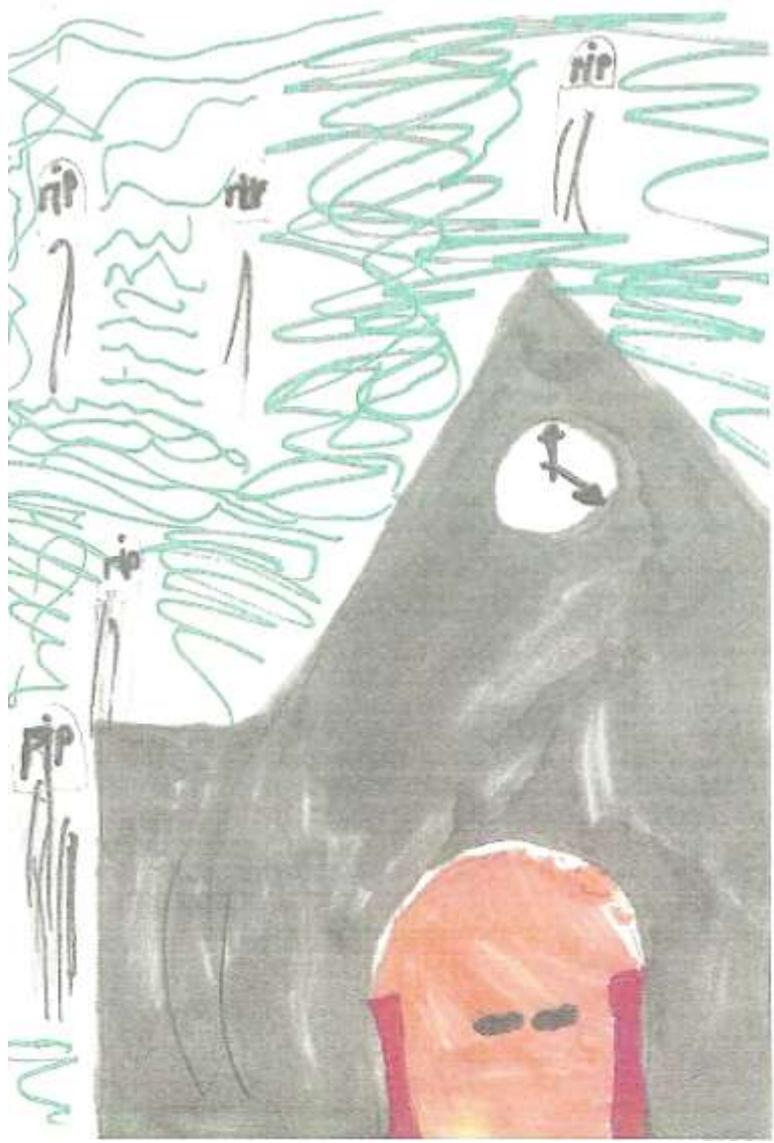


Bedstone & Bucknell

Parish Plan

2016 - 2021



CONTENTS

Introduction.....	3
About this Plan	3
Utilities and Communications.....	4
Housing Development.....	6
Employment Development.....	8
Environment	9
Community Facilities (Social and Community Infrastructure)	12
Safety Concerns	16
Acknowledgements.....	18

INTRODUCTION

This is the second Parish Plan for Bedstone and Bucknell. It builds on the first, which was produced in 2010, refreshing it to reflect the current views and concerns of Parish residents. The work was carried out by the Parish Plan Review Group during 2015-16, and involved several different ways of obtaining residents' views, including:

- An information stall at the annual Bucknell Show
- Public meetings in May and November 2016
- A questionnaire survey of all households in the Parish, carried out in May 2016
- Discussion groups in Bucknell primary school and with local teenagers

Information from the questionnaire survey was collected, analysed and summarised into a detailed survey analysis report by the Shropshire Rural Communities Charity in July 2016. A copy of this is available for download from the Parish website, <http://www.bedstoneandbucknell.org/> under the "Parish" section.

A total of 171 surveys were received, of which 15 were from Bedstone. It is estimated that opinions were obtained from at least 40% of households in the Parish. Overall 55% of responses were from females and 45% from males (apparently this is normal for such surveys), with 54% being over 65 years old and 46% being under 65.

About this Plan

This Plan has been developed from all of the above sources of information about residents' views and concerns. More detailed information and evidence in support of the issues described in it can be found in the Survey Analysis Report referred to above. In addition, the 2010 Parish Plan contains background information about the Parish and its history, as does the Parish website. Copies of this current Plan, the Survey Analysis Report, and the 2010 Plan are available for download from the Parish website under the "Parish" section; at <http://www.bedstoneandbucknell.org/>.

Clearly, money for local public projects is very difficult to access at the moment. This plan identifies actions that residents think can realistically be undertaken in the next five years. It is expected that it will be refreshed again in about five years' time.

Different types of actions have been recommended in response to the issues identified:

- Actions by local volunteers
- Lobbying Shropshire Council
- Using existing funds or applying for grants

- Actions to be undertaken directly by the Parish Council
- Presenting the information to those involved for a decision to be made about action needed

The Plan is split into sections representing different topic areas. Each section begins with a summary of the significant findings from the survey analysis and the other public consultations described above, and then presents in table form some recommended actions (short and long term) to address these issues.

Bedstone and Bucknell Parish Council will lead on some of the actions and will try to ensure that all are addressed in the long run, but some of them will depend on groups of volunteers amongst the residents to actually complete. A number of Implementation Groups were set up at the public meeting in Bucknell on 22nd November 2016, to further develop and implement actions in response to the issues set out in the sections below. The co-ordinators of these groups and their contact details are included in the tables that follow.

UTILITIES AND COMMUNICATIONS

Road maintenance

A majority (55%, 91 individuals) of respondents are unhappy with the state of our roads, with 32 people being very unhappy. In addition 12 of 49 individual written comments in this section of the survey were about potholes and poor road maintenance.

Mobile phone reception

43% of respondents (83 people) are unhappy with mobile phone services in our area. 13 of 49 written comments included references to poor mobile phone signal, and dependence on a single network provider.

Digital radio reception

32% of respondents (51 people) are unhappy with radio reception in general, and 6 written comments specifically mentioned poor digital radio reception.

Respondents were generally happy with the other utilities and communications surveyed (sewerage, TV and radio reception, internet and broadband).

Recommended Actions - Utilities and Communications

Key Issues	Statistical evidence for issue	Proposed Long term activity	Proposed Short term activity
Poor road maintenance	<p>55% (91 individuals) unhappy with road maintenance in Parish.</p> <p>12 people made additional comments about poor state of local roads.</p> <p>Was also a concern in the 2010 Parish Plan.</p>	<p>Parish Council to consider regular review of reports raised by residents through online system and otherwise, and action taken by Shropshire Council to remedy the issue. Aim to keep check on adequacy of Shropshire Council responses.</p>	<p>Publicise, and encourage residents to make use of, the online and telephone reporting system for road maintenance faults (see below for the internet address and telephone number).</p>
Mobile phone coverage – poor reception & limited network coverage	<p>43% (68 individuals) unhappy with mobile phone coverage in Parish area. 13 people made additional comments .</p> <p>Similar concerns were noted in the 2010 Parish Plan.</p>		<p>Parish Council to raise this issue with Shropshire Council and local MPs, adding local voice to national concerns.</p>

Reports about road maintenance faults (potholes, etc.) can be made by any member of the public through Shropshire Council's highway maintenance reporting system www.shropshire.gov.uk/highways-and-traffic/highway-maintenance or phone 0345 678 9018.

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

In interpreting these findings, it is relevant to note that 54% of respondents (88 individuals) were over 65, and 78% (127 people) over 55 years of age.

New housing over next 10 years

Only 36 respondents want more than 30 houses to be built in the parish over the next 10 years. In contrast, 35 want no more new housing at all, 25 favour up to 10, and 45 up to 30 houses. Overall, three quarters of respondents who expressed an opinion want no more than 30 houses to be built in the next ten years.

Type of housing

Overall, responses show support for 2 and 3 bedroom houses, and affordable homes. 43 respondents want no housing of 4 or more bedrooms to be built.

There is general agreement with all of the 'types of housing' suggested (open market rental and freehold, social, retirement/sheltered, and self-build housing, live-work units, a care home). The highest disagreement (37%) was recorded for 'Social housing'. The most 'Don't know' and also the lowest response rate was recorded for 'Self-build housing'.

Community-led housing

76 respondents support the idea of community-led housing, whilst 56 are not in favour. Only 4 people expressed a wish to be directly involved in any group planning to build community-led housing. 8 respondents indicated an interest in living in such housing.

A Care Home in Bucknell

70 respondents support the building of a care home as part of any new development, whereas 30 did not support the idea. Only 6 people expressed a personal interest in the establishment of a care home. 74 respondents believe it is important to encourage the development of a care home as a source of employment in our area.

Recommended Actions - Housing development

Key Issues	Statistical evidence for issue	Proposed Long term activity	Proposed Short term activity
New housing development	<p>Three quarters of those who expressed an opinion in the survey wanted no more than 30 houses to be built in the Parish during the next 10 years.</p> <p>Housing development was noted to be a “divisive topic” for the community in the 2010 Parish Plan.</p>	<p>Plans for any new housing development in Bucknell should be reviewed, with particular focus on the sustainability of the local community.</p> <p>Any large scale housing development should only be undertaken in separate phases of small numbers of dwellings, spread over a period of years for the total development.</p>	<p>The Parish Council should take note of this finding, which contrasts with Shropshire Council’s current development plan for 70 new houses to be built on the timber yard site in Bucknell.</p>
Type of housing	<p>43 respondents wanted no houses with 4 or more bedrooms to be built. There is general support for developments of 2 and 3-bedroom houses, and some affordable homes.</p>	<p>The Parish Council should continue to be actively engaged with any plans for housing development in the village, and seek to ensure the appropriate mix of housing is built.</p>	<p>The Parish Council should inform Shropshire Council of this finding, to influence future planning permissions.</p>
Building of Retirement / Sheltered Housing in Bucknell	<p>Three quarters of those who expressed an opinion in the survey agreed with the building of retirement or sheltered housing in Bucknell.</p>		
Building of a Care Home in Bucknell	<p>70 survey respondents agreed with having a care home in Bucknell, for both housing and employment reasons.</p>		

EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

In interpreting these findings, it is relevant to note that 54% of respondents (88 individuals) were over 65, and 78% (127 people) over 55 years of age.

Development of the former railway yard site in Bucknell

132 respondents to the survey supported employment development on the former railway yard site in Bucknell. 14 individuals expressed a personal interest in the employment opportunities that might be generated.

Type of development

There is general support for all the types of employment mentioned in the survey questionnaire, with the exception of ‘recycling businesses’ which 75 people indicated are not important or very unimportant. The three types of business receiving most support were ‘light industry’, ‘small offices/services’ and ‘agricultural businesses’. The remaining business types (local arts and crafts, a care home, local tourism, and environmental) received support from a smaller majority of respondents.

6 of the written comments made by 21 individuals made specific reference to the need for an improved village shop facility.

Recommended Actions - Employment development

Key Issues	Statistical evidence for issue	Proposed Long term activity	Proposed Short term activity
Development of the former railway yard site in Bucknell	<p>132 respondents were in favour of Shropshire Council’s plans for employment development on the former railway yard site in Bucknell.</p> <p>14 individuals expressed a personal interest in the employment opportunities arising from such development.</p> <p>75 people did not support development of “recycling businesses” in Bucknell.</p> <p>Most support was for “light industry”, small offices/services” and “agricultural businesses”.</p>	<p>Parish Council to consider ways in which small business and other appropriate employment development can be encouraged on the former railway yard site in Bucknell, in liaison with Shropshire Council and other relevant bodies.</p>	

ENVIRONMENT

Bucknell and Bedstone Parish generally has a very good quality environment, with the surrounding countryside being largely in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Bucknell has a Conservation Area protecting the central part, (including most of the historic or listed buildings). The Parish is an established base for walking, cycling, bird/ wildlife watching and fishing, and it attracts visitors who make an important contribution to the local economy. We should be justifiably proud of our Parish.

The response rate to this part of the survey demonstrated that protecting and improving the environment was very important to nearly everybody.

Since the last Plan was produced in 2009, improvements have been made to minimise the risk of flooding from the River Redlake, and in the area of roads around Bucknell phone box, the junction of Red Lane with Dog Kennel Lane and also the B road leaving Bucknell towards Bedstone. However sixty comments about flooding were listed, including some still about the above areas that have been improved. The area of Bridgend Lane (at the end near Bucknell centre) where the road level is near to the river level remains a regular area of flooding, see key issues below.

There is almost universal support for:-

- Protecting and maintaining public trees and replacing with suitable alternatives any that have to be removed because they are unsafe.
- Protection of the open fields in the heart of Bucknell, that bring the countryside into the heart of the village.
- Grass and hedges being cut regularly, maintaining litter bins and having a zero tolerance of litter and dog fouling.
- Other things that had widespread support were good landscaping, surfacing of paths, shrub planting to encourage birds, and information boards with maps etc., showing interesting features and public rights of way (see key issues below).

Some other issues that had considerable support were the quality of public seating and tables, and improving village entrance signs. If, for example, AONB signs similar to the type that can be seen as you leave Knighton on the road to Clun were available to be fixed to the main village entrance signs, it could boost residents' good feelings about our villages, and let visitors or potential visitors know what a good base for the AONB our Parish is.

Recommended Actions - Environment

Key Issues	Statistical evidence for issue	Proposed Long term activity	Proposed Short term activity
Bus shelter	103 respondents, (more than two thirds), favoured a bus shelter near Bucknell Railway Station.	Obtain a design for a suitable shelter, that will enhance the appearance of the village, with estimated costs. (It will need to shelter users from “splash up” from passing traffic.) Provide Shelter.	Make enquiries of Bus Operating Company and Shropshire Council. Investigate potential sources of financial help to cover the cost, e.g. grant-giving organisations, Shropshire Council, bus companies.
Flooding	71% thought it important to have a “River Watch Co-ordinator” on the Parish Council. 60 written comments were made about flooding.	Everybody to keep an eye out for any debris in the River Redlake that could cause a blockage of the flow at the bridges near the Post office and Garage. Ground work to reduce flooding in Bridgend Lane.	Parish Council to ask Shropshire Highways what can be done to reduce flooding in Bridgend Lane. Redlake Watch Co-ordinator identified and Implementation Group formed at public meeting on 22/11/16. Contact: Sue Fairclough, 01547 530279 or email sue.fairclough@yahoo.co.uk
Information Boards	76% thought these were important.	Provide boards with maps, showing interesting features and buildings, and businesses, at key locations, e.g. the proposed Bus Shelter, the Village Green, and Daffodil Lane	Ask all businesses if they would like to be featured on such boards. Ask Railtrack about improving and updating the existing board at Bucknell Railway Station.

Key Issues	Statistical evidence for issue	Proposed Long term activity	Proposed Short term activity
Landscaping and Shrub Planting on Public areas.	78% thought this important.	Start a phased scheme of planting in one area per year, so that there will be impact from the start, and momentum will then build up over the longer period.	Consider a possible relatively small allocation of Parish funds (over a five year period) to purchase durable and decorative shrubs that would also encourage birds etc. Seek volunteers to form a group to plant and maintain these shrubs.
Dog waste and litter	94% thought this an important issue	Move bins as necessary to ensure good coverage of areas where dog fouling and litter is known to be a problem. Consider installation of additional bins if required.	Review current positions of dog waste and litter bins. Consider most suitable positioning and distribution of these bins.
Stone built Railway Goods Shed, dated 1860, existing on Coal Yard	This was raised and supported at the village meeting. Local railway enthusiasts have given more support, and provided information and historic photos.	If a Planning Application is made, every effort should be made to resist demolition, and encourage renovation/reuse. (A new book – The Railway Goods Shed and Warehouse in England, has just been published by Historic England.)	Information/Historic Photos have been provided to Shropshire Council's Conservation Officer, who has made a site visit with two Parish Plan group members. He has since put the data on to the HER – Historic Environment Record. This would be taken into account if a planning application is made for the Coal Yard.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES (SOCIAL AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE)

Bedstone is a much smaller community than Bucknell and has very few amenities other than a church and a large modern village hall. There is a small independent boarding school in the village. One respondent suggested that it would be useful to be able to use the school's swimming pool and another suggested that there should be a footway at the bus stop outside the school entrance.

Bucknell has a wide range of thriving community activities as well as some useful amenities. The activities include the WI, a skittles/boules club, a walking group, a book club, the pop-in cafe and an annual show. The amenities include a village hall, a church, a primary school, a recreation ground, general store, post office, butcher, motor vehicle repair workshop, filling station/newsagent and two public houses. Whilst many residents are pleased with many of these, there are some where improvements in quality have been called for. Five areas in which residents would like to see change have been identified:

- Improved general store / village shop facilities
- A better village hall in Bucknell
- More amenities for young people
- Use of the Daffodil Lane recreation ground
- More support for the elderly and lonely

Further information follows for each of these subjects.

(a) Improved general store / village shop facilities

The General Store, Post Office, Butcher, Motor repair workshop and Filling Station/Newsagent were all important to over 90% of respondents. However in response to the survey question "What additional amenities would you like to see in Bucknell?" 47 (out of 92) comments were about the need for more general store / village shop facilities. Similarly, in response to the question "How might the quality of current amenities be improved in Bucknell?" 15 (out of 58) comments were about improving the current general store / village shop, both the premises and the range and variety of stock for sale. Many of those making comments referred to the better facilities provided by the community shops in Wigmore and Aston-on-Clun, and the general stores in Leintwardine.

(b) A better village hall

More than three quarters of respondents to the survey agreed that Bucknell Village Hall needs to be improved. Support was split evenly between those who agree with "Further Improve the Memorial Hall" and "Build a new Village Hall". Slightly more agreed with "Better use of existing facilities such as School and Church".

(c) More amenities for young people

Several suggestions were made by the younger residents of the Parish to improve the amenities available to them.

Some will involve capital expenditure –

- Dirt Jumps for mountain bikes
- A multipurpose court (for Tennis, Basketball, 5 a side)
- A basket ball hoop in the big park (i.e. the Daffodil Lane recreation area)
- More play equipment in the parks

Others involve someone organising activities for young people –

- A youth club
- More activities during the holidays in the park
- Children's football tournament

The younger residents also expressed the need for a bus shelter, supporting the views of over two-thirds of the adult survey respondents, who favoured having a bus shelter near Bucknell Railway Station – see the Environment section of this Plan.

(d) Use of the Daffodil Lane recreation ground

In response to the question “It has been suggested that the recreation ground is currently underused. It costs a significant amount to maintain it. What would make you use it more?” 67 suggestions were made, the formation or re-instating of sports clubs featuring quite a few times.

It is clear that the demise of the Bucknell football team is regretted in many quarters with several requests to revive it plus other sports including cricket in the summer. One suggestion was to link sporting activities with those of Bucknell Primary School to catch children at an early stage.

The existence of the Bucknell Show was noted and appreciated with suggestions for expanding this, e.g. with a Spring Show.

61 comments were made in response to the question “What kind of activities should be offered that would generate extra income?”. Two respondents raised a question as to whether the recreation ground can generate income (due to a clause in the original grant funding contract).

(e) More support for the elderly and lonely

Data from the 2011 Census shows that 31% of the Parish population was over the age of 65, and it is apparent from the experience of local services such as the “Pop-in Cafe” at St Mary's Church and the Good Neighbours Scheme that there is a need to increase the support available to the elderly and lonely residents in our Parish. There are also a number of local residents who are keen to work together to develop such services.

Recommended Actions - Community Facilities

Key Issues	Statistical evidence for issue	Proposed Long term activity	Proposed Short term activity
Better general store / village shop facilities in Bucknell	The majority of comments made by respondents to this section of the survey concerned the need for improved general store / village shop facilities, with better premises and increased range and variety of goods for sale.	The Parish Council and Shropshire Council should consider how to ensure that that the replacement new village shop and other business premises (featured clearly in Shropshire Council's development plans for Bucknell) are built before the existing shop and other business premises are demolished. This is to save local jobs and services that are vital for the Parish.	Residents of the Parish should make more use of the retail facilities they wish to see improved, asking retailers to stock specific items they need.
Better village hall facilities	More than three quarters of respondents to the survey felt that Bucknell Village Hall needs to be improved but there is no consensus about how this should be achieved.	Either build a new hall or improve the existing one.	<p>Memorial Hall Committee (Contact: Nicky Edwards, 07973 563829 or email edwardsn80@gmail.com) to work with Parish Council to undertake investigation into whether it is possible for the school, memorial hall and church to work together to make the most of their facilities, both buildings and land.</p> <p>Investigate the viability of either improving the current village hall or building a new one.</p>

Key Issues	Statistical evidence for issue	Proposed Long term activity	Proposed Short term activity
Improved amenities for young people	Consultations with younger residents of the Parish showed there is general dissatisfaction with the range and quality of village facilities for young people. Several suggestions were made, and are listed above.	Develop and maintain as many of the amenities listed as possible.	At the public meeting in Bucknell on 22/11/16, members of an Implementation Group were identified to look after provision for young people in the Parish. Contact: Juliet Earp, 07986 462401 or email jmjearp@gmail.com
Better use of Daffodil Lane recreation ground	There was general agreement in the survey that more use should be made of the facilities offered by the recreation ground.		Identify a group that will take responsibility for developing activities on the recreation ground. Contact: Memorial Hall Committee – Nicky Edwards, 07973 563829 or email edwardsn80@gmail.com
	Reinstatement of sports (football, rugby, cricket) was mentioned by 18 of 67 respondents	Formation of sports clubs	Advertise locally for interest in playing football (the sport mentioned by most) and in forming a bowling club.
	Car boot sales were mentioned by 5 of the 67 respondents	Formation of a committee to organise these on a regular basis	Ask those who have previously held them to consider doing so again.
	Several respondents expressed uncertainty over whether fund-raising activities at the ground or renting all or part of it out is permitted under current arrangements		Determine (with those who control the ground) the true situation

Key Issues	Statistical evidence for issue	Proposed Long term activity	Proposed Short term activity
Increase support facilities for the elderly	<p>Aging population (31% of Parish are over 65).</p> <p>Anecdotal experience from existing facilities in Bucknell village.</p> <p>Three quarters of those who expressed an opinion in the survey agreed with the building of retirement or sheltered housing in Bucknell.</p> <p>70 survey respondents agreed with having a care home in Bucknell, for both housing and employment reasons.</p>	<p>Develop existing Good Neighbours Scheme so that it offers informal help to elderly in their homes.</p> <p>Work with Age UK to explore setting up a Befriending Scheme.</p> <p>Explore with specialist developers possible sheltered housing and/or care home facilities on the designated timber yard housing development site.</p>	<p>Publicise Silver Line (telephone support for the lonely elderly) in the Parish, through the Bucknell Newsletter, posters on notice boards, etc.</p> <p>Offer training session for all sections of the community to become "Dementia Friends", and work towards making Bucknell a "Dementia-Friendly Village" (through the Alzheimer's Association).</p> <p>Contact: Margaret Hay-Campbell, 01547 530750 or email magarethayc@gmail.com</p>

SAFETY CONCERNS

Speeding (90% concern) and HGV's (82%) through the villages were top safety issues. There were also lots of written comments about these issues.

80% felt urgent action should be taken to improve pedestrian safety on the road between Bucknell School and Post Office, again with lots of written comments made. 98 respondents (of 130) recommended a 20 mph speed limit, 47 suggested street lighting and 60 suggested road markings showing a path for pedestrians. There were 45 other comments, which included suggesting writing more 'slow' signs on the roads, a proper pavement/footway (with a kerb) where the road is wide enough and also road calming measures.

Other road related safety issues included:

- The level crossing junction: the approach from the Sitwell direction – if travelling towards the school – the view of traffic coming across the level crossing is obscured by the level crossing machinery.
- Speeding along Weston Road

Police presence, vandalism, noise and nuisance and property crime are generally not thought to be problematic.

Recommended Actions – Safety Concerns

Key Issues	Statistical evidence for issue	Proposed Long term activity	Proposed Short term activity
Speeding	90% of survey respondents expressed concern about speeding through the villages, with a third wanting urgent action to be taken	Establish tighter speed restrictions in Bucknell village – particularly between the School and the Post Office – recommend maximum 20 mph limit between the level crossing and the phone box corner. Suggest that the 50mph limit on road in from the Lingen Bridge be replaced with 30mph from before the junction with Oil Mill Lane.	Parish Council to work with Shropshire Council to establish measures to lower the speed of traffic at the places of concern to residents. An Implementation Group was formed at the public meeting in Bucknell on 22/11/16 to develop approaches to managing traffic speeds effectively in the village. Contact: Nigel Hartin, 07583 962292 or email nigel.hartin@shropshire.gov.uk
Road Safety at Bucknell Level Crossing	Several comments made in survey responses about the difficulty of seeing oncoming traffic at this road junction	Discuss with Network Rail possibilities for improving road junction visibility and pedestrian access at the Bucknell level crossing.	Install a mirror opposite the level crossing so that traffic approaching from Sitwell direction and turning right towards the school can see traffic approaching from the other side of the railway tracks.

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Tarena Beddoes, Duncan Cullimore (Secretary), John Munro Derry, Lesley Evans, Ian Hay-Campbell and Andrew Rolfe (Chair).

(Also serving as members at an earlier stage were Nick Dummer, Ian Graves (Chair) and Beverley Stone.)

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