

## First Ideas on Maiden Bradley Parish Plan Review and Update

This is a preliminary document that summarises the position as I see it, and identifies where the Parish Council will need to give a view or make a decision.

**Objectives.** In keeping with the policy of Wiltshire Council, the Warminster and Villages Community Plan (WVCP) is about to be reviewed and updated to cover the period to 2025, and Maiden Bradley's Parish Council is expected to contribute on behalf of our community.

When Wiltshire Council was formed and Salisbury District Council ended, Maiden Bradley found itself moved from the Mere cluster of local parishes to its current Warminster grouping. As a result Maiden Bradley's 2005 *Parish Plan* was written and structured to different guidelines from those of parishes within the Warminster area, which had been part of West Wilts District.

Because there are a number of differences between Maiden Bradley's Plan and the format requested so as to provide consistency under the new regime, any update will need to have three objectives –

1. A restructuring of the format and presentation to bring it in line with Warminster's framework.
2. A review of progress on achieving the aims of the original 2005 Plan.
3. An update to cover the period to 2025.

### 1. Fitting in with the new format.

The 2005 Plan was organised under 10 headings, with a further section assessing people's top priorities. The 10 headings are –

1. Parish Facilities and Community Life
2. Conservation and Restoration
3. Transport and Communications
4. Traffic and Parking
5. Crime and Policing
6. Access to Services
7. Young People
8. Jobs and the Local Economy
9. Housing
10. Governance

The work of the WVCP has been structured around 8 key themes that have been adopted by partnerships across Wiltshire in order to standardise approaches and to allow direct comparison and assessment. While the subject areas in our own Parish Plan are firmly grounded in the views of the community, the WVCP headings show the more top-down preoccupations at county level. They are:

1. Economy, including tourism and employment
2. Housing and the built environment
3. Culture, including leisure, recreation, heritage and the arts
4. Environment, including countryside and land-based issues
5. Transport, access and traffic
6. Education and life-long learning
7. Health and social care
8. Crime and community safety

As well as these 8 main themes the WVCP has two relevant 'postscript' headings – Villages and Young People.

Some of these cross-map quite easily, but others are more difficult. The table below has three columns. The first identifies the sections and sub-sections in our 2005 Plan. The second suggests where they might sit in the WVCP structure, though at times the WVCP format does not seem entirely sensible, as for example with the location of disability. The third lists items from the 2005 Plan that do not seem to have an obvious place in the new structure.

<b>MB 2005 Plan</b>	<b>WVCP structure</b>	<b>Location unclear</b>
<b>Facilities &amp; Community Life:</b>		
Recreation ground	Culture & leisure	
Youth club & swimming pool	ditto	
Village shop	Economy & tourism	
Pub		Possibly in Culture & leisure?
Church		ditto
Walled garden		Possibly in Environment?
Village hall	Culture & leisure	
Provisions for disability	Transport access & traffic	
Supply of volunteers		Possibly in Culture & leisure?
<b>Conservation &amp; Restoration:</b>		
Priority approach	Environment	
Listed buildings	ditto	
New building	ditto	
<b>Transport &amp; Communications:</b>		
Location issues	Transport access & traffic	
Public transport	ditto	
E-communication		Problem unique to MB in area?
Location & shopping		ditto
<b>Traffic &amp; Parking:</b>		
Traffic on B3092	Transport access & traffic	
Traffic on other roads	ditto	
Parking	ditto	
<b>Crime &amp; Policing:</b>		
Crime levels & prevention	Crime & community safety	
Policing	ditto	
Neighbourhood Watch	ditto	
<b>Access to Services:</b>		
Health	Health & social care	
Education	Education & lifelong learning	
Older & vulnerable people	Transport access & traffic	
<b>Young People:</b>		
Sports facilities	Culture & leisure	
Minibus		Not covered in WVCP
Insurance costs		ditto
Youth club		ditto
<b>Jobs &amp; the Local Economy:</b>		
Agricultural primacy	Economy & Tourism	
Tourism	ditto	
<b>Housing:</b>		
Conservation area & AONB	Housing & built environment	
New building	ditto	

Affordable homes	ditto	
<b>Governance:</b>		
Parish Council		Not covered in WVCP
Wider governance		ditto

As the table suggests, most material in our original Plan can be cross-mapped to the new structure, but in thematic terms there are perhaps 4 areas where this is not so easy –

1. Our location on the periphery of Warminster, and dependence on provisions (schools, GPs, shops, etc.) that are not located in Warminster. Also isolation, e.g. mobile signal.
2. The emphasis in the original Plan on maintaining and enhancing our quality of community life as a village community (i.e. rather than as a dormer outpost of Warminster).
3. The importance we placed on a better deal for younger people.
4. Our views on governance, which were largely supportive of moves to bring more decision-making down to our community level.

The Parish Council needs to have a view on what to do with the subject areas from our original Plan that do not find an easy place in the new format.

My view is that Location and our own Community Life (1 and 2 above) could be covered in a new introduction to the revised plan. The focus on young people (3 above) is harder to place, and I feel the lack of it to be quite a serious weakness of the first Warminster Plan. My view would be to take a mildly deviant line and convert ‘Culture & Leisure’ into ‘Culture, Leisure and Young People’. As to governance (4 above) I think it’s up to the councillors to decide if they want it included, but again it seems a weakness of WVCP that it gets no coverage.

## 2. Review of the 2005 Parish Plan.

For the purpose of this exercise I have incorporated the cross-mapping to WVCP, including the suggestions made in the paragraph above.

All I’m seeking to offer here is a summary, based on my own impression of what has and has not been achieved. It is important that the Parish Council gives a view on –

- The effectiveness of the cross-mapping, but more importantly still,
- The accuracy of my assessments, including omissions.

More detail and photos can then come into the next draft.

**Context - Our Parish.** Maiden Bradley is a small parish in Wiltshire close to the Somerset Border. It takes in the Village and a number of small surrounding settlements, mainly farms. It is a very old parish, referenced in the Domesday Book. For part of its life it was best known for its Priory and hospice for women of good birth suffering from leprosy. Later it became the focal point for the workers on the Duke of Somerset’s estates and in the Duke’s family home, and in these decades it reached its largest size. However, the parish as we now know it dates from the period after the Second World War, when some of the Estate’s farm land and many of its dwellings were sold. The population is 335, so we are a small parish.

Our location sandwiches us between two major national tourist attractions. Three miles to the north is Longleat, with its Safari Park, and Center Parcs holiday village. A similar distance to the south is the National Trust property at Stourhead. The B3092 runs through Maiden Bradley, and links these two sites, but is also a ‘rat run’ for HGV traffic between industries to the north (around Frome, Bath, Bristol, etc.) and places south and along the A303.

We are in a Conservation Area, and form part of the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB). There are 23 listed structures in the Parish, with

All Saints' Church having a Grade 1 listing. Three areas, Brimsdown Hill, Bradley Wood and Long Knoll, are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). Not surprisingly conservation features large in local agendas.

**Impact of our location.** Administratively Maiden Bradley with Yarnfield Parish is part of Wiltshire Council, and the sub-group of Warminster and the parishes clustering around it. However, unlike other parishes in the cluster, Maiden Bradley's community does not relate especially closely to Warminster Town. Evidence for this is –

- Frome (in Somerset) is equidistant and widely used for shopping.
- Most primary school age children go to Whitesheet School (in Zeals and Kilmington, outside the Warminster area).
- Most secondary school age pupils go to Gillingham (in Dorset), as does the school bus.
- A GP clinic in the village is provided by the practice in Stourton, again crossing local government boundaries.
- The main road through the Parish (B3092) runs North to South, from Frome to Mere. The route to the East (to Warminster) is a narrow minor road.

These points are not intended and should not be taken as an attempt to distance ourselves from Warminster: rather they are making the point that Maiden Bradley is something of a frontier community, and this has given it particular characteristics.

Some of these characteristics are viewed as advantageous, such as the very strong sense of 'community', seen in the large number of local leisure groups and the high level of involvement in voluntary activity. This explains why the 2005 Plan placed so much emphasis on retaining and enhancing community life, and avoiding the risks of becoming a dormer population linked to a local urban area.

In other instances there are disadvantages, of which perhaps the most noticeable example is the continuing lack of a reliable mobile phone signal. More broadly, there are always likely to be risks to cohesion in a community where the quality of life is dependent on decisions made in Dorset and Somerset local government, as well as Wiltshire.

**The 2005 Parish Plan.** The method used to produce this was a survey by questionnaire, which had a response rate of a half of the entire adult population. A draft plan was grounded in the results of the survey, and was discussed and approved at a well-attended open meeting. While specific proposed actions were given target dates (unrealistically ambitious in most cases), it was not directly geared to covering a particular time span, and many of the desired actions were clearly long term ones.

The tables that follow review progress to date. Where percentages are given, these are the proportions of the respondents who supported the action.

<b>The Economy, including Tourism and Employment</b>	
Views and proposed actions -	Developments -
<p>Maiden Bradley is in a productive agricultural area of mixed farming and some forestry. There are also a number of small businesses and self-employed individuals, some in tourism, though many residents find employment outside the Parish.</p> <p>87% say we should seek to remain an agricultural community. 55% would like to see more locally based jobs, but 70% oppose creating industrial units, and 71% oppose any building on open spaces for the purpose of creating jobs.</p>	<p>In keeping with majority views, there has been no industrial development in the Parish.</p> <p>Regarding tourism, there was strong initial action, with an increase in B&amp;B provision, and Bradley House having an active programme of events, mainly marriages. This particularly benefitted the church, pub and shop. Unfortunately the company running events at Bradley House has recently ceased operations, and one of the B&amp;B premises has been sold, so future progress is uncertain.</p>

<p>83% would support developments within Bradley House that created more local jobs, and 69% support efforts to promote tourism.</p> <p>The proposed action is to develop a strategy for taking advantage of the substantial tourism already occurring around our Parish, and provide support for Bradley House in any parallel development.</p>	
<p>The 2005 Plan stated – ‘the Village Shop ... is regarded as a parish treasure, and has gained national recognition as an exemplar of local co-operative action to retain a key resource.’ 98% supported the shop and wanted its continuity to be ensured. The shop is in tenanted property, and is community owned and run, with a local voluntary committee and a mix of paid and voluntary staffing.</p> <p>The specific action was to encourage the shop’s Management Committee to review the options with regard to the tenancy of the shop premises, and come forward with proposals.</p>	<p>On the specific issue of tenancy, several options were considered and rejected. The strongest reason is the risk of losing passing trade if the shop moved away from its current well-known location on the main road. The population of Maiden Bradley is not considered large enough to support a village shop without help from people outside the Parish or passing through along the main road.</p> <p>In recent years the shop has undergone a major modernisation, thanks to help with significant fund raising by local volunteers, grants from the Parish Council for specific items, and gifted equipment from the Co-op. In 2010 it was Wiltshire Village Shop of the Year. An active policy of stocking an increased range, with an emphasis on local produce, continues.</p> <p>The shop is not secure. Its finances are somewhat precarious, and are likely to remain so. However, the need for it is fully recognised, and the strength of commitment from staff and volunteers is unwavering. The burden of property rental remains.</p>

<b>Housing and the Built Environment</b>	
<b>Views and proposed actions -</b>	<b>Developments -</b>
<p>Over three quarters of us are owner occupiers, with the rest in rented or tied properties. We have an unusually high proportion of rented properties, mostly belonging to the Duchy of Somerset Estates.</p> <p>We are largely (90%) content to be protected by the planning restrictions arising from conservation area and AONB status.</p> <p>We divide two thirds / one third between a majority (68%) who favour no new building or a maximum of 5 new dwellings in the coming decade, and the minority who support a more active building programme. A large minority (41%) favoured any new building to be at the lower end of prices.</p> <p>Proposed action required the Parish Council to convey the majority views to elected officials and planning officers, and seek to ensure that planning decisions respect the community’s wishes. Parish Council liaison with the Estate, as the main landowner, was also mentioned.</p>	<p>Expectations have been met. There has been limited new building, with the main site (High Street) based on the conversion or replacement of older buildings.</p> <p>Survey work was carried out in response to largely external pressure for ‘affordable homes’. This showed a low level of likely demand from local people, but a significant difference in defining what constituted ‘local’ for this purpose. An attempt to obtain suitable land failed.</p> <p>The difference in definition is between the view of our community that ‘local’ should mean people living in, who have lived in, or who have family ties to the Parish. It clashes with what appeared to be the view of the local authority that ‘local’ could mean just about anyone in Wiltshire.</p> <p>The narrower definition remains that of our community, and within that framework the possibility of affordable housing remains on the table should an opportunity arise.</p>

<b>Culture, Leisure and Young People</b>	
Views and proposed actions -	Developments -
<p>For many decades Maiden Bradley developed around the need for staffing for the Duke of Somerset's household, gardens and estate. While most of this is now history, it has left behind a tradition of a community that is cohesive, develops its own cultural and leisure pursuits, and has a great many things 'going on' for people who want to get involved.</p> <p>In the 2005 survey people valued the traditional facilities of church and chapel (81%), pub (69%), and village hall (69%), as well as the range of clubs and societies (91%) and the monthly Parish News (87%).</p> <p>However, a different picture emerges regarding sports facilities, the use of the recreation ground, its swimming pool and the youth club (at that time a building on the recreation ground). Because so much difficulty has been experienced in keeping these going, there was divided opinion on whether we should or could keep them. At the same time it was strongly expressed that if these facilities were allowed to close, we would be letting down our young people.</p> <p>Ambitious actions were proposed –</p> <p>Prepare and cost a plan, and seek funding for development and ongoing upkeep, to enable sports, including football, cricket and swimming, to be enjoyed on the Rec.</p> <p>Plan, cost and seek funding for bringing youth club facilities up to date, including a new youth club building.</p> <p>Seek funding for upgrades to the Village Hall.</p> <p>Parish Council to review the situation of premises that may need work to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act.</p> <p>Consider ways of increasing the flow of volunteers to help arrange and run parish activities.</p>	<p>Leaving aside the recreation ground and its incorporated swimming pool and youth club, all valued facilities remain in operation. Further, All Saints' Church has a new roof, and substantial changes have been made to the village hall to bring it up to date and accessible to people with disabilities. Both benefitted from highly successful fundraising campaigns.</p> <p>Sadly the Chapel is little used at present, though this may not be the sort of matter that can justify any intervention from the wider community.</p> <p>There have been changes to clubs and societies, but a thriving community life continues.</p> <p>As for the recreation ground, the Parish Council handles its upkeep, it is used for the annual village show, and Frome football team plays there, and the play area for younger children is well used and kept to standards recommended in ROSPA reports. However, there are no Maiden Bradley sports teams; the youth club has closed and its building demolished after a bout of vandalism made it unusable; and the swimming pool has not been opened in 2011.</p> <p>Several difficult challenges have emerged –</p> <p>The size of the population is small for team sports to flourish, and part of the reason for the youth club falling into disuse was a dip in numbers in the relevant age group (now reversing).</p> <p>The capital cost of a new youth club would be high.</p> <p>In relation to the swimming pool, the insurance costs for opening it have been found to be greater than any potential income from entry charges. The insurance of leisure activities has been identified as a wider problem.</p> <p>Our community functions through a very high level of volunteering, but because of our size there are limits to what is possible. Shortage of volunteers is a major impediment, and in addition there is great dependence on a few key people as organisers and in fund raising.</p>

<b>Environment, including countryside and land-based issues</b>	
Views and proposed actions -	Developments -
<p>In the survey we strongly supported a conservationist approach to our parish (98%), and identified many candidates for ongoing restoration and maintenance. Many people also stressed the need for new developments to be sympathetic to tradition.</p> <p>The proposed actions asked the Parish Council to</p>	<p>The conservationist focus has continued.</p> <p>The Walled Garden has come into use as a thriving community garden.</p> <p>(I don't know what the PC has done about the last on the list.)</p>

<p>ensure that the very clear and near unanimous support for a conservationist focus is reflected in the policies and actions of all tiers of local government.</p> <p>There should be ongoing liaison with the Duke of Somerset over the creative use of the Walled Garden.</p> <p>The Parish Council should set up and maintain ongoing information about the upkeep, preservation and restoration needs of our public areas and facilities, and initiate approaches to see if some more valued features (e.g. Fountain, Village Hall mural) can be listed.</p>	
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<b>Transport, Access and Traffic</b>	
Views and proposed actions -	Developments -
<p>The survey found that 92% of adults have access to their own road transport, and 73% use it regularly to go to work. Just 6% do not have their own transport, and 8% make use of public transport. There is no reason to believe this situation has changed much, and it points up that the bulk of people living in Maiden Bradley feel the need to have their own transport.</p> <p>At the same time there is great concern about traffic on the B3092. General worry about through traffic is expressed by 96%, with 97% being concerned about speeding, 94% about lorries and 82% about the risk to pedestrians. 92% support the campaign for a 7.5t weight limit on the B3092.</p> <p>Proposed actions were to continue pressure on Wiltshire Council (then County Council) for a 7.5t weight limit on the B3092; press for traffic calming and safety measures in Church Street and at the north and south crossroads, and in relation to pavements and pedestrian safety on all roads; campaign for action to reduce speeding through the Village; and continue to monitor and protect the situation of the minority who do not have their own transport.</p> <p>Another area of concern was the risk to older people and those with disabilities arising from the narrowness of pavements, absence of pavements (e.g. on High Street), and lack of crossing points on the B3092.</p>	<p>Traffic calming measures have been installed at both ends of the B3092. An improved crossing point has been set up by the shop. More recently a voluntary group has been formed, trained, and is carrying out speed checks in the 30mph limit area.</p> <p>While there has been a beneficial impact from these developments, other proposed actions have not yet taken place, and traffic flow has increased in volume. Paper agreement has been achieved with Wiltshire Council for a 7.5t limit, but in the knowledge that no action is likely in the foreseeable future. No changes have been made to pavements or roads where there are no pavements, and there continues to be anxiety about pedestrian safety and children crossing the B3092 on their way to / from the play area and school bus stops.</p> <p>For the minority who depend on public transport .... (I need help on any changes here)</p>

<b>Education and Life-long Learning</b>	
Views and proposed actions -	Developments -
<p>Being close to the border between Wiltshire, Dorset and Somerset, has the effect of enlarging choice. The survey threw up no evidence of dissatisfaction with the use of schools outside the Warminster area, or in the case of secondary schooling, outside Wiltshire.</p> <p>There is a pre-school group (Owlets) meeting in the Village Hall. For state education there is some</p>	<p>Educational choice continues much as in 2005. However, the pre-school group now meets less frequently, and is particularly susceptible to variations in numbers. (This last statement needs checking)</p> <p>No information was collected in the 2005 survey about use of adult education, but at an informal level much goes on in clubs such as the Reading Group</p>

<p>choice. Young children from the Parish mostly go to Whitesheet (Kilmington and Zeals), with fewer to Crockerton or Horningsham primary schools. For older children a school bus runs to Gillingham.</p> <p>Some use is made of private day schools.</p> <p>The 2005 Plan proposed no actions, but set a task to keep a watching brief to ensure that the current range of choice is maintained.</p>	<p>and Garden Club.</p>
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<b>Health and Social Care</b>
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Views and proposed actions -	Developments -
<p>We are not close to the main centres for health or social care services, but being close to the border means that many residents do not look towards Warminster or Wiltshire for these services.</p> <p>Primary Health Care is provided from practices in Warminster, Bourton, Frome and Mere. A Bourton-based GP does a weekly surgery in Maiden Bradley, provides access to other primary care services (e.g. community nursing, health visiting), and his prescriptions can be sent into the Village Shop for collection. There are local (community) hospitals in Shaftesbury, Frome, Warminster and Westbury, offering outpatient services from consultants based at Bath and Salisbury district hospitals. Social care is organised from Trowbridge.</p> <p>The weekly surgery and prescription delivery is much valued, especially by those who do not have transport. However, the surgery takes place in a private house, due to the kindness of the occupant. While this is greatly appreciated, it is assumed that this is unlikely to keep going long into the future, so there is concern about having a replacement premises as and when needed. In consequence, the Parish Council was asked to review the long term position of the GP surgery, assess the viability of replacement premises when required, and liaise with the PCT for guidance.</p>	<p>The position remains as in 2005.</p> <p>(I don't know what actions the PC took about the GP surgery.)</p>

<b>Crime and Community Safety</b>
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Views and proposed actions -	Developments -
<p>In 2005 Maiden Bradley was covered by policing from Mere, with a named officer for liaison and reporting and a monthly report published in the Parish News.</p> <p>Despite assurances that we are in an area of very low crime, about a half of us are still bothered about the risk of burglaries, theft of or from vehicles and criminals coming in from outside the area. Most of us (79%) were content with the service we got from our local police officer, though perhaps less happy with the extent of action to deal with traffic offending.</p> <p>There was a Neighbourhood Watch, which was generally felt to have too low a profile.</p>	<p>Policing has now moved from Mere to Warminster. We still have a named liaison officer and a publicised reporting process, and there are close links with the Parish Council.</p> <p>The police have also offered help and advice on security matters, and continue to do so.</p> <p>Action has also been taken in relation to speeding, with the provision of equipment and training for a volunteer team to carry out speeding checks.</p> <p>On the down side the Neighbourhood Watch has ceased operating.</p>



### 3. From now to 2025?

Experience since 2005 makes it clear that timetabled developments some years into the future are unrealistic, at least for Maiden Bradley. Analysis of achievements since 2005 show that the presence of a 'Should be completed by ...' target in the Plan had no noticeable impact on when tasks were undertaken. Rather a range of other factors are the determinants, such as –

- An opportune moment, perhaps because of a grant possibility.
- A group or individual deciding to pick up a challenge and give it a go.
- An idea that catches the imagination and sets people working.
- A feeling that if something isn't done now, it will quickly get worse.

It would be far from the truth to think that the Parish Council, or some other volunteers, get out the Parish Plan, look at it, and say to themselves - 'This is the next thing on the chronological list, so time to get stuck into it.' The substantial successes that have been achieved have relied more on the ability of our community to be flexible and take opportunities when they offer themselves.

In extending the time span of the Plan, two questions are relevant –

1. What remains still to be tackled, on the basis of the 2005 survey?
2. Have any new issues or needs emerged?

**Tasks still to be tackled.** These will be summarised in the order they appear in the tables in Section 2.

***The Economy, including Tourism and Employment.*** The protection of Maiden Bradley as a primarily agricultural community with an array of small local businesses remains as a task, and many residents will continue to find employment outside the Parish.

Tourism flourished for several years, but has now dipped, and effort will be needed to rebuild. The biggest tourist enterprise in the locality, Longleat (3 miles away) has surveyed and found that over 40% of its visitors stay in the area overnight, so effort may well be rewarded.

The village shop, which is both an employer and hugely important for the community, has been on the receiving end of substantial fund-raising, and in consequence undergone much improvement. It also has a large and dedicated amount of voluntary support, and is willing to experiment and change. However, with such a small local population it remains in need of passing trade, and its finances continue to be vulnerable. So far no solution has been found for overcoming the substantial rental it pays as tenant of the shop premises, and since this is a significant part of overall costs, it remains a subject of concern.

***Housing and the Built Environment.*** The Parish Council continues to support the backing given by a large majority of the community to the protection of Conservation Area and AONB status, and to the linked view that house building should be at a low level and planned with great care. There is limited current evidence of a need for affordable homes for younger local people, with 'local' as defined within the Maiden Bradley community. However, there has been shown to be a need for adapted or purpose-built housing for older people, with instances of forced departures from the village because of the lack of suitable housing.

***Culture, Leisure and Young People.*** This is perhaps the biggest arena of challenge for the next decade. Actions requested from the 2005 survey have not been completed with regard to the recreation ground and its facilities (youth club, swimming pool, sports field), and only the children's play area is in full use. With regard to the youth club and swimming pool matters have deteriorated.

At this stage the first task related to the youth club is to carry out work amongst the younger part of the community to establish if a rebuilt youth club would be valued and used. If interest is present, then the formidable task arises of funding a new building, but the cost is unlikely to be greater than that of the new All Saints' roof, so it is not something Maiden Bradley should feel to be beyond its potential. A linked assessment should question whether any new building might accommodate other facilities, such as storage for sports ground equipment, sports team space or space in which a health clinic could be held. Multi-purpose buildings have a lower risk of vandalism than single-purpose premises that are known to be closed and empty for much of the time.

Suggestions from the survey for the better use of the sports area included a possible bowling green and all-weather tennis court, as well as looking into the prospect of team sports.

The need for the swimming pool is not structural, but relates to the problem of having an adequate supply of trained volunteers during the school summer holiday weeks, and meeting the very high cost of insurance. Both of these issues are picked up later in this report.

**Environment Including Countryside and Land-based Issues.** The Parish Council continues to carry out the predominant view of the community in favour of a conservationist approach to our environment. The outstanding task is to carry out a review of listed buildings and other sites where listing might be warranted.

**Transport, Access and Traffic.** While traffic calming and moves to deal with speeding have been successful, the volume of traffic increases, and the 7.5t weight limit remains a strongly supported ambition, and one which Wiltshire Council is asked not to forget.

While there may be matters beyond our control over the weight limit (i.e. the need for A350 to A303 access to be improved first), there are no such reasons why action should not be taken to meet the request for improvements to pedestrian routes in the village, and these remain a target. Specifically these cover improving (basically widening) pavements in some areas, putting pavements where none currently exist, and providing a crossing over the B3092 especially for children, in relation to their access to school bus stops and the recreation ground.

?Anything about public transport?

**Education and Life-long Learning.** The 2005 Plan included a watching brief, to preserve the range of choice, but no actions. The most frequently used schools (Whitesheet and Gillingham) are well regarded, so the watching brief will be continued.

Should we add something like – Additionally the Parish Council will seek to establish whether there is a need and demand for adult learning that could be helped in any way. (I've added this in large part because of the benefits that have come from the PC supporting further training for our Clerk.)

**Health and Social Care.** The Parish Council will continue to do whatever it can to ensure the continuation of the weekly GP surgery and prescription service in the village.

**Crime and Community Safety.** The Parish Council will continue to liaise closely with our designated police staff, and the Parish News to publish relevant information and advice from the police. The emphasis from the police on security measures and advice is appreciated, and despite public service cuts we hope will carry on. The newly established speed checks are strongly supported.

As part of this, the Parish Council will take an initiative designed to get an active Neighbourhood Watch going once again, and look into the case for a linked Farm Watch.

**Have any new needs emerged?** While no entirely new themes have emerged, there are a number of matters that warrant further attention, or have become more challenging than they appeared in 2005 –

**Governance.** This is a theme in Maiden Bradley's 2005 Plan, but appears to be excluded from the topic headings of WVCP. The view from our community is that it is appropriate for us to have the opportunity to appraise and receive information about the way we are governed, and for the purpose of this Plan that covers the work of the Parish Council, Warminster Area Board and Wiltshire Council.

Actions requested in the 2005 Plan, and carried out, were for a Parish Council web site and better notice board provision. A report on every Parish Council meeting is also published in the Parish News. However, locally relevant material from higher up the line is less openly available, and with the demise of Salisbury District we no longer receive as much useful detail as in the past.

One set of Parish Council actions not mentioned in the Plan have nevertheless had a beneficial impact. When the Parish Council appointed its Clerk she was largely unqualified in that field. By supporting (funding) her in gaining qualifications, as well as the experience of working with Maiden Bradley, she has now taken on the Clerk's role in several other parishes, with potential future economies of scale and useful shared information.

**Demography.** Quite small demographic changes, such as the arrival or departure of a couple of families, can have a noticeable impact on the structure of our small population, particularly in sectors where a small change in numbers can affect the viability of an activity. In the last few years this has happened with pre-school arrangements and the youth club, and in a different way with the retirement of previously important volunteers. Population changes could also have an impact on such matters as the need for affordable homes, the level of membership of clubs and societies, and the available capacity for volunteer work. In a longer perspective the loss of people who carry the 'folk memory' of Maiden Bradley traditions and culture can also affect community life.

A valuable set of information, perhaps at the Warminster Area Board level, and covering all the attached villages, would be on demographic changes and predictions.

**Volunteers.** Maiden Bradley has always been a parish that has depended for parts of its economic and most of its social and cultural life on the efforts of volunteers. As is typical of many communities, much volunteering has come from people whose family responsibilities have eased, or who have retired from employment, or who firmly believe that for a community like ours to thrive people must step forward and play a part. Having an above average older population, and one from varied employment backgrounds, has been important. In the last decade Maiden Bradley has been blessed with a strong and skilled group of volunteers, whether specifically in fund raising or helping with the diverse range of activities requiring voluntary input. However, it is becoming apparent both that for many people it is harder to find time for voluntary work (quite likely linked to the recession), and that the government expects an increasing range of tasks to be undertaken on a voluntary basis.

A challenge for Maiden Bradley is to find ways of at least keeping up, preferably increasing the flow of volunteers, and this is a matter that the Parish Council will investigate.

**The Cost of Health and Safety.** In recent years there have been instances where parish activities have been curbed or scrapped altogether because of the high cost of carrying out health and safety recommendations and funding the necessary insurance cover. Examples include the non-opening of the swimming pool, and the cost of providing overall cover for team sports on the recreation ground.

For a small parish like ours, with a correspondingly small Parish Council precept, this has become a serious problem. The most likely solution for reducing individual parish costs would be for a

larger body, such as Wiltshire Council, to establish an overall insurance policy for the county, and carve up the cost amongst parish councils according to their population. Maiden Bradley's Parish Council urges action in this direction.

### **Conclusions and Priorities.**

This review of the 2005 Parish Plan and projection into future years has, as might be expected, shown a mixed bag. Many of the actions sought in 2005 have been carried through successfully; but much remains to be done, and while some challenges may have got easier, some have become distinctly harder or more costly.

Our priorities for the next few years are likely to focus on –

- Keeping the Village Shop up, running and thriving.
- Tackling the formidable challenge of a better deal for our young people, especially around the youth club and leisure opportunities.
- Investigating and if need be taking action with regard to special housing needs for our older residents.
- Getting a 7.5t weight limit in place on the B3092.
- Ensuring the GP surgery in the village continues.
- Encouraging and enabling the flow of volunteers.
- Minimising the way costs and health and safety matters restrict community life.