

Shaping the Future of Latton Parish



A report about the progress
of the Latton Parish Community Led Plan

2013 – 2018

Contents



Foreword, by Graham Blunden, Chair, Latton Parish Council

	Page
Introduction	2
Mitigate Road Noise and Traffic	3-4
Preserve and Improve Public Transport	5
Maintain and Enhance Access to the Countryside	6
Develop Community Facilities	7-8
Maintaining and Sustaining Local Businesses and Services	9
Contact us	9

Foreword



In October 2013 a Community Led Parish Plan was adopted by the Latton Parish Council. This was based on the information residents gave about life in the parish. The plan set out some of the issues to be addressed to improve the quality of life of all of us living in the parish and gave a focus for the activities of Latton Parish Council.

Parish life has changed during the five years of the plan and many of the actions have been worked on. Many residents have got involved in making positive changes to facilities and opportunities in the parish and I am grateful to them for their work.

As the life time of the parish plan comes to an end in 2018 a review of progress has taken place and I am pleased to let you have a summary of this. This report also highlights issues that still need working on.

If you would like more information about the parish plan or a copy of the original document please visit www.lattonparishcouncil.org.uk/parishplan

To find out more about the work of the Latton Parish Council and to get involved please contact me.

Yours faithfully



Graham Blunden

Chair of Latton Parish Council

www.lattonparishcouncil.org.uk

Introduction

The following section lists the main issues identified in the parish plan then summarises the changes that have taken place and what more is left to do.

The issues that residents in Latton Parish identified as needing action were are follows:

- Mitigate Road Noise and Traffic
- Preserve and Improve Public Transport
- Maintain and Enhance Access to the Countryside
- Maintain and Sustain Local Businesses and Services
- Develop Community Facilities



Mitigate Road Noise and Traffic



Reduce Traffic Noise from the A419

Residents in Latton are the most concerned about the impact of traffic. Noise from the A419 is an ongoing worry as traffic volumes increase year to year.

The Latton Parish Council has supported a number of road noise campaigns to get change since the road was built in 1998 when it became clear that the concrete surface of the road as it bypasses Latton was in itself creating more noise than was necessary if a quieter surface treatment had been used.

The A419 Noise Action Group (A419NAG) <http://a419nag.co.uk/> came together in 2012 and continue to lobby and raise awareness about the excessive road noise on the A419 which adversely affects residents in Latton. A report looking at the social consequences of the road noise incorporated evidence from Latton residents reporting the adverse effects on health and wellbeing on living beside this major road.

Noise measurements taken at various points in Latton show disturbing levels of noise and have increased since the same measurements were taken in 1998 when the road first opened. There is evidence obtained through Freedom of Information that the volumes of traffic and speeds are increased significantly.

However, despite a compelling case for noise quietening measures to be implemented progress is frustrating with agencies and government all absolving themselves of responsibility. The local MP's have failed to exert influence and Highways Agency and government departments have failed to respond. In June 2016 there was the promise of a Latton barrier but no follow through.

The next phase of the A419 NAG campaign is to press for change to the road surface as part the road improvement scheme to the A417 at The Air Balloon and Nettleton Bottom named 'The A417 Missing Link' <http://a417missinglink.co.uk/the-problem/>. This road improvement is expected to provide an economic boost to the region. This improvement effectively establishes a non-stop motorway route (M5 to M4) and as a result even greater pressure on the A419 / A417.

Public consultation on the Missing Link begins in early 2018.

There is a real case for keeping the pressure on for change to the concrete surface on the A419 / A417 and monitoring the continuing effects on Latton parish of the A417 concrete stretch.

The A419 road noise issue continues to be taken forward by the parish council on behalf of residents.



Reduce the impact of traffic speed in the Parish

The parish council has focused and prioritised issue. There has been successful work to coordinate its activities with Wiltshire Council and police to make change and reduce the effects of traffic speed in the parish at a number of places, e.g. Latton High Street and at Water Eaton.

There has been a successful implementation of Community Speedwatch which is a national initiative where active members of local communities join with the support of the police to monitor the speeds of vehicles using speed detection devices. This is located in Latton village itself.

Co-ordination of the Speedwatch activity in the parish is undertaken by a parish councillor and data which is gathered in the parish is examined by the council when it meets to consider the extent of the problem.

Parish residents have trained and undertaken many hours of monitoring and are a visible presence on the High Street which in itself prevents the danger of motorists breaking the speed limits.

The parish now has a Speed Indicator Device (SIDs). These are temporary vehicle activated signs which detect and display real-time vehicle speeds. SIDs are a relatively cheap method of speed management which aim to change drivers' speed behaviour in different driving environments and are seen as effective.

Even with all the efforts made ongoing and focus on trying to reduce this problem the data gathered in the parish demonstrates that there is still a problem and motorists are still offending.

Residents in the Water Eaton area of the parish also report problems with excessive traffic speeds and this is particularly dangerous on roads shared by agricultural users and horses and where the road in the area meets the A419. Still more to do.

Reduce the impact of heavy goods vehicles

Latton parish now has a weight limit in place and this has improved safety, reduced pollution and noise. All the actions identified in the plan were undertaken.

A reporting system is embedded now in the parish and residents can report offending vehicles and contractors to Trading Standards officials at Wiltshire Council <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/trading-standards> and prosecutions can be made.

Not long after the weight limit was imposed a gravel pit excavation site was established on the Cirencester Road in Latton so efforts to make sure that heavy goods vehicles in and out adhere to the weight limit have been taken with new signs at the site entrance.

It will be an ongoing issue for Latton Parish Council to monitor and review along with other enforcement agencies.

Preserve and Improve Public Transport

The Latton Parish Plan identified that for residents without their own transport living in the parish and accessing services was a challenge and the current public transport service did not address all their needs, for example accessing leisure activities, getting to doctors and local hospitals at Swindon or Cirencester or further afield.

For the young getting in and out of the parish during the evenings for leisure and work was an issue and for elderly getting to the bus stops identified as problem. The parish plan demonstrated higher than the average car ownership in the parish. Latton parish residents are reliant, in the main, on cars to access services beyond the parish. This is particularly the case of those living in the Water Eaton.

The plan set out to 'achieve a greater understanding of public transport issues, lobby for improved bus services, and increase awareness of public transport options'.

The parish council has engaged with the Cricklade Link scheme which is which is a community transport service run by volunteers and run on a not-for-profit basis to assist people who cannot access private or public transport for any reason. The Cricklade Community Link service is used by Latton residents and is promoted by the Parish Council.

Ensuring all members of the parish can be connected to services, including healthcare, employment opportunities and leisure does remain an issue.



Maintain and Enhance Access to the Countryside



Increase awareness of access to the countryside opportunities

For many people living in Latton parish enjoying the beauty of the countryside for walks and leisure is valued and they feel needs to be preserved.

An informative interpretation board is now located in the village provided by the parish council and visitors and residents alike can gain an understanding of the history and ecology of the area. The Cotswold Waterpark organisation continues to work to improve the area so that it is attractive to visitors and preserves wildlife and the environment. Cotswold Canal Trust also see Latton as an important part of the Eastern section of the canal restoration. The Latton Basin is the site of the old transshipment basin between the North Wilts and Thames & Severn canals.

The development of the canal systems continues and significant investment has been made to rebuild the Weymoor Bridge at Latton Basin.

http://latton.bravesites.com/http://www.cotswoldcanals.net/photo_page.php?idx=3810

This work has been carried out by skilled volunteers and improves this historical and significant part of the parish. Access to the pathways on the canal have been improved since 2015.

Pathway routes to Down Ampney village have been improved during the life of the Latton Parish Plan and signposts have been improved on the walks and paths. In Water Eaton the Thames Path runs over land in that part of the parish.

One issue which is relevant to this aim are the policies and practices of The Wellcome Trust. The Wellcome Trust are now a substantial landowner in Latton parish having purchased the national Cooperative Group farm businesses.

Develop Community Facilities



The plan identified the community gardens at Latton parish, the village hall and playpark as community facilities as well as community services such as shops and leisure facilities.

The parish council considered that its work had to a. improve the facilities and services in the parish itself and b. help link residents to facilities in nearby towns and villages.

Village Hall

There has been considerable focus on creating a sustainable plan and way forward for the village hall. Discussions are well advanced with the Church authorities to re orientate and update St John The Baptist Church <https://www.achurchnearyou.com/latton-st-john-the-baptist/> to create a space for broader community activities as well as functioning as a place of worship. Selling the village hall is part of this plan. Significant time has been spent to take this forward. Latton parish will have a new community facility and a beautiful and historically significant church will have a sustainable future.

The Jubilee Gardens

The Jubilee Gardens have become the centre for activities for residents such as a summer barbecue and other outdoor events. It provides a central meeting point and outdoor opportunities. It is well maintained and a new access gate to the newly updated play area makes a welcoming leisure area for residents.

The Playing Field

Over the life time of the parish plan the playpark has been improved with new equipment installed funded by the parish council. The park is now a safe space for play and outdoor activities enjoyed by all. This secures the future of the playpark.



Information

There was seen to be a need for communication to residents to improve and a website has now been established. Email is increasingly the way that parish matters are communicated. Issues may still remain about getting information to everyone in the parish and provide information that is wanted.

Notice boards continue to provide an important function all across the parish.

Enable Latton Residents to make better use of local community hubs and promote and support community activities in Cricklade through joint publicity about activities

This action was developed as it was felt that the community in Latton parish itself was too small to create sustainable facilities located in the village and a key aim was to connect Latton residents in particular those without transport to services in Cricklade.

Water Eaton residents tended to access services in Castle Eaton and neighbouring towns but more may need to be discovered about their needs in this respect.

Since the plan was developed some activities have been established such as a playgroup and village coffee mornings and evening social events.

Maintaining and Sustaining Local Businesses and Services



It was recognised that connectivity for residents via internet was key to their economic and personal life. Whether for learning, business or social life. Broadband speeds in Latton itself are now not viewed as a problem, work has been taken forward and this is important. Those in Water Eaton report some issues of poor Broadband service and this may need to be looked at again.

Promote businesses and services and provide opportunities for local business exchange

The process of developing the parish plan began the understanding of the wide range of business activity taking place in the Latton parish. From working farms, a national charitable trust, a specialist car rallying circuit for motoring enthusiasts, electronics, fishing businesses, a private utility company and a gravel extraction business. Many of the businesses are very visible but the parish council understand that many small businesses may exist in homes and in other instances people are working from home.

Many businesses were keen to get more involved in parish activities and this may be a focus for the parish council. The question might be "how can we work with businesses to support improving life for all in the parish"

To find out more about the work of Latton Parish Council contact The Parish Clerk
clerk@lattonparishcouncil.org.uk

Visit the website: www.lattonparishcouncil.org.uk



www.lattonparishcouncil.org.uk