

PITCHCOMBE



PARISH PLAN

2014



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THANKS

The Parish Plan Steering Group would like to thank all those who have helped in the preparation of this document. In particular Gloucestershire Rural Community Council for their practical support all the way through the process, Stroud District Council for their financial support and members of Pitchcombe Village Hall Committee for delivering and collecting the questionnaires.

Introduction

In the last ten years or so many parishes throughout Gloucestershire and the rest of the country have prepared Parish Plans the purpose of which was to bring members of the community together to consider how, if at all, they would like their parish to develop in the following five or ten years.

Pitchcombe Parish Council has several times discussed the need for a Parish Plan for Pitchcombe but, until quite recently, felt that the work and expense involved were likely to outweigh the benefits.

However, at its meeting 8th March 2012 the Council reviewed the position, decided that it would be beneficial to embark on the exercise and approved an application for a grant from Stroud District Council to cover the cost and sought professional assistance from the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council.

A particular consideration, rightly or wrongly, was the thought that evidence of a lively independence might help to preserve Pitchcombe's separate identity in the event of any future local government re-organisation encouraging larger parishes or groups of parishes.

The process, which covers but is in no way restricted to issues of land use, is intended to be community led and to achieve this several public meetings have been arranged bringing together individuals from all parts of the parish some of whom happen to have been members of the Parish Council and Village Hall Committee.

In order to establish basic data and ascertain the views of parishioners a questionnaire was prepared and circulated and the results then analysed by GRCC and set out on page 7.

On the basis of this information the steering group then prepared an Action Plan set out on page 10 which attempts to prioritise the steps needed to make Pitchcombe an even better place for us all to live.

If these seem somewhat limited it should be borne in mind that Pitchcombe is a small parish in area, population and resources but, as E.F. Schumacher demonstrated in his book of that name 40 years ago, 'Small is Beautiful.'



HISTORY OF PITCHCOMBE

NAME

The first recorded use of the name, or something like it, was in the 12th Century when Gilbert Foliot, then Abbott of St. Peter's Monastery in Gloucester, wrote to the Bishop of Salisbury complaining of the criminal activities of one Walter de Pinchcum. Since then there have been many variations including Pichelecumb, Pinchenecumbe and Pychecombe to name but three but Pitchcombe seems to have been the settled name for the last 200 years.

CASTLE

Castles are always fascinating and the name Wragg Castle Lane always excites curiosity. However there is nothing to see and only a legend that Wragg Castle Farm incorporates a staircase that was part of the old castle. It was possibly one of many strongholds raised during the reign of King Stephen (1135-1154) of which 140 were ordered to be destroyed by a Council of Westminster under King Henry II in 1155.

LAND OWNERSHIP

Land transactions have been traced as far back as 1204 but two have been particularly significant. In 1608 John Throckmorton was recorded as Lord of the Pitchcombe Manor. He was a Roman Catholic, had other land at Lyppiatt and is thought to have been involved in the Gunpowder Plot. In 1610 he sold it to Thomas Stephens of Middle Temple, Attorney General to Prince Charles whose family retained it until about 1825 when it was bought by a local mill owner, John Little whose family having built Pitchcombe House in 1740, have retained much of it ever since.

CHURCHES / CHAPEL



The original church, the Pitchcombe Cradle, was built in 1376 and remained in use until about 1819. It was then thought to be too small - maybe attendance was compulsory – and replaced by the new current church which was constructed around the old one which was then knocked down from within.

That may have been a response to competition from the Congregational Chapel built in 1803 between what are still known as the Chapel Steps and Manor Farm. There is no trace of the building nor of any graves. It was used until about 1898 when its popularity had so declined that it was demolished.

SCHOOL / VILLAGE HALL

The old school, also built in 1803 for “up to 50 children”, closed in 1923. After a period as a Sunday School it became the Village Hall in about 1953. Thanks to a lot of fund-raising and some help from Gloucestershire Rural Community Council and National Heritage Lottery Fund it is as good a hall as you will find in such a small village and the Management Committee ensures a full calendar of events throughout the year.

PITCHCOMBE HOUSE

Pitchcombe House was built in about 1740 for Thomas Palling probably on the site of an earlier building. His brother, William, later built Brownhill Court on the opposite side of the valley in the Parish of Painswick. Thomas Palling left no issue and the house passed to his nephew, John Caruthers, great,great,great,great grandfather of the present owner, Robert Little.



OTHER BUILDINGS

Bedcroft has claims to be one of the oldest houses in the village arising from the date 1553 carved in a stone door lintel. However that may possibly have been re-cycled from an earlier building there or elsewhere as it is not much different from a number of other buildings whose features suggest they were built in the 17th or 18th centuries.

Smalls Mill must have straddled the boundary between Pitchcombe and Painswick at the bottom of Pincot Lane. It was completely dilapidated about 30 years ago and what you see now is nearly all new.

Likewise Wades Mill (formerly Pitchcombe Mill) was also on the Painswick Stream at the bottom of Wades Lane. There is little to see of the mill apart from the Mill House.

The Eagle was the last pub in the parish closing on Old Year's Night 1973, give or take a year or two.



Star Farm was undoubtedly one of the other pubs in the village as an internal door is divided across the middle to facilitate "off sales – but at present lacks a liquor licence!

The Halfway House on the A46/A4173 junction, which was the Post Office until August 1973 was probably another. Pitchcombe had gained its first Post Office between 1876 and 1879 run from a converted annexe to Chestnut Cottage.

Although thought of as unchanged for many years Pitchcombe has gained about 25 new houses in the last 60 years and many others have been significantly altered or

extended.

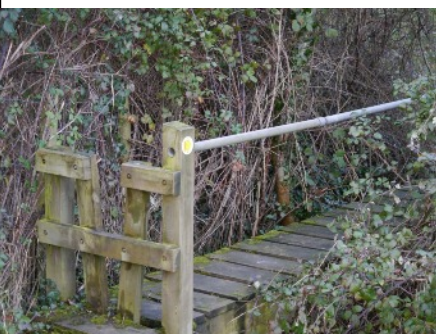
TRANSPORT

According to the Victoria County History "In 1818 a new turnpike built up the valley of the Painswick stream past Pitchcombe replaced Wick Street as the main road to Gloucester." Then, a year later "In 1819 a road was built from Painswick to link with the new route at Pitchcombe thus replacing the Wick Street route (*from Painswick*) to Stroud."

The Painswick railway project for which a Bill was introduced in Parliament in 1866 and apparently received the Royal Assent on 26th May 1889 never materialised for lack of funds despite a legacy of £5,000 from one Frederick Gyde.



INDUSTRIES



Apart from the three old mills, of which there are many references to be found, one of the most interesting industrial developments was that of Wades Mill under the ownership of Peter Matthews who was described in 1858 as a "bone manufacturer". Kelly's Directory for 1863 describes the business: "Peter Matthews & Son; agricultural chemists and manufacturers of oil of vitriol, super-phosphate of lime, bone dust and all kinds of artificial manures for corn, turnips, clover and other grasses, and dealers in Peruvian guano; Pitchcombe Bone Mills."

RESTHAVEN

Resthaven, was opened in 1938 as a 13 bed nursing home by Maud Little who had been Acting Superintendent of Standish Hospital (for wounded soldiers) during World War 1. It became a Registered Charity in 1964 and has since been extended to 36 beds by the Trustee Board which now includes four Pitchcombe residents.



PARISH COUNCIL

Pitchcombe has its own Parish Council with 5 councillors and was in the front line several years ago when the Painswick Valley was threatened with massive development by the Stroud District Council draft Local Plan – which has very recently been finalised without this allocation. Indeed it shows no “settlement boundary” for Pitchcombe implying a presumption against any further development. The parish covers an area of 2033080 m² of which 14390 m² is occupied by domestic buildings.

POPULATION

The first national census, in 1801, showed Pitchcombe having 40 houses inhabited by 216 people – 104 male and 112 female. By 1841 there were 63 houses inhabited by 243 people but by 1851 these figures had apparently declined to 45 houses inhabited by 145 people, possibly owing to emigration caused by the decline of the cloth trade.

100 years later there appear to have been 83 private households occupied by 281 people and the 2011 census shows 232 people living in 105 households. Of these people 29 are under the age of 18 and 73 are 65 or over. There are 113 dwellings.

CONCLUSION

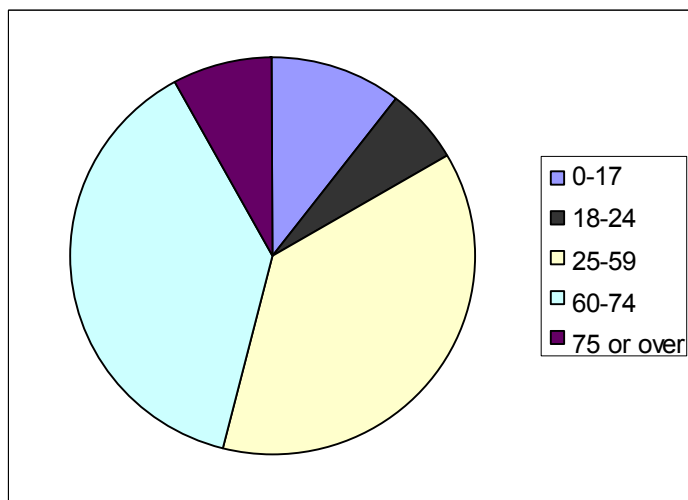
Pitchcombe’s unexceptional but independent past augurs well for a flourishing and independent future



Survey Results of the Parish Plan Household Questionnaire 2013

Where percentages are given in the following analysis of the questionnaire responses it should be appreciated that not all people filling the questionnaire answered all the questions and when they did so they could have been doing it on behalf of themselves and other members of their household. 88 households completed the questionnaire. Furthermore some questionnaire respondents were asked to tick every box of relevance to them so percentages of interest could not be calculated.

For those who returned the questionnaire the total number of people for their households was 197, including children, almost equally split between male (93%), female (98%) residents. Of these 25 were children up to the age of 17. There were 81 residents aged 18 to 59 and 91 residents over the age of 60. Greater detail is shown on the attached Pie chart.



Most of the residences (50) have 2 occupants whilst 14 have only one resident and another 20 have 3 or more.

Detailed responses to the questionnaire can be found in the Appendices to the Parish Plan on or Pitchcombe Parish Council website at www.pitchcombe-pc.gov.uk. Anyone who is particularly interested could find more information there.

Traffic and Roads

90% of respondents wish discussions with Highways about traffic issues to continue. 73% felt that the road layout for Halfway Pitch onto the main A46 was not safe. The preferred option for improving Pitchcombe Junction was for a roundabout (58%) but respondents were asked to make one choice only out of the possible options. 50% believed that traffic speed around the village was acceptable whilst over 40% were happy with traffic speeds through the three lanes which exit onto the A46. 58% would support an increase in the Parish Council precept for pothole repairs with the average suggested increase being £3,000 (last year's precept was £2,705). Only 23% believed that on street parking was a problem in Pitchcombe.



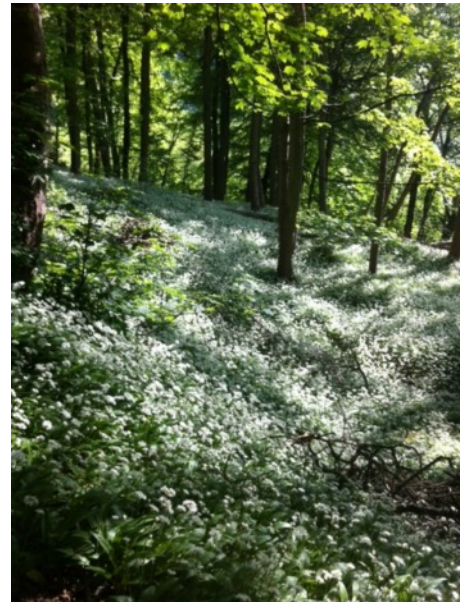
Housing

Only 42% were in favour of extra housing in Pitchcombe in the next 10 years but the preferred size of this development if necessary would be 1-5 houses. There was no consensus as to what sort of housing should be built.

Environment

59% would like to see more power cables underground and 5 particular areas were felt to be relevant for this.

72% were in favour of delaying the mowing of verges until wild flowers have seeded. 58% felt that parish footpaths were adequately maintained. A number of possible facilities for Pitchcombe were proposed. Of these 2 had a majority in favour, namely seating in the woods (47%) and a play area, (30%). Only 14% believed that dog fouling was an issue and 35% believed that dog bins should be available.



Business and Economy

A directory of local businesses and services on the Parish Council website was favoured by 72%. 25% stated that they work at home and 20% run a business from home. There was virtually no interest in providing a meeting place enabling hire of WiFi/internet access. 13% were in favour of a business club in Pitchcombe.

Transport



91% of residents had access to a car and on average there were two cars per household. There seemed to be little take up of the bus service with 11% using the bus either weekly or monthly, 48% occasionally using the bus and 38% never using the bus. 81% were in favour of retaining the two bus shelters. There seem to be 47 bicycle users in the village. There were very few people who have difficulty getting out and about and they seem to have a solution to the problem. No one had difficulty accessing health services. 11 people were in favour of a supermarket delivery drop off facility and a few would like some form of lift share scheme.

Crime and Community Safety

Few people (13%) had any problem with Cold Callers but most would like Pitchcombe to be designated as a “No Cold Calling” area. 69% would be willing to join a Neighbourhood Watch scheme but only 23% of those would be willing to help organize it.

Education and Learning

There was general overall satisfaction with education services available to those in Pitchcombe. There was interest from a dozen or so people in having IT classes in Pitchcombe. 27 people were interested in having a book club in Pitchcombe and 8 would be prepared to help with a Pitchcombe village history project.

48% were content with the Broadband speed. There were a variety of reasons for using Broadband/internet access but it seems most people use it for social and business use and a large proportion for additional purposes.

Leisure and Tourism

81% of residents felt that footpath maps would be useful and would like such a map to be placed at a number of localities. 14 people expressed an interest in helping to make such a map. Most were aware of the annual New Year walks and the summer walks.



Pitchcombe.net and 40 people used it.

The presence of the church in Pitchcombe was valued by 67 people.

Issues

There appear to be very few serious “issues” in the village. Any that there are are generally sorted as they arise. The road safety issues are a “work in progress” and are dependant on others ie Gloucestershire Highways, Gloucestershire County Council and the Police so an end date cannot be foreseen.



A 38 page booklet of Appendices is available containing the original questionnaire and detailed results. This is also on the Pitchcombe Parish Council website: www.pitchcombe-pc.gov.uk

Further statistical data may be found at:

<http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadHome.do?a=3&i=1001&m=0&s=1363706971618&enc=1&extendedList=true&nav=A&areaSearchText=>

and put in the parish name or ward name.

ACTION PLAN

Issue	Importance of issue	Possible Solutions	Suggested Actions	Lead Responsibility	Other agencies and/or partners	Target completion date	Review
Traffic and roads	90% of 80% response said to continue the campaign to resolve the Road Safety issues on the A roads	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Change layout at junction of A46/A4173 2. Reduce Speed limit through the village on the A roads to 40 mph 3. Increase the Parish Council Precept to help deal with potholes (52% favour some increase) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Parish Council to continue campaign 2. Draw attention of county councillors, police commissioner and Gloucestershire Highways to every accident 3. Parish Council to investigate the possibility of taking up Highways Community Offer 	Parish Council	<p>Gloucestershire Highways County Councillors Police MP Residents of PITCHCOMBE Neighbouring Parish Councils</p>	Annually until completion from May 2014	Annually until completion from May 2014
Crime, disorder and community safety	Significant concern raised	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set up No Cold Calling area 2. Revive/extend/set up Neighbourhood Watch Scheme 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set up Public Meeting for Neighbourhood Watch 	Parish Council	<p>Police Neighbourhood Warden Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator</p>	July 2014	March 2014
Environment, conservation and heritage	Significant interest	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Undergrounding of power cables 2. Planned cutting of verges to allow plants to seed 3. Provision of seating in the woods 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to pursue agreement to put cables underground 2. Contact County Ecologist for information and support. Request Information on sensitive areas from residents 3. Provide seating in the woods 	Parish Council	<p>AONB Landowners Western Power Distribution, County Ecologist Gloucestershire Highways</p>	July 2015	July 2014
Business and Economy	Significant Interest	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Business Directory to be set up on Parish Council Website 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set up Business Directory 2. Publicise business directory on website 	<p>Jubilee Fund Parish Council</p>	<p>Stroud District Council IT department</p>	<p>July 2014 March 2014</p>	
Health and leisure		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set up a reading group/circle 2. IT classes 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Call initial meeting 2. Order first set of books 3. Set up system 	Parish Clerk	<p>Gloucestershire Libraries</p>	May 2014	
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Set up local history Group 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Find provider 2. Sort out time, venue and cost 3. Secure funding 	Parish Council	<p>GRCC Pitchcombe.net</p>	July 2014	July 2013
			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Call initial meeting 2. Decide on format and scope 	Cllr M Little	<p>Painswick Local History Group Stroudend Tything Educational Trust</p>	July 2014	
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Develop a set of footpath maps for the Parish 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Obtain grant funding for project 2. Use Public Sector mapping 	Cllr M Little	<p>Parish Council</p>	July 2015	

			agreement to produce maps 3. Write 'blurb' 4. Decide on how these are to be available	Parish Council	GRCC New Local History Group Other local groups	July 2016	
		5. Develop a "Parish Map"	1. Look at how other places have developed this 2. Apply for Funding 3. Decide on location and format	Parish Council	Gloucestershire County Council	July 2015	
Community Facilities	Some Interest	1. Set up a joint oil-buying scheme 2. Set up Good Neighbour scheme	1. Liaise with one already in existence 2. Ensure residents who wish to set up one are aware of procedure 3. Prepare information pack for new residents	Parish Council	Village agent	May 2016	
		3. Facilitate provision of further activities at Village Hall for all age groups.	1. Share responses with Village Hall Committee 2. Ask those(18) who have stated their willingness to assist to come forward (via Pitchcombe.net?) 3. Explore the possibility of new activities at the Village Hall	Village Hall Committee	Parish Council Parents Village agent	Ongoing	May 2014

