connectivity and flexibility for passengers which limits connectivity for onwards journeys to key regional hubs which can provide Wiltshire residents with good opportunities for higher education and higher paid employment opportunities.

Analysis carried out in this study shows that the key local settlements, growth areas and interchange locations for Wiltshire sit along the TransWilts corridor. Improved connectivity to the local growth areas and economic hubs would support growth locally, while improved connectivity to the key interchange locations including Swindon, Westbury and Salisbury will provide improved interchange connections for onwards services to London, Reading, Oxford, Bristol and Southampton.

Furthermore, the government's net-zero targets are driving the implementation of policies which aim to reduce car usage. Paired with increased levels of congestion both within Wiltshire and into the key cities, enhancing Wiltshire's ability to accommodate local and inter-regional journeys is the key to rail being best able to support economic and housing growth.

From the analysis carried out in this study, rail can best support economic and housing growth in the Wiltshire area by improving connectivity through incremental delivery of enhancements to existing services and delivery of new services to support new stations.

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Dependent on:	Intervention required	Connectivity Benefit	Growth benefit
Hourly frequency on TransWilts services and through connectivity from Swindon – Salisbury	Yes Milksham loop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved service frequency</li> <li>- North-south connectivity</li> <li>- Direct connectivity between Salisbury, Trowbridge and Swindon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Areas along the corridor will become more attractive areas for investment, development and new residents.</li> </ul>
Bristol – Oxford		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Direct connectivity from Chippenham and Swindon.</li> <li>- Reduced number of interchanges required. With improved TransWilts services, residents will have good rail options to travel to Chippenham and Swindon where they can interchange for a direct service to Oxford.</li> <li>- Supports potential future delivery of Corsham station, making rail more accessible for those in and around Corsham.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improves accessibility to a key academic, life sciences and technological hub.</li> <li>- Supports growth in and around Corsham</li> </ul>
Paddington – Westbury stopper and hourly semi-fast	Yes Westbury Platform 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved service frequency</li> <li>- Direct and regular connectivity between Paddington, Westbury and the South West</li> <li>- Supports potential future delivery of Devizes Gateway station</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improves accessibility into London, supporting a commuter, tourist and leisure market.</li> <li>- Supports growth in and around Devizes</li> </ul>
Optimising connection times at Swindon, Westbury and Salisbury		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Optimisation will be driven by more services running which will provide better interchange opportunities for onwards connections from Swindon, Westbury and Salisbury to regional locations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved connectivity to interchange stations will result in improved opportunities for onwards journeys to key regional locations and will increase accessibility to top higher education facilities and higher paid employment opportunities.</li> </ul>
Providing new services that facilitate the opening new stations at Corsham and Devizes Gateway	Yes New stations and delivery of supporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Delivery of new stations will provide more opportunities to connect settlements and regions locally and regionally.</li> <li>- It will provide residents in and around Corsham and Devizes with a more attractive rail option and makes rail more</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved accessibility in Corsham and Devizes will encourage investment from businesses and support opportunities for local housing and employment growth.</li> <li>- Improved rail accessibility to key education, economic</li> </ul>

	services	<p>accessible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increases the proximity of residents to a railway station, reducing end-end journey times.</li> </ul>	and leisure hubs.
Hourly service at Pewsey	<p>Yes</p> <p>Westbury Platform 0 and new Paddington – Westbury service</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved service frequency gives a more attractive service.</li> <li>- In conjunction with TransWilts improvements, this offers much improved opportunities for interchange at Westbury, giving at least an hourly journey opportunity or better to all other key stations in Wiltshire</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Areas along the corridor will become more attractive areas for investment, development and new residents.</li> <li>- Improved linkage to Westbury and beyond will open up more opportunities to travel for work, education and leisure, providing economic stimulus</li> </ul>

*Table 19 - Benefit delivered and intervention required for recommended services*

## 7. Next Steps

This study sets out a vision for improvements to Wiltshire's rail system that can support sustainable growth in Wiltshire. The recommendations made in this study draw from and align with the industry vision, stakeholder strategies for rail and Wiltshire's local strategic vision for growth and should be adopted as the bases for development plans and strategic vision for the rail system in Wiltshire.

Improvements are recommended in stages and the study sets out some choices for stakeholders around the train service options that could be pursued., which will inform a programme to develop the strategic and investment cases to deliver the suite of enhancements incrementally.

The study should be endorsed as the proposed strategic baseline for rail system planning and should be used as the basis for further detailed analysis on the feasibility and requirements for delivery of the proposed recommendations.

Having agreed the preferred options, a refined ITSS can be re-tested, constructing a whole-day train plan to confirm its viability, along with Early development work of the proposed infrastructure interventions to provide an indication costs and operability for freight and passenger services that utilise the line. The service recommendations and further detailed analysis will also inform the prioritisation of development work on interventions including Westbury Platform 0 and Melksham loop.

High level design work has already been undertaken by the Old Oak Common impacts workstream for interventions at Melksham and the Devizes IFS workstream for Westbury Platform 0 and Devizes Gateway station. High level analysis has also been carried out for a new station at Corsham. Further development work will incorporate and build upon this study and high-level development work already undertaken via the individual workstreams to deliver viable business cases.

Devizes and Corsham new stations are likely to be dependent on delivery of new services, which are included in the recommended ITSS in the form of the hourly Paddington – Westbury, for Devizes, and the hourly Bristol – Oxford, for Corsham. A separate SOBC considers the case for the Bristol – Oxford service. Prioritisation of an intervention at either Melksham or Westbury Platform 0 will also be determined via further analysis of a refined ITSS.

Ultimately interventions should be developed in association with the service enhancements that they help deliver. However, this study shows that the requirements for different new services are highly interconnected in the Wiltshire area, such that the case for an intervention may sit across numerous service outcomes. Further development and refinement of the ITSS will help to confirm these inter-dependencies and provide a sufficient level of maturity for identification of business cases for investment that supports multiple outcomes.

Further development needs to include all the areas for intervention identified that are not considered directly in this study but has an interface including Wessex aspirations, The Greater Exeter Rail Study and proposals for Southcote Junction.

Infrastructure interventions should inform industry enhancement priorities and funding requirements to deliver the strategic vision for Wiltshire, which delivers benefits further to passenger and freight services utilising the line, including uplift in frequency of services and enhanced local and regional connectivity to key growth hubs.

Evidence from analysis conducted as part of this study shows the network in the Wiltshire area to be nearing or at capacity and it should be recognised that these system constraints in the Wiltshire area mean that most enhancements to services will likely depend on system interventions. Further development should be undertaken to strengthen the link between interventions and benefits and to support the development of an investment case for enhanced services, new stations and recommended infrastructure.

This analysis should also consider safety considerations, such as impacts on level crossings and cross platform interchanges.

As these programmes progress, individual projects can be accelerated for delivery as appropriate. Further development should be completed prior to submitting a Decision to Initiate to enter the programme(s) into the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline (RNEP). The RNEP process and associated business case development is shown below in Figure 22. Network Rail must work with STB's and other stakeholders to identify best the use of rail budgets to undertake the necessary development of identified schemes.

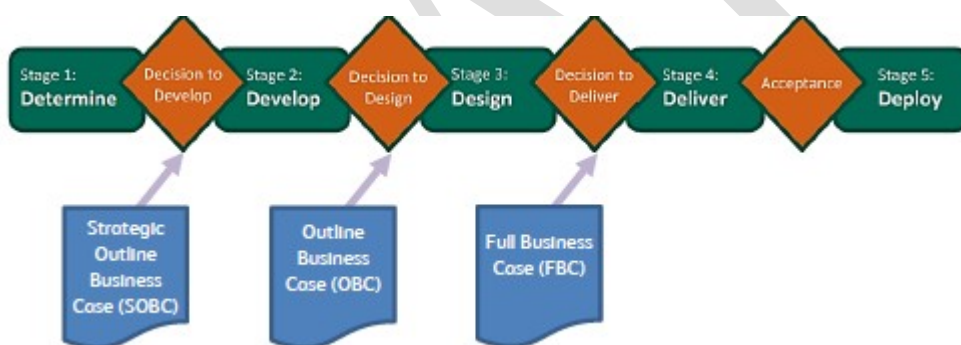


Figure 22 The Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline process, with business case development stages

Whilst it's likely that delivery of some of these enhancements will require central government funding, there are opportunities to progress development more swiftly through other funding sources, including blended funding. It is important that the collaborative work undertaken for this study is used to enhance the case for future programmes.

The large majority of information required for development of the strategic and business cases is contained within the Wiltshire study and development work should focus on building upon this with further detailed analysis.

We will also use the information gained to inform future strategies and plans. The suite of interventions identified sets out an incremental investment programme which should be used to inform future investment programmes and studies including Western Gateways strategic vision and Wiltshire's CTP and LTP and be used to support development of an integrated, inter-modal transport system in Wiltshire so that growth in

Wiltshire can be fully supported. Further development of the proposed interventions will require active engagement with all stakeholders.

Close engagement with partner organisations outside the rail industry who have interests in supporting growth within Wiltshire should continue. The study and proposed programme should function as a baseline for the strategic vision for rail in Wiltshire for all beneficiaries of the rail system and those who have a role in supporting the housing and employment growth in Wiltshire. The recommended programme should engage with potential funders and make the study information available to facilitate the development of business cases outside the RNEP process.

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## Lorraine McRandle

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**Subject:** FW: Request for urgent Official Council letter of concern on reliability to key rail industry players  
**Attachments:** mtug\_forward\_20240818.pdf

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**From:** Graham Ellis <graham@sn12.net>  
**Sent:** 19 August 2024 08:30  
**To:** Locum <locum@melksham-tc.gov.uk>; Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Pat Aves <pat.aves@melksham-tc.gov.uk>; John Glover <john.glover@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>; <[REDACTED]> <[REDACTED]>; Committee Clerk <committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk>; Lorraine McRandle <office@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Request for urgent Official Council letter of concern on reliability to key rail industry players

Dear Teresa and Tracy,

May I ask if you (both) might write an official letter to appropriate senior people to ask them to take steps to restore Melksham's train service to operate at the level specified in First Group's contract, on behalf of rail users in Melksham.

Current reliability is appalling - the contract target is that fewer than 2% of trains are cancelled on the day, but the cancellation rate at weekends has risen from 13% over the last six months to 27% over the past few weeks.

Cancellation rates such as this drain traffic away and are very bad for our local economy and the quality of life / travel here, especially for those without routine access to private transport. "Wait for the next train" does not apply to Melksham as it does at the other 4 West Wilts towns which have timetables with 3 to 6 times the level of service here, and replacement road transport is sporadic, slow to arrive, and a longer journey time means that ongoing connections are routinely missed. The loss of a single outbound trip ruins people's day and also decimates the passenger count and service justification for return trains later in the day.

The rail industry reports on why trains are cancelled. Whilst there is a variety of reasons, mostly it's because of a lack of qualified staff (drivers and train managers) to run the service. First have been providing the service at Melksham since 1st April 2006, with more or less the current service level since December 2013, so they should have had long enough to fix prior problems. But there have been a number of changes not entirely in First's hands - rather direction from the contract operator as to what they run and on staffing levels. First do have some choice though - when short of staff, their daily control team have decisions to make as to what trains to run, and it feels like they cancel they leave Melksham with excessive service gaps compared to elsewhere. That's because it's simple to fill crewing holes on the main lines where rosters are complex by stealing from the "via Melksham" service.

There is a break point in First's contract to run our trains in May 2025 which it is fully expected that the new government will take - with their strategy for rail, I would be astonished if they did not. And that means there is only limited motivation for First to sort out what I can only describe as a mess. We have very few enforcement levers we can pull here and run the risk if we push beyond a certain point of a negative outcome for Melksham. We are at a time of great risk, but also great opportunity with our local train and bus operations.

So my request is for an official letter from yourself, and / or the chair or mayor of the council, to the Managing Director of Great Western Railway (Mark Hopwood) and the Rail Minister (Lord Peter Hendy) asking for current train services that call at Melksham (remind them of the population of around 27,000 in the station catchment, and the rise from 3,000 to 75,000 passenger journeys per year in the last decade) to be radically improved back towards running at the level specified in the current timetable with a cancellation rate throughout and at also at the weekend (now the busiest time of the week) not to exceed 4% - which generously gives them the go ahead to cancel twice as many trains than contracted.

Copies of your letter, I would suggest, to our MP, to Transport Focus, to the TransWilts Community Rail Partnership, to Wiltshire Council and to the Western Gateway sNTB.

Melksham Without has always been very supportive of a good public transport network in the area, and Melksham Town has been positive on it too. The recently set strategic objectives of Melksham Town now have public transport support and improvement as one of their key strategies, so I suspect that a letter of support is within the policy of both councils and can be easily done. You are also welcome to copy this letter openly forward rather than re-writing the technical elements if you wish.

Looking forward, we have had a strategic hiatus with the retirement or passing of many of the people who have been instrumental over the years in bringing a thin but useable train service back to the town. We are now in process of oiling the wheels to partner more closely with public transport providers over coming months and years to minimise risks and maximise opportunities.

Graham Ellis

#### Copies

- Pat Aves, MTC rep on MTUG (Melksham Transport User Group)
- John Glover, MWPC rep on MTUG
- John Hamley - Transport rep on Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
- Committee clerks at MTC and MWPC

#### Attachments

- Open Train Times online stats - captured yesterday - showing the worsening cancellations
- Also an online log from Saturday showing an example of how the service fell apart on the day
- Background / overview article from my blog on the wider state of public transport

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Graham Ellis

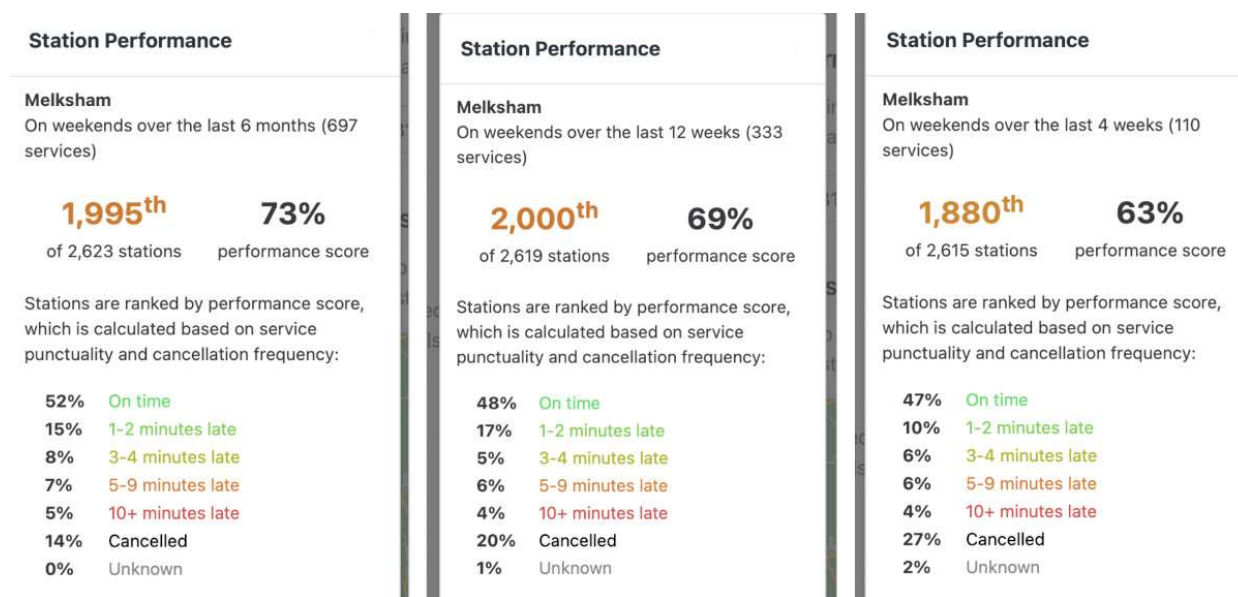
<http://grahamellis.uk> - >

Acting chair - Melksham Transport User Group

A Director of TravelWatch SouthWest

A Melksham Without Town Councillor

My emailing policy: >



# MELKSHAM ALL DAY ON 17/08/2024

-1 hour

+1 hour

STP	Plan Arr	Act Arr	Origin	PI	ID	TOC Destination	Plan Dep	Act Dep	
WTT	0801	Cancel	Westbury	-	2M11	GW Swindon	0802	Cancel	
VAR	0909	Cancel	Swindon	-	2O88	GW Weymouth	0910	Cancel	
WTT	1008	Cancel	Westbury	-	2M15	GW Swindon	1009	Cancel	
WTT	1130	Cancel	Swindon	-	2M25	GW Westbury	1131	Cancel	
WTT	1232	Cancel	Westbury	-	2M17	GW Swindon	1233	Cancel	
WTT	1338	Cancel	Swindon	-	2M26	GW Westbury	1339	Cancel	
WTT	1434	<del>1440</del>	Westbury	1	2M19	GW Swindon	1435	<del>1442</del>	2
WTT	1539	<del>1538</del>	Swindon	1	2M27	GW Westbury	1539	<del>1538</del>	2
WTT	1638	Cancel	Westbury	-	2M21	GW Swindon	1639	Cancel	
WTT	1850	Cancel	Westbury	-	2M23	GW Swindon	1851	Cancel	
WTT	2008	Cancel	Swindon	-	2M40	GW Westbury	2009	Cancel	
WTT	2133	<del>2135</del>	Weymouth	1	2M45	GW Swindon	2134	<del>2137</del>	3
WTT	2234	<del>2232</del>	Swindon	1	2M44	GW Westbury	2235	<del>2233</del>	3

-1 hour

+1 hour

## Lorraine McRandle

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**Subject:** FW: Request for urgent Official Council letter of concern on reliability to key rail industry players

---

**From:** Graham Ellis <graham@sn12.net>

**Sent:** 19 August 2024 09:24

**To:** Locum <locum@melksham-tc.gov.uk>; Teresa Strange <clerk@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>

**Cc:** Pat Aves <pat.aves@melksham-tc.gov.uk>; John Glover <john.glover@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>;

<[REDACTED]> <[REDACTED]>; Committee Clerk <committee.clerk@melksham-tc.gov.uk>; Lorraine McRandle <office@melkshamwithout-pc.gov.uk>

**Subject:** Re: Request for urgent Official Council letter of concern on reliability to key rail industry players

Correction - GWR / First's break point is in June rather than May next year. I don't think it makes any real difference to the story, but best be accurate - 22nd June 2025.

Graham Ellis

[REDACTED]

<http://grahamellis.uk> - [REDACTED]

My emailing policy: <http://grahamellis.uk/email>

On 19 Aug 2024, at 08:29, Graham Ellis <[REDACTED]> wrote:

May 2025



# Melksham Town Council

Town Hall, Melksham, Wiltshire, SN12 6ES  
Tel: (01225) 704187

Town Clerk Tracy Predeth BA(Hons), MPA, FLSCC

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024

Mr M Hopwood CBE

By email

Dear Mark

Melksham Town Council has asked me to write officially to you to express extreme concern at the frequent short notice cancellation of trains at Melksham Station and to ask you to take the necessary steps to return the service to, at worst, the minimum reliability level specified in franchises and management contracts. Could we look to returning to that minimum level by the end of the year?

We note that the new government has made train service reliability a priority for rail. We also note that most short notice cancellations are reported as being due to a lack of available train crew or operational trains, which are the responsibility of GWR. We appreciate you'll need help from partners, so we are copying this letter to the others you'll be working with to fix the issues.

Melksham is a growing town of over 25,000 in the urban area in which the station is situated. Passenger journey numbers have grown in the last decade from 3,000 per annum to over 70,000 - working with yourselves and others and with a service that has moved up from 2 to 8 trains each way per day. The numbers look good, but remain below the average for the five West Wiltshire towns of 400,000 journeys per annum on an average urban area population of under 22,000.

Our Town Council has always been supportive, seeding the Melksham Rail Development Group prior to the improvements described above and continuing that support throughout. We have recently confirmed public transport as one of our key strategies, working alongside and within the Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan (joint with Melksham Without) and our Unitary (Wiltshire) Council.

The Melksham community area has two lower layer super output areas that are in the top 20% of the most deprived areas of the county according to the indices of multiple deprivation, where around a third of households don't have access to a private car or van. That's why the passenger numbers have remained robust even with train cancellation rates over 15% at weekends over the last 3 months, versus a 2% maximum target. New councillors will be elected next May and we know that rail industry structures are being significantly changed, but key staff teams remain the same, as does the very real need for an appropriate station and train service in Melksham - for the current and potential customers of public transport.

Our Economic Development and Planning Committee meets every 3 weeks. We have provisionally set an agenda item for 29th October at which we will review progress towards the return of reliability to our train service, and will look forward to us all working together through 2025 and



# Melksham Town Council

Town Hall, Melksham, Wiltshire, SN12 6ES

Tel: (01225) 704187

Town Clerk Tracy Predeth BA(Hons), MPA, FLSCC

beyond for a truly reliable service for that and future years. It will make a huge difference to us locally. It will be in line with government objectives. It will address environmental issues where transport is the biggest generator of CO2.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and take on board the concerns of Melksham Town Council. Any thoughts you have would be gratefully received. Should someone from GWR wish to address Melksham Town Council personally, they can contact the Committee Clerk, who would be happy to make the arrangements.

Yours sincerely.

T Predeth, Clerk to Melksham Town Council.

Cc

Paddy Bradley, Chair of the TransWilts Community Rail Partnership

Richard Clewer, Leader of Wiltshire Council

Brian Mathew, MP for Melksham and Devizes

Daryn McCombe, GWR Train Service Delivery & Performance Director

Louise Haigh, Secretary of State for Transport

(Lord) Peter Hendy, Rail Minister

Nina Howe, Transport Focus

Teresa Strange, Clerk, Melksham Without Parish Council

Richard Cowell, Chair of West Wiltshire Rail User Group

Samantha Howell, Director of Highways and Transport, Wiltshire Council

Graham Ellis, Acting Chair of Melksham Transport User Group

Bryony Chetwode, TravelWatch SouthWest company secretary

Tamara Reay, Wiltshire councillor and a board member Western Gateway STB



# Melksham Town Council

Town Hall, Melksham, Wiltshire, SN12 6ES

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Town Clerk Tracy Predeth BA(Hons), MPA, FLSCC

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Jools Townsend, CEO of the Community Rail Network

John Glover, MWPC rep on MTUG

John Hamley - Transport rep on Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

Councillor Phil Alford – Melksham North Ward

Councillor Saffi Rabey – Melksham North Ward

Councillor Pat Aves – Melksham Town Council Local Passenger Group rep.

# Looking forward - public and sustainable transport

Published 19th August 2024

## 0.1 - Introduction

I am looking forward. This update is a newsletter for people in the Melksham area on public transport - looking at what has been achieved in recent years, and what is planned, proposed, possible for the next years. I am someone who has been personally involved with promoting service modernisation and improvement for nearly 20 years, and in doing so taking on a strong technical knowledge, I am asking you to indulge me in seeing some personal plans in here as I am very much looking forward to continuing that promotional role over coming years.

We have a job that is started but not finished - a lot has been achieved but there is a lot more to do. And we are at a time of both great opportunity and great risk - an opportunity for further development for the benefit of our communities, but also a risk of losing the spotlight and any investment to help bring our public and sustainable transport provision even up to the level of neighbouring towns and examples from further afield, some of which show us how it could be done.



### A beautiful day here in Melksham and look what has been achieved

- [1.1. Buses up](#)
- [1.2. Trains up](#)
- [1.3. Better Station and bus stops](#)
- [1.4. Better fares](#)

### And in other news in strategy for the future

- [2.1. Bus plans](#)
- [2.2. Network Rail report](#)
- [2.3. TWCIP being considered](#)
- [2.4. A growing town](#)

### Looking ahead on a more personal / closer to home side

- [3.1. Rejoined the board of TravelWatch SouthWest](#)
- [3.2. Server Moves](#)
- [3.3. Modernisation of Coffee Shop \(responsive and https\)](#)
- [3.4. Ability to rejoin TransWilts as a member](#)

### Ongoing national proposals

- [4.1. This governments direction for public transport](#)
- [4.2. Great British Railways, nationalisation and restructure](#)
- [4.3. Bus service futures](#)
- [4.4. A railway for the future](#)

### Ongoing proposals in our area

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## 1. A beautiful day here in Melksham and look what has been achieved

### 1.1 Buses up

Sunday buses up from 44 departures (and arrivals back) to 2 destinations last September to 200 departures (and arrivals back) to 2 destinations this September. Improvements too to services from Bradford-on-Avon with a late afternoon bus back now where previously the last bus was just after lunch time.



Over the years, there have been many threats to the local bus service and some losses - most deeply felt the evening buses to and from Chippenham and Trowbridge, and almost all services on town route 15 to East Melksham - pre-covid hourly, but now just a single service at 12:06 from The Bear. Some may be valid service modernisations, and some are to be regretted but it could have been so much worse if the 50% or greater cut in funding proposed in 2016 had gone ahead. As it was, we campaigned hard at [Option 24/7](#) to maintain bus support - successfully - and with a particular emphasis on weekend and evening services. And, yes, the evening bus services on route 273 between Bath and Devizes survive and are busy - all be it with a very long gap mid-evening.

## 1.2 Trains up

We now have 118 trains per week calling at Melksham, versus 26 at the start of the last decade. And passenger numbers on individual trains are now in excess of the numbers that travelled to or from Melksham in an entire week in those days. Make no mistake - we have moved from a virtually useless service to one that is still poor (even when it runs - there is a major reliability issue) and there is a long way to go.

As from last summer, the final major gap in being able to call the service "all day, every day" was filled, with addition of evening trains on a Saturday in winter, and a late evening service on Mondays to Fridays throughout the year.

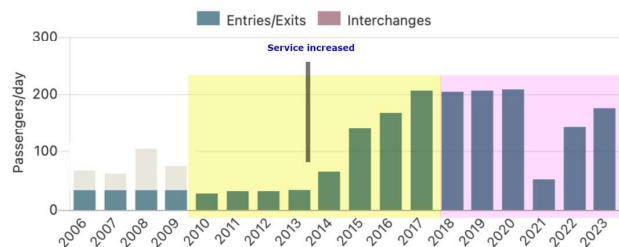
The graphic attached shows the growth in Melksham Passenger numbers from 2006 to 2023. I have taken the liberty of shading the period that I was Community Rail Officer for the line in yellow - I'm proud to have been a part of that growth; the pink section since my reluctant departure was hit by covid, and also perhaps reflects the redirection of community rail away from general traffic promotion of current services. *At one time, it was cheaper to buy a Melksham to Bristol ticket than one from Trowbridge and Bradford-on-Avon, and our journey numbers were artificially inflated. I have shaded the journey columns sections to represent these tickets from Melksham sold but never used here.*



**1,843<sup>rd</sup> busiest**

176 passengers/day · [History](#)

**Melksham - Daily Passengers**



## 1.3 Better Station and bus stops

A decade ago, there was just a short platform at Melksham - enough for a single carriage train, with a small "bus stop" style waiting shelter. There were six car parking spaces just outside. Longer trains could call, but if they did all passenger had to / from Melksham had to use a single door - not a problem while passenger numbers were so abysmal.

We now have a platform which takes the full length of a train up to 3 carriages and has extra safety elements such as a yellow line. We have a larger waiting shelter, a ticket vending machine, a covered bicycle area, more seating, a CCTV system, a "next train" display and additional information displays. The car parking spaces are now designated for pick up and drop off only, and just across the station forecourt is a public (paid) car park now run by Wiltshire Council with around 50 spaces. Signage to and from the station has been much improved.

There are over 100 bus stops in Melksham, ranging from those with no regular service at all such as the one at the railway station though the minimal service at some of 5 per week through to the Market Place bus stop which I estimate has around 360 services a week leaving on 9 routes (14, x34, 68, 69 to Corsham, 69 to Trowbridge, x69, 271, 272 and 273). Some bus stops have been improved over the years, and I welcome the first real time bus display which has been installed at Mitchell Drive in Bowerhill, with a promise of more at the two busiest stops in the Town Centre

## 1.4 Better (lower) fares

On the buses, the single fare of £6.50 to Bath is currently replaced by the £2 flat fare introduced by the previous government and promised to run until December.

On the trains, GWR introduced "via Melksham" fares that help encourage the use of our line by through passengers, and some of those fares give reductions to and from Melksham too. With the provision of off peak trains, day returns are now practical at a fraction of what they would previously have cost during the week.

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## 2. And in other news in strategy for the future

### 2.1 Bus plans

The Sunday services to Chippenham and to Trowbridge restarted (after many years) in the Spring, and the Sunday service to Bath and Devizes becomes hourly from 1st September. Good. Real time display at a handful of busy stops will be arriving in the next few weeks. What else is needed?

On existing routes, evening services to and from Chippenham and Trowbridge would be welcome. And there are many requests for the return of the extra penultimate service from Bath to Melksham which we lost at the start of Covid when First Bus pulled out; the 21:05 is describe by many as "too early" and the 23:15 (to become 23:20 on Saturdays) as "too late". Difficult to do in a cost effective manner, but need noted.

Melksham was reduced from a town with a two vehicle "Town Service" in 2020 to a single vehicle service as a "temporary measure" but that reduction has become permanent, with the single vehicle and single driver shift doing school runs and trying to service everything else in between, none of which encourages many passengers except those who have no option but to use it. Some parts of Melksham only have one or two buses a day now, and there are other anachronisms. We need a second vehicle to service the town, and after 4 years gap that could and should reflect the needs of the future rather than slavishly duplicating what it did in 2019.

Logic is for a new Town service - christened "16" - to run from the Railway Station just after the train has called to the Town Centre, and out along Sandridge Road to the edge of town, then along the eastern relief road to The Spa and up to Bowerhill, serving the business area there before heading out to the Police station on Semington Road and some journeys on to Holbrook Vale. Return by the same route, arriving at the station a few minutes before the train calls so providing connection / interchange facilities and scope for a personal needs break for the driver. This route is close to the one we tested in real life in September 2022 with the electric bus hired for the day. The exiting town service - route 14 with it's multiple variation to take everyone on in, including a couple of runs designated "15" can then be updated to take out variants through areas served by the 16, and provide a more thorough service that's of much more use to many people and not just those who have had no choice but use it. It is instructive to look at the town bus in Devizes - a smaller town but with two vehicles - and see how busy they are!

Melksham's buses have been diesel powered for many years. Although greatly improved of late, that makes them noisy, smelly, rattly, and not good on a sustainability front. Alternative power, such as electricity (but hydrogen talked about) has become much more practical of late, and companies like The Big Lemon who we visited in Brighton 3 years ago are now operating as close as Bath, with electric buses coming with Go-ahead to Salisbury soon. Here in Melksham as across other Wiltshire Towns, contracts were re-let for four years for Town buses based on price once a basic standard was met, and that meant that bids that included electric operation did not win, as the operators proposing them had to recuperate the extra costs of setup over just 48 months. Had the contracts been 8 years, or sustainability and zero carbon been an evaluation factor, the outcome might have been different. There is, though, huge sense in looking at the model for route 16 and making that an electric operation.

## 2.2 Network Rail report and rail plans

The railway line through Melksham is a single track and it takes (realistically) 20 minutes for a train to pass through and for the line to be set up for one coming the other way. There is a significant amount of freight traffic on the line (which often runs early or late), there are often diverted mainline trains coming through, and there is nowhere at either end of the single line for trains to wait without getting in the way of other services. So the current passenger service of a train every couple of hours each way is about the most that can be managed, and even that is a nightmare to plan and operate, especially on disrupted days. However, an appropriate service for Melksham is an hourly service. That's not only for Melksham itself but also through passenger from Swindon and Chippenham to Trowbridge and Westbury, who make up two thirds of the passengers on the train.

The draft Network Rail report "Wiltshire Rail Strategic Study", 72 page draft of July 2024, analyses the best case improvement from a whole series as stepping up to an hourly service each way from Swindon to Frome, and a part of the benefit is the service increase at Melksham. To achieve this, extra capacity would be required on the line, and the report suggests officially (as we have for many years) that a loop to allow trains to pass each other at or near Melksham would make sense. The report also highlights the need to restore the 4th platform at Westbury which was taken out of use in 1984; these days, the lack of that platform with the greatly increased train frequency seems to mean that more often than not, trains have to slow or wait as they approach.

The Network Rail document also considers ahead - looking at the sensible step of electrifying from Cocklebury Lane, Chippenham via Westbury and Frome to the Mendip quarries for both freight and passenger operation. It all makes sense, but in coming years will need encouragement for it to be taken forward and actually implemented.

## 2.3 LWCIP being considered

There is a current ongoing consultation on the Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan for Melksham, envisaging how road and footpaths can be improved to make them more friendly. Background work done by Wiltshire Council and their consultants, resulting in a 75 page report that is out for consultation until 6th September.

Many of the suggestions in the LWCIP make sense, and much backup evidence is provided. However, much of the evidence is historic and dates back to the 2011 census and many of the walking and cycling flows have changed since then, with the secondary school now on the road to Devizes not the road to Bath, with station users up from 3,000 per annum to 75,000 and with extra housing built to the east of the town, on the old school site, and off the old Semington Road. Some informed data is much more current, but the data that would lead to suggestion of improving facilities for flows that are no longer there should, perhaps, have been excluded. Data from Priority for People, the 2021 survey by the Town Council, could usefully inform the LWCIP process and, I will admit, I am unclear as to the stages to be taken in implementing the plan - the report is financed, but (I would suggest) not the interventions it suggests.

Melksham is one of the longest established towns in Wiltshire, and a number of our streets near the centre date back to the days of the horse, cart and stagecoach. Where that was all the traffic that had to pass through the narrows between oft-listed buildings, these days to that mixture we need to add lorries, buses, delivery vehicles and private cars, and bicycles, scooters and mobility chairs - squeezing a quart into a pint pot. Many of these modern vehicles are much faster than the stagecoach, and they're there in far greater numbers than in bygone times with Melksham being so much larger than it was. Spa Road, from the Market Place to Melksham Hospital is a particular accident black spot.

Melksham Without Parish Council have done a thorough review of the draft LCWIP which they took to their council on 29th July, and I commend to you. At Melksham Town Council, I don't think we have any staff or councillors with the technical knowledge or time to do such a detailed review and subject to a read through over coming days I am going to propose that we endorse their commentary which in a brief overview looks appropriate. See also the Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan II (2020-2038) - 130 pages, consultation closes 22nd August - see below.

## 2.4 A growing town

The population of the Melksham area is around 26,000, up from 12,000 in 1951 and 22,000 in 2011. We might anticipate further growth to somewhere between 30,000 and 40,000 over the next 15 years - these numbers thrown into recent doubt by the requirement by the new government to build substantial extra housing in the county. We are working under the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework), The Wiltshire Core Strategy (next version the "Local Plan") and the Neighbourhood plan - made in 2022 and with a new version going to local referendum in the next 6 months to a year.

With a growing town, and with changing provision, public, sustainable and private transport all needs to develop to keep pace with, and indeed be ahead of, demand. In many ways, the growth of the town is the friend of public transport as it boosts the economic case for a more frequent service which, when run, encourages more people to use it because of its very frequency. You can see elements of this change if you look back at recent years too, with Melksham's train and bus services (with the exception of the travesty of the Town Bus cuts and the failure to link road and rail) having blossomed so much in recent years - and there will be more to follow

Housing Growth proposed by Wiltshire Council in the local plan, and other sensitive areas that are potentials if government requires more homes be built, are all away from the Town Centre and railway, but just to the side of the proposed "route 16" bus for which a case can be made even before anything is built. Proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan are for "brownfield" site housing on the former Cooper Tires site and the old Library site, both of which are in closely adjoining existing public transport routes / flows that are covered elsewhere in this document. The final Neighbourhood Plan site to south of Melksham is not so well suited for public transport, but I note that access is via Pathfinder Way, with good bus services to the Town and to Bath and Devizes, and on the proposed town bus route 16 too which will take new residents to the railway station.

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## 3. Looking ahead on a more personal / closer to home side

### 3.1 Rejoined the board of TravelWatch SouthWest

TravelWatch SouthWest (TWSW) is a coordinating CIC of volunteer technical experts who provide updates to and an interface between User and specialist interest groups, and financial management and operational staff in the Transport Industry and local and national government. Twice a year, a general meeting across the SouthWest gives member groups and industry experts a chance to update their knowledge and to network, and other seminars, papers meetings and advise between meetings helps inform people across the sectors in a field where co-operative informing is patchy. TWSW helps bridge the knowledge gap between the use and the provider.

BC (Before Covid) I was a member of the TWSW board - a group of lovely people who really know their transport stuff. I was out of place with my lack of knowledge, unable to contribute much and asking silly questions, and stood down, which gave an opportunity to another fantastic expert to join the board, and gave me some more time for other activities such as local ones in Melksham.

With one of the experts, sadly, retiring from TWSW with immediate effect, I have been invited back onto the board through co-option and will stand again more formally for a three year term in December. I still know a lot less than the rest, but I am in a position to be able to help fill a press, publicity and liaison role and helping with web presence, and also helping inform the very future of TWSW which runs on a very small budget provided by Transport Operators such as those who are losing their franchises / contracts under new government plans.

### 3.2 Server and system moves

The web server that I use for much of what I do is based with a Web Service Provider, and has been around for ages. It's being switched off at the end of this month, and I am in the process of moving lots of stuff around - 2 weeks to go before the deadline.

My Facebook account was over-secured to JelliaJamb and cutting a long story short you will find a new personal profile at <https://www.facebook.com/graham.ellis.melksham/> - please contact me though there and re-established friendships welcomed.

I am not campaigning for re-election to Melksham Town Council next Spring and when I leave the Council I will no longer have my official

email address there - so I am encouraging people who share my wider interest to use graham@sn12.net please.

Lisa and I are upgrading our home internet provision over the next few days. In theory it is straightforward. In practise, issues sometimes crop up with such things. Status page ... <http://status.sn12.net> ... if you lose me or servers.

### 3.3 Modernisation of Coffee Shop (responsive and https)

I founded the Great Western "Coffee Shop" forum in January 2007. Using Open Source software, I was expecting it to run - at most - for 18 months. But here we are, now in our 18th year and whilst it's not as busy as it used to be, we still had nearly 1,200 new posts last month and it remains a key community <http://www.firstgreatwestern.info/index.html> tool with passengers, campaigners, rail advocates and staff all sharing thought and information from London through the Thames Valley, the South West and South Wales. We have a team of a dozen administrators and moderators but, truth be told, the members usually keep themselves very much in order and we have little to do.

Whilst the need for the "Coffee Shop" to provide a passenger forum over the years has not really changed, how people wish to access it has. Rather than accessing from a laptop computer which was how things were done 18 years ago, we now have a wide variety of devices of all sort of shapes and sizes. Rather than use an http protocol, members would prefer the more secure https (s for secure) even though we collect no personal data. And rather than including cookie consent in the forum terms and conditions, members would prefer a separate pop-up.

The software we use - Simple Machines - uses PHP version 4, but we're now up to version 8 and we should really switch. However, it is not 100% compatible with some older syntaxes being deprecated from one version to the next, and then removed. We can't easily switch, though, because we have tailored the version we run over time - never expecting to be around in 2010, let alone 2024!

Much work to be done. I'm still quite happy to do much of this work - very much the technology through which I earned my living for the largest part of my working life and still fun, but it takes a lot of time.

### 3.4 Ability to rejoin TransWilts as a member

If you hold more than 1% of the share of a business that operates in premises in the Parish, it's regarded as a pecuniary interest. As one of just less than 60 "members" of the TransWilts CIC, I held 1.75% of the shares - £1 invested and with a liability of £1 if they went bust, and as a CIC no intent of making a profit for shareholders. So when the hub cafe opened, I gave up my membership to let me speak on TransWilts matters at council. With the hub cafe now closed and lease released, I can now apply to rejoin TransWilts and I am inclined to do so though I would not expect to take much (if any) of a role

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## 4. Ongoing national proposals

### 4.1 This governments direction for public transport

Scroll down for rail and bus individually ... there is a desire for a uniform reliability and provision at minimal cost to the taxpayer, but at same time giving control of operations locally which may lead to a lack of uniformity - a postcode lottery of services?

### 4.2 Great British Railways, nationalisation and restructure

The King's Speech included the bill to "Nationalise the railways" and provide a legal basis for Great British Railways. The restructure may be important, but at this point it's something of an enabler and we'll need to wait and see how the things that have been enabled are done.

There is an element of dogma and populism in "Nationalisation" - much is already nationalised, and much will remain in private hands. I'm pretty sure that most trains will remain privately owned by the likes of Porterbrook, Eversholt and Angel Trains - companies which most of you will never have heard of, themselves owned by banks and big multi-nationals, and around a third of your fare goes on train hire. And the government seems to be encouraging open access train operation, which is private sector trains on the national network; scope for the nationalised service to be reduced to a basic service and then have the private sector provide the rest? Here in Melksham, our current train service is broken at the weekend and the strategy openly talk of / allows and plans for a potential open access operator on the line.

In the last few days, the government has settle the industrial dispute for more money with the train drivers that's been ongoing for 3 years, with around 20 days of strikes. Statements are that it may be costing £100 million to settle, but that must be balanced against £1 billion of damage done by the strikes. But within days we are seeing other rail staff saying "we want that same deal" and some of the drivers (LNER and not GWR) calling more strikes in a separate dispute, with a strong expectation that the government - who run LNER - will accede to their demands / requests.

### 4.3 Bus service futures

The government plans to allow much more franchising by local authorities, which seems very much the opposite of ceasing franchising on the railways. And allow local authorities to set up their own bus operations in the future?

Certainly the plans for doing better than leaving things to purely market forces then buying in extras that no-one wants to provide commercially make some sense. Just the other week, I took the Swanage bus from Weymouth. An average frequency of an hourly bus - except that it's 2 buses 3 minutes apart and then a gap of an hour and 57 minutes, with the two buses operated by rival companies. Madness, and it results on "thinner" routes of neither being able to survive, and a loss of off-peak services of a need for financial taxpayer support when the total service should be self supporting.

The £2 single fare promotion was originally for 2023. The previous government extended it through 2024 (over the general election period) and the current government is now wrestling with a "what do we do?" question. Could some fares go up 3 times locally (and some 5 times for other extreme journeys elsewhere in the country)

How are we doing on electric buses? On buses and trains connecting? On through ticketing across buses and trains? On integrated information systems? On providing a stability so that investment can be made (public or private sector) on a service for the future that runs economically and on which people can plan their lives?

### 4.4 A railway for the future

\$ 64,000 public transport questions ...

- 4.4.1 Service routes, levels
- 4.4.2 Service and infrastructure reliability
- 4.4.3 Price of travel, understandability of ticketing
- 4.4.4 Information systems
- 4.4.5 Welcoming the passengers (or not)
- 4.4.6 Network changes - new stations, even closing unused ones and lines
- 4.4.7 Access for all - including those without smartphones, with cycles, etc
- 4.4.8 Looking after people when things go wrong

The new structures open a door for those things to be dealt with; I suggest that there the average passenger doesn't really care who operates his train or bus which is what so much talk is about - he wants a reliable service going where and when he wants, in safety and comfort and practically accessible at a price he can afford.

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## Ongoing proposals in our area

### 5.1 Running clock face (Hourly) Trains

Melksham's trains need to run hourly each way, and at the same time in each hour. If you look at the stats of another station - and I chose Warminster as being the closest in terms of Town size, and with a history of service of about the level we should have, you'll find their passenger journey numbers about 8 times ours. Yes, double the service at Melksham and each train will be twice as busy as each current train.

Back up evidence? For everyone I talk to who uses the service, I speak to someone else who does not, citing infrequency, unreliability, difficulty getting to the station and the unwelcoming "feel" down there. And I move in public transport circles, so I meet a disproportionate number of current users.

The word **running** is key. It is no good having trains in the timetable and then cancelling them, especially at short notice. The rail industry need to employ and have available enough staff and lease enough working trains to run the service.

### 5.2 Evening buses all week everywhere

The late bus from Bath which runs 6 days a week is often very busy - but I will admit that passengers are few in number on that vehicle earlier in the evening. But why just 6 days out of 7, and why is the last bus back from Chippenham and Trowbridge so early that people working away, or doing overtime or finishing at 6pm or attending an event can't get home by bus? We're not looking at much here - a single vehicle from Trowbridge at 8 and 10 p.m. and from Chippenham at 7, 9 and 11 p.m.

### 5.3 Bus and walking links to station



That's the "16" bus as described above. And with a Melksham loop on the railway, the northbound and southbound hourly trains will call within minutes of each other, so the bus can connect to and from trains in both directions. From the first train to the last, please and, yes, that means multiple driver shifts even though it's a single vehicle.

Houses in Foundry Close were described when sold as "near to the station". Correct, but that's as the crow flies. On foot, it's the best part of 1km, and involves either walking down a major road with no footpath in parts, or crossing that road twice which is what is strongly encouraged. And yet - "all" that is needed is a section of fence taking down between two pieces of Wiltshire Council roadway, with improvement of about 10 yards of path. This would also bring the x34 bus stops far closer to the station

The old steps from the end of the station platform to the bridge over the railway could usefully be re-opened. Saving another "Great Way Round"

The Subway under the A350 which links the railway station to the town is in need of some Tender Loving Care - a project to improve that has been mooted and stillborn over the years.

## 5.4 More passenger-welcoming NaPTANs

A NaPTAN is a National Passenger Transport Access Node - bus stops and railway stations to you and me. Many of them in Melksham are far less welcoming than they might be, and that puts people off. For many it's as simple as keeping them clean and any signage up to date, with as a minimum these days a QR code to take you to current service running. There's a very large number of bus stops and for perhaps a dozen we're looking at a shelter and a bit more maintenance work - lights that work, any damage put right, etc. There is only one railway station.

The railway station is at the back of an industrial estate; at weekends and of an evening it's a very lonely place where people may not feel safe. Signage for outgoing passengers is frightening, telling them they may be fined if they don't buy a ticket from a complex-programmed machine. Arrivals expecting to find a town centre or waiting buses or a stop with service or taxis find none of those. These days, there are usually other people around when a train calls, but early arrivals for train who are newcomers really wonder, and people getting off a train for the first time, unmet, find themselves rapidly alone. No-one to ask, no loo, not even a drink of water. The "Melksham Hub" Cafe failed its economic case but from the lessons learned I believe the community could do better.

## 5.5 Melksham Transport User Group

- 5.5.1 - User information and support
- 5.5.2 - Commemorative seat in memory of Peter and Margaret
- 5.5.3 - Station friends including cafe presence
- 5.5.4 - Working with industry and specifiers for better service

## 5.6. We need to sort out cycling and walking updates

A big open question here where I am not an expert. Yes, I do walk and cycle around but I have not studied in great detail, and tend to look / use things rather than getting involved in too much of the why and wherefore. However, we do not to my knowledge have a local expert. A great deal of good learning work was done by Priority for People and much has been done in working up the Neighbourhood Plan. At the Town Council, I seem to be the best of a bad job ... an untrained volunteer with limited time.

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## 6. And in conclusion

### Conclusion from the above

We are at a time of great opportunity, but also of great risk of not taking those opportunities and getting it wrong. Some difficult and unpopular short term decisions need to be taken as we reset things for the future. There are some good knowledgeable experts around and that knowledge must be cherished and used and not lost on a bonfire of political dogma, indifference and cutting. The voice of the user of services - the customer is king - must be heard and changes must do right for those customers.

Personally, I am not campaigning for another 4 years on the Town Council - there are better and more effective (and much more enjoyable) things I can do, and those are for the benefit of my ward, my town, and my region. Many of things in the article above point to a start of those things, but although it's long they just scrape the surface.

I have referred to many documents above - perhaps a thousand pages in total.

## Next Steps

Having motivated **you** to read this far, I need to be suggesting options as to what we as a community can do and how **you** can effectively help.

- \* There is a West Wiltshire Rail User Group meeting on 18th September
- \* There is a TravelWatch SouthWest meeting on 11th October
- \* There is a Climate Friendly update for the constituency in B-o-A on 22nd October
- \* There NEEDS TO BE a co-ordinating meeting for Melksham, perhaps under the auspices of the "Melksham Rail Development Group" or the "Melksham Transport User Group" - re-envigourating. I **wish** I had something set up / I could tell you about here, but I don't.

What I can do is to give you a date to hold in your diary - Friday 25th October - very provisionally - for a significant public community meeting here in Melksham. I am updating at <http://www.passenger.chat/29008>.

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Written by Graham Ellis?

Graham Ellis has been a lifelong public transport user and advocate, as well as a private car driver in a career that took him to all corners of the British Isles and beyond. As an IT trainer and technical author in niche topics, Graham is well versed in understanding complex requirements and formulating potential solutions. He presents them in clear terms and with options and alternatives offered to fit the wider picture.

Graham was vice chair of the Melksham Railway Development Group (MRDG) for many years. This successfully concluded in the regaining and retaining of a useable train service at Melksham. MRDG activities are now being rolled into the wider West Wiltshire User Group, where Graham is a committee member and public meeting organiser. He has been deeply involved in advocacy and promotion for local buses, helping modernise service provision across the area. Public Transport has to be an intensely co-operative provision between modes and communities and flows.

Our own IT training centre offered accommodation for guests from near and far. Graham appreciates the concerns of people unfamiliar with using transport in the area. He is well used to providing information and assistance, and feeding back in a constructive manner where appropriate. This was expanded in 2007 into the "Coffee Shop" online forum where Graham is Webmaster (aided by a wonderful team of moderators, and with much useful input from industry professionals as well as passengers) with around 1,000 posts every month to this day on travel and transport in the Thames Valley, South West of England and South Wales.

Writing in the summer of 2024, we have a window of great risk and also great opportunity. Our public transport industry is being brought forward from models that have served us for decades, but are no longer suitable. Needs have changed. New strategies need to consider not only optimum passenger travel to changing patterns but also wider issues such as freight, the environment, and the economic and financial foundations. The pleasure of reliable travel and the information systems can help ensure this works for everyone in spite of the complex background behind the whole structure. Travel should be a pleasure.

Graham is retired in Melksham, and lives with his wife Lisa beside a bus stop. Medical and health issues are significantly restricting our mobility and flexibility but not our ability to think, answer, inform. We are becoming ever more versed in accessibility issues be it for ourselves, or extended for those travelling with young children, heavy luggage, cycles, dogs and other items.

P.S. Lisa is my rock and questions my editorial decision to leave out my years as President of the Chamber of Commerce, my role as an elected independent Town Councillor, my running of our own business, my handling of huge data and web sites, my blogging, and my frequent and often official appearance at Stations, bus stops, village fetes and in carnival to answer questions and promote our area and transport. She says I'm complex ;-)

Marianne Rossi  
Melksham Without Parish Council  
First Floor  
Community Campus  
Market Place  
Wiltshire  
SN12 6ES

23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024

Dear Marianne Rossi,

As we reflect on the past year at Help Counselling Services (HCS), we are thankful that we had Melksham Without Parish Council's support. Thanks to your generosity, we have made significant strides in expanding our services and reaching more individuals in need across Wiltshire. We are excited to share our achievements and future plans with you.

### **Expanding Our Team and Services**

This year, we have grown our team to include 24 counsellors, who collectively offer 80 sessions of counselling each week. Our counsellors have undergone specialised training in areas such as working with suicidal clients, trauma, bereavement and loss, and neurodiversity, ensuring we provide the highest quality of care to our clients.

We have also fully settled into our new premises, which provide a welcoming and supportive environment for both our clients and staff. Additionally, we are delighted to welcome Natalie to our team, who will focus on fundraising and connecting with community groups to further our mission.

### **Inspiring Community Fundraising Efforts**

We are incredibly proud of the fundraising initiatives spearheaded by our clients. Kirsty, organised a Christmas raffle that collected hundreds of prizes and raised £500. Paul, another dedicated supporter, cycled the Jurassic Coast Challenge, raising £250. We are very proud of them and their achievements inside and outside the counselling room.

### **Strengthening Local Partnerships**

We have forged deeper connections with local surgeries to ensure clients are supported during counselling and referred appropriately. Looking ahead, we continue to support the staff of White Horse Care Trust through a renewed contract. Additionally, we are thrilled to have won a bid with Wiltshire Council to provide 800 sessions of counselling to employees across Wiltshire. One of our most significant undertakings is partnering with you to reduce health inequalities in Melksham and Chippenham and sees us opening rooms one day a week in both towns to improve accessibility to our services.

### **Addressing Local Needs**

Wiltshire faces significant challenges, with some of the poorest areas in England and life expectancy disparities of up to 10 years. The rural nature of the county often makes services difficult to access, particularly for the elderly, disabled, and those experiencing poverty. Residents earn 10% less than the national average, and young people face bleak prospects, with up to 18% lacking qualification and waiting lists of up to five years for ADHD and Autism



diagnoses. At HCS, we are committed to addressing these issues and making a profound impact on our clients' lives.

### Measuring Our Impact

We continuously measure and track our clients' progress to ensure we are making a positive difference. Using the 'Wheel of Life' assessment, clients score eight key areas at the start and end of their counselling sessions. In 2024, we observed significant improvements across all areas of life, including:

Anxiety:	34%
Low Mood:	23%
Health:	21%
Self-Worth:	36%
Vocation/Job:	13%
Personal Relationships:	45%
Family Relationships:	18%
Friends/Colleagues:	31%
Personal Interests:	26%

Client feedback also plays a crucial role in our continuous improvement. Some recent testimonials include:

"I would like to say a big thank you and well done for the service you gave to me. I cannot explain the difference it has made to me and my family. It feels like I have turned around 180 degrees. Thank you all for all your help and support. It does mean a lot and makes a great difference to lots of people."

"I enjoyed my interaction with my counsellor very much. I was impressed at how she remembered so many small details I had shared with her. I felt I had my concerns listened to, probably for the first time ever."

Clients also rate various aspects of their experience, with notable results:

- 84% found the service very easy to access
- 90% felt their initial enquiry was handled very well
- 95% formed an excellent relationship with their counsellor
- 95.6% improved their self-awareness and understanding of their issues
- 79% felt their issues had improved since starting counselling

Our dedicated team: Laura and Rachel continue to support our clients and counsellors, embodying the heart of our organisation. Our trustees lead with vision, propelling the charity forward to reach more people and make a meaningful difference in Wiltshire. Our counsellors have provided 4,500 sessions of counselling this year, generously offering their time, skills, and experience for free.

### Looking Ahead

At HCS, we remain committed to providing donation-based counselling to anyone over the age of 16 living in Wiltshire, either in person or remotely. We offer professional support for mental health issues such as low mood, anxiety, stress, trauma, relationship issues, and bereavement and loss. Our services also include advocacy to access the Community Mental Health Team and other services. We help our clients understand and manage their emotions, resolve

conflicts, improve communication, and build healthier relationships, ultimately enhancing self-esteem and life skills.

We continue to work closely with community organisations to provide accessible mental health services and promote mental well-being within the community.

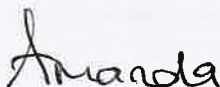
### **Your Continued Support**

Your generous contribution of £180 has been instrumental in our success this year. As we move forward, we hope for your continued support to help us expand our services and reach even more individuals in need. Together, we can create healthier, stronger communities and make a lasting impact on the lives of those living in Wiltshire.

A final last word, we are still looking for potential Trustees, and at the moment we do not have a single Trustee from Melksham area. Someone from the local councils in our number would give us the local knowledge that we are so desperately missing. Please could you speak with your colleagues on the council and encourage them to make contact with us, and of course we would love to hear from you.

Thank you for your ongoing support and belief in our mission.

Warm regards,



Amanda Wilkes  
Executive Director  
Help Counselling Service



**Teresa Strange**

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**From:** Wiltshire Council <wiltshirecouncilnews@news.wiltshire.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 22 August 2024 11:31  
**To:** Teresa Strange  
**Subject:** Project Gigabit - North Wiltshire Lot 30 type C connectivity solution

[View this email in your browser](#)



22 August 2024



**Funded by  
UK Government**

## **Project Gigabit**

### **North Wiltshire Lot 30 type C connectivity solution**

Building Digital UK (BDUK) has appointed telecoms provider Openreach to build next generation gigabit capable infrastructure in Central and North Wiltshire. This follows the award of a contract to Wessex Internet covering South Wiltshire last year.

The Openreach contract will target places that are too expensive for providers to reach in their commercial build, and which would otherwise be left behind without access to next generation broadband connectivity.

Wiltshire Council has welcomed this appointment and looks forward to developing a working relationship with Openreach and supporting them to achieve a successful rollout of this scheme.

Openreach anticipate connecting 9,000 premises over the next five years. This means residents and businesses will have access to lightning-fast gigabit capable broadband to help grow the local economy, accelerate innovation and improve people's lives.

Detailed delivery plans are being developed so we can measure the pace of delivery against Openreach's targets. This announcement moves the project into the early enablement phases, and further briefings will be provided as more information becomes available.

Further connectivity has been widely anticipated by residents, businesses and people in North Wiltshire who were not otherwise connected through the Project Superfast programme, which ended in 2022. Wiltshire Council is hopeful for further flexibility through the BDUK Gigabit Voucher Scheme (GBVS).

This scheme can provide vouchers worth up to £4,500 for homes and businesses in the hardest to reach rural areas to support the cost of installing new gigabit capable connections to their doorstep when part of a group. Further briefings will detail when/if BDUK release vouchers for areas needing additional support to achieve connectivity. Currently the voucher scheme is paused in Wiltshire and many other parts of the UK, although this can change.

The following e-mail can be used to raise specific enquiries:

[broadband@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:broadband@wiltshire.gov.uk)

Find out more about Project Gigabit and BDUK



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