



# **Dyrham and Hinton** **Parish Plan** **2015**

# INTRODUCTION

Dyrham and Hinton is a small parish, combining the two villages, on the edge of the Cotswold escarpment in which farming was historically the dominant activity. The community was largely self-sufficient over the centuries, but the changes over the past 60 years have radically altered the demographic make-up of the Parish. Farming is now continued by a few families and the majority of the working population are employed in Bath or Bristol. There are approximately 110 dwellings in the Parish and an estimated population of around 240. Several buildings are listed; Dyrham village is in a Conservation Area. The rural setting of the Parish is much valued by Dyrham and Hinton parishioners. Within the parish, in addition to the farms, there are several small businesses, particularly along the eastern side of the A46, and towards Pucklechurch. They employ around 150 people, creating their own transport and communications needs.

The increased reliance on the car and the decline in rural bus services have led to a situation where parishioners are mainly dependent on their own transport to commute to work or school and for leisure and entertainment. This has contributed to a decline in the services provided in the Parish itself. Nevertheless Dyrham and Hinton do have two pubs, a mobile library service, the National Trust property, a church and various small businesses. The Parish has an active social calendar focused on various events at the Village Hall and a popular Summer Revel that attracts many outside visitors. It remains a close-knit active community, which warmly welcomes newcomers.

## **A Parish Plan for Dyrham and Hinton**

Communities are growing and changing all around us. Many people have strong views on whether this change is for the better or the worse. Parish Plans arose out of the Government's 2000 Rural White Paper and to provide communities with an opportunity to manage their local environment.

They give everyone in a community the opportunity to influence the development of their surroundings and are intended to be evolving documents, outlining how a community would like to develop over the next ten years. Hundreds of Parish Plans have been completed and this direct action by communities has improved the way their local areas have developed.

In early 2013, a Steering Group was formed to develop a Parish plan for Dyrham and Hinton. There followed a series of open meetings, to develop a questionnaire to gauge the Parish's views; 93% of those who received a questionnaire took the time to respond, and provided very valuable input for this Parish Plan.

The plan is designed to be a statement of what the Parish wants to do itself, and what help it wants from the various authorities (South Gloucestershire Council, Dyrham and Hinton Parish Council, The Police, Health Authorities etc). The aim of the document will be to make clear to those responsible for the various services, what the parishioners will expect from them over the next ten years, and what is felt to be important to the parishioners to enable the villages to flourish. It is hoped that this plan highlights the things admired about the Parish but also expresses the desire for change where it is felt that the community has not received the support and infrastructure that it deserves. The Steering Group has proposed a plan of actions to be carried out by future volunteer-led task groups to establish the desired changes. Consideration should be given at an early stage to the establishment of a Project Management Team from the Dyrham and Hinton Parish Council and residents, plus South Gloucestershire Council, to shadow the various sub-contractors involved on tasks requiring specialist personnel and equipment.

## WHAT PEOPLE LIKE ABOUT DYRHAM AND HINTON

Respondents to the recent parish survey have rated the value of the natural, rural environment and the peace and tranquillity in the parish very highly. Phrases such as “the rural or country feel of the parish” and “beauty of the countryside” were typical of the responses. Maintaining the look and feel of the parish will require preservation of those features most cherished; the village hall, the pub, farm shop, the church and Dyrham Park, the footpaths, verges and the chestnut tree on Hinton Common were all deemed to be key elements.

As well as the physical features of the parish that are key elements of life in Dyrham and Hinton, many comments valued the neighbourliness, the local societies and the friendly community spirit. The Old School and Old School House on Chapel Lane are also owned by the community, and administered by the Village Hall Trust; both properties are currently let, contributing to the upkeep of the community owned properties. Residents appreciated the community passes issued for access to Dyrham Park, the House and its amenities. There were mixed views on the desirability of encouraging more young families into the parish to maintain its character, and wanting to avoid over-development, which would spoil the character.



### **Dyrham and Hinton Parish Plan Steering Group**

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*Photographs courtesy of Andrew Hedges, Frank Hutchinson and Ed Walsh*

## AMENITIES

### Broadband

Over half (76) of respondents use broadband for business purposes. There are about 20 discrete businesses in the parish, plus farms, so about 40 respondents must be using broadband for working from home at least part of the time. Broadband is also widely used for email and social networking (Facebook, Twitter etc.) and for home banking and online shopping. 73 respondents stated that the current broadband service is inadequate for their needs, against 46 for whom it was sufficient. The associated comments, from both Dyrham and Hinton areas, mentioned both the slowness and unreliability, across several different ISPs. Typical comments were “BT - very slow, buffers and sometimes it is non-existent, which makes it very unreliable.” and “2.5mbs too slow for my needs, especially when uploading - 5 pages can take 40 minutes!”.

### Mobile Phones

Although the majority (70) found that mobile phone signal in the parish was adequate for their needs, 53 did not. Comments suggest that Orange/EE and O2 give the poorest coverage, while Virgin is patchy and Vodafone gives the best coverage. However, 3G coverage is poor, and 4G is looked forward to, which may provide a broadband alternative if it arrives.

### Healthcare Provision and Access

The majority of respondents (97) were happy with the provision of, and access to healthcare services from the parish. However, many commented on the delays in getting appointments at the local doctors’ surgeries, quoting 10-14 days. Access, particularly, is a problem to some, both for parking and wheelchair users. Differing views were expressed about the benefits of a local defibrillator. Some comments were expressed about difficulties in getting to Pucklechurch surgery and especially Southmead without a car, and pointed out that our nearest major hospital now, the RUH, is also inaccessible without a car. Some concerns were expressed about the need for improved home care for the vulnerable, and for carer support, and about the need to ensure that such workers can find the relevant homes, especially at night. The minor injuries unit at Yate was valued by at least one business.

### Disabled Facilities

A small number, around 6, of respondents answered questions related to people who suffered some form of disability. Several pointed out that the current public transport facilities are insufficient. 4 people felt that the village hall was adequately adapted, although 1 commented that a hearing loop system is needed. The majority (5 people) felt that the church was not suitable for disabled people, both for access reasons and for the lack of a toilet. One comment pointed out that toilet facilities cannot be provided because of the need for extensive structural alterations, and practical problems with a Portaloo.

### Buses & Car Sharing

On the whole, respondents felt that the existing bus services could not be improved, although only about a third of respondents voiced an opinion. Most of these respondents would use a suggested bus to Pucklechurch monthly or less, although 18 respondents would use it daily or weekly. A comment pointed out that a link to Pucklechurch would enable access to Bristol, Bath and Yate. Similar views were expressed about a suggested bus to Bath, although rather more would use that. Comments included other suggested destinations, such as Yate (minor injuries unit), connection to a park & ride site for Abbeywood, Marshfield, Emersons Green, Lansdown Park & Ride and a school bus service to the Lansdown schools (currently over 10 pupils). Several commented that there is no commuter bus service to Bath or Bristol, and that a single bus to Bristol is not that useful. Several commented that the current non-school buses are very under-utilised, and that more buses are not viable for a small village with many different needs. The



Kingswood community bus service is of limited use, particularly for wheelchair users. Both the National Trust and Marshfield Bakery, the parish's largest employers, expressed the problem of transport for them.

Although most respondents didn't think that there was a need for car sharing schemes for either regular commuting or occasional visits to shops etc., over 40 people thought that one or the other would be useful. Comments pointed out that many sharing schemes exist for the school run to Bath, and for some commuting. Others offered occasional car sharing for shopping etc.

### Public Spaces

Most respondents felt that the existing public spaces could not be improved, or that there was need for more. However, 53 added comments. Suggestions included a children's play area, perhaps in Dyrham Park or near the village hall, although the Pucklechurch and Doynton alternatives were seen to be good. Other suggestions included a tennis court, cricket and football pitches and safe places to ride a bike or wheel the elderly and push chairs away from traffic. Several suggested "tidying up" Hinton Common, including cutting the verges more frequently, and planting decorative trees and flowers. Extra parking for visitors, and for any new facilities is desired.

### Local Societies

In general, knowledge about the existence of the various societies in the parish is wide-spread, and the omission from the list of the Dyrham gardening club was pointed out. Several people expressed interest in most of the societies, which is encouraging, but since the questionnaire was anonymous, nothing will happen unless these people contact the relevant societies! All contacts are listed on the web-site ([www.dyrhamandhinton.com](http://www.dyrhamandhinton.com)). Many comments made additional suggestions. The ballroom dancing class is sadly missed, and suggested additional societies included a book club, film club (showing in the village hall), walking and cycling groups, supper club and more ad hoc events such as race nights rather than full societies.



### Local Amenities

The village hall was rated of high importance by 103 respondents, although all the listed amenities were rated high or medium by about two-thirds of respondents. Frequency of use varied more widely, in the nature of these amenities. The village hall, the Bull and Quacker's Farm Shop & Café were the most frequently used, while the mobile library and the milkman received the least custom. Suggestions included more notice of the mobile library, monthly community or other social events at the pub, quiz nights, a Saturday community shop, a mobile shop or stall. Comments pointed out that the village hall kitchen and outside space is a limiting factor on parties/weddings/celebration events, and that it cannot host two meetings/events simultaneously. A web based booking system for the village hall was suggested.



### St. Peter's Church

60 respondents felt that the church plays an active enough role in village life, against 42 who disagreed, and 57 would not like to see the church used for other activities, with 44 who would. Many suggestions were put forward for such activities, with concerts or music events, and exhibitions the most commonly mentioned. Some felt that it could be used for religious or non-religious discussions. One felt that it should only be used for Christian or Christian-related activities. The lack of toilet facilities was pointed out.

## ENVIRONMENT

The topic of alternative energy supplies (wind and solar) produced many responses, several of which focused on geo-political or national considerations rather than at the parish level. Solar energy can be captured commercially in large-scale developments, as well as on individual roof-tops. The financial subsidies surrounding the various types of alternative energy play an important and unpredictable role in evaluating the suitability of the various schemes, and will need to be monitored to understand future developments in energy production. There were majorities in favour of the principle of wind- and solar-generated power, (67/114 for wind and 63/119 for solar).



### Wind farms

The majority of respondents stated that they are in favour of the principle of wind generated electricity, however 83/119 respondents stated that they would not support further applications for the erection of windmills in the parish.

### Solar Farms

A small majority (63/119) of respondents stated that they were generally in favour of large scale solar panel facilities (solar farms) being established on agricultural land. 70 respondents stated that they were neutral or supportive if planning applications were made for further solar farms, while 39 said they would submit an objection. Over the span of the plan, it is probable that new technologies will make the visual appeal of domestic solar panels more acceptable.

### Public rights of way

73/111 of respondents stated that footpaths and bridleways in the parish are maintained to a satisfactory level, and 74/114 of respondents stated that they would not like to see more unofficial footpaths in the parish upgraded to Right of Way status. 49 respondents were unaware that the Cotswold wardens are supported by South Gloucestershire Council to maintain the rights of way.



## Green belt and common land

49 respondents said that there is not adequate provision for parking for walkers visiting the parish, but 66 said that additional parking should not be provided, and 69 respondents said they would not be in favour of using common space or grass verges being used for car parking. 76 respondents stated that future overhead cables should be placed underground, even though the costs were to be added to the parish rates.

## Road Safety

83/115 of respondents believe that the local road network is incapable of sustaining a greater population; 68/116 were not in favour of providing dedicated cycle lanes in the parish, and 65/117 were not in favour of the provision of dedicated pavements in the parish. The most acceptable forms of traffic calming were vehicle activated signs and village gateways; chicanes were thought impractical given the farm vehicle movements.

## Rubbish collection, recycling and fly-tipping

99/115 respondents said that they are happy with current waste collection. 67/119 said that they would be in favour of litter bins being provided at hot spots, even if the costs of installation and emptying are carried on the parish rates. 62 were in favour of installing CCTV to monitor fly-tipping, while 55 were not. 42/118 respondents were not aware how to report fly-tipping activity to South Gloucestershire Council.

## Street lighting

89/118 respondents were happy that the current level of lighting should stay the same as now, and 103/119 were content that street lighting be turned off during the early hours to save electricity. There seems to be a lighting issue at Healey Drive, reported by 5 respondents.

# COMMUNITY

## Housing Development

With its rolling terrain, river valley, and narrow roads and relative remoteness, the Parish is not ideal for sustained development. The lack of gas and mains sewage further reduces the attractiveness of D+H for large-scale development.

Balanced against these physical restrictions and limitations is the need for younger families to contribute, sustain and hopefully become the active side of the Parish, and prevent its gentle decline as older people are forced to move away from the parish, and closer to towns for transport and healthcare. Despite the emerging, demographic picture, 74/120 respondents preferred no increase in housing within the community, but 57/116 respondents thought there should be some increase in housing.



When asked where they would like to see any further development, respondents chose the following categories:

- Sites with existing buildings or industrial use 64
- Brown-field sites 51
- Infill sites 37
- Existing garden land 23
- Sites adjacent to established parish housing 38

When asked what type of housing they would support, respondents chose the following:

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| • Sustainable, affordable housing       | 31 |
| • Starter homes with 1-2 bedrooms       | 31 |
| • Medium family homes with 2-3 bedrooms | 34 |
| • Large family homes with 4+ bedrooms   | 17 |
| • Smaller houses for older people       | 19 |
| • A mixture of the above                | 41 |

### Crime etc.

Concern was expressed about the deviant anti-social activities taking place at the edges of the parish, and in some of the surrounding lanes. A low crime rate was appreciated with 74/123 households being unaffected by crime and therefore the lack of police presence was not an issue. Nor was the potential use of CCTV cameras etc., 49/74 were satisfied with the present level of policing. More concern was expressed over the excessive amount of fly tipping in the area and general litter with only a third of householders aware they could report this issue. 23 respondents said that they were keen to help set up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme in the parish.

Uncontrolled animals were an insignificant issue raised. 70 people were unaware of how to report problems with dogs or horses. With the fly tipping issue, villages should again get as much information on the offenders and report to Street Care and litter on the roads. 67/119 respondents were in favour of the possibility of litter bins being provided and the cost absorbed within the parish rates.

### Communication etc.

People use all of the various methods of communication about parish activities, but none of them is read by everybody. Most people receive information via the parish magazine (106) or word of mouth (100). About half of the people use the most up-to-date method, the community web site, and a similar number read the village notice boards. Less than half the respondents read posters, although more read flyers. 28 people use the information booths.

69 respondents, about half, thought that communications could not be improved, although 32 did, and offered suggestions. A third of these suggested email communication, particularly for events, with several suggesting an 'opt-in' approach for this. Text communication and the use of social networks were also suggested. Several people encouraged use of the website, including more resident contributions and a parish diary. The timing limitations of the parish magazine were noted. A weekly magazine was suggested, but people also noted the need to move away from costly paper. The WI Welcome Pack was praised as extremely useful.

## Dyrham and Hinton Action Plan

Key: KCT Kingswood Community Transport  
 PC Parish Council  
 SGC South Gloucestershire Council

LEP Local Enterprise Partnership  
 PPSG Parish Plan Steering Group

1. Telecommunications (Broadband and mobile phone coverage)					
No.	Issue	Action	Lead resp.	Poss. Partners	Timescale
1.1	Some areas may still be unable to access High Speed Broadband, despite BT roll out of fibre optic broadband	Investigate whether and how superfast broadband can be extended throughout the parish with funding from the Glos/Wilts project	PPSG	PC, SGC	Summer 2015
1.2	ditto	As a fallback, pursue community funded options		Wansdyke project?	Autumn 2015
1.3	Inconsistent mobile phone service across all networks	Ensure that 3G and 4G options are pursued alongside broadband			

2. Transport and Access to Services					
No.	Issue	Action	Lead resp.	Poss. Partners	Timescale
2.1	Local health provision eg access	Review comments and discuss in detail with the Patient Reference Group	PPSG	Local Practice	Summer 2015
2.2	Lack of transport for older people and others without a car	Consider need and scope for forming or joining a volunteer car scheme, eg for medical appointments	PPSG	Three Shires Practice	Summer 2015
2.3	ditto	Investigate possibility of car sharing scheme for eg shopping & commuting	PPSG		Summer 2015
2.4	ditto	Review current Community Transport provision and scope for improvements and better communication	PPSG	KCT	Summer 2015
2.5	Getting staff to local employment	Discuss further with local employers, including possible help from LEP or Chamber of Commerce	PPSG	LEP, SGC, Business West	Summer 2015

### 3. Community Facilities

No.	Issue	Action	Lead resp.	Poss. Partners	Timescale
3.1	Need to improve Village Hall facilities	Review feedback with Village Hall Committee including improving the kitchen, hearing loop, parking, web-based booking and an extra meeting room		Village Hall Trust	March 2015
3.2	Need for more activities and groups	Provide communication facilities for people wishing to start or join new activities/groups via the web site		Village Hall Trust	Summer 2015
3.3	More use of Church	Review feedback with PCC/Vicar, and provide facilities for people wishing to arrange events in the church, via the web site		PCC	March 2015

### 4. Environment and Open Spaces

No.	Issue	Action	Lead resp.	Poss. Partners	Timescale
4.1	Public Right of Way	Promote the work of Cotswold Wardens & consider monetary contribution to their work	PPSG	PC, AONB	Summer 2015
4.2	Maintenance of common land etc.	Discuss with Parish Council	PPSG	PC	Summer 2015
4.3	Rubbish collection & fly tipping	Encourage people to report abuse	PPSG	PC, SGC	Summer 2015
4.4	ditto	More litter bins etc & consider street lighting in Healey Drive. Consider installing 'No Fly Tipping' signs	PPSG	PC, SGC	

### 5. Traffic and Roads

No.	Issue	Action	Lead resp.	Poss. Partners	Timescale
5.1	Inadequate roads	Ask PC to ensure any development must include road improvements	PPSG	PC (SGC)	Summer 2015
5.2	Speeding	Lobby SGC re appropriate calming for Hinton road, with vehicle activated signs the preferred suggestion	PPSG	SGC, PC	2015/6
5.3	Other road users	Consider what can be done to enable safe usage, given that most people do not want dedicated cycle lanes or pavements	PPSG	PC, SGC	2015/6

## 6. Crime & Anti Social Behaviour

No.	Issue	Action	Lead resp.	Poss. Partners	Timescale
6.1	Anti social behaviour	Encourage villagers inform police of anti social behaviour, including accurate description of vehicles etc	PPSG	SGC, Police	March 2015
6.2	ditto	Ensure everyone know how to report such behaviour, eg notice boards, web site	PPSG	SGC, Police	March 2015
6.3	Neighbourhood Watch	Encourage the creation of a Neighbourhood Watch scheme for those interested			
6.4	Problems with dogs or horses	Publicise methods of reporting problems			

## 7. Planning and Development

No.	Issue	Action	Lead resp.	Poss. Partners	Timescale
7.1	Housing development	Review detailed comments and discuss with PC (SGC)	PPSG	PC, SGC	Summer 2015
7.2	Development impact on Green Belt & Common land	Any future housing should be designed with adequate off street parking, and any future developments should place power cables underground	PC		2015
7.3	Wind turbines	PC should not support further applications	PC		Summer 2015
7.4	Large scale solar panel facilities	PC should not support further applications	PC		Summer 2015
7.5	Other alternative energy sources	Encourage the PC to take an active role when reviewing alternative action plans for eg fracking			

## 8. Communication

No.	Issue	Action	Lead resp.	Poss. Partners	Timescale
8.1	Better information to residents on events and news in the parish	Working group to consider how to provide email and/or text notification of parish events, plus review ways of improving use of the community website	PPSG	Local experts?	2015

