



# **Padworth Parish Plan**

**2010 - 2020**

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## Introduction

**T**he Padworth Village Plan sets out a **VISION** for how we wish our village to develop over the next 10 years **and** identifies the **ACTIONS** which will be needed to achieve this vision.

This is a Padworth project and, in preparing this document, all of us who live in the village and the immediate locality have had the opportunity to state what we do wish to see and, equally importantly, what we do not wish to see over the next decade. In preparing this plan we have identified a number of things which we can do for ourselves, some things that we shall have to do in partnership with West Berkshire Council and some which we shall do in collaboration with other organisations. It is encouraging that a number of positive developments have taken place directly as a result of the energy generated by the preparation of the Plan. We recognise, however, that in the real world it is unlikely that everything which we recommend can be achieved but if we do not make the effort to ensure that our voices are heard then we shall only have ourselves to blame if changes are imposed on us which are not to our liking.

It is essential that we remember that the publication of the Village Plan is not an end in itself – it is merely a means towards an end. The adoption of the plan is simply the first step towards achieving the objectives which we collectively have identified. It provides the basis for an Action Plan which will only meet its targets through the involvement and commitment of local people. It should not be regarded as immutable. We live in an ever-changing world. The Plan also provides a platform for future thinking and planning as we respond to changes in circumstances and grasp fresh opportunities as they arise.

The publication of this plan is the culmination of work which has been undertaken over the course of the last 18 months. This has been carried out by volunteers who have committed considerable amounts of their time, energy and skills to the project. The members of the Steering Group, the Working Groups and those who delivered and collected questionnaires all deserve a special thank you. We have also benefited from the contributions which others have made in the organisation of our Open Days and the Youth Day. We have been encouraged by the high level of participation in Open Days, Youth Day and Open Forums and the good response to the survey questionnaire. These recommendations carry weight since they represent a true reflection of the views of local people.

We are grateful to Padworth Parish Council for their support throughout. We are also grateful to the Parish Councils of our neighbours, Beenham and Aldermaston. Their support has made it possible to address issues surrounding the Aldermaston Wharf area community (which as a result of an accident of history is divided between the three parishes) on a collaborative basis.

We are particularly grateful to Sarah Ward of Community Action West Berkshire who has been an unfailing source of help and advice throughout. We have also been helped by the Greenham Common Trust which prepared and copied the questionnaires, the Berkshire Association of Clubs for Young People and the Sports and Leisure Activities Team.

It's our parish – we made it our Parish Plan.....

## Padworth Past – A Little History

The village of Padworth has not been the focal point of any major event in English history but, as with all communities, the village has been touched and shaped by local and national events.

**How did Padworth get its name?** The origins of the name of the village are uncertain. The suffix “worth” in English place names comes from the Saxon word wurt” or “wort” meaning a homestead or enclosed space. It is likely that the village was originally a homestead or farm in the ownership of Padda. Other possibilities are that the first part of the name derives from the Old English word “pad” meaning a toad or possibly from the slang word “pad” meaning a path. The last explanation is the least likely since this use of the word cannot be found in English before the 16<sup>th</sup> Century by which time the name of the village was well established. It has at various times been known as Peadenwurthe (10<sup>th</sup> Century), Pedewurth (12<sup>th</sup> Century), Paedwewrd or Padworze (13<sup>th</sup> Century) and Padesworth or Pappeworth (14<sup>th</sup> Century).

**Padworth’s earliest inhabitants.** Padworth is mentioned in the Domesday Book but there were inhabitants in the area of the village at a much earlier date. The earliest known inhabitants were the Atrebates (a Belgic tribe from what is now Northern France). They were among the most powerful and civilised tribes living in Britain. The founder of the dynasty Commius came from France. He was originally an ally of Julius Caesar but later turned against him and was forced to flee to Britain where he became the King of the Atrebates. The tribe occupied Berkshire, Surrey, Sussex and parts of Hampshire. The capital of the Atrebates was Calleva (Silchester). After the Roman invasion of Britain (43 AD) the Atrebates were ruled as a client kingdom of Rome.

**Grim’s Bank.** Grim’s Bank is the defining feature of the southern part of the village. It is an ancient earthwork which runs along the ridge on the southern side of the Kennet Valley. It is one of a number of earthworks of Saxon origin in Britain to carry this name. The best known is Grim’s Dyke which forms part of the Ridgeway. The bank was probably constructed after the fall of the Roman Empire (410 AD). It is not certain if it was built for defensive purposes or simply to mark the northern boundary of the Atrebates. The name Grim (or Grimmer) comes from an Old Norse word “Grimr” meaning devil and was often used to describe Odin the Norse God of War and Magic.

**The origins of the village, the manor and the church.** The first documented mention of the village was in 956AD when King Edwy granted land to Eadric at Padworth. There are references to the manor of Padworth during the 11<sup>th</sup> century and the church was built during the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Padworth House occupies the site of the old manor house of the Coudray family who were Lords of the Manor from the early 13<sup>th</sup> Century. The family sold the house at the time of the Civil War to Thomas Brightwell, a London merchant and Governor of St. Thomas' Hospital. His descendants and relatives lived there until well into the 20th century. The family name of successive owners, however, changed successively to Griffith and then Darby-Griffith through marriage and descent through collateral lines. The house was almost entirely rebuilt around 1769 by Christopher Griffith and his wife Catherine. The work was carried out by John Hobcroft – a London builder and carpenter who was also responsible for the building of Wasing House. It contains some elegant Adam style plaster decoration by Joseph Rose. Many years ago there was a boating lake which was part of the Padworth House Estate. It was created as a private facility, for use by the Squire and his guests. It stretched from below Home Farm to Belchers Lane (now Padworth Lane) and was fed from an off-shoot of the River Kennet above Padworth Mill. The water level was controlled by a weir opposite Millbrook Cottage. The house is now a Co-educational Boarding School.

**The Plague.** A number of major external events have had an impact on the village over the centuries. The first was a major outbreak of the Plague (the Black Death) in 1348/49. It is estimated that 20 – 30% of the population died. Farm livestock were also affected. An historical account records “not only mankind but the brute creation suffered from this scourge, and as the putrid carcasses lay unburied in the fields the infection went on multiplying itself unchecked”. A high proportion of the population died and in some places “as seems to have been the case at Padworth, no men were left to till the ground”. In other neighbouring districts in Berkshire the devastation must have been as great. “Of Thatcham” a contemporary deed records “that in that year all the free tenants and the peasants were dead by the pestilence and that the lands are now in the hands of the lord because there is no one who wants to buy or to till them”. Many years elapsed before the country recovered. Although there is no direct record that such was the fact, it seems probable that the deaths of Sir Thomas Coudray and his wife, following so closely on each other in that year, were caused by the epidemic.

**The Civil War.** There was a skirmish at Padworth during the Civil War on 21 September 1643 the day after the first Battle of Newbury which had ended in a stalemate. The Parliamentarians retired, making their way towards Theale close to the south bank of the Kennet intending to cross the river by the bridge below Padworth Park. They entered the

narrow lane between Aldermaston and Padworth just by Padworth Gully when they encountered a force of cavalry supported by 800 musketeers commanded by Prince Rupert who had taken up position on their line of march. This force fell on the rearguard of the Parliamentary forces. The mounted soldiers fled in disarray shouting to the foot soldiers to tell them to flee. The foot soldiers were, however, made of sterner stuff and poured volleys of shot into Prince Rupert's tired cavalry which was forced to abandon the attack having lost some 300 men. The Parliamentarians continued to Theale where they passed the night. The churchyard contains a number of pits which were found in the nineteenth century to contain collections of indiscriminately mixed human bones lying near the surface and these are thought to have been the relics of those killed in the skirmish in Padworth Gully.

**The Inclosure Act.** Inclosure Acts for areas of agricultural land were passed sporadically from the 12th century onwards but the majority were passed between 1760 and 1820. "Open field" farming, which was the norm for centuries, was nearly always inefficient since it required compromises and deals amongst proprietors of adjacent strips of land. Consolidation into larger units led to economies of scale and encouraged farmers to experiment with crop rotation and other measures which greatly increased productivity. The process of enclosure was the first major step towards the establishing the efficient agricultural industry which exists in Britain today. The downside of enclosure was that the rights of local people were extinguished over the enclosed areas. Much has been written about these by historians with differing political perspectives. Many have concluded that they represented a triumph of capitalism leading to the peasantry losing its traditional rights to grazing and pasture and limiting the number of smallholders. There is no doubt that they were major agents of change – but they were neither an unmitigated evil nor a universal good. The Inclosure Act for Beenham, Padworth, Aldermaston and Wasing was passed in 1803 and amended for Padworth and Beenham in 1811. The preface for this latter Act explained the reason for legislating for these two parishes together was that their common rights were "*so intermixed with each other and blended together that it has been found very difficult to ascertain and define the boundaries of the said parishes*". This observation is particularly relevant today. The major areas of inclosures were located in Lower Padworth close to the river.

**The Kennet and Avon Canal and the Great Western Railway.** The idea of an east-west waterway link across southern England was first mooted in Elizabethan times, since the sea route between Bristol and London was hazardous as Atlantic storms and the rugged coast line took their toll on small coastal vessels and conflicts with France frequently made British cargo ships the prey of French privateers and warships. No action was taken until the early

18th century when the Avon was made navigable from Bristol to Bath and the Kennet from Newbury to Reading to meet local needs. A survey by John Rennie charted out the route for the canal between Bath and Newbury in 1793. Construction began shortly afterwards and the Canal was opened in 1810. The opening of the Great Western Railway in 1841, which was designed and built by Isambard Kingdom Brunel, removed much of the canal's traffic, and in 1852 the railway company took over its running, levying high tolls at every toll point until the canal was hardly used. By the 1950s large portions of the canal were closed because of poor lock maintenance. The Kennet and Avon Canal Trust was formed in the 1960s to restore the canal from Reading to Bristol for through navigation and as a public amenity in partnership with British Waterways. The area around Aldermaston Wharf provided a major source of employment for local people from 1770 when the Aldermaston brewery (later Strange's Brewery) was established and at a later date Sterling Cables.

Needs old pictures of the parish –  
if possible (david do you have  
any?)



which covers the two churches in Mortimer, St Saviours at Mortimer West End as well as the ancient parish church of Padworth.

The village school which was established in 1875 (following the passage of the Forster Elementary Education Act of 1870) was closed on the order of the Secretary of State for Education in 1985. Although the village school no longer exists there are now four private educational establishments within the parish boundaries. There are two nursery schools (Jubilee Day Nursery and Tiddlywinks – the latter occupying the buildings of the old village school), Padworth College (a private co-educational secondary school) and Alder Bridge (a Steiner School). The village at one time had a grocers shop and post office by Aldermaston Wharf and another grocers and post office on Padworth Common. The sole remaining retail facilities for daily purchases within the village are provided by the Total petrol station on the Bath Road and the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust shop at Aldermaston Wharf. One public house remains – The Round Oak on Padworth Common and the people of the Aldermaston Wharf area are served by the Butt Inn.



### **A Village in Transition**

There are three residential settlements in Padworth as there have been for centuries, although the distribution of the population has changed considerably in recent years – and dramatically so over the last 4 years.

**Padworth Common and Padworth Lane areas.** The area on the ridge and close to the common has seen least change over the last 50 years. There is a number of properties immediately to the west of the Parish boundary in Aldermaston Parish which geographically form part of the Padworth Common settlement. There are 57 households within the boundaries of the Parish in these areas.



**Bath Road area.** The housing stock alongside the Bath Road largely reflects the “ribbon development” characteristic of the inter-war and immediate post-war years. There were 60 households in this area until 2008. This has increased by more than 60% to 97 since that date and we are aware of further planning applications which have been or are likely to be submitted in the near future. The newer properties in the area include houses and flats and include some social housing.

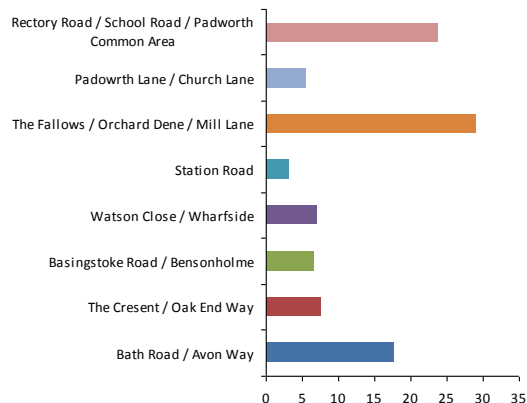


**Aldermaston Wharf area.** This area contains some established housing stock, notably along Mill Lane, but it has also been the subject of extensive new housing developments.



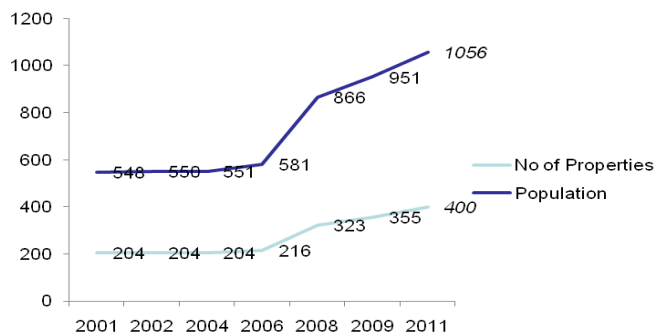
The number of households in this area has grown even more dramatically than that in the Bath Road area. At the time of the 1991 Census there were 61 households in this area. This had grown to 88 by the time the 2001 Census was taken and in the last 4 years the total number of households within Padworth Parish has trebled to 188. The Aldermaston Wharf area also contains elements of three

parishes – Padworth, Beenham and Aldermaston. These parts of our neighbouring parishes, which together with Padworth form the geographically distinct settlement of Aldermaston Wharf, are composed entirely of new housing developments constructed within the last 20 years. These have added 128 new households in that part which is within Beenham Parish and further 32 in Aldermaston Parish. The total number of households in Aldermaston Wharf now totals 348 of which 54% are in Padworth, 37% in Beenham and 9% in Aldermaston.



where people live

**Demography.** The 2001 Census identified 204 households and the total population amounted to 548 in Padworth Parish. The number of households within the Parish boundaries has risen to 342 (an increase of 67%). Exact figures for the population are not available in the periods between censuses although it is possible to estimate the population on the basis of the number of households and by using surrogate measures (e.g. the electoral register). The construction of new housing within the parish has brought into the village a substantial number of families with children while the older housing stock largely



comprises one and two person households. It is probable that the population is now close to 1000 and if new planning permissions are to be granted then this number is set to rise further. The probable population of those parts of our neighbouring parishes which comprise the settlement Aldermaston Wharf will be

between 400 and 500. These developments have inevitably raised important questions about the adequacy of local educational and transport facilities and the availability of other amenities and facilities for daily living and recreational purposes.

## The Views of Local People

The Steering group has sought to engage with all residents at every stage in the development of the Village Plan. Major opportunities have been provided by the Open days (April 2009) which generated over 140 comments, ideas and suggestions and the survey questionnaire which was delivered to every household in the village. Every effort was made by the team who volunteered to distribute the questionnaire to speak personally to residents and encourage them to complete the questionnaire. The overall response rate was 57%. In addition a Youth Consultation was held during July 2009 and the Padworth newsletter has carried a standing invitation to local people to raise issues directly with the Steering Group at any time. The major points which emerged from these exercises were:

**What is the most important reason for living in Padworth?** People like living in Padworth – in particular they value the rural environment and village life and the sense of belonging to a community. Subsequent discussions and the enthusiasm of residents of our neighbouring parishes at Aldermaston Wharf to be a part of the process underlines this latter point. A number of local residents are emphatic that strict limits should be placed on future housing developments in following the rapid growth of the village over the last four years.

**How do people travel for work, educational or leisure purposes?** Local residents overwhelmingly (more than 80%) are reliant on their own transport for travel to work, training or study. Less than half the remainder (8%) use the local train service although nearly half of all residents use the train occasionally for a range of purposes. Bus and coach services are used by a very small proportion of local residents. Improvements in the frequency and timetabling of these services (particularly rail services) would attract more users especially if more secure parking was available. Residents are even more reliant on their own transport for all other activities (e.g. shopping, leisure activities, travelling to medical facilities etc).



**How accessible are amenities and facilities?** It is many years since Padworth lost its school, shop and post office. Local people have to travel significant distances to access

these and other facilities which are necessary for daily living. This poses a problem for a sizeable minority and adds to the level of car usage by the majority. The two private nursery schools in the village are heavily used by local people. The majority of early school age children from Padworth are pupils at Aldermaston Church of England Primary School while others travel to Ufton Nervet or elsewhere and a significant minority attend private schools. Similarly people travel widely for their regular household shopping with substantial numbers shopping in each of the following; Tadley, Calcot/Reading, Thatcham and Newbury. The local village shop in Aldermaston is used regularly by less than 10% of local people. It is also necessary for people to travel to attend their local medical practitioner – over 80% of residents are registered with practices in Mortimer (29%), Theale (26%) and Bucklebury (26%) and half of the remainder are registered with practices in Tadley.

**Do people feel safe and secure living in Padworth?** In general the answer is yes – but there are some major concerns. A high proportion of local residents are concerned about road safety in almost all areas of the village. These concerns include excessive vehicle speeds ((82%), inadequate facilities for pedestrians (86%) and cyclists (62%), heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) on rural roads (81%) and inconsiderate or hazardous parking. There is some concern about crime levels (particularly theft) and some about anti-social behaviour (principally vandalism and noise).



**How adequate are opportunities for young people?** The questionnaire survey identified 116 residents under the age of 18. A direct extrapolation from the response rate to the questionnaire would indicate that the numbers are over 200 and this is likely to be an underestimate since the response rate was lowest from the newer housing developments which have a higher proportion of young people. There is a strongly held view that the growth in the size of the community justifies a greater investment in youth facilities. There are currently limited playground facilities at the Village Hall for those in the younger age groups but this is not remote from the residential areas and some is due to be installed at the public open space adjacent to the newly constructed Fallow development at Aldermaston Wharf. Other opportunities for



children – particularly for older children are limited. The possibility of developing craft clubs, tennis, scouts/guides etc were proposed by many residents.

**How adequate are leisure facilities for residents of all ages?** The facilities within Padworth are limited. There are only two clubs – the Women’s Institute and the Ladies Social Group. The responses to the questionnaire identified strong support for better sporting facilities (particularly tennis – 37%) and more community based events and clubs. There was particularly strong demand for community social and musical events (72%) and for gardening (35%), local history (25%) and environmental groups (22%). Groups for the last two of these interests have been formed as a direct result of the activities generated by the Parish Planning Process. The Village Hall plays a limited role in the life of the village. It

is heavily used (more than 400 bookings a year) but principally by groups and organisations from outside the parish boundaries. The location which is remote from residential areas and the relatively poor state of the principal part of the building act as disincentives to more extensive use by local people. These disadvantages are likely to be compounded by the increase in



traffic generated by the construction of the Integrated Wasted Management Site in close proximity to the hall.

**How will the development of the Integrated Waste Management Site affect the local community?** The plan to locate a waste management site adjacent to Padworth Sidings



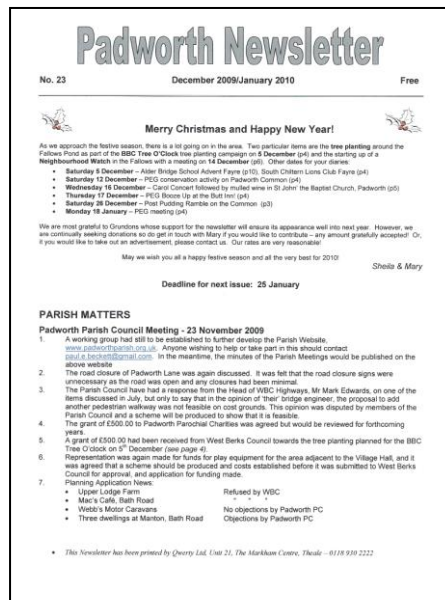
has been highly controversial. The plans include a waste transfer station, a material recovery facility, a household waste recycling centre, an in-vessel composting facility and a municipal depot with workshop, fuelling and washing facilities. This development will inevitably have a negative impact on those living in the immediate vicinity, on the village hall and its

users and more widely on the village through an increase in traffic flows and a disruption of

village life. It is recognised that the development is proceeding and it is essential for the village to engage constructively with West Berkshire Council and Veolia to minimise those negative impacts and promote initiatives which will compensate for the loss of amenity.

## How can Padworth and neighbouring communities maintain and enhance their sense of community?

There is a real sense of community in the village and its adjoining neighbourhoods. Occasional village social events (the “meal on the trot”, the harvest supper and the annual carol service) enhance that sense of belonging. Additional village social events would be welcomed by a high proportion of residents. The village newsletter (started in December 2007) which is also distributed to those in the contiguous communities and the creation of a village website, have been welcomed by all villagers. The newsletter in



particular has been highly praised – over 93% of respondents cite it as their primary source of information on local activities. The implementation of many of the proposals itemised above (eg better facilities for young people, improved recreational opportunities for people of all ages, the development of special interest clubs etc) will all contribute to a greater sense of cohesion in the village and the surrounding areas. It is encouraging that the planning process has already generated some developments. One area of concern raised by a number of respondents has been a lack of information about the activities of the Parish Council. The Council has taken some steps to remedy

this by providing a summary of items discussed for the Padworth newsletter and by establishing a village website with details of Council Meetings. A longer term aim must be to increase representation from the more recently developed areas of the village and to build on the good working relationships which have been established with our neighbours in Beenham and Aldermaston. .



## Towards 2020 – Actions and Recommendations

### Towards 2020 – Actions and Recommendations

The Parish Planning process has identified a number of major themes for the future. In developing its recommendations for an Action Plan the Steering Group have borne a number of key criteria in mind.

1. The Plan should set no more than a limited number of priorities – an over lengthy “wish list” is more likely than not to lead to inaction.
2. Recommended actions should meet the SMART criteria – they should be **Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic** and **Timely**. The recommendations listed below specify the actions to be taken, identify who should be responsible, set a timescale and state what funding will be required (if any).
3. The Plan should identify those actions which we can undertake ourselves and those which we shall need to undertake in collaboration with outside agencies – voluntary bodies, other organisations, West Berkshire Council or other official agencies.
4. The village should be proactive in developing actions collaboratively with neighbouring communities as appropriate.

The major themes identified by local people, provide the framework for the actions and recommendations detailed on the following pages:

#### ***1. Improving traffic management and road safety for all road users in all areas of the village***

##### **Background**

Concern over road safety in the village results from the convergence of a number of factors.



These include:

- the overall growth in population (including many young people)
- the presence of two major “A” routes with no safe crossings for residents to access public transport, a school and leisure facilities
- inadequate facilities for pedestrians and cyclists
- mixed use of rural roads by walkers, cyclists, riders and young people
- increased HGV traffic on rural lanes
- speed only restricted to national limits on some residential roads
- expected growth in traffic volumes during the construction and operation of the waste management site from staff, domestic users and waste site vehicles (the site will include a municipal depot with vehicle fuelling and maintenance facilities).

### **Key issues**

**Basingstoke Road (A340).** The difficulties include exceptionally narrow pavements, pavements on one side of the road only on the canal bridge, heavy use by HGVs and no pedestrian crossing restricting safe access to the rail station and to leisure facilities (the public open space adjacent to The Fallows development and the Butt Inn).

**Bath Road (A4).** Speed on the Bath Road at Lower Padworth is only subject to national speed limits. The increase in the number of properties by more than 60% has increased the number of vehicles which exit onto this major trunk road. Some exit onto an accommodation road but a number directly onto the A4 at the point where the dual carriageway ends and here the sight lines are particularly poor. There is no pedestrian crossing to permit safe access to public transport.

**Padworth Lane/Rectory Road.** The lanes to the south of the river are narrow and in places reduce to a single track with passing places. These lanes are subject to a width restriction but there is no speed restriction other than the national speed limit. There is mixed use of these lanes by cars, cyclists, riders (there are three stables/equestrian centres) and by walkers including many young children as there are two nursery schools on these lanes. The road is heavily used by vehicles accessing the nursery schools, residential properties and it is also used as a “rat run” by private cars and also, on occasions by HGVs in breach of the width limit. The problems affect the roads listed above most severely but they also impact on the other lanes on the ridge. These lanes meet the Department for Transport (DfT) criteria for “Quiet Lane” status.

**Reading Road.** This is heavily used by commuter traffic and by HGVs. There is currently a 50mph limit on this stretch but this frequently exceeded. There are nearly 40 residential

properties on this stretch (some in Padworth and some in a contiguous part of Aldermaston Parish). This road across Padworth Common meets the DfT criteria for a 40mph limit.

**Objective.** To improve traffic management and road safety for all road users in all areas of the village.

**Actions.** To explore with WBC measures to address these concerns. It is understood that the A340 and A4 are to be included in the WBC review of speed limits in 2010. This is to be welcomed. It is essential that any speed restrictions which are introduced should be effectively enforced.

***2. Developing more accessible facilities and amenities for the growing population of the village and neighbouring communities – particularly for residents of the Bath road and Wharf areas***

Insert picture and words required

**Background.** The rapid growth and changing demographics of the population of Aldermaston Wharf and the Bath Road areas have generated a demand for a greater range of facilities and amenities. This has been highlighted in the questionnaire responses. The demand for amenities was also been highlighted in the questionnaire responses for Plans for adjoining Parishes.

**Key issues**

**Parking facilities around the Wharf Area.** The difficulties include parking for residents, visitors to the canal and users of the station. The lack of on street parking and the need to encourage more use of the car parks in the area.

**Medical Facilities.** Residents in the Wharf and Bath Road have to travel considerable distances to visit a doctor, dentist, or a chemist. Many of the new residents in the Bath Road are young parents who are dependent on public transport. More accessible facilities would improve the quality of life in the parish. These might be provide by the establishment of a volunteer driver scheme or (in the longer term) by the development of a clinic facility in a new community centre in the Wharf area.

**Local Shop.** There is currently no shopping facility in the Wharf area, the nearest being the local petrol station or the shop in Aldermaston Village. Residents currently travel to adjoining urban areas even for their convenience purchases. The lack of this amenity was

highlighted as an issue in the questionnaire and results as to the potential use of a shop encouraging.

**Community Facilities.** There was a positive response in the questionnaire for the provision of clubs and facilities such as tennis, badminton, gardening, youth clubs and arts. There is no community building in the Wharf Area to support this demand.

**Objective.** To improve and develop neighbourhood facilities and amenities for all residents

**Actions.** To explore with WBC and other partners the range and possibilities to enhance facilities and amenities in the village with particular focus in and around the Wharf area.

### ***3. Creating better facilities for young people***

**Background.** The last 10 years has seen a dramatic rise in the number of young people, from early years to teenage, (especially around the Aldermaston Wharf area). The Steering Group decided that it was important to gauge the views of young people when preparing the village plan. This was achieved by holding an activity afternoon on

the public open space adjacent to the Fallows development. This attracted around 20 youngsters from 0-14 years of age with their parents. The afternoon consisted of games organised by the Sport, Leisure & Activity Team. Participants were invited to write a wish on a "Wishing Line" and to take part in video interviews.

**Key issues.** The key issue for the young people was the lack of facilities for sports or clubs for both younger children and teenagers. There is a playground for the younger children but nothing suitable for the 9-15 year olds. The overriding demand was for a tennis court, basketball court, nature reserve, a children's club of any kind, and an area for growing things (allotments). This last demand was also expressed by many adult members of the community.

**Objective.** To create activities and clubs for the local children and young people.

**Actions.** To set up a craft club, primarily for the 5-10 yr olds with a view to this growing over the years. Alder Bridge School has been approached as a possible base and the first steps towards achieving this have already been taken. Collaboration with St Luke's Trust (Mill Lane) to resurface the tennis court so it can be opened to the local community and to

Insert picture and words required

consider the possibility of opening up a field behind St Luke's for allotments. To explore the possibility of developing activities for youth based at the Village Hall.

#### **4. Increasing opportunities for leisure activities in or close to Padworth**

**Background.** The rapid growth in population of Padworth and neighbouring areas has generated a demand for a greater range of leisure opportunities within or close to the village.

Insert picture of tennis courts at Mill Lane or playing fields at the Fallows

**Key issues.** The highest levels of interest expressed in the questionnaire responses for physical activities were for keep fit (51%), tennis (37%), dancing (32%) and badminton (25%). The highest levels of interest shown in other leisure pursuits were in a gardening club (35%), a local history society (25%) and an environmental group (22%). Steps have already been taken to establish the last two of these.

**Objective.** To develop a greater range of opportunities for leisure activities in the local neighbourhood in accordance with the interest identified through the Open Days and questionnaire.

**Actions.** To explore possibilities for establishing classes and/or local clubs to promote the above activities through local initiatives. Possibilities include setting up classes for keep fit and dancing in the village hall, exploring the possibility of the use of local tennis courts and encouraging interested individuals to take the lead in developing these activities. To collect and publish information on the availability of leisure opportunities within the neighbourhood.

#### **5. Maintaining and enhancing our environment**

**Background.** Padworth lies adjacent to the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and has many of the characteristics of the area. The village is predominantly rural in nature stretching from the acid heathland of Padworth Common on the ridge on the southern side of the Kennet valley through open agricultural land and wetlands in the flood plain of the Kennet to the river and the Kennet and Avon Canal close to the northern boundary. It contains a number of varied and important habitats and these are as important as those in the designated AONB. .

**Key issues.** The opportunity to enjoy the country and village life was the most frequent response (56%) given to the question what is most important to you about Padworth. This was reflected in the responses to a range of other questions. Nearly all of residents actively enjoy the rural environment on foot (94%) of bicycle (42%) and 58% stated they actively went out to “see nature”. The importance of protecting the rural environment was stressed by over 80% and many residents volunteered to contribute actively to maintaining and improving the natural environment. The creation of the Padworth Environment Group (PEG) is a local initiative which has derived directly from the Village Planning process.

**Objective.** To maintain and improve the natural environment by enhancing understanding of environmental issues, increasing opportunities for all to contribute to and enjoy the local area. To work with neighbouring communities to reduce carbon emissions and energy consumption and promote healthier lifestyles.

**Actions.** To build on the work already undertaken by PEG in collaboration with local landowners, BBOWT, the Kennet and Avon Canal Trust, the countryside ranger and TVER to meet the above ends. The Plan envisages that local people will play a role through practical conservation work in maintaining habitats, improving biodiversity, encouraging self-sufficiency and reducing carbon emissions. The maintenance and improvement of footpaths and bridleways and the exploration of additional linkage footpaths have a high priority.

## **6. Minimising the negative impacts of the Waste Site development**

**Background.** The development of an integrated waste management site adjacent to Padworth Sidings has been highly controversial. It will inevitably have a negative impact on those living in the immediate vicinity, on the village hall and its users and more widely on the village through an increase in traffic flows and a disruption of village life.

Insert picture of planned site

**Key issues.** These include:

- impact of traffic generated by the site – this will include waste vehicles, vehicles of personnel (the permitted hours of operation are such that many will be travelling to or

from the site at times when public transport is unavailable) and those of members of the general public bringing household waste to the site. Traffic assessments have been carried out and have delivered conflicting results. The increased volume of traffic raises a number of major concerns regarding access and excessive loads on trunks road to the north and rural lanes to the south of the site

- impact on local residents – there are nearly 100 residential properties located within 250 metres of the boundary of the site and approximately double that number within 500 metres. Residents are concerned about noise, light pollution, odour and litter in addition to the impact of traffic
- the village hall is in close proximity to the waste site and access to both is by way of Padworth Lane. The hall is heavily used (around 400 bookings per annum) and the users include young people and a group of highly vulnerable young adults who must be regarded as being at risk from the increased volume of traffic. There is also a concern that the proximity of the site may reduce the level of bookings and consequently income received and that this may imperil the future viability of the hall and undermine efforts to enhance community life.

**Objective.** A major objective for the village as the host community for the development is to engage constructively with West Berkshire Council and Veolia to minimise potentially negative impacts on local people and community life and promote initiatives which will compensate for the loss of amenity.

**Actions.** To establish a village waste site working group (already in place) to consider issues relating to the development during the construction phase and later when the site becomes operational. To participate actively in the Waste Site Liaison group with Veolia, West Berkshire Council and other relevant agencies.

### ***7. Developing and enhancing a sense of community***

**Background.** Padworth is a geographically dispersed village which has a significant sense of community. It is also a village in transition and a major challenge for the community will be to build on existing strengths and to establish an inclusive community embracing all residents and encouraging newcomers to participate

Insert picture – not sure what yet

actively in village life. This echoes two major objectives of the Community Strategy for West Berkshire:

- fostering a stronger sense of place ... and more cohesive local communities
- creating a culture – and thereby increase numbers of people – who are able to contribute to their communities by volunteering.

**Key issues.** A number of issues will influence the ability of the community to achieve the aims stated above. These are:

- timely and effective mechanisms for effective and up-to-date information exchange amongst local residents. The first steps towards this have already been taken by developing a community website – with links to the Parish Council and the Village Hall. It will be essential that this is maintained and updated on a regular and frequent basis. The Padworth Newsletter in its first two years has established itself as an invaluable means on communication and achieved the highest positive response (over 93%) to any question in the questionnaire
- ensuring effective local involvement in village affairs – the demographic changes which have occurred have yet to be reflected in membership of the Parish Council
- developing partnerships with neighbouring communities – the interactions which have been developed through the planning process have emphasised the extent to which Padworth shares aspirations and concerns with its immediate neighbours. The Aldermaston Wharf Area Group has played an important role in this and provides a platform to explore the possibility of shared interests more widely
- a number of suggestions for enhancing a sense of community have been proposed during the course of the preparation of the Parish Plan. These have included one or two major village social events during the year (one possibly linked to the Annual General Meeting of the Parish Council), an information pack about the village for residents (including details of available amenities and facilities, a short history of the village, a footpath map etc). This might also provide the basis for a Welcome Pack for newcomers
- the establishment of leisure activities, local clubs or adult learning opportunities within or close to the village
- improvement of community facilities based either on the village hall or on a newly developed community centre which is more accessible to a greater proportion of local residents.

**Objective.** To create a more cohesive and inclusive local community in partnership with our neighbours and increase the numbers of local residents participating in local activities and events.

**Actions.** To explore through the Parish Council the most effective ways of addressing the issue itemised above.

## Action Plan

**SAFER (e.g. reducing anti-social behaviour, reducing speed on roads, emergency planning)**

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	PRIORITY	START DATE	PROJECT MANAGER/ LEAD PARTNER	OTHER PARTNERS	POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES	JUSTIFICATION
Reduce speeding and enhance traffic calming	Conduct a professional risk analysis of traffic hazards in identified high risk areas	H		3PC, AWAG & Waste Site Liaison Group	WBC & TVP		Major concerns in the survey (82 - 86%). Long-standing Issues - now more pressing due to population growth i(particularly young people), absence of safe road crossings for pedestrians & expected increase of traffic generated by waste site. Dialogue with WBC established.
Improve safety for pedestrians	Install pedestrian crossings and flashing school signs, widen pavements , enhance footpath over canal & railway bridge	H		3PC & AWAG	WBC & TVP		
Improve public parking around Aldermaston Wharf	Explore possibilities with WBC, TVP, British Waterways and Network Rail	M		3PC	Network Rail & British Waterways		
Reduce HGV traffic on A340	Investigate means to reduce HGV traffic through 3PC	L		3PC	WBC & TVP		
Reduce HGV traffic on rural lanes – to south of River Kennet	Explore possibilities with WBC Highways Department and Veolia	H		3PC, Waste Site Liaison Group	WBC & Veolia		
Improve surfacing of roads in the area	Undertake an audit of road surfaces in area and agree resurfacing plans with WBC	L		3PC	WBC		Many surfaces poor & deteriorating. Some work in hand.
Adoption of roads on the newly developed estates in the Wharf area	Work with developers, WBC and TWA to resolve outstanding issues	M		AWAG	3PC, WBC, TWA, Persimmon & Wimpey		
Introduce/strengthen NHW schemes in the area	Identify and recruit area coordinators to develop schemes	M		3PC	TVP		To address concerns over anti-social behaviour
Improve flood protection	Work with WBC and EA to ensure gullies are cleared regularly	H		3PC	WBC & Environment Agency		To minimise risk of further flooding of domestic properties as in 2007

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	PRIORITY	START DATE	PROJECT MANAGER/ LEAD PARTNER	OTHER PARTNERS	POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES	JUSTIFICATION
Monitor impact of development of integrated waste site on traffic movements, potential environmental impacts & impact on village hall	Work with WBC, Veolia & Environment Agency to ensure that potentially negative impacts are minimised during the construction and operational phases	H		Padworth Waste Site Group	Working with WBC & Veolia through the Padworth Liaison Group		To address concerns over additional traffic movements of Veolia staff, Veolia vehicles & private cars

**MORE PROSPEROUS (e.g. supporting the village economy, enhancing tourism & supporting employment)**

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	PRIORITY	START DATE	PROJECT MANAGER/ LEAD PARTNER	OTHER PARTNERS	POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES	JUSTIFICATION
Development of a village shop in the Wharf area	Engage with Kennet and Avon Canal Trust to discuss proposals	M		AWAG	Kennet & Avon Canal Trust, CCB, Virsa, other community shops		To meet needs of local people (52% ) – particularly those reliant on public transport & reduce car usage
Improve public access to the canal and river and public parking	Explore possibilities with WBC, Kennet and Avon Canal Trust and British Waterways	M		AWAG	Kennet & Avon Canal Trust & British Waterways		Enhance leisure opportunities for West Berkshire
Ensure that future housing developments are in keeping with the existing environment	Work with WBC and developers to ensure maximum benefits for the community	H		AWAG	3PC		To adopt a positive approach to future developments & ensure maximum benefit for local people
Develop a Village Design Statement	Build on previous efforts – develop contacts with WBC & Planning Aid	M		Padworth Parish Council			

**HEALTHIER (e.g. fostering a sense of place & belonging, improving health & well-being of all, promoting independence of vulnerable people)**

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	PRIORITY	START DATE	PROJECT MANAGER/ LEAD PARTNER	OTHER PARTNERS	POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES	JUSTIFICATION
Increase bicycle usage	Investigate possible locations for cycle routes & produce a cycle map	M		PEG	WBC, 3PC, Spokes		To encourage healthier living & reduce car usage
Increase use of public footpaths & bridleways. Investigate the development of new linkage rights of way	Ensure footpaths & access are maintained, produce a rights of way map of the village. Establish a programme of village walks & cycle rides	H		3PC	WBC Rights of Way Officer		To encourage healthier living & greater appreciation of natural environment
Increase recreational/sports facilities for adults and children	Investigate facilities for tennis, keep fit, dancing to meet wishes expressed by local people	H		3PC	WBC Adult & Community Learning, Extended & Youth Service, Alder Bridge School & St Luke's Trust		To encourage healthier living & meet wishes of local people of all ages
Develop leisure opportunities to meet wishes expressed by local people	Take steps to establish clubs for gardening, local history and an environmental group	M			3PC & WBC Adult & Community Learning & Arts & Leisure		

**GREENER (e.g. reducing carbon footprint, reducing waste & increasing recycling, encouraging consumption of local produce, increasing diversity of local wildlife).**

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	PRIORITY	START DATE	PROJECT MANAGER/ LEAD PARTNER	OTHER PARTNERS	POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES	JUSTIFICATION
Maintain & improve the natural environment	Continue development of environmental group & set up parish watch group	H		PEG	3PC, BBOWT		
Promote community & personal efforts to reduce carbon emissions& energy consumption	Link with National Greening Initiative, Lett schemes & explore possibility of establishing a swap shop. Develop reduce, reuse & recycle initiatives	H		PEG	National Greening Campaign & Veolia		To contribute to local & national efforts to reduce carbon emissions
Improve and develop natural habitats (the common, canal & river banks, verges, gravel pits, hedges & woodland etc)	Develop a plan for local involvement in maintaining & enhancing the natural environment. Explore possible partners to develop the gravel pits.	M		PEG	3PC , local landowners, countryside ranger & TVERC		To maintain & develop local environment. used widely by local people for leisure & recreational purposes (<93%). To encourage greater involvement in care of the countryside.
Carry out practical conservation work to improve biodiversity on the Common and by the Fallows	Work with the Countryside Ranger to develop specific projects to encourage and monitor populations of birds, moths & butterflies, reptiles, adders, dragonflies etc	M		PEG	3PC, countryside ranger & BTCV		
Reduce litter & dog fouling	Organise litter picks, install dog bins	M		PEG	3PC – in partnership with Kennet & Avon Canal Trust		
Establish allotments & village orchard for local residents	Investigate possibility of providing allotments in collaboration with St Luke's Trust	H		PEG & 3PC	St Luke's Trust		To meet the expressed need of local residents committed to gardening and healthier living

**STRONGER (e.g. fostering a sense of belonging & participation in village life & ensuring amenities & facilities are accessible to all)**

OBJECTIVE	ACTIONS	PRIORITY	START DATE	PROJECT MANAGER/ LEAD PARTNER	OTHER PARTNERS	POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES	JUSTIFICATION
Develop facilities to engage the interest of children and young people.		H		3PC	Alder Bridge School		To provide opportunities for young people close to their homes
Increase local involvement in village activities	Encourage representation on Parish Council from newly developed areas of village, plan village social events	H		AWAG	3PC		To increase involvement in village activities
Increase awareness throughout the village of events and developments	Support the Padworth Newsletter, improve the Padworth website	H			Padworth Parish Council		To enhance a sense of community

**ABBREVIATIONS IN ACTION PLAN**

WBC	West Berkshire Council
PC	Parish Council
3PC	3 Parish Councils (Padworth, Beenham and Aldermaston)
AWAG	Aldermaston Wharf Area Group
PEG	Padworth Environmental Group
WSWG	Waste Site Working Group
TVP	Thames Valley Police
TWA	
NHW	Neighbourhood Watch
EA	Environment Agency
BBOWT	Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust
TVERC	Thames Valley Environmental Record Centre
BTVC	British Trust for Conservation Volunteers

## Next Steps

The publication of a Village Plan is not an end in itself – it is a means to an end. The work which has brought us to this point has already served a valuable purpose. It has engaged the interest of a number of people from all parts of the village and it has led directly to the development of a number of initiatives which have been referred to in the introduction to this document. There is, however, a great deal more work to be done if the village is to achieve its aspirations. Working groups are already in place which are taking forward specific issues relating to the Wharf area and the environment. The Village Plan Steering Group will be disbanded now that the Plan has been published. It is proposed that a Plan Implementation Group should be established which will be charged with carrying forward the actions itemised in the plan.

## Appendix

### **1. Terms of Reference**

The Padworth Parish Plan Steering Group has been established by the Padworth Parish Council to prepare an action plan (“The Padworth Parish Plan”) to address the concerns, needs and aspirations of the local community.

The Steering Group will be responsible for the development of the plan. It will seek to draw in and consult with all residents, organisations and businesses in the local community through a survey, open meetings, events and personal contact. The Group will consider developments which embrace adjacent areas of other parishes where these form parts of distinct geographical entities (eg the area around Aldermaston Wharf and Padworth Common) although these are divided for administrative purposes by historic parish boundaries. The Group will maintain close links with the Parish Council throughout and with the parish councils of our immediate neighbours (particularly Aldermaston and Beenham).

The Steering Group will prepare a project plan with the intention of completing the Padworth Parish Plan no later than June 2010.

## 2. Methodology

The Steering Group met for the first time on 8 December 2008. The membership (see Annex 1) was drawn from all areas of the village and to ensure good links with our neighbouring parishes included residents of those parts of Beenham and Aldermaston from the Aldermaston Wharf area.

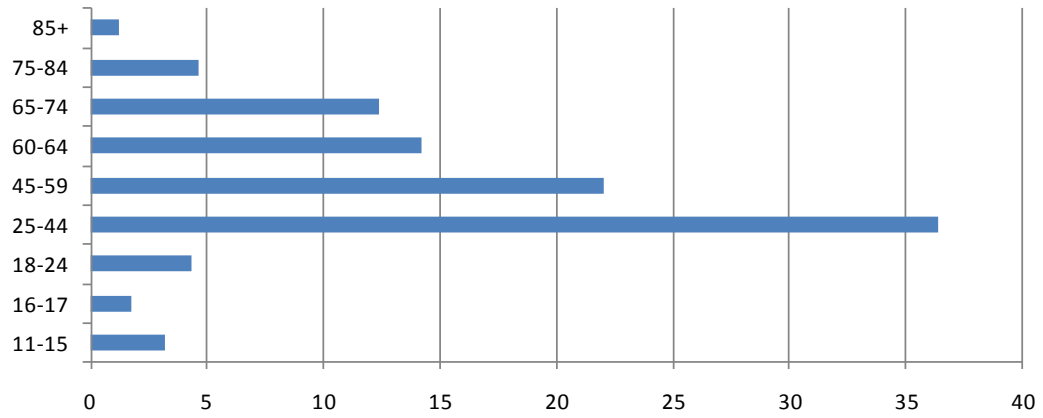
The Steering Group has met every 4 to 5 weeks since that first meeting. The key steps in developing the Plan have been:

Padworth Open days	3 & 5 April 2009
Distribution of survey questionnaire	June 2009
Collection of questionnaires	July 2009
Youth Day – 18 July 2009	
Analysis of questionnaires	August 2009
Establishment of Working Groups	September 2009
Aldermaston Wharf Area Group	
Padworth Environmental Group	
Waste Site Group	
Open Forums	27 & 29 November 2009
Draft of Plan	December/January 2009/2010
Review of Plan by WBC	February/March 2010
Final drafting of Plan	April/May 2010
Publication of Plan	June 2010
Detailed results of questionnaire	
Action Plan	
Contacts	

### 3. Sample results from the questionnaire

A full copy can be obtained from the Parish Website at [www](http://www).

Age profile of the responders



## **4. Membership of Steering Group and Working Groups**

### **Parish Plan Steering group**

Paul Beckett	Rachel McCrory
Mike Berry	Graham Newman
David Clark (Vice-chair)	Hannah Shock
Dawn Davis	Margo Smith
David Evered (Chair)	Tom Tucker
Grahame Hawker	Dawn Turpin
Sam Lee	Sarah Ward

**NOTE** - Jane Mullin and Andy Tucker also served on the Group but were unable to continue due to other commitments. Graham Newman, Dawn Davis and Margo Smith joined the Group in September 2009 following the judicial review of the Waste Site Planning Decision.

### **Aldermaston Wharf Area Group**

Mike Berry (Chair) – Beenham  
David Clark – Padworth  
Carla Kayser-Booth – Aldermaston  
Rachel McCrory – Padworth  
Hannah Shock – Beenham  
Angela Spoor – Aldermaston

### **Padworth Environmental Group**

Tony Booth  
Grahame Hawker  
Jenny Lacon  
Peter Lacon  
Dawn Turpin (Chair)

### **Waste Site Working Group**

David Clark  
Janis Daly  
Dawn Davis  
David Evered (Chair)  
Keith Gilbert  
Sam Lee  
Graham Newman  
Mike Potter  
Margo Smith

