



Pewsey  
Community  
Area  
Partnership

## Minutes PCAP 11<sup>th</sup> April 2024

### Wootton Rivers Village Hall 7pm

#### Present:

Dawn Wilson (Chair, PCAP Health and Youth, Wilcot, Huish & Oare PC)  
Caroline Lequesne (Wiltshire Council)  
Susie Brew (PCAP Coordinator)  
Curly Haskell (PVTP volunteer & PCAP Standards Working Group)  
Beverley Helps (Easton Royal PC)  
Hew Helps (Easton Royal resident)  
Kate Silvester (Pewsey Green)  
John Brewin (Woodborough PC)  
John Paul Sheerin (Great Bedwyn PC)  
Linda Tamani (Manningford PC)  
Dean Cowley (Wootton Rivers PC)  
Charles Lee-Bennet (Upavon)  
Patrick Hayward (North Newnton PC)

- 1) Introductions were completed.
- 2) Minutes from 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024 were accepted, proposed Curly Haskell, seconded Kate Silvester.
- 3) Apologies: Jeremy Wyatt (Great Green Bedwyn, PCAP Environment), Sylvia Wyatt (Great Green Bedwyn, Bedwyn PC, PCAP Environment), Peter Deck (PCAP Planning, Pewsey Resident), Cllr Paul Oatway (PCAP Crime & Community Safety, Wiltshire Council), Colin Gale (Vice-Chair, PCAP Transport, Rushall PC),
- 4) No Declarations of Interest.

#### 5) Potholes Update

Dawn Wilson raised the issue that it is not just domestic vehicles that are being damaged by the poor state of the roads, but the brand new buses have also been damaged, with 5 of the 7 vehicles being off the road in recent weeks. This has led to some service unreliability which will potentially impact bus usage as people cannot put up with unreliability.

Cllr Clewer was due to meet PCAP on 9<sup>th</sup> April, however the meeting was changed by Cllr Clewer and will now take place on 23<sup>rd</sup> April. Cllr Clewer has requested that it is a small meeting so PCAP is unable to invite all the parish councils to the meeting. Since the meeting has been arranged, there has been work on the A345 and work booked for the A342, as well as the Oare pothole being filled in. Currently, there are 168 potholes on the list for the meeting with Cllr Clewer – this includes the ones from Alton Parish Council but not the ones from Easton Royal Parish Council, which will be sent over.

Questions were raised about what has happened to all the money that Cllr Clewer talks about and, given the underspend by Wiltshire Council, why some of that money wasn't redirected to road maintenance.

John Brewin said that Cllr Paul Oatway took Cllr Clewer around some of the worst areas on the C261, so he is aware of them.



Dawn Wilson said that the contractor doesn't have the staff with the right skills or the right materials, which is an issue for Wiltshire Council as it is their contract. Compare the quality of work in Wiltshire to that in Cornwall where McCormack are the contractors and the roads are in a much better state. Also, the Highways 5 Year Plan for maintenance work has next to nothing for the Pewsey Community Area on there. In addition, the previous 3 years' issues have been removed from the plan, rather than being carried forward. Curly Haskell was disappointed to see that Pewsey Parish Council has not contributed to the Potholes Report for the Pewsey Community Area.

John Brewin raised the issue regarding the November Highways Matter Area Board when Wiltshire Council promised to get responses to issues raised within a week. It is now 5 months since that meeting and still no responses have been received. Caroline and Richard have been chasing this up with Highways but to no avail.

Kate Silvester raised the process for claiming damages from potholes as you can only claim if it has been reported, but you can't find out whether it has been reported or not. Promised improvements to the reporting app have not materialised.

Susie Brew will add the potholes from Alton Parish Council to the list as they arrived after the production of the report.

#### 6) Parish Issues Review & Flytipping

There were a number of issues raised. Patney PC has experienced failure of the gully service to turn up and has not been able to get a response from WC on this. Great Bedwyn has a gully clearance booked, so we have put Patney and Great Bedwyn in contact with each other to see if this can be resolved. Ruth Kinderman may also be able to help Patney, so Susie will put them in contact with one another. Wilcot Huish & Oare has had issues with sheep worrying (in one instance, 12 ewes were killed and the flock scattered far and wide. In addition, they had issues with the Parish Steward (Carl) who has been called away to other parishes for other work, so have not had their work done as a result – Susie to add to the Pothole Report as it means potholes aren't getting fixed. There are also issues with signage of temporary redirections of rights of way. Wootton Rivers had issues with a blocked drain which contributed to the flooding of 2 houses which are still empty and drying out. The drain has now been unblocked but does not provide a permanent solution. Wootton Rivers also recorded pothole issues which get worse every year.

A dilapidated and stripped out caravan was abandoned at the bridge embankment on the road and later ran down the road into a parked car. Wiltshire Council dealt with this promptly.

#### 7) Community Plan

a) **Economy** – The Pewsey Vale Tourism Partnership is busy, as always, with a few new members over the last month or two. The annual membership fee of £55 covers running costs (e.g. website, security, etc) and any excess enables us to advertise in VisitWiltshire and Great West Way publications. Anecdotal feedback from accommodation partners indicates that where they would be booked for the summer months in January, the bookings are coming in much later than normal. The PVTP has applied for a GWR grant to create a Literary Trail and resurrect the King Alfred Trail in Pewsey. The issue of Wiltshire not having an LVEP organisation continues, with no plan from Wiltshire Council on how to resolve this.

#### b) **Transport**

##### **Buses:**



## Pewsey Community Area Partnership

The demand-responsive Wiltshire Connect Bus Service has been performing well. Promotion offers of £1/ride on Saturdays have been available to increase the ridership on Saturdays. There will also be a drive to increase the use between Devizes and Marlborough.

Wiltshire Council Transport received £2.1 million per year for 2 years, Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) grant funding to improve services across the county. During this period of grant funding WC cannot cut services as part of the requirement of the grant funding award.

Linda Tamani raised the issue that the phone service for the bookable buses is not available on Saturdays, so if you have a problem and want to cancel, if you don't use the app, then you are unable to do so. Linda spoke to Paul Sanders at WC and was given a contact number for Saturdays which you can send a text to. Susie to get the number from Paul and share.

John Paul said that Great Bedwyn Parish Council has received lots of feedback on the new service and 80% of it is negative. This is probably because Great Bedwyn was well served before the changes. John Paul will collate the specific issues so that we can forward them on to Paul Sanders at WC.

### **Trains:**

GWR Stakeholders Mtg with Mark Hopwood (GWR) & Marcus Jones (Network Rail) – Zoom Mtg – 27th Feb 2024. Apologies from both GWR & Network Rail for the overall poor performance recently being provided on the Great Western Network. Hitachi not delivering the right number of trains each day due to weather and vandalism. Network Rail acknowledged they are not providing level of performance required. Industrial Action – Although a deal was reached with the RMT there is still no deal with ASLEF with little chance of reaching a settlement with the current mandate. Looking at further electrification there are no real plans, long term strategy due to funding constraints. Some plans, like the 4th platform at Westbury, may have gone backwards. Possibility of more bus/rail links as fairly cheap wins.

Network Rail – Wiltshire Strategic Study – Stakeholder Working Group – 27th March 2024

A revised scope has been applied to the modelling using off peak hours. The impact to Pewsey is the modelling to include the additional semi-fast service giving 1 train/hour during peak hours is not being modelled. Network Rail advised they were still hoping to do this modelling if time permits. The overall impact on Pewsey Commuters is a longer journey time Pewsey to London with the off-set of a regular 1 train per hour service. The modelling is very hypothetical using baseline timetables which are not being achieved. The freight analysis impact is considerable on the passenger service especially around Westbury – Salisbury.

A draft report was supposed to have been issued in March with a final report revised to end April beginning of May. Not optimistic on the report timetable.

Bad news – Pewsey is the bottom ranking station out of 2,623 stations on the GWR network. Pewsey has 500 passengers a day and was ranked in March as bottom and this was not just a one off for just March. Pewsey ranks mid-way in the 2,623 stations for the number of passengers per day. Colin has emailed Mark Hopwood to ask what he is going to do about it and what the current progress is on getting staffing back to Pewsey. The email has been acknowledged. Since then, Dawn has had news that Kelly has a contract to run the ticket office at Pewsey in Simon's absence. Simon hopes to return back, albeit on shorter hours and build up from there. Kelly is likely to continue working through this period to provide back up.

- c) **Planning** – Peter Deck was unable to attend the meeting. Dean Cowley raised a potential issue with the Draft Local Plan from Wiltshire Council, on that the definition of an infill site had changed. Previously it specified that an infill site could have 1 or 2 dwellings on it, now the plan states no number.



Susie Brew raised a planning application in Grafton Parish at Wexcombe that could impact not only all the parishes in the Pewsey Community Area, but any National Landscape across the country. An application for a new dwelling to the south of the site of a modern barn was made many times and refused. Eventually an application was put forward to convert the modern barn and this was initially refused, but then allowed at appeal. There were specific conditions applied that if the person who eventually was to do the conversion requested any change, however small, from the application that had been allowed, then it would be deemed not to have planning permission. This was done to protect the village, WC and the landowner from uncertainty. The workshop and land was subsequently sold to a developer who has put in planning permission to build a modern design house to the south of the existing modern barn. They have used precedents for this application, but the precedents do not fall under AONB planning rules. There are many issues with the application (does not conform to local Design Statements, does not meet AONB planning requirements, previous applications for a building on that site have been refused, etc). However, for some reason, the pre-planning report by Wiltshire Council was very favourable for this application and the developers of course are making the most of this. The Parish Council, North Wessex Downs National Landscape and all the village of Wexcombe have put in objections to the application. Cllr Wheeler has called in the application so if the Planning Officers are minded to support the application, it will go to a meeting. However, if this application does go through, it will have consequences for any site where there is a modern barn by setting a precedent that will be hard to fight. Planning application reference is PL/2023/07710. Susie will share a document containing the issues so that any parish that has concerns can also submit their views.

- d) **Crime & Community Safety** – Cllr Paul Oatway was unable to be at the meeting. Dawn advised Parish Councils that if you buy your own SID then it cannot be at a fixed site, running 24x7 as if they are on all the time people become immune to them. The Police are now enforcing this rule.
- e) **Environment** – Kate said that Syliva and Jeremy are now looking at Wild Flower Verges to see how this could be implemented across the area. Susie had met a chap at the North Wessex Downs Council of Partners meeting recently who was an expert on community wild flower verges. He has since shared information on how to go about doing this. Susie will share the document.  
Kate now has the infrared camera for Pewsey and has done some heat loss surveys already. They will resume in the autumn when the weather is cooler as this distorts the imaging.
- f) **Culture, Heritage & Leisure** – Crofton Beam Engines, Wilton Windmill and Pewsey Heritage Centre have all reopened for the 2024 season. The Crop Circle Centre is also open. The Walkers are Welcome quarterly meeting is in May and will be a face to face meeting in Pewsey, with a walk and then lunch. The North Wessex Downs Walking Festival is on from 30<sup>th</sup> May to 9<sup>th</sup> June. Many of the walks are already fully booked, some with waiting lists. The Pewsey Community Area is well-represented at the Festival.
- g) **Health & Wellbeing** – Dawn confirmed that we are trying to reinvent the group so that it delivers worthwhile projects for the area. The grant fund is aimed at older adults and vulnerable adults. Linda said that it is difficult to do group social projects in parishes where the residents are scattered, such as in Manningford. Caroline suggested funding for a professional befriending service might be something that parishes want to consider. Susie said that PCAP has a project for creating an information area on the PCAP website for outdoor and other activities (an idea from Judy Haynes of Great Bedwyn Footpaths



who had seen this in the New Forest). Caroline suggested that there is a pilot for a similar thing in Warminster where the groups would maintain the information. Susie and Dawn felt this would be unlikely to work as groups would then have to duplicate their information. Dawn confirmed that the monthly Pewsey Vale Memory Café has now been going for 10 years, with Movement to Music in place for 8 years. Funding has come from the Wiltshire Community Foundation, Marlborough Lions, the Health & Wellbeing Fund and the Masons. The weekly Community Café in the Wesley Hall is very popular.

h) **Children & Young People** – There is a pot of funding for Youth Work.

Charles said that they lack a community centre in Upavon (the village hall is limited as it has no parking). Upavon PC is looking at way to raise funds to build a new pavilion so that there is a centre that the community can use. Caroline advised to look at the Football Foundation and Sport for All for grants. The Friday Pewsey Youth Café continues and is very successful with 25 to 30 children every week. Dawn is stepping back having got the funding for a sports teacher for 18 weeks, so that children can explore different sports. Community First provided the sports coach information. Pewsey Pump Track is a great success with people of all ages making use of it and sharing skills. The official opening is on 27<sup>th</sup> May with a BMX champion opening the facility. The Wiltshire Council eVoucher scheme has mean that Dawn is able to process food shopping vouchers much more quickly and easily. Over £9k has been distribute in the last year, benefitting 70 families. Work is continuing to get Coop and Lidl on to the shopping vouchers scheme.

i) **Treasurer Report** – Dawn presented the Treasurer’s Report.

**8) Pewsey Area Board & Wiltshire Council Update** – Caroline encouraged all Parish Councils to let her know of subjects that they would like covered at the Area Boards.

**9) Any Other Business** – none.

**10) The Chair** thanked everyone for attending and Wootton Rivers Parish Council for the use of the hall, refreshments and setting thing up. The meeting closed at 8.55pm.

The next PCAP meeting is on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> July at 7pm at Woodborough Parish Room.