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## Calne Community Plan • Update 2010



**CALNE COMMUNITY  
AREA PARTNERSHIP**



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Bremhill • Calne • Calne Without • Cherhill • Compton Bassett • Heddington • Hilmarton

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## Calne's community vision: evolving, adapting, fulfilling

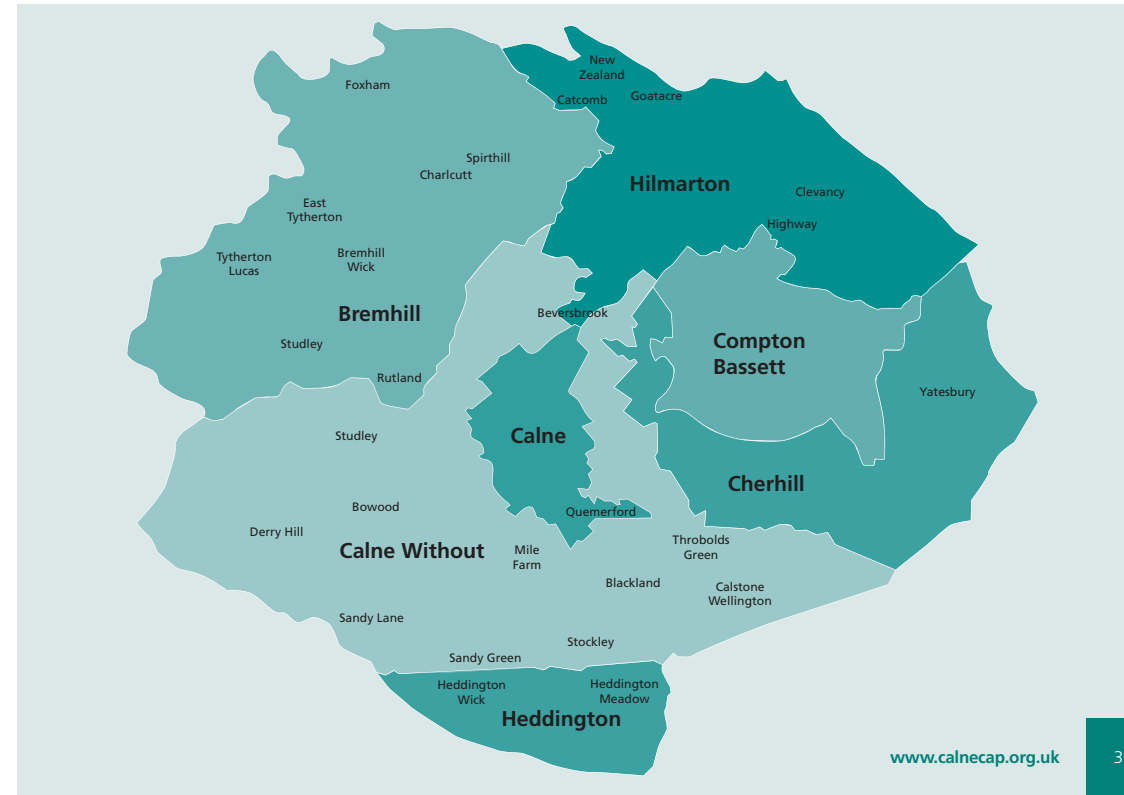
2	Welcome to the 2010 update of the Calne Community Plan – six years into our ten-year Plan, and making a tangible and positive impact on the people, organisations and businesses in our market town and its surrounding communities.
10	The original Plan was drawn up by the Calne Community Area Partnership, based on extensive local consultation, and focused on the issues deemed most important by individuals, groups and commerce.
16	In response, action plans were put in place, and future aspirations expressed, and the Partnership pledged to regularly update the Plan to reflect its progress and impact. This latest update brings together the most recent progress reports and views gathered from:

- Public events
- Calne Community Hub
- Young people via Community First

- Wiltshire Council's Corporate Research Centre
- Meetings with a variety of local organisations
- Surrounding parishes

In the eight themes covered by the Plan, and contained in this update, many of the original issues are still regarded as key, and the considerable responses and achievements are reported in detail.

However, as social and economic trends have shifted, the Plan has also been responsive to the changing needs and concerns of the community and to its aspirations. In this sense, this living and evolving Plan continues to accurately reflect the vision for the Calne Community Area, as set out by the people who live and work here.



# The backdrop

*The response of the Calne Community Area must be taken account of within the development of all plans for the town ...*



When Wiltshire County Council became the unitary Wiltshire Council in April 2009, one of the authority's stated aims was to ensure that local people were fully involved in the decisions that affect them – and the Community Plan does much to identify the needs and aspirations of the whole Calne Community Area.

This 2010 update, however, is written against a backdrop of the deepest recession in almost three decades, and the largest ever national debt. Businesses have suffered, unemployment has risen steadily, and the coalition government is set to impose large cuts in public spending and in welfare benefits. The effect will almost certainly be to increase unemployment, particularly within the public sector.



### Calne in the recession

Calne has not been immune to the difficulties, but the area has suffered less than other parts of the country. While the national unemployment level at the end of April 2010 was 7.9 per cent, North Wiltshire's rate was 2.3 per cent. The number of business failures in this area has also been proportionately less. In common with other towns in Wiltshire,

Calne has a significantly large proportion of small businesses, but a high percentage of the population commutes, particularly to Swindon and RAF Lyneham. Small businesses have been more difficult for the government and council to target for support, but have themselves demonstrated a greater ability to fight for survival and retain their workforce through the recession.



### RAF Lyneham

Closure of the airbase has been confirmed, and the five-year impact to the local area has been put at £900 million. There remains the possibility of another military use, and private investors have also expressed an interest in the site. Wiltshire Council is still to declare its aspirations for the base; an announcement which is urgently needed to mitigate the damaging effect on the local communities and economy.

### Local Development Framework (LDF)

Wiltshire Council's new-look LDF aims to define the objectives for each town, and its local area, up to 2026, and Calne and its surrounding communities are actively encouraged to contribute. Calne Town Council, for instance, in 2009 carried out its own consultation seeking local views on the future for the town.

Nine out of every ten people voted to retain and enhance Calne's unique market town character, while supporting its slow, sustainable measured growth – a view which must be taken into account as part of the LDF.

### A Sustainable Community Strategy

Government guidelines point to the need for a sustainable community strategy which must consider:

- What should happen to ensure that Calne Community Area has a viable economic future
- How to adapt to demographic shifts
- The assessment and mitigation of the effects of climate change on the locality
- How to build a cohesive community.

The flexibility and proactive nature of the Community Plan equips the Calne Community Area Partnership with current and relevant information and views with which to reliably influence the development of Wiltshire's sustainable community strategy.

# Economy

*Calne is in a better position than many of our neighbouring towns, and those around the country ...*



## Achievements

A closer **working relationship** between the Porte Marsh Industrial Estate and Calne Town Council is slowly evolving. The Council, supported by the North Wilts Economic Partnership, has hosted a Porte Marsh Forum lunch to develop this integration, and further events are planned.

Interest has also been expressed in the development of a **Business Improvement District (BID)** for Porte Marsh and other potential development sites in Calne. The BID would be a co-operative of local business ratepayers in a precisely-defined geographical area. This business-led initiative gives companies the power to manage their own operating environment to directly benefit their business, employees, and clients. The BID is currently being developed.



## Responses

Wiltshire Council's decision to change the **Curzon Street road layout** continues to cause significant congestion in the town and along the A4. A petition to the Council has asked for a full review of this problem, asking for alternatives to be considered. The Council has agreed to this request.

A public consultation is underway regarding Wiltshire Council's proposals to harmonise **car parking charges** in the county's towns. The prospect of Calne losing its free car parking is potentially the most damaging threat to Calne's retailers. Businesses are being urged to give their responses to the local authority and to the Economy theme group.



## Aspirations

Historically, North Wiltshire's **development plans** were centred on Chippenham as a designated Strategically Significant Town. A change in policy, however, means that the authority should now support developments at the existing Porte Marsh industrial estate, and other brown-field locations.

The **broadband service** within the Calne Community Area has improved, but is not universally available, particularly in villages outside Calne. Wiltshire Council had pledged to publish a broadband review in Sept 2010, defining the mapping of super-highways in Wiltshire, and considering and evaluating further improvements to the service.



**Retail provision** has remained stable in Calne, despite the recession. There have been closures, but these have been replaced by new businesses and Calne is in a better position than many neighbouring towns and the rest of the country. The loss of Woolworth coming to Calne was a setback, but Wiltshire Council has improved the appearance of the empty property with a window display, and negotiations continue to attract a suitable business.

The development of new retail provision in rural areas has, however, been affected by the recession. This is an issue which requires urgent attention to help sustain rural communities.



## Parish Focus

People in Cherhill parish have voiced the need to maximise local business activity, by identifying suitable office provision and business premises for residents, and to have access to universal broadband at national speeds and connectivity.

# Crime and Community Safety

*Our vision is to maintain and increase the visible police presence on the streets ...*



## Achievements

The opening of the rebuilt Calne Police Station, together with high profile press coverage of Calne's Neighbourhood Policing Team has kept local **policing strategy** in the public eye. PCSOs have also been co-ordinating Neighbourhood Watch, and updating the database.

There has been good support and high attendance at **Community Safety** meetings, and a high level of backing from Calne Town Council for the Community Safety Forum. Safety was also the driving force behind the introduction of traffic calming measures in Derry Hill and Hilmarton.

Partnership working has significantly reduced acts of **vandalism** and graffiti. Pubwatch, Shopwatch and Storenet radio have been introduced in Calne and the 'under 25' rule in Sainsburys continues to help tackle **under-age drinking**.

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**CCTV** provision has been expanded to cover North End play area and Church Street in Calne and over 40 CCTV volunteers have been recruited.

## Responses

Reports of **bullying** have been linked to violent crime, and police are addressing the issue with visits to local schools. **Crime Prevention** initiatives are also constantly under review in the fight against crime, while the police are also committed to reducing vandalism by continuing to monitor criminal damage.

Plans are in hand to expand Sainsbury's '**under 25' rule** to include other retail outlets, and to increase awareness of the Designated Public Place as an alcohol exclusion zone. Meanwhile, **traffic calming** measures are to be reviewed in Calne at North End, Lickhill Road, Priestley School, Fynamore School and London Road.



## Aspirations

There continues to be a commitment to increasing Calne's **police presence** on the streets, and to stepping up the campaign to attract people to the Special Constable team. Aims are to improve Crime Prevention initiatives and Neighbourhood Watch, particularly for the communities' most vulnerable members. Bullying will continue to be addressed by expanding police visits to schools, and plans are to work effectively with partners to reduce vandalism.

Local agencies will continue to be encouraged to participate in the **Community Safety Partnership** which, it is hoped, will extend its remit to include and develop Community Safety initiatives. This group will also be developing an action plan to deal with foul and offensive language in public places, specifically through education.



On **local roads**, the Plan highlights the need to work with Calne Area Transport and Wiltshire Council to develop a safe local cycle network. Increased road safety awareness also features, alongside the need for a more prominent police presence with speed guns. While laws are already being enforced in respect of litter dropping and dog fouling, the Plan includes a high profile **anti-litter** campaign with publicity on prosecutions and possible fines. There will also be more bins for dog waste.

## Aspirations also featured are:

- A poster campaign targeted at school pupils to deal with issues of under-age drinking
- Increased awareness of the availability of fire safety checks
- A Community Safety plan for Castlefields Park
- To continue CCTV coverage to meet the needs of the community



## Parish Focus

Most people living in Cherhill do not believe an extra police presence is needed. However, they highlight the need to improve parking at Middle Lane outside Cherhill School and at Yatesbury Village Hall and to ensure that local speed limits are enforced.

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# Culture

*Culture, in all its forms, including recreation, leisure, sports and arts is a major contribution to community cohesion ...*



## Achievements

Two major concerns were identified from the 2006 consultation – the need for more **venues** for community events, and for more places for young people to meet socially. In response, several venues have provided enhanced facilities, including:

- **The Beversbrook Sports Facility** – set over 54 acres, this includes 11 football pitches with eight changing rooms, plus a multiple-use games area for netball or tennis, and a cricket pitch and nets. This year, the pavilion facilities were extended by adding a large Community Hall, suitable for badminton and other uses, that is available for hire.
- **The Recreation Club and Grounds** – home to the town's sports clubs – has had a new multi-purpose children's play area built within the grounds. A further new play area was opened in **North End**.

- **The Calne Community Hub** at 27 High Street has now opened with the support of Wiltshire Council to provide a base for the Calne Community Area Partnership, as well as a venue for other local community groups.
- **The White Horse Leisure Centre** re-opened as a not-for-profit organisation in January 2008. It is managed by volunteer directors and welcomes 20,000 people each month.

**Festivals** have also been encouraged to incorporate attractions for children and young people – such as the 2010 Summer Festival when a large empty retail outlet was transformed into a children's wonderland. Members of the Calne Area Young People's interest Group (CAYPIG) are regularly attending organising committees to ensure their voices are heard.

The Grove Youth Centre and the John Bentley School together with Calne Police now hold regular Blues & Zuz discos, and Calne Area Board continues to work with CAYPIG at Open Space meetings to listen and address young people's issues.

Events are being publicised more widely to increase participation using church parish magazines, Calne Town Council newsletters, posters and banners. All are used to increase awareness and generate greater interest in community events.

**Existing events** such as the Christmas lights switch-on, Bike Meet, Duck Race, Country Music Festival, Calne Music and Arts Festival and the Summer Festival, continue in popularity each year and generate increasing community support.

**Library** opening hours have also changed in response to public opinion – through the Community Area Partnership, the Library, and the Wiltshire Council website, residents voted on their preferred options, and the majority vote to open on Wednesday afternoons and close on Thursday evenings was implemented in June 2010.

## Responses

Concerns that the design of the existing **Station Road BMX track** is not suitable for both BMX and skateboard use, have prompted the Community Area Board to create a working group of young people, led by a Wiltshire councillor, to review the existing track design and consider a new site for the track.

## Aspirations

Proposals are in hand for a new service **Moviola Premiere** to be launched at the

new Community Hall at Beversbrook to supplement the existing **cinema shows** at Calne Town Hall. This will bring newer films to Calne – probably four to six weeks after general release – to a wider audience, such as families, under-17s, and disabled people who do not have easy access to multiplex screens.

## Parish Focus

A website to provide information on community events and group and club activities in Calne Without is under construction, while in Cherhill, residents have highlighted that young people 'need more things to do', calling for the provision of low cost evening transport to neighbouring towns and villages. The Parish also identifies the need to maintain and enhance its play equipment.

# Education and life-long learning

*... ensuring that learning opportunities are available to all members of the community in an environment that encourages people to take part.*



## Achievements

In our community area, education extends behind mainstream primary and secondary schools to embrace lifelong learning. Opportunities have been provided to encourage the exploration of new skills and interests, particularly in information technology – and to create a diversely-skilled local population.

## Since the 2006 update of the Community Plan, the area has seen:

- The **E Calne Project** extended for four years
- **IT training** centralised at Calne Library as a result of feedback from our 2007 IT survey
- **Training sessions** organised for unemployed, and self-employed people



## Responses

With the closure of Wiltshire College's only **Adult Education** facility in Calne, an Adult Education group has been established, aiming to provide the syllabus at other venues. The group, made up of representatives from Calne's three senior schools, Wiltshire College, Calne Community Area Partnership, and the Local Authority, is mapping current provision in adult informal learning. Plans are to highlight where this provision does not satisfy demand, and to devise a strategy for identifying funding streams and venues.

The **Partners in Literacy** initiative, co-ordinated by Wiltshire Library Service is working with organisations in the Calne Community Area that help families engage with literacy in the home. Their aim is to equip frontline workers with the confidence and information to talk about literacy skills, and to be aware of the support available in the community.



Family support is also now available from the Calne **Extended Schools Cluster**, which offers co-ordinated community social care and education projects, including family learning opportunities. In addition, Parent Support Advisors are based at St Edmunds, St Dunstan, Holy Trinity and John Bentley schools, and also cover village primary schools.

**Joint projects** are also in progress, including plans by John Bentley and CAYPIG to provide after school activities. Calne Chamber of Commerce and The John Bentley School are also working together to invite local businesses to provide mentoring to school pupils. Employers have also been invited to nominate young people from their organisations to talk to John Bentley pupils about the transition from school to work.



## Aspirations

Community feedback points to the continuing need to take learning opportunities for all age groups to **rural areas**, and to improve transport links which will enable the whole community to take part.

## Further aspirations involve:

- Identifying the current basic skills level in the community area, and working with appropriate agencies to address the need
- Sourcing funding to support the continuation of the E Calne Project beyond 2010
- Creating more opportunities for young people to study life and career skills, and providing support for school leavers and job seekers
- Encouraging independent learning, and making information and advice about educational opportunities freely available and well-publicised.



## Parish Focus

Consultation within Cherhill Parish calls for better use of village notice boards and the parish website, ensuring that all are regularly updated and creating awareness of the facilities and opportunities available to all.

# Environment

*... enabling people to live in an area where we identify, protect and actively conserve the landscape, natural features, species and habitats, and work towards a sustainable community.*



## Achievements

The most significant developments affecting the environment in the community area have been the formation of the Friends of **Abberd Brook**, and the work to maintain the **Castlefields Park**.

- The early part of 2010 was dominated by improvement works to Abberd Brook. This waterway, flowing from the east of Calne to the River Marden at the Doctors' pond in Calne, became the focus for the newly-formed Friends of Abberd Brook. Members organised regular **litter picking** along the banks, as well as occasional clearance of the brook itself.

In March, the group successfully organised a **major clean-up** of the brook by 35 volunteers, assisted by the Coleman's Farm Learning and Community Association and Westlea Housing Association. The British Trust for Conservation volunteers helped supervise



the clearance, and supplied the necessary equipment. It is hoped that this will be an annual event.

- The area has benefited over many years from the care provided by the Castlefields Canal and River Park Association (CARP), which has recently completed the **Chavey Well restoration** and a newly-planted wildflower meadow. The Bunny Hunt continues to be held at Easter.

## Responses

The brook clean-up has prompted a large number of **improvement initiatives** to increase the biodiversity of the brook, and to create a cleaner and healthier environment.

## The Friends are planning to:

- Restore the stepping stones and improvement to the spring-fed pond
- Remove stinging nettles, and the Himalayan Balsam where necessary



- Plant native plants and flowers on the banks of the brook
- Continue children's bug-hunting and pond-dipping activities
- Train volunteers in first aid and conservation skills
- Encourage greater community cohesion by providing conservation activities
- Consult with Calne Town Council to replace vandalised and broken litter bins

Meanwhile, plans are in place to restore the **town lock** on the Wilts and Berks Canal arm, which will create an educational and visually pleasing feature in Castlefields Park. It is hoped that this will be completed by the summer of 2011.

## Aspirations

Over the next five years, the environmental group aims to seek funding for the **engineering work** and dredging required



to improve the flow and quality of water, and to strengthen the banks to provide a quality habitat for protected species.

It will also look to increase its partnership work with community groups to manage and enhance the site for wildlife. The group also plans to assist Calne Town Council in providing a **green corridor** from the eastern end of Calne to the town centre.

## Parish Focus

Working with a local Rambling Association Officer, Calne Without identified methodologies to create a group of volunteers who are able to regularly walk public rights of way and report any difficulties. This has addressed the parish's specific action plan to ensure the continued and ongoing enjoyment of the local environment. Parish walks of varying levels of difficulty are now being planned for people in the area.

In Hilmarton, the parish council is building strong links with Wiltshire Council's Rights of Way Wardens, local volunteers and land owners to rectify a range of issues affecting footpaths and bridleways. These include the lack of signage, blocked paths, broken stiles, locked gates and poor drainage.

Cherhill residents have highlighted the need to reduce the parish carbon footprint by maximising use of renewable energy and reducing fossil fuel use, as well as extending doorstep recycling to include cardboard and plastics.

# Health and social care

*... following consultation, neighbourhood nursing teams, out of hours GP services, and 'access to care for all' have been set up in the community area.*



### Achievements

#### The 2006 Pathways for Change

The 2006 Pathways for Change consultation had a significant impact on the health and social care provision in the Calne Community Area. As a direct result a number of services were introduced or extended – including neighbourhood nursing teams, out-of-hours GP services and the 'Access to Care for All' initiative.

Local buildings providing care services have largely become accessible with assistance, and following the Pathways for Change consultation, NHS Wiltshire Stakeholder meetings are now regularly held.

### Responses

The Partnership is responding quickly and effectively to many of the issues raised in recent community feedback, including the need for **Patford GP surgery** to be relocated in central Calne alongside other health-



related services. Discussions are being held between the surgery, NHS Wiltshire, Wiltshire Council and Calne Town Council to find a suitable relocation site and to plan its implementation.

The need for a **level access** to shops has resulted in the re-surfacing of Phelps Parade pavement, and a number of dropped kerbs for wheelchair users and buggies have also been created in Calne.

The **neighbourhood nursing teams** are supporting people in staying in their own homes, and co-ordinating the need for care, including emergency care as appropriate. Meanwhile, GP surgeries are providing limited **healthy living initiatives** to deal with obesity and smoking.



### Aspirations

Further issues raised during consultation, and earmarked for action include:

- Increased NHS dental provision
- Improved access to community-based services for people with mental health conditions
- Greater support for people with drug and alcohol related issues
- Public conveniences in the centre of Calne
- The provision of sufficient services to enable older people to live independently in the community
- Co-ordinated healthy-living services at all GP surgeries
- Level access to all shops.



### Parish Focus

With the focus on health and social care, Cherhill Parish aspirations extend to providing care parking, improving footpaths and pavements, and creating a new community hall with the potential to provide facilities for all. An internet café, skate park and BMX track are included in the parish's hopes for the future.

# Housing and built environment

... Council and Government initiatives have resulted in more affordable housing being made available.



## Achievements

In response to a rapidly increasing population over the past decade, Council and Government initiatives have made available more **affordable housing**. It was established that a total of 1,200 homes in Calne should be provided between 2006 and 2026: 30 per cent of these have already been built, and the authority is committed to a further 19 per cent.

*In 2007, the average home price in the Calne Community Area was 5.07 times the average annual earnings of residents. In 2008, the average house price in Wiltshire was £238,217; in Calne, the average cost was £196,026. (Source: Land Registry). From 2001 to 2006/7, the Community Area had a 16.1 per cent change in net dwelling completions, above the Wiltshire average of 6.6 per cent. Estimates for the Area now project a lower than average increase in dwellings by 2026 of 15 per cent compared with Wiltshire's 22.9 per cent.*

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Many **pavements** have been identified as being of poor quality and some urgent work has been undertaken. Consultation was conducted on the need for, and location of dropped kerbs, and five sites were completed using Calne Area Board funding.

## Further achievements include:

- Shops owned by Wiltshire Council and rented by individual businesses have been improved, including those in the Phelps Parade, where a modern glass roof has been installed.
- Colourful floral arrangements have been created, and the Town Gardens developed by Calne Town Council. Meanwhile, there is evidence that private developers have improved housing estates' landscaping.



## Responses

An assessment of the most sustainable location for **new housing development** pinpoints land to the east of Calne as most appropriate, possibly for up to 500 dwellings. This would provide a single sustainable urban extension to the town adjacent to the Portemarth Industrial Estate and proposed employment development on land at Beversbrook Farm. This proposal has the potential to increase opportunities for people to live and work in the same location and improve Calne's self-containment.

It has also been agreed that the villages of Derry Hill, Studley and Heddington, should receive only **limited infill housing** development, appropriate for local housing needs.

The **local landscape** is being significantly enhanced with the creation of a new native woodland area of 10,000 English trees by the



Hills Group on a former landfill site at High Penn. Blackthorn, oak, ash, lime, black poplar and downy birch are being planted with a variety of shrubs to provide a rich source of food for wildlife and insects, and to improve the bio-diversity of the area. This tree planting scheme is the largest in Wiltshire in 2010, with funds secured from the Forestry Commission.

## Aspirations

Among the community aspirations cited in recent feedback were:

- The need to improve the appearance of empty shops. Negotiations continue to take place in respect of letting privately-owned shops.
- To further encourage landscape settings that are sympathetic to the local environment
- To improve facilities in public buildings, including the Calne Community Hub.



## Parish Focus

Cherhill Parish Plan highlights the concerns of residents about the declining infrastructure in the villages of Cherhill and Yatesbury including the lack of public transport, shops and Post Office. The Plan details the steps that have already been taken towards these issues, and intended actions have been prioritised.

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# Transport

*... our aim is to enable the people of the Calne Community Area to reach their destination of choice quickly, safely and in an environmentally-friendly way.*



## Achievements

The Partnership has worked to address the wide-reaching views of the community that transport should be swift, safe and affordable in the area. It should be easy for everyone to access, understand and use, and should be both environmentally and economically sustainable.

People should have choices about how to travel into, around, and from Calne. It is this choice that will contribute to the character and quality of life in the area, and which has driven the following developments:

- The **Route 55** bus has become active and successful
- There is full **disabled access** on some public vehicles
- A town **cycle network** has been included on the Town Council map
- The Wigglybus service, which continued until 2007, has been replaced by **Connect2Wiltshire** service.

## Responses

The most recent community feedback highlighted the need for **affordable public transport** for young people in the evenings and at weekends. This is currently under discussion and the Partnership is also canvassing Wiltshire Passenger Transport Unit for a more flexible network and new stops.

**Disabled access** still needs to be improved, and the transport group is seeking full accessibility on all public transport serving the Community Area.

Local schools continue to suffer **traffic congestion and parking issues**, and measures are being introduced at Fynamore and Derry Hill Schools to ease access by way of good quality, safe footpaths.

Concerns about insufficient **cycle parking** in Calne are being addressed by the introduction of cycle stands in several new locations both within the town and more widely across the Community Area.



## Aspirations

Over the next decade, the Transport Group aims to achieve a number of improvements to meet the continuing concerns of local people. It pledges to create a new culture of travel opportunities based on better public transport choices and more support for cycling, walking and travel by mobility vehicles.

### Specific aspirations include:

- The reduction of traffic speeds within the town centre and along approach roads
- An upgraded cycle plan, covering the town and rural areas
- Improved pavements and footpaths by resurfacing and widening, allowing for shared use by pedestrians and cyclists.
- Available, affordable public transport for evenings and weekends
- Full disabled access on all public transport
- Investment for projects which improve the choice and availability of public



transport, and the upgrading and extension of safe cycling and walking facilities

- A Transport Hub in Calne town centre, offering multiple facilities including travel information, toilets, refreshments and communication facilities.

Through these proposals, our vision is to resolve town centre congestion and parking issues, and to improve access to the area's facilities – enhancing the general well-being of residents both in rural and urban communities.



## Parish Focus

Hilmarton's Parish Plan in 2005 highlighted the need for road safety improvements, particularly on the A3102. A group was set up exclusively to focus on road safety and has witnessed a more than 100 per cent increase in traffic volume on this 40 mph road over the past five years. The Parish has pledged to continue lobbying the relevant authorities and to provide evidence of the need for change.

Cherhill Parish has also focused on transport issues, including the need to provide parishioners with more transport choices in order to reduce carbon emissions, make roads safer, improve people's health, and protect the parish environment.



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