



The Charltons Community Plan 2017



*Produced by The Community Plan
Working Group, on behalf of
The Charltons Parish Council, Somerset*

*Approved by The Charltons Parish Council on
Tuesday 28 November 2017*



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Introduction



Communities now have the opportunity to have more influence over the future of the places where they live through provisions under the Localism Act 2011. The main route for this is to create a Community Plan which takes the views of residents into account.

In June 2014 The Charltons Parish Council decided to create just such a Community Plan. This would provide a blueprint for how the Parish, its infrastructure and facilities should develop over the next 10 years.

The first step was to establish the Community Plan Working Group – then seek the views of residents. This was done via the Parish Questionnaire, Housing Needs Survey and Community Plan Open Day, for which funding was secured from South Somerset District Council, the National Lottery and the Parish Council. Additional information was gathered from the National Census 2011.

From all this information, the group has developed the Community Plan – providing a framework for the development of the Parish for the next 10 years. The Parish Council will review progress on the actions contained in the Community Plan at its Annual Parish Meeting.

This is your Community Plan: now it is up to us all to ensure that the actions contained within it are carried out for the benefit of all.



Our history

'A delightfully rural retreat'

Our ancient parish comprises the villages of Charlton Adam and Charlton Mackrell, and the smaller settlements of West Charlton, Lytes Cary, Cary Fitzpaine and Wellham.

The civil parishes of Charlton Mackrell and Charlton Adam were amalgamated in 1885 and the name of the combined civil parish has recently been changed to 'The Charltons', instead of just 'Charlton Mackrell'. Until 1 October 2011, Charlton Mackrell and Charlton Adam remained separate ecclesiastical parishes (although long a single benefice) but the combined ecclesiastical parish is now also The Charltons.

The parish lies in a shallow saucer of hills watered by streams and the River Cary, and is a varied landscape that as a whole gives its own particular and distinctive rural character. The clay soil Cary Valley, which can be seen from Green Down, is bordered by wooded hill slopes and the river descends through water meadows at Lytes Cary – an entirely different environment from the hard limestone escarpment of Green Down (pictured top right) with its special flora and fauna. The flat land from Tout Quarry to Matford Farm and Cary Fitzpaine has long vistas of arable fields once dotted with elms (bottom right). The villages are tucked into slight folds in the land and have their own open spaces which create a fitting setting for the churches and houses.

The River Cary flows through the parish from its source at Park Pond in Castle Cary, entering at Cary Fitzpaine, passing under the Fosse Way at Popple Bridge, then through Lytes Cary, West Charlton and Wellham, and to Somerton and on to King's Sedgemoor on the Somerset Levels. Various streams in the parish flow into the River Cary, including Bull Brook running south through Charlton Mackrell around Charlton House, across Mill Lane where it once drove Peck Mill, to the north of the church, and then past Rookery Farm to join the Cary.



Ancient tracks, such as Ridgeway Lane towards Lytes Cary, and the alignment of field boundaries provide evidence of Iron Age and earlier routes to and through the parish. Earlier still, evidence of prehistoric occupation has been revealed by Historic Environment Record archaeological fieldwork around Tout Quarry. The Fosse Way runs



through the parish. This Roman military road was constructed in AD49, linking the Midlands and the North with Exeter and the Dorset coast. The nearby village of Ilchester was once an important Roman town named Lindinis.

Evidence has been found of Roman and Romano-British occupation in the parish. Two Roman villa sites have been discovered: one at the south-western edge of Windmill Hill, where finds included 'herringbone' walls, tiles, a hoard of coins and three stone coffins, and another north-west of Lytes Cary, near the River Cary, where a hypocaust was uncovered. Roman burials, a Roman inhumation cemetery, remains of buildings with flagged floors, pottery and implements have been unearthed north and south of the area around Charlton House (pictured right), including a number of slab graves to the east of the Kingweston Road, and some on an



allotment between Alehouse Lodge (pictured left) and Three Wells Cottage. Evidence of a Roman road has also been revealed by recent archaeological oversight of building work to the west of Ilchester Road.

Although no records exist about the parish during the Saxon period, 'Charlton' is significant, being a Saxon name. It is derived from the Saxon 'Cherletone' which means the settlement or farmstead of the freemen (peasants). There are sites which suggest Saxon / very early medieval occupation, including the 'Lilac Cottage / Highway House' enclosure area (adjoining the lane / footpath leading most directly north from Charlton Mackrell church) where pottery dated 10th–12th century has been found.

The first recorded details of the parish are in the Domesday Book, a statistical survey of England commissioned by William the Conqueror in 1086 to assess the extent of land, ownership and resources.

The suffixes Adam and Mackrell only appeared after Domesday. Charlton Adam is known to be named after the FitzHamon / FitzAdam families in the 12th century, who sold it to Bruton Priory (later Abbey) in 1258. The origin of 'Mackrell' is less clear, and even back in 1633 the Somerset historian Gerard of Trent had no good explanation. Almost certainly Mackrell also derives from a family name (it is variously recorded in early deeds as Mackerell, Makeral, Makarel, etc.) but there is no clue in the manorial history, although a Herbert Makerel occurs at Somerton in 1243. Several manors took their names from the River Cary, including Cary Fitzpaine, which was briefly held by the FitzPayns in the 13th century.

Charlton Mackrell was sometimes identified as West Charlton, and indeed the medieval settlement was concentrated there. What we see of West Charlton now is the original settlement shrunken; the road pattern was originally more complex, and the medieval settlement was probably concentrated in the area between the church and the manor house (identified with Rookery Farm) on both sides of the road to Somerton. The field opposite the

church was the location of the parish poorhouse, dating back to at least the 1780s until it was sold in 1838, and the platform is still visible. In his Survey of Somerset undertaken from 1781 - 1787, Edmund Rack says of Charlton Mackrell: *“It contains about 30 houses which are romantically situated among groves of beautiful elm trees near the church, many of which are very neat dwellings built of the fine blue lias . . . The lands are most arable and produce good crops of wheat, barley and beans.”*

A second village developed in the 17th century, half a mile to the north beyond Manor Farm



and Priory Farm (which formerly belonged to Charlton Adam) to become the principal settlement of Charlton Mackrell. This is dominated by Charlton House, built by Thomas Lyte in 1726 almost certainly on a much earlier core, and Alehouse Lodge (left), which is likely to be one of earliest buildings in this settlement, with features that indicate mid-16th to mid-17th century origins.

Charlton Adam is often known historically as East Charlton. Medieval occupation in the village grew up around the large rectangular area, where its parish church lies, enclosed by four lanes which was known as the Penning or Square. Edmund Rack says in his 1781 – 1787 survey: *“The houses are in general very decent dwellings, and some very good, the whole built of that excellent blue lias . . . The houses in this parish stand in a grove of fine elms which fringe the borders of almost every inclosure and road and render it in summer especially a delightfully rural retreat. The variation of surface also adds to its beauty, and the ascent on every side is very easy. The lands are rather more arable than pasture and produce good crops of grain.”* The manor house of Charlton Adam was located outside the village at Manor Farm (Charlton Mackrell).



The parish has two attractively-situated parish churches.

St Peter and St Paul in Charlton Adam (right) is Grade I listed and has a 12th century font. In *Somerset - The Complete Guide*, Robin Bush says: *“The present church dates from the 13th century although largely remodelled in Perpendicular style: the south chapel or Strangways aisle added in the 16th century.”*



St Mary the Virgin in West Charlton (above right), is Grade II* listed; it is a handsome

cruciform church having a crossing tower, with some 14th century work although much restored in 1847, a 12th century font, and rare bench-ends of the early 16th century, with one uniquely showing the devil Tittivilus who noted down sins.



The primary school sits opposite St Mary's Church, making a very pleasing scene on an elevated open rural aspect. The school (left) was built in 1853 and The Buildings of England calls it 'a good Puginian Gothic group of house and schoolroom', mentioning the unexpected treat of its rare Minton tiles: "The classrooms surprisingly are lined in Minton tiles between lettered bands giving Archdeacon Brymer's preferences. Also useful admonishments, e.g. (for the infants)

'lying lips are abomination to the Lord'." In the 19th century a school and Methodist chapel were erected at the north-east corner of the square in Charlton Adam, now forming a private house. The Reading Room (right), built in the 1850s, is on Hillway in Charlton Mackrell and was given to the parish in 1937 by W. J. Brymer. It faces the Parish Green that was presented to the parish in the 1970s by Mr and Mrs Phillips who owned The Court.



Over the centuries, many people from The Charltons have emigrated all over the globe, but our best-known adventurers are the Adams and Squire families. Henry Adams and Edith Squire married at Charlton Mackrell church in 1609. Henry was a local farmer and Edith was one of the daughters of Henry Squire, the son of a Rector of Charlton Mackrell. The couple emigrated to America, probably in 1638, and became the ancestors of Presidents John Adams, John Quincy Adams and Calvin Coolidge, as well as of Samuel Adams who signed the Declaration of Independence. Presidents Millard Filmore and William Howard Taft were descended from Edith's sisters, Ann and Margaret.

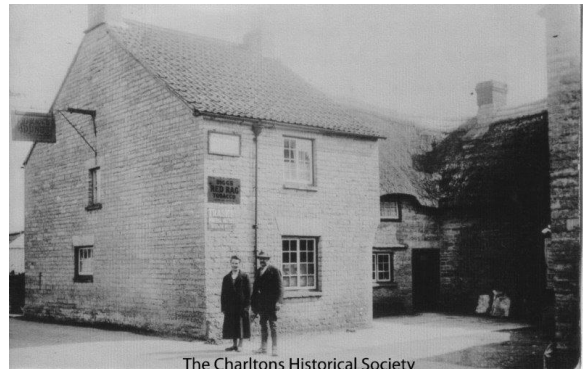
Arable farming appears to have dominated over the centuries, with this and dairy farming continuing to feature strongly. The Victoria County History indicates that over the centuries *'few parishioners followed non-agrarian pursuits'*.

Blue Lias was evidently quarried in The Charltons at least since Roman times. In the 19th century quarries in Charlton Mackrell were sited near Tuckers Batch (right) and south of Tout, and masons, stonecutters, and associated craftspeople occur regularly in the parish registers from 1814.



By 1861 a number of shops had been established, including a draper, grocer, butcher and basket-maker. By 1866 there was also a baker, tailor and coal merchant, and by 1883 a general store had opened. It appears that gloving as a cottage industry was pursued by the women of the parish during the 19th century, with the finished products being taken to Glastonbury for sale. In 1923 the businesses included a cycle agent, bookmaker, hairdresser and motor-car proprietor, and by 1927 there is also a chemist.

During the 19th century, Charlton Adam was served by beer shops, one of which – the George – gave its name to George Street. A public house called the New Inn is mentioned in Charlton Adam in 1745 and in 1765 appears to have changed its name to the Old Inn. The Blue Boy Inn is recorded in 1769 and the Butchers Arms in the 19th century. The parish’s current public house, the Fox and Hounds (right), was converted to an inn in the 19th century, possibly when the north wing was added in 1866.



The early building now known as Alehouse Lodge was probably first licensed as The Greyhound in the 1830s, having previously served as a beer shop, and is mentioned by name in the Somerset County Gazette in 1839. Throughout the 19th century and into the 20th it was used as the venue for property auction sales and inquests, and also advertised shooting matches (at ‘trap’ birds and glass globes) for prizes, presumably held in the garden or allotments behind. During World War 2, the local Home Guard held pistol practices in the skittle alley. In the 1930s, in addition to the main bar, the tap room became a smoke room and there was a club room upstairs.



The railway line from London Paddington to Exeter runs through The Charltons but trains no longer stop here. The station at Charlton Mackrell (top left) opened in 1905 and, when in use, there was a good local trade in stone, lime (with a large stone crusher and lime works adjacent to the station – below left), gloves, dog biscuits and farm produce. The station closed in 1962 in the wave which preceded the Beeching axe, and The Charltons have since reverted to their more rural character, albeit with more of the population working outside the parish (including at nearby RNAS Yeovilton).

A parish of Blue Lias, the stone has always been our great asset and is still quarried locally. The stone has defined the character of our historic buildings, boundary walls, paving and floors. On some higher-status houses it is combined with Ham stone dressings to windows and doors to wonderful effect.



We are fortunate to have retained a good number of thatched buildings, such as the peacefully-set Cedar Lodge and Lavender Cottage (left) in Charlton Adam, the cottages atmospherically set near the grove in West Charlton (The Cottage (below right), Sunny Cottage, Budds Cottage and Wildes Folly), the long low thatch of Shephard's Orchard, and the terrace of cottages called Tuckers Batch on Primrose Hill.

Clay pantiles and Roman tiles are also characteristic of the parish. Pantiles (produced in Bridgwater from the end of the eighteenth century) with their muted varied red tones, give a delightful texture and richness, such as on the Grade II* listed Old Cottage at West Charlton, distinctive also with its massive chimney and early C16 mullioned windows.



We have a great many buildings worthy of further mention, but not the space. The excellent *'Design Statement for the Parish'* is attached in the Appendices of this Community Plan. It describes the valued characteristics of the parish buildings and landscape, and in 1998 was accepted by South Somerset District Council to be used as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

We have two conservation areas in the parish, 'Charlton Mackrell and West Charlton Conservation Area' and 'Charlton Adam Conservation Area', designated in recognition of their historic importance.



The hamlet of Lytes Cary is famous far beyond the West Country for the fine Grade I listed medieval Lytes Cary Manor (left), in the hands of the National Trust since 1948. Writing of its evolution over the centuries, architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner said of the house *'all parts blend to perfection with one another and with the gentle sunny landscape that surrounds them.'*

To finish, here are a few lesser-known aspects of The Charltons' very special and unique character. Green Down Nature Reserve at Wellham is on the side of Windmill Hill and run by the Somerset Wildlife Trust. It provides a habitat for a range of species including the largest number of Large Blue Butterflies anywhere in the world. Green Down is also the site of the Powder House, used in the construction of the railway. This barrel-vaulted building from 1903 was built to store the explosives that blasted the cutting, and is thought to be one of only two remaining on the GWR line.



And finally, when is a dovecote not a dovecote? When it's at Lytes Cary. The beautiful and timeless view from the manor to what appears to be an 18th century dovecote is, in truth, a 20th century pump house built in 1934 (pictured right).

Our Community



The Parish of The Charltons, which covers Charlton Mackrell, Charlton Adam, West Charlton, Wellham, Cary Fitzpaine and Lytes Cary, has 470 houses and 1,073 residents according to the 2011 National Census¹.

This thriving community treasures its core services, which include:

- The post office/shop on High Street, which is open seven days a week;
- The Fox & Hounds pub, which offers home-cooked food and regular events;
- Charlton Mackrell Church of England Primary School, founded in 1852 and now with around 80 pupils spread over three classrooms;
- A Community Hall with playing fields and children’s play area as well as a smaller “village hall”, The Reading Room;
- Lytes Cary Manor, owned by the National Trust, which brings many visitors to the house, gardens, shop, cafe and book barn. It also has two holiday lets, allotments, bee hives and a large swathe of land accessible all year for walks;
- Two churches – St Mary the Virgin in Charlton Mackrell and SS Peter and Paul in Charlton Adam, and
- Thriving clubs and groups, including art, horticulture, dog training, badminton, a youth club, tennis, pilates and the cider club.

The parish is home to many businesses, including a quarry, agriculture, a major construction materials supplier, four equestrian establishments and storage services; a range of sole traders offering everything from building and construction to hairdressing, dog grooming, accountancy and beauty therapy; and charities such as Hallr Wood and Somerset Levels Riding for the Disabled.

It is also home to quite a diverse mix of people, although all but 51 were born in the UK, and there are almost equal numbers of men and women, at 527 to 546.

Other facts and figures about our community include:

- **Age:** The average age across the Parish is 45 but there’s a 12 year difference between Charlton Adam (average age 37) and Lytes Cary/Cary Fitzpaine at 50.5. Charlton Mackrell (which includes West Charlton and Wellham) is in the middle with 47.

¹ The National Census information relates to: Northstone E00148798, Northstone E00148799 and Northstone E00148800.
Source: <http://www.ukcensusdata.com/northstone-e05006843#sthash.d00NH2Sz.dpbs>

- While a third overall are in the 34-54 year-old age bracket, one in four (238 people) are over 65. There are only 64 people (less than 6%) in the 25-34 age bracket: 46 of them live in Charlton Adam and have 24 children under the age of five. There are 83 young adults (aged between 16 and 24).
- **Children:** There are 224 dependent children, of whom 34 are under five.
- **Houses:** Astonishingly almost half of all the houses – 211 properties – are owned outright and another third are owned with a mortgage. These provide homes for 826 people, 77% of all parishioners. In the remaining 22% of houses, 2% are shared ownership while 17% are a mix of social and private rented, providing homes for 212 people. Most of these – 70% – are in Charlton Adam.
- **House types:** Half the houses are detached, a third semi-detached and 12.5% terraced. Another 10% are caravans or mobile homes. Seventeen houses – almost 4% – have “no usual residents”.
- **Single households:** One in five homes (21.25%, 95 properties) are occupied by single people, the majority of whom are over 65 years-old (55 people or 12.3% of the population). Eighteen are single-parent households with dependent children.
- **Work:** A quarter of our residents do not work. One in five (177 people) are retired, and another 46 people (5.45%) look after family or are affected by long-term sickness or disability. Most of the 844 people aged 16-74 – a total of 542 people (64%) – are “economically active” and one in five are self-employed.
- **Industry:** The top industries for the Parish’s 252 working women are education (56 = 22.2%), human health and social work (43 = 17%) and retail (35 = 13.9%). The 274 men, meanwhile, are primarily in manufacturing (43 men = 15.7%), construction (37 = 13.5%) and wholesale/retail/car repair (31 = 11.3%). Only 19 residents (just under 7%) are in public admin and defence.
- **Occupations:** The majority – 21% or 111 people – are in the “professional occupations” bracket which covers science, engineering, IT, health, business, media and public service. These are closely followed by 87 people in skilled trades and 69 managers and senior directors.
- **Travel to work:** Seven in 10 people (366 individuals) drive a car to work and another 11 are passengers. Another 14.3% (75 people) work from home and 39 (7.4%) walk to work. Only 13 people use public transport to get to work
- **Transport:** Most people (97%) rely on a car for transport, with two in five households (42% = 187) having access to two cars while 19 homes have four or more.



The Census information only goes so far: some additional information was gleaned from the Parish Council Questionnaire, distributed in May 2015, but this was only completed by 157 households covering 324 people, approximately a third of the total population.

This revealed that residents mainly worked within 20 miles of home, supported local businesses and community events, and were committed to helping the community to flourish.

Key findings were:

- **Demographics:** The survey results implied that The Charltons had a generally ageing population, but this was skewed by the fact that 66% of those who responded were aged 50+ and only 19% were in the 18-50 age bracket.
- **Backgrounds:** only 16% were brought up here while 20% moved here for work and 16% for retirement. Others relocated to be closer to family, because they liked the area or for other reasons.
- **Employment:** half the respondents were either working full-time, self-employed or in full time education. 40% were retired but less than 1% were unemployed. Of those who worked, 55% worked within 20 miles and a further 18% worked from home.
- **Local services:** 92% used the post office/shop; 73% the pub; 58% the playing fields; 53% the Reading Room and 46% the Community Hall. A third went to church and/or used the play area.
- **Events:** the most popular events in the village are CHADS performances (46% of respondents had been to one) and church services (45% had attended).
- **New services:** a third (32%) were interested in a Good Neighbour Scheme to help with shopping, transport and odd jobs.

Overall, people said the Parish was friendly, with a committed volunteers and a strong community spirit. The quiet rural environment was appreciated as much as access to the invaluable services of the shop, post office, school and pub.



The Community Plan process



In June 2014, The Charltons Parish Council decided to seek the views of the residents of the Parish so that a Community Plan could be created. The Community Plan would guide how the Parish developed over the 10 years from the date of its publication. A working group was established to oversee its production and held its first meeting in December 2014.

The first action was to distribute a Questionnaire to all households in the Parish: this was done in May 2015. This sought views on facilities, the local economy, community, communications, the environment, housing and transport. Responses were received from 157 households representing the views of 324 individuals – a response rate of 34%. Analysis of the questionnaire responses are contained in Appendix 6.2.

In October 2016, a Community Plan Open Day was held at the Fox & Hounds pub, where feedback from the Questionnaire was presented and additional ideas sought from residents on how the Parish might develop over the next 10 years. More than 200 residents attended the event to give their views to members of the working group, and to Parish and District councillors.

This was followed in November 2016 by an independent Housing Needs Survey, conducted by the Community Council for Somerset and funded by the Big Lottery Fund. A total of 506 surveys were distributed to every household in the Parish on the electoral roll and 155 valid responses were received. This represents a 31% response rate which, in CCS's experience, is considered high. The results of the survey were made available to the Parish Council and the Community Plan Working Group at the end of January 2017 and are detailed in Appendix 6.3.

Data from the Questionnaire, the Open Day and the Housing Needs Survey have been collated by the working group and form the statistical basis of this Community Plan.



Community Plan Guidelines

1. Housing & development



Guideline HD 1 - Housing Stock Volume

To meet the needs of local people and South Somerset District Council's plans for sustainable development in rural settlements, it is proposed that the Parish's housing stock be increased by a maximum of 5% over the 10 year period 2017-2027. It is important that this development is spread throughout the villages and hamlets of the Parish, with each accommodating some development commensurate with its size and facilities.

Guideline Basis

The 2011 census showed that there were 470 households in the Parish: this has increased to approximately 500 in the period up to January 2017. The results of both the Housing Needs Survey (HNS) and the Parish Questionnaire showed that there was limited support (38% and 31% respectively) for controlled housing development within the Parish which would meet the needs of existing Parishioners. The HNS showed strong support (67% of respondents) for future development if it were to meet the specific needs of The Charltons' parishioners.

Guideline Actions

This Guideline will support any discussions that the Parish Council has with potential developers and the planning authority. It will also assist in formulating Parish Council responses to planning applications over the period.

Guideline HD2 - New Dwelling Types

Future housing development within the Parish should contain a high proportion of two- and three-bed properties to give a more balanced distribution of dwelling size throughout the Parish, and to encourage young families to move into the Parish.

Guideline Basis

The HNS shows that 40% of the houses in the Parish have four or more bedrooms. Of those HNS respondents who believed more housing was needed, 47% favoured three-bedroom dwellings and 44% favoured two-bedroom. Only 8% wanted to see more large homes (four-plus bedrooms) built in the Parish. These conclusions were further supported by the responses to the Parish Questionnaire, where there was strong support for starter homes to buy or rent.

Guideline Actions

This Guideline will support any discussions that the Parish Council has with potential developers and the planning authority. It will also assist in formulating Parish Council responses to any planning applications over this period.

Guideline HD3 - Future Housing Development

Any new housing development within the Parish should fully accord with the requirements of Guidelines HD1/2 and the Guidance set out in the *Design Statement for the Parish of Charlton Mackrell*² contained in Annex 6.2 of this Community Plan. This is of particular importance for any proposed development within the designated Conservation Areas of the Parish.

- In order to maintain the predominately linear character of the villages, any new developments should be infill between existing dwellings and should not consist of more than 10 dwellings on any one site.
- Any new development must respect the local character, historic and natural assets of the Parish and take every opportunity through design and materials to reinforce local distinctiveness.
- Historically there have been isolated instances of surface water and sewage flooding in the Parish following periods of exceptional rainfall. Any new housing development within the Parish must take account of this, ensuring that the situation is not exacerbated by the development and that, where possible, the opportunity is taken to improve the situation.
- The open spaces within the villages and hamlets that make up the Parish are of particular importance to the character of the villages and should be preserved.

Guideline Basis

When asked in the HNS what future housing development would be supported, 75% of respondents supported the conversion of existing buildings while 46% supported sites of 10 homes or less and 45% supported infill properties. Only 14% supported medium sites of 10+ homes and 4% supported larger sites of 20 or more dwellings.

Guideline Actions

This Guideline will support any discussions that the Parish Council has with potential developers and the planning authority. It will also assist in formulating Parish Council responses to any planning applications submitted. The Parish Council will, in conjunction with South Somerset District Council, regularly review the existing Conservation Areas within the Parish and determine if new areas are needed to protect the character and appearance of the Parish.

² The *Design Statement for the Parish of Charlton Mackrell* is so-called because at the time it was drafted the Parish Council was known as Charlton Mackrell Parish Council. It does, however cover the entire parish of The Charltons and has been adopted by South Somerset District Council.

Guideline HD4 - Housing for Older People

Of the 5% increase in housing stock planned for the next 10 years, four or five dwellings should be purpose-built homes for older people.

Guideline Basis

17 respondents to the HNS would be interested in moving to a purpose-built older people's home within the next 10 years. The majority were looking for a two bedroom property, preferably a bungalow. This is supported by the Parish Questionnaire: when asked if more housing was to be built, 96 respondents suggested homes suitable for downsizing/retirement.

Guideline Action

The Parish Council should actively encourage potential developers to include a small number of older people's homes in their proposals.

Guideline HD5 - Affordable/Social Housing

Any housing development within the Parish should meet South Somerset District Council's requirements for Affordable/Social Housing, and priority for that housing should be given to people from the Parish or with strong connections to the Parish.

Guideline Basis

We are fortunate within the Parish that approximately 10% of the total housing stock is Social Housing, and believe it is important to maintain that balance between Social Housing and Market Housing. It is also important that any new Affordable/Social housing is spread between the villages in the Parish.

The Parish Questionnaire asked if new affordable/social housing were to be built who should have priority: 100 respondents said only local people while 95 said people with local connections only.

Guideline Action

Any planning application which includes Affordable/Social Housing should have a condition placed on it to give priority to parishioners of The Charltons or people with strong established connections to the Parish.

Guideline HD6 - Parking at new developments

Any new development within the Parish should provide off road parking which meets the requirements of Somerset County Council's Parking Strategy with regard to Residential Parking Standards.

Guideline Basis

On road parking is an issue at certain points within the Parish. This was reflected in the results of the HNS where 92% of respondents felt that any future development should

ensure there was no need for any on road parking. 80% of respondents felt that two off road parking spaces per dwelling should be the absolute minimum.

Guideline Action

This guideline will support any discussions the Parish Council has with potential developers and the planning authority. It will also assist in formulating Parish Council responses to any planning applications over this period.

2. Traffic, transport & road safety



Guideline TRS1 - Speed Limits

In the interests of road safety, all existing 40mph speed limits in the Parish should be reduced to 30mph. The speed limit should be reduced to 20mph on Bonfire Lane near Charlton Mackrell Primary School and Pre-School, and on Ilchester Road approaching its junction with Bonfire Lane when the school crossing lights are flashing. Additionally the national speed limits through the hamlet of Lytes Cary should be reduced to 30mph to improve road safety for both residents and visitors.

Guideline Basis

There is a school crossing patrol on Ilchester Road, at its junction with Bonfire Lane, which has a 40mph limit. While this meets Somerset County Council's criteria for school crossing patrols, it is not ideal. The speed limit at this point should be reduced to make crossing the road safer, both for the school crossing personnel and the children that they supervise. In the HNS the main concern of 77% of respondents about future development in the Parish was busy roads and the potential for access issues.

Guideline Action

The Parish Council and residents are to lobby Somerset County Council to reduce the speed limits in the Parish where appropriate.

Guideline TRS2 - Community Speed Watch

Speed limits are only effective in reducing speed when they are enforced. Therefore it is important to actively support the efforts of parishioners in conducting the Speed Watch Scheme and to investigate rolling it out to other roads in the Parish where speeding is a problem.

Guideline Basis

The present Speed Watch Scheme has been effective in reducing speeding on Kingweston Road in Charlton Mackrell but requires the continued backing of both the Parish Council and the volunteers who run it. A constant supply of new volunteers is required to ensure that it remains in place.

Guideline Action

The Parish Council should continue funding the Speed Watch Scheme and the organisers should investigate expanding the scheme to other areas of the Parish where speeding is a problem.

Guideline TRS3 - Weight Restrictions in the Parish

There is a 7.5 tonne weight restriction, except for access, on the through routes in both Charlton Adam and Charlton Mackrell. Every effort should be made to retain these and to ensure that they are adhered to.

Guideline Basis

In response to the Parish Questionnaire question “*Are you concerned about the volume of heavy vehicles passing through the village?*”, 224 people were concerned about the volume of heavy vehicles while 73 were not.

While the weight limit has a significant effect on heavy vehicle traffic through the village, there are still several instances each month where heavy vehicles try to drive through the villages.

Guideline Action

The Parish Council should ensure that the weight restrictions are kept in place and individual parishioners should report to the authorities those vehicles which ignore those weight restrictions.

Guideline TRS4 – Improved Transport Options

In order to reduce the reliance of residents on car ownership, minimise feelings of rural isolation, and to reduce the number of car journeys undertaken within the Parish, ways of introducing a car sharing scheme and improvements to the frequency and scale of public transport should be investigated.

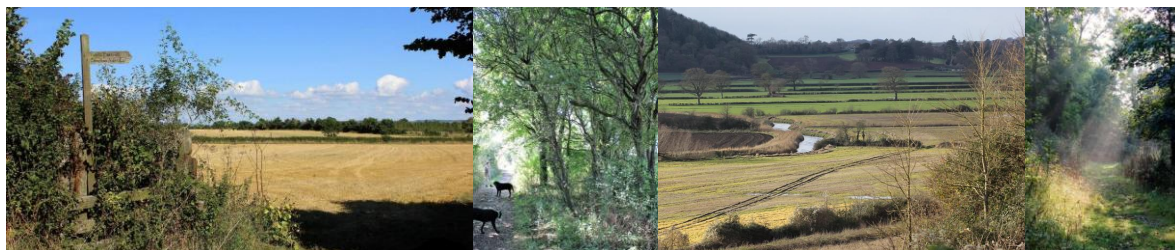
Guideline Basis

87% of respondents to the Village Questionnaire had access to a car, and 88% said that it would be very difficult to live in the Parish without a car. At present, the only public transport available is a very limited bus service in the village. Improvement to these services, or the introduction of a volunteer car-sharing service, or more use of Community Transport options would enable residents to more easily access the wider range of transport options in local towns.

Guideline Action

Under the guidance of the Parish Council, a Working Group should be formed to investigate improvements to the Parish’s transport options, both in the public and voluntary sectors.

3. The natural environment



Guideline NE1 - Footpaths

Footpaths in the Parish are an important asset, which are regularly used by both parishioners and walking groups from further afield. They should be kept unobstructed at all times with appropriate and clear signage.

Guideline Basis

The footpaths in the Parish are generally well delineated and signposted. It is important that they are kept clear of encroaching vegetation, and that stiles and gates are maintained. The use of the footpaths by walking groups has the potential to bring economic benefit to businesses in the Parish. It is also important that users respect landowners' property by keeping to the designated footpaths and by closing gates after them. In addition, dog owners should adhere to the Kennel Club Countryside Code³ when walking with dogs.

Guideline Action

The Parish Council will nominate a Councillor to co-ordinate and action any requirements for maintenance or repair of the Parish's footpaths.

Guideline NE2 - Street Lighting

The introduction of any form of street lighting should be actively discouraged except where there is a proven need for urgent safety considerations.

Guideline Basis

There are, within the Parish, significant colonies of nocturnal protected mammal and bird species which would be significantly affected by the introduction of street lighting. Modern suburban-style street lighting would be detrimental to the rural character of the villages and hamlets within the Parish and cause a loss of night-time dark skies.

³ For full detail, please click through to the [The Kennel Club Countryside Code here](https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/getting-a-dog-or-puppy/general-advice-about-caring-for-your-new-puppy-or-dog/puppy-and-dog-walking/the-countryside-code/)
URL = <https://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/getting-a-dog-or-puppy/general-advice-about-caring-for-your-new-puppy-or-dog/puppy-and-dog-walking/the-countryside-code/>

Guideline Action

The Parish and District Councils should strongly resist any attempt to introduce street lighting into the Parish unless there is a proven need for personal safety.

Guideline NE3 - Keeping the Parish Litter Free

To keep the roads, lanes and grass verges of the Parish free from litter and dog excrement.

Guideline Basis

While the majority of Parishioners keep the parish free from litter and dog excrement, there are still occasions when both litter and dog fouling in the Parish become an issue. The annual litter pick carried out by Parishioners and the sweeping of the roads by the District Council ensure that littering does not become too unsightly. There are also four dog litter bins in the Parish, which are maintained and emptied by the District Council.

Guideline Action

Ensure that the annual litter pick is fully supported by both Parishioners and the Parish Council, and investigate the provision and emptying of additional dog litter bins.

4. Business and the local economy



Guideline BLE1 - Encourage & Support Businesses in the Parish

To determine how the Parish can support the existing businesses in the Parish and encourage new and suitable businesses to be established.

Guideline Basis

A wide range of businesses are established in the Parish, ranging from heavy manufacturing to sole traders. These provide employment opportunities for residents both from within and outside the Parish. The Parish Questionnaire asked, “*Would you support more local businesses within the Parish?*” A total of 246 residents (90% of the respondents) said that they would. Residents were also asked what barriers there were to establishing a business here. The responses were varied and only some were within local control. The survey did not ask the existing businesses what facilities they needed to maintain or grow their business: we, therefore, do not have a complete picture.

Guideline Action

To carry out a survey of existing businesses within the Parish to elicit their views on what is needed to support existing businesses, and to encourage suitable new businesses to be established.

Guideline BLE2 - Establish a Directory of Businesses

To be able to plan for business needs within the Parish it is necessary to know the number and scope of businesses that already exist within the Parish.

Guideline Basis

In response to QBE 3 of the Parish Questionnaire, “*What do you see as barriers to setting up a business within the Parish?*”, responses included poor broadband connectivity, lack of suitable premises and a lack of business support. In order to understand these factors in more depth the views of existing businesses need to be sought. However, we do not currently have a database of those businesses to enable this to happen.

Guideline Action

To establish and maintain a database of businesses which are operating within the Parish.

5. Leisure



Guideline CL1 - Clubs and Societies

In order to thrive, the clubs and societies within the Parish require the support of members, volunteers and, where appropriate, the Parish and District Councils.

Guideline Basis

There are 15 active clubs and societies within the Parish, ranging from an Allotment Society to a Tennis Club. All of these need to be supported by parishioners and, in some cases, also by the Parish and District Council so that they continue to enhance the social cohesion of the Parish. The Parish is also fortunate to have organisations such as the Forest School and the Somerset Levels RDA which aim to improve the lives of people with disabilities.

Guideline Action

For all parishioners, and the Parish and District Councils, to actively support the Clubs and Societies located in the Parish.

Guideline CL 2- Youth Club

To support the Youth Club in the Parish with voluntary assistance and, where appropriate, financial support from the Parish, District and County Councils.

Guideline Basis

There is a thriving Youth Club in the Parish for young people aged between 11 and 18 years-old. It is funded by the members and grants from the authorities. The youth club is an important asset which should be at least maintained in its present form and, if possible, developed to provide more activities for young residents.

Guideline Action

To continue to actively support the Youth Club, both financially and through volunteering by parishioners.

Guideline CL3 - The Community Hall & Memorial Playing Field



To ensure that the Community Hall, Playing Field and the Children's Play Area are maintained and supported so that a wide range of activities can take place on them, and to develop the Children's Play Area to take account of the changing needs of young users.

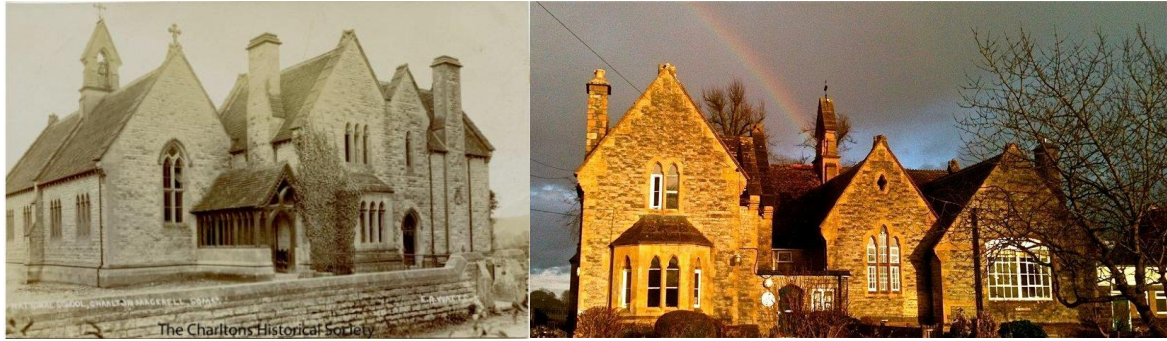
Guideline Basis

The Playing Field was used by 58% of respondents to the Parish Questionnaire, while 46% used the Community Hall and 29% used the Play Area. This shows that all these facilities are used by a high proportion of residents and need to be maintained to ensure continued safe use. The equipment in the Play Area should be updated to meet the needs of today's children. There is some support in the village for an adult Trim Trail which, if installed on the Playing Field, could increase the field's usage as well as benefiting the wellbeing of parishioners.

Guideline Action

To ensure that the Community Hall, Playing Field and Play Area are maintained and improved, and to explore the supply of new play equipment and an adult trim trail. Funding for any new schemes should be sought from individuals, the national lottery, District Council and any future housing developments within the Parish.

6. Charlton Mackrell C of E Primary School



Guideline CMS1 – Community and School working together

The relationship between the community and the school is good and well established. To ensure that both flourish further efforts should be made to enhance that relationship.

Guideline Basis

In response to the Village Questionnaire, many respondents “liked” the fact that the parish had a good school and pre-school. There is, however, a feeling that unless you have children or relatives that attend the school and, because of its location within the Parish, it can seem a little remote.

Guideline Action

The school will continue to provide an excellent level of education for its children in a friendly, family atmosphere.

The school will continue its close contact with the church in the village.

The school will continue to invite members of the wider community to school events, and continue to support and promote other community events and activities.

The school’s Governing Body will work with the Friends of the School and other organisations to explore ways of improving how the school and the community can work together. There will be a specific governor with responsibility for liaison with other community groups.

It will work with the Parish Council to:

- Promote signage in order to show the whereabouts of the school and the safety of the children, and
- Support appropriate new houses, which help to maintain the viability of the school.

It will investigate the wider usage of the school facilities outside of the school working hours, while maintaining the security of the school and being mindful of the continued viability of other village organisations which rent out space and facilities.

7. Places of worship



Guideline PW1 – Churches

The churches are an important part of the heritage of The Charltons and are significant in the spiritual and communal life of the villages. Members of the church believe the church is here to serve God and the community, and to bring the Christian message of hope to the community.

Guideline basis

The churches are ancient buildings and, apart from routine running costs, require maintenance and repair. Efforts are constantly being made to increase the worshipping community but there is a risk that the church buildings may close unless a concerted effort across the wider community is made to maintain them.

Guideline Action

The Parochial Church Council will continue its efforts to ensure that the church buildings are maintained, and that Christian worship and service continues to be a part of village life. The support of the wider community is also needed in the maintenance of the buildings.

8. Key parish assets



Guideline KPA1 - Assets of Community Value

Three facilities within the Parish are listed on South Somerset District Council's Register of Assets of Community Value. These are:

- The Reading Room, Charlton Mackrell
- The Post Office and village shop, Charlton Adam
- The Fox & Hounds public house, Charlton Adam

It is important that these assets are supported and used by the community, and that the Community is ready to act should any of these Assets be threatened with closure.

Guideline Basis

The Localism Act 2011 gave communities the right to identify assets they believe are of value to their community and to nominate them to be listed on the District Councils Register of Community Assets. The Post Office/Shop, the Reading Room and the Fox & Hounds have all been included on the register.

This gives the community the right to bid for these assets on the open market should they come up for sale in the next five years. The responses to the Parish Questionnaire showed these three facilities to be in the top five of facilities used in the Parish: the other two - the Community Hall and Playing Field - are owned by the Parish.

Guideline Action

The Parish Council will actively monitor the situation regarding the three Assets of Community Value, and review whether any other buildings or open spaces should be included in the future.

The Parish Council will review and renew the list of Assets of Community Value every five years to ensure it does not go out of date.

If the Community wishes to retain the Assets of Community Value it is essential that they actively support them.

Appendices

A. The Charltons Design Statement

(Officially known as The Design Statement for the Parish of Charlton Mackrell)

B. Community Questionnaire Results

C. Housing Needs Survey
