

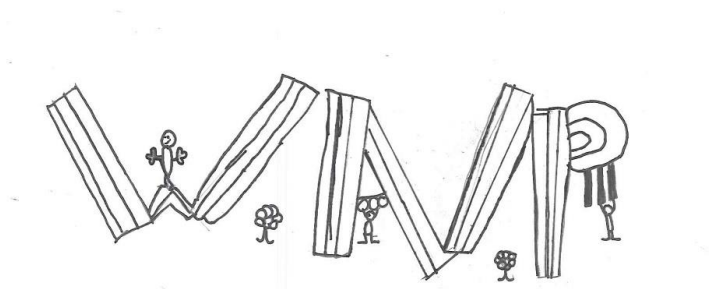


2018- 2038

Westfield Neighbourhood Development Plan



Grateful thanks to the children of Westfield Primary School for designing the Neighbourhood Plan logos. They look amazing.



Background document June 2017



Foreword by the Chair of the Westfield Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

Westfield is a **great** place to live. A safe, prosperous, and neighbourly community with a unique heritage, strong family and neighbourhood ties and an optimistic and enthusiastic population, enjoying a dynamic future.

Investment and change in the years ahead will only be worthwhile if it makes a real difference to the lives of local people and the future of its community. The Westfield Neighbourhood Plan, being led jointly by Westfield Parish Council and a dedicated team of Westfield residents, started back in April 2015.

Following the exciting proposals and guidelines laid out in the Localism Act, the Parish Council realised immediately that it presented a unique opportunity to ensure the people of Westfield would have a say in all aspects of the future of their parish, but most importantly it wanted local people to decide where, for example, new housing should go, what educational infrastructure should be incorporated, and where commercial and retail locations were required, rather than leaving this decision entirely to Bath & North East Somerset Council (BANES).

Westfield's Neighbourhood Plan sets out a vision for the area that reflects the thoughts and feelings of local people with a real interest in their community. The Plan lays down a clear framework with objectives on key themes such as moving around, housing, employment, green space, shops and community facilities. It builds on current and planned activity and says what Westfield Parish Council, BANES and its partners will work towards.

The Westfield Parish Council is committed to developing and strengthening the contacts and groups that have evolved because of the Neighbourhood Planning process. It believes that by working together to implement the Plan it will make Westfield an even better place to live, work and enjoy.

I simply cannot complete this introduction without thanking the key people who have worked so hard to bring it to fruition, or who have supported the Steering Group so strongly during this huge task.

Thank you all,

Cllr Ron Hopkins, Chairman, Westfield Neighbourhood Working Group



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Introduction

A Neighbourhood Plan is a community-led initiative for guiding the future development of an area. It is about the use and development of land and its starting point and continual reference is the evidence, mostly from local people which identifies local needs and priorities.

Providing the Neighbourhood Plan passes scrutiny by an independent examiner and is subsequently approved by referendum, Bath and North East Somerset Council as the Local Planning Authority will be required to take the Plan into account in the consideration and determination of planning applications and subsequent appeals.

Introduced in the Localism Act 2011, the Plan must meet the following conditions:

- General conformity with the strategic policies of the formally adopted Development Plan for the area. For Westfield these are outlined currently in the Local Plan, however once the Placemaking Plan is adopted (potentially autumn 2017) then the Local Plan policies won't apply. A current list of the saved local plan policies are in the back of the B&NES Core Strategy which can be viewed online. The Neighbourhood Plan is also written with reference to the West of England's Joint Spatial Plan will set out a prospectus for sustainable growth that will help the wider area meet its housing and transport needs for the next 20 years.
- Have regard to current National Planning Policy, a link for which is given in the Evidence Base.
- Contribute to achieving sustainable development
- Be compatible with European Law and human rights obligations

Scope and Purpose

The Westfield Neighbourhood Area was designated on 23rd April 2015. It covers the whole of the parish (see map below) and sets out a vision and policies for the parish until 2035. The B&NES Core Strategy runs from 2011-2029 and the Placemaking Plan follows the same time frame. The Westfield Neighbourhood Plan runs until 2035, with reviews every five years to ensure it up to date and in accordance with the most recent Development Plan Document.



Designated Westfield Neighbourhood Development Plan Area



The Neighbourhood Area

Kelly's Directory Bristol and Somerset 1897 described Westfield as, "a hamlet one mile west of Radstock with a Primitive Methodist Church erected in 1869 and enlarged in 1897 and will seat 400 persons".

By the early nineteenth century Westfield still consisted mostly of rural land and coal mining works, with little residential development. Westfield's unique street scene emerged with the building of large numbers of terraced miners' cottages along the Fosse Way in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and the area developed into a more populous neighbourhood in its own right. Modern housing estates were developed on land on both sides of the Fosse Way from the 1970's onwards.

Jumping forward to 2011, Westfield became officially recognised as a parish. The characteristics which set it apart from its neighbouring towns and villages are celebrated and preserved as uniquely Westfield.



St Peter's Church Photo courtesy of Westfield Parish Council

The 2011 Census shows that 5855 people live in Westfield, comprising 2,033 households, 1,215 children, 3,800 working age adults and 840 people over 65. The largest area of inward migration into the parish has been by people aged 25-44 and children.

77.7% of residents are economically active, compared with 69.9% in England. The Economic Deprivation Index 2009 shows 8% of residents living in income



deprivation, which compares to an average of 13.5% in England. Westfield Industrial Estate, the largest of its type in B&NES, is a highly valued element of the Parish.

With a high percentage of semi detached and terraced houses, 78.9% of housing in Westfield is owner occupied, compared with 64.1% across England. However the affordability ratio (ie the average house price as a ratio of average income) in Westfield is 7 compared with an average of 15.4 across England.

Described as the 'green lungs' of Westfield and separating it from neighbouring towns and villages are two much loved green corridors: Waterside Valley to the south and land abutting the cycle way and the Janes estate to the north. Both are rich in natural wildlife, provide breathtaking views and are a source of recreation and fresh air for local people.



Land abutting the Janes Estate. Photo courtesy of Westfield Parish Council



Vision

The vision of the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group is to maintain and further enhance the parish of Westfield, as a place that people of all ages, generations and backgrounds aspire to live, through the use of creative development that enhances the historic character of the area whilst delivering requirements of future generations.

This will be achieved through a blend of protection of existing community assets, enhancement of amenities and infrastructure, future developments that meet the needs of existing residents as well as growth aspirations to encourage new people into the parish.



*View from Waterside Valley (Downside Abbey in the distance)
Photo courtesy of Westfield Parish Council*



Key issues and objectives

Housing

- Define building styles and layouts of any new developments in Westfield to meet the character of the parish.
- Clarity on residential infill and backland development.
- Energy efficiency incorporated in the design of new housing.
- Lifetime homes to meet the needs of the aging population.

Green Spaces

- Conserve and enhance the rural landscape and important views so widely appreciated by the community overall.
- To give better access to the green spaces, particularly due to the hilly nature of the North/South green areas.
- To create leisure nature trails/ heritage trails.
- Increase the allotments provision.
- Protect the ecology of the green corridors.
- Provide access to green spaces in neighbouring parishes and towns.
- Enhancement/ preservation of significant footpaths such as the Fosse Way.
- Planned play facilities, garden sizes, seating, trees and easy access to green spaces.

Preserving heritage

- Westfield has a rich heritage relating to the former Somerset coalfields. The public consultation has identified a wish to preserve this and raise awareness of it, including:
 - Pit Pony stables
 - Engine House
 - Pit Path from Westfield Engine House and stables down to Somervale Road



Economy, Industry and Jobs

- Raise the quality/quantity of employment opportunities in Westfield to try to reduce out commuting.
- Allow growth of Industrial Estate.
- Preserve and enhance the existing Industrial Estate.
- Opportunity for recreational and tourism activities.

Amenity and Infrastructure

- The Community Consultation highlighted a need to provide within Westfield a designated focal point by way of a 'village hall'.
- Seek potential sites for the development of a community centre for the use of all residents/council but including also children/young mothers and youth clubs for older children.
- Seek sites for a more competitive range of shops
- Preserve the Railway Pub as an asset of Community value.
- Enhancement of broadband provision
- Enhancement of street lighting

Traffic

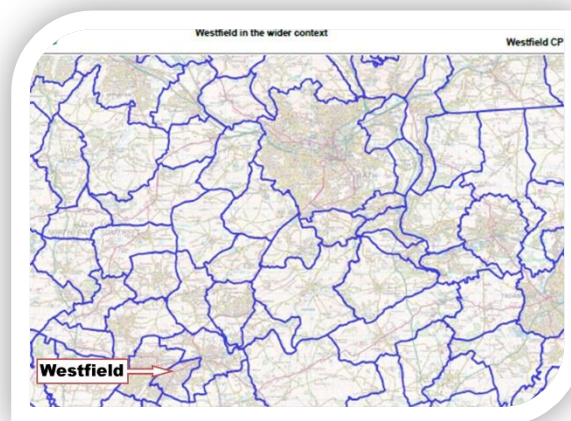
- To maintain or lower density of traffic on the A367 that runs through Westfield, particularly given the fact that the A367 has one of the highest traffic densities in the whole of the BANES area.
- Seek potential of diverting traffic.
- Measures to mitigate traffic hazards.
- Safer footpaths.
- Improve residential parking.
- Preservation of public transport in Westfield.
- Address the issues of surface water flooding and air pollution from the A367.



Housing

Westfield context

Westfield is a long established and mature community located approximately 10.5 miles South West of Bath.



The community is primarily linear in nature, extending along the A367 Fosseway from Radstock in the North East towards Shepton Mallet in the South. The community has expanded to either side of the Fosseway and infilled land up to the boundaries with the neighbouring parishes of Midsomer Norton and Radstock. It is intrinsically linked to these two settlements but has its own separate identity.

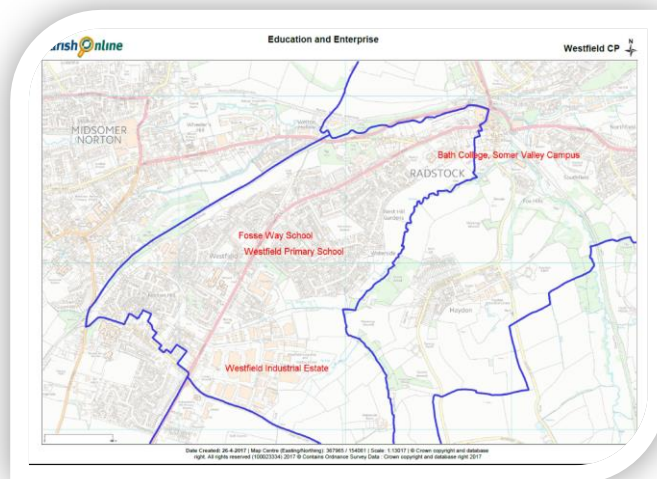
Up until May 2011 Westfield was administered as a component of Norton Radstock Town Council. This Council was disbanded and three independent Councils were established in Westfield, Midsomer Norton and Radstock.

Whilst Westfield has its own character, it is part of the wider Somer Valley and welcomes the opportunity to work together with neighbouring towns and villages. However, its distinction as a mining community is defined by the fact that it is separated from other urban areas by its green infrastructure.

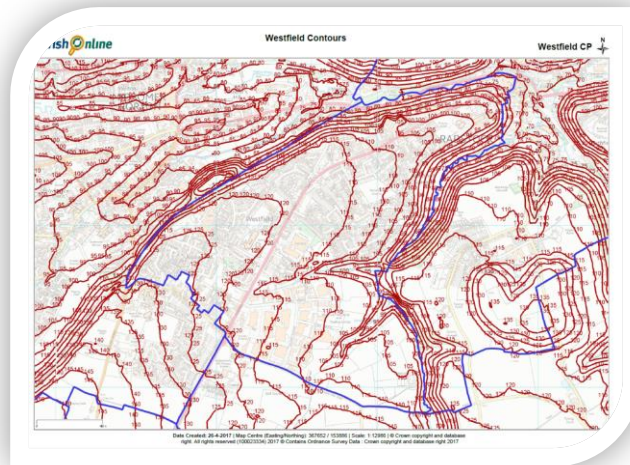


Westfield is a parish committed to Education and Enterprise and hosts important facilities such as Bath College Somer Valley Campus and Westfield Industrial Estate. Westfield has a proud heritage based on the Roman settlement and its mining history, being a significant population centre of the old Somerset Coalfield area.

There have been a high number of small housing developments in recent years, and one significant project at the former Alcan factory site. Westfield has a small number of local shops in the immediate area at Westfield local centre and it supports the sustainability of local businesses.



The topography of the area is extremely hilly and there are significant gradients within the parish and on the land in adjacent parishes. There are numerous views across both adjacent communities and open farmland or recreation land, outlined further in the Green Space section.



The community of Westfield has developed mainly over the last 200 years and has been built as a number of clearly defined phases. There has always been a healthy mix of residential and industrial occupation, which has provided both homes and local employment for residents and employment for residents of adjacent communities.

Up until the 1970s there was a significant coal mining industry within Westfield or surrounding areas and during the 1800s large numbers of Miners Cottages were built to accommodate the workforce. The local mines gradually closed as they became uneconomical due to difficult conditions and more efficient sources being developed in other areas of the country.

With the closure of the coal mines other industries developed in the area. This has provided opportunities for new housing to be built on brownfield sites.

The follow development and land use types feature in Westfield :-

Miners' Cottages mainly built mid 19th Century to early 20th Century.





Ex-Local Authority housing built 1960s / 1970s. Now privately owned or managed by CURO.



Intermediate Housing estates - Janes Estate and Waterside Estate, built 1970s



Nightingale Estate, part of it built 2010s





Recent Housing Estates, Upper Court and surrounding area, built 2000's



Industrial Estate and units



Miners Welfare Trust Recreation Grounds at Westhill Gardens and Norton Hill.



Pit Path and old railway line now converted to cycle way.





Waterside Valley



Churches and public buildings



Schools and College



Clubs, Doctors, public house and other facilities





At its inception in 2011, Westfield consisted of 2,341 households, this number increased to 2,506 in 2015.

The miners' cottages primarily occupy the hillside gradient rising along the A367 from the north eastern end towards Radstock to the south western end towards Stratton on the Fosse. Further roads radiate off to both sides of the A367. The nature of these dwellings is primarily linear, most properties have both front and rear gardens, typically plots are long and thin and well established, with many trees, shrubs and hedges. Because there is a large area of mature gardens interspersed with some areas of wild land, these areas of Westfield provide a good habitat for wildlife.

There are key recreational Miners' Trust green spaces at Norton Hill and Westhill and there are public green spaces at the local shops. The miners' cottages are predominantly terraced, typically stone walls pitch roofs, mostly slate. Numerous chimneys are visible and many are still actively used. Many properties have porches, with extensions or sun roofs.

Miners' cottages

	
Chimneys and porches	Large windows



Garages around the back

Extensions, sun rooms, porches



Walled front gardens

Small front gardens (large back gardens)

New developments have housing set back from the road with front and back gardens. Roads have grass verges and cul de sacs are prominent. The irregular design, green centres all make the new developments visually attractive. Further, there are gaps between dwellings, with trees, hedges and bushes. In recognition of the wildlife in Westfield bat boxes have been included in the new Alcan estate. There are a variety of building materials in the new developments: red brick, stone block and render. Roads are tarmacked and occasionally broken up with areas of block work.



More recent housing estates

	
<p>Janes Estate – Uniform style, green verges</p>	<p>Janes Estate – porch styles</p>
	
<p>Waterside Estate – variety of house types</p>	<p>Waterside Estate – larger front gardens</p>
	
<p>Waterside Estate – variety of house sizes</p>	<p>Waterside Estate – variety of building materials</p>



Nightingale Estate (new part) – uniform style

Nightingale Estate (new part) – built with solar panels



Nightingale Estate (new part) – variety of housing types

Nightingale Estate (new part) – full planting scheme



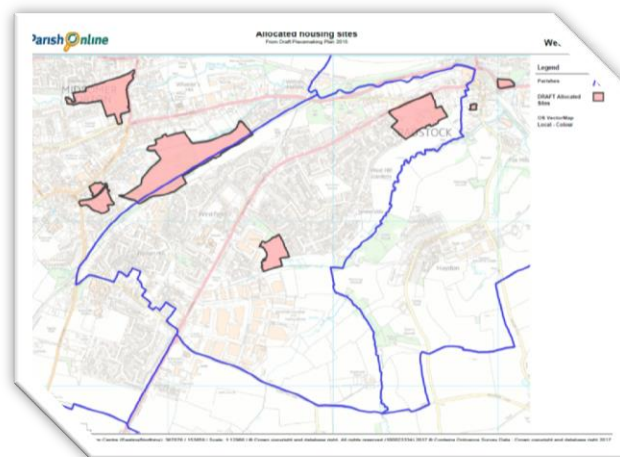
Nightingale Estate (new part) – front walls

Nightingale Estate (new part) – small front gardens



Empty properties do occur, although not in great number in Westfield and the Neighbourhood Plan supports the BANES's Empty Property Policy, July 2013.

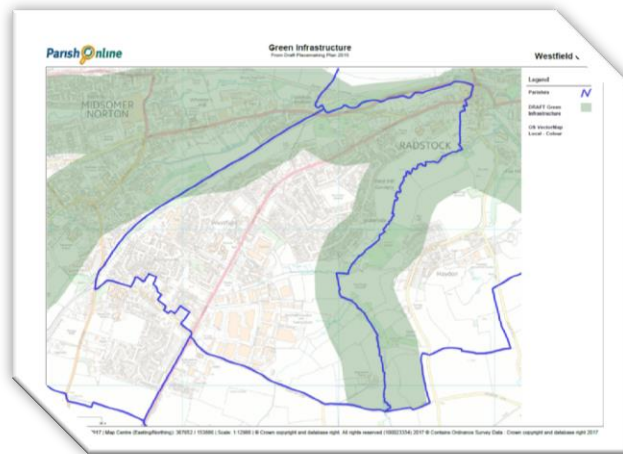
Location of housing





Green Spaces

Westfield, being primarily in an elevated position in the Somer Valley, is very fortunate that it does retain green corridors to the north and south of its boundary. During public consultations there was a strong local desire to maintain these green corridors, as part of Westfield's identity. Waterside is widely used throughout the year by ramblers, dog walkers, mountain bike riders and children and in the summer months (school holidays) by many families picnicking along the stream. These are important green bio diversity corridors.



Ecology

The green corridor to the north is part of a BRERC Site of Nature Conservation Interest. The coal tip is a roost for more than eight species of bats, including the rarer Lesser and Greater Horseshoe species which use the cycle path at the bottom of the field for foraging after sunset. Deers, foxes and an abundance of slow worms are seen in this field. This site is an SNCI.

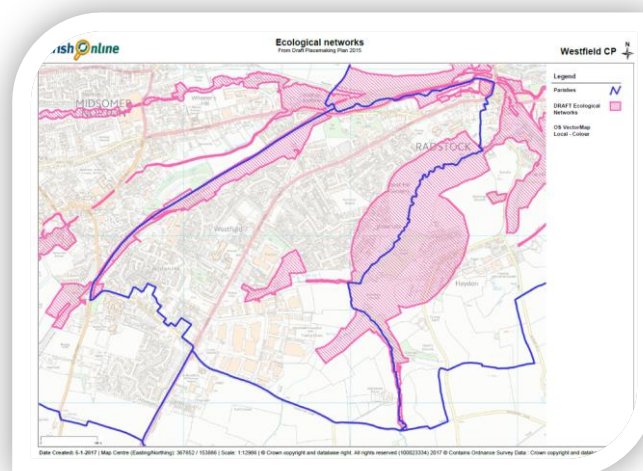
Waterside Valley to the south is a BRERC Site of Nature Conservation Interest and is rich in wildlife. In 2012 there was a full Ecology report of this area undertaken.

- The bat activity surveys detected foraging and commuting activity from three species of bat (common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and nocturne).
- The site was described in the report as having “running water with associated marginal habitats, ancient woodland, unimproved calcareous grassland, semi improved neutral grassland and geological interest.”
- Variety of semi natural habitat with notable species: marsh arrow grass, marsh ragwort, bog stitchwort, fan-leaved water-crowfoot, reed sweetgrass, short-fruited willowherb, early hair grass, brown bent, cornflower, crested hair grass etc.”



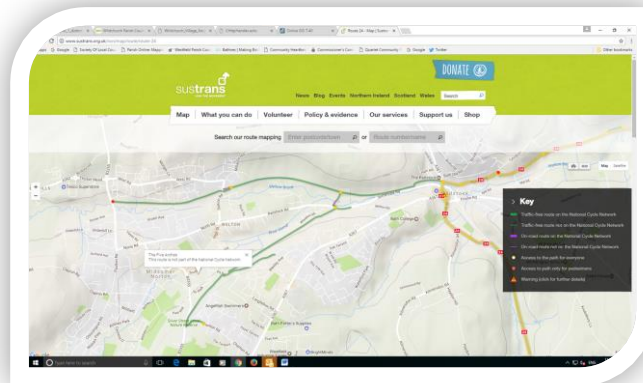
- The report went on to describe the broadleaved woodland as “likely to provide habitats to a range of wildlife. Dead wood provides opportunities to specialist invertebrates and could provide refuge opportunities to reptiles.”
- Trees are also likely to support nesting and sheltering birds.
- Furthermore some of the trees could support roosting bats in addition to providing foraging/commuting habitat.
- The broadleaved woodland is considered to have local value as it is a BAP priority habitat.”
- This area supports birds such as barn owls, reptiles, bats and badgers. Often Deer are seen within the Waterside Valley usually to be found foraging for food and watering in the stream.

The map below shows the current green corridors and known bat corridors.

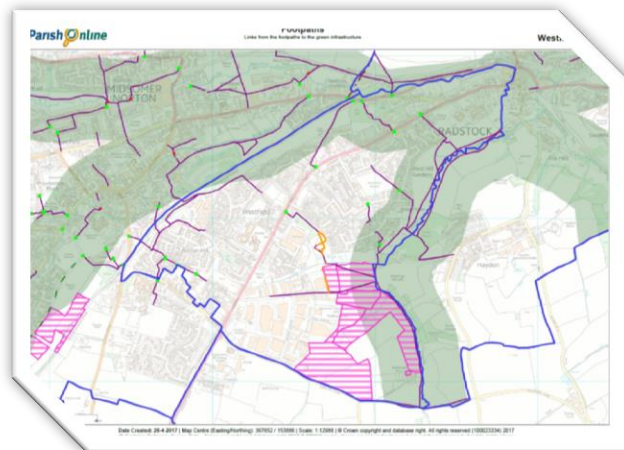


Access to the natural environment

The green corridor to the south is called **Waterside** and features a valley side running down to a stream with public footpaths and three bridges over the stream, provided for access.



To the north is a recently built **Sustrans cycle path** on the old Railway track, this again is accessed by a steep slope from Westfield and although the Fosseway public footpath is the link to it, this is extremely steep and slippery in any wet weather. (The Heritage Section of this Plan refers to the preservation and renovation of this footpath). The cycle path is very widely used for recreation by residents of Westfield and all the neighbouring conurbations (Midsomer Norton/Radstock/Mendip) for horse riding, cycling and dog walking, running and general exercise. It has direct links to further cycle paths which will take you as far as Frome to the east (11 miles+), so for all aspiring marathon enthusiasts it is a major benefit. The major difficulty on this from Westfield's perspective is in easily accessing the cycle path, particularly for the older generation.

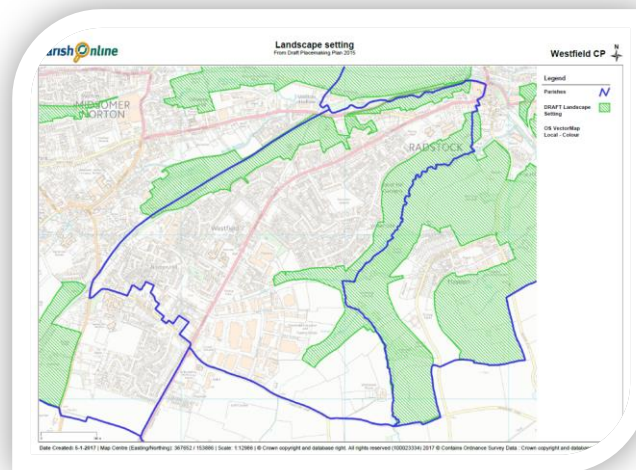


Both the Waterside and the cycle path green corridors are used by local junior schools for nature walks in the summer months, being quite rural with squirrels, birds, tree varieties, stream water flows, forest walking and fantastic views of the countryside. Westfield Parish Council has commissioned a series of identified scenic

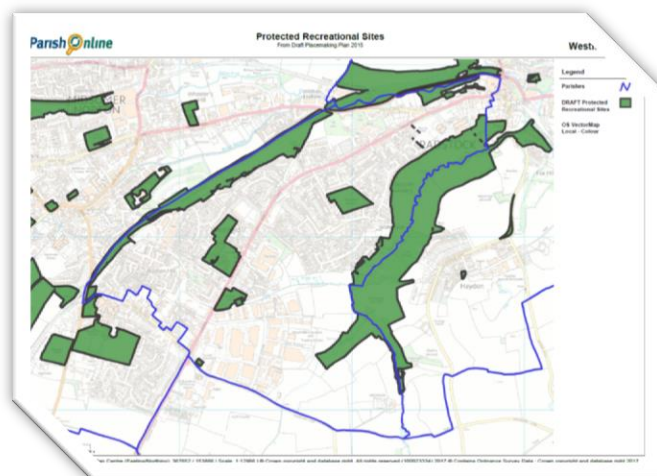


walks around the parish and a schools nature trail could be adopted as an added aspiration.

As mentioned above the Waterside green corridor does not extend the full length of the parish. There is a small section at the western end immediately behind the main Trading Estate which is outside the green corridor.



These are the areas the Neighbourhood Plan is seeking to protect.



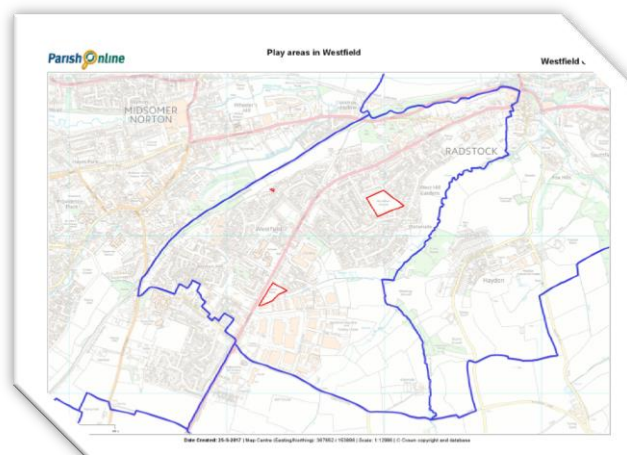


Community Aspiration 1

- Create signed nature and wildlife trails, including some accessible to wheelchair/pushchair users.
- Improve access to the countryside including safe walking and cycling routes in the Parish and their accessibility by people of all ages to encourage healthier lifestyles.
- Map and, wherever possible, link our local Green Spaces to those of neighbouring parishes and towns, including
 - (i) a Westfield Park in the form of a nature trail, linked to the proposed town park in Midsomer Norton to allow access to both and
 - (ii) management of the weir on the border with Radstock.

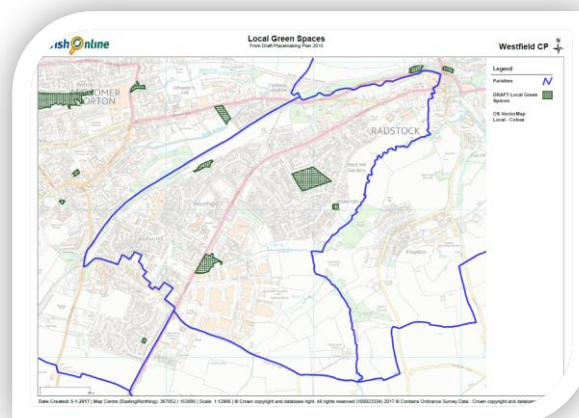
Play areas

The division of the community by the A367 is reflected in the access to some of the recreational areas currently in the Parish, for example, the southern half of the parish has two recreation areas, Westhill Recreation Ground and Norton Hill Recreation Ground, whereas the northern half of the parish contains only a very small play area at Shakespeare Road (0.0288 ha).



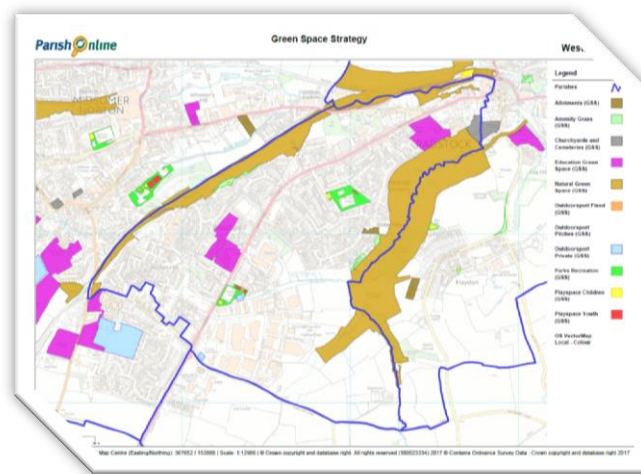


Through the consultation which supports the Green Space Strategy, there has been identified a need in the north of the Parish for more play space to meet the needs of all age groups. There are identified inadequacies in the current recreational facilities in the north of the parish, causing many residents to travel to other facilities outside their area. The protected recreational sites from the emerging Placemaking Plan are shown below. BANES Green Space Strategy 2015 shows a deficit in this type of space.



Allotments

B&NES' Green Space Strategy 2015 identifies that Westfield is short of both green space and allotments per head of population. Westfield has the largest shortfall in allotment space in the whole of the Somer Valley, falling short by 1.49 ha and the second highest shortfall in park and recreation ground of 4.49ha and lacks amenity green space by 0.98ha (B&NES Green Space Strategy 2015-2029). The current allotment site is shown in the Green Space Strategy from the Emerging Placemaking Plan below.



The Plan seeks to encourage recreational activities and provide a healthy and sustainable food supply, together with developing a better understanding of the food chain in younger residents. There are currently no allotments in the north side of the Parish.

Rural character

Land north of Highfields

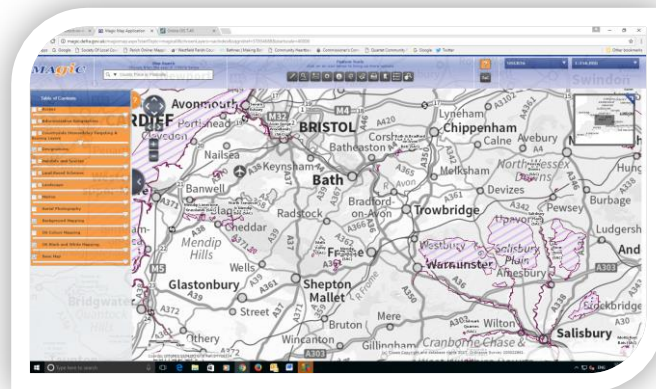
The site consists of some 4.3 ha of north-facing hillside, located between the centres of Midsomer Norton to the north-west, Radstock to the east, and Westfield to the south. The steeply sloping land is currently used for grazing, and lies outside the housing development boundaries designated by the Bath and North East Somerset Local Plan, 2007. A public footpath that is part of the original Fosse Way, a roman road linking Exeter with Lincoln, runs across the north-eastern end of the site. The hillside makes a positive impact to the character and landscape setting, with its steep natural incline and the overall openness it creates. The Conservation Area Assessment for Radstock notes that the Conservation Area boundary has been drawn to include the adjacent linear field to the west of the Wellsway batch. The openness of the wider hillside, and the relationship of the former coal tip to the former railway (now a cycle path), are part of the setting of this heritage asset and contribute to its significance as part of the area's industrial history.

The majority of the site lies within a designated Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI), the Norton Radstock Disused Railway Line SNCI, a linear site stretching some 3km along the route of the former railway. The high ecological value of this SNCI derives in large part from its unbroken length, and habitat connectivity, such that it functions as “green infrastructure”, bringing a wide green corridor and its associated wildlife through the centre of the urban area. Ecological surveys have



been undertaken and established that its semi-improved grassland supports a range of plant species, with one area at the western end containing a greater range of floral diversity than the rest of the site.

The cycle path to the immediate north of the site forms an important route linking west to east through the area, used for commuting and foraging by Greater and Lesser Horseshoe bats. The Mells Valley Bat Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bat SAC are linked by this corridor.



Waterside Valley

The B&NES Rural Landscapes of Bath and North East Somerset Landscape Character Assessment (2003) describes Waterside Valley as having relatively steep river valleys, small irregular shaped fields in valley, unclipped hedges in valleys, industrial past evident from remains of colliery spoil heaps, some individual farmsteads, few individual hedgerow trees but large areas of hawthorn scrub, scrub woodland and new plantation, open landscape on higher plateau with wide views.

This small character area of just over 3sq km lies between the built up areas of Midsomer Norton and Radstock. The character of the area results from its relationship to the built up area and the associated coal mining heritage. It is divided into three separate areas and includes several tributary valleys of the Wellow Brook including the River Somer, Snail's Bottom and Kilmersdon Brook.

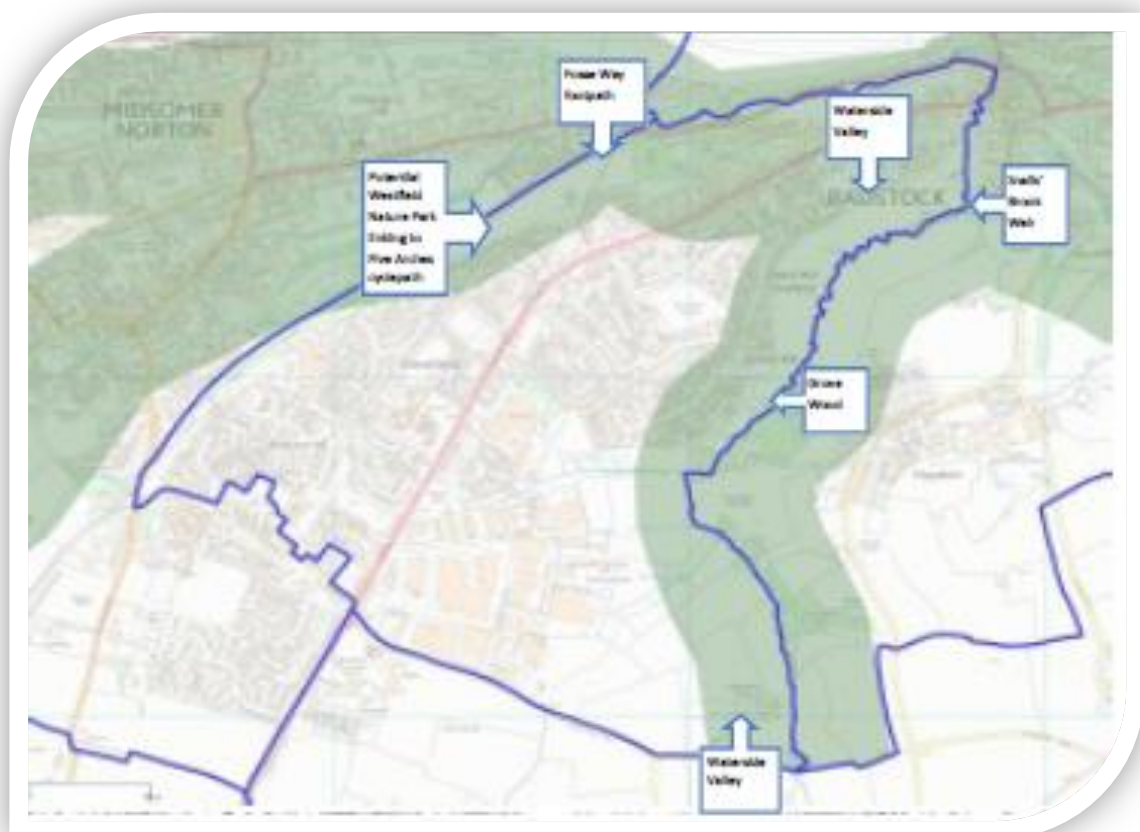
The floors of the Somer Valley and Snail's Bottom are Mercia Mudstones. The base of the Kilmersdon Valley however is alluvium deposits. Above this on both sides of all the valleys is a band of shales and clays from the Penarth Group. These rocks are from the Triassic period. The majority of the remaining upland is Lias Limestone (white and blue) while the very highest part above 130m, south of Haydon, is a small



outcrop of Inferior Oolitic Limestone. This part of the plateau is virtually a small western outlier of the Cotswolds that has been separated by erosion of the intervening area. All these limestones are from the Jurassic period. The steepest slopes of both the Kilmersdon and Snail's Bottom Valleys have frequently slipped. Below all of the areas is the coal bearing Carboniferous strata.

The soils of the valleys and valley slopes are generally derived from the Mercia Mudstones and are slowly permeable, reddish and clayey. The remaining higher land has shallow, well-drained calcareous soil derived from the limestones. The area is outside any Green Belt or Area of Natural Beauty (AONB) designation.

The frequency of springs, particularly east of Haydon gives a marshy character to parts of the valley.



Grove Wood is one of the most distinct areas of woodland in the area and is registered as ancient semi natural woodland. There is considerable scrub along the stream sides and upper slopes of the valleys and some scrubby woodland on the spoil heap by the colliery. Newly planted areas are found adjacent to Grove Wood



and along the upper slopes of the Kilmersdon Valley. The scrub consists mainly of hawthorn and bramble with coarse grasses.

The valleys give an enclosed feel to the landscape in contrast to the plateaux with their open views. The tower of Downside Abbey is visible across the plateau to the south. Snails Bottom, the old Haydon spoil heap (batch) and Kilmersdon Valleys are particularly well used for casual recreation.

The landscape has changed in the last 150 years from a rural scene to an industrial one dominated by the coal industry and back to a rural scene. The disturbance caused by coal mining and railways and the subsequent ending of mining and disuse of the railways has created valuable habitats of nature conservation interest. The plateau is well maintained as a traditional rural landscape.

Important Views

Westfield is recognised as a beautiful area; residents value the rural beauty and that includes the stunning far-reaching views in and around the two green corridors on either side of the Parish. The Plan aims to protect the high quality views in and around the Plan Area. Due to the topography of the land, there are some places where development will have a greater impact on views. The contour map below shows how the green corridors have some very prominent steep sides, high peaks and long open areas. The photos indicate the areas within the plan area that are visually most sensitive to development as a result of the topography.



Photos courtesy of Terry Reakes

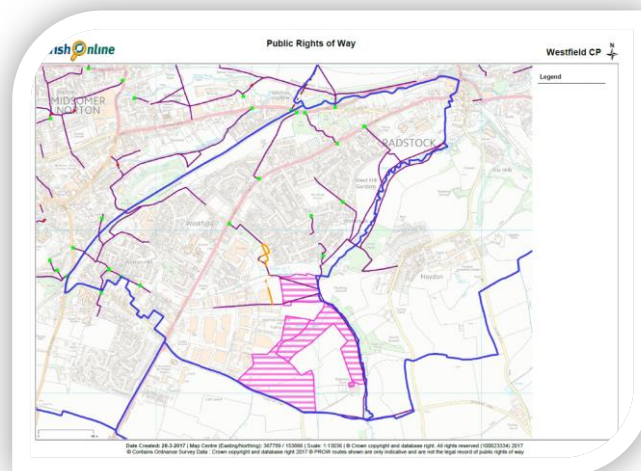


Preserving Heritage

Westfield has taken its Parish name from the rather prosaically named field, which was west of South Hill. Norton Hill means a north enclosure in old English.

The parish has a proud history of being a part of the old Somerset Coalfield Area, of which Radstock was the main distribution terminus. A number of historic remnants of this coal mining heritage remain, the batches, the Wellsway Pit, the engine house and the pit pony stables. Some of these assets are contained within the B&NES Adopted Policy of Conservation for the Mining area of Radstock.

Westfield also retains a Public Footpath which is the line of the Roman Road, the Fosse Way, built by the Romans between Exeter and Lincoln and indeed links more directly locally to Bath. These assets are appreciated by all as historic remnants of Westfield's past.



Community Aspiration 2: Preserving Heritage

Our Neighbourhood Plan supports the preservation, protection and enhancement of our historic environment by:

- a) Encouraging the development of a Heritage Trail for the Parish;
- b) Promoting the enhancement of Public Footpath CL24/42 Fosse Way.



Mining heritage

Industrial coalmining was established in 1763 and statistics show that by the 1970's when the mines closed over 10,000 men and boys had been employed in the local pits.

Coal seams were found in the Westfield from the carboniferous period, when coal had been formed from vast masses of vegetable matter. Many fossils of fern leaves were found on the batches. Some fish fossils were also found.

Most batches were formed from the residue of stone and dust which was left after the coal was extracted. Over the years the batches were landscaped or levelled and the stone used for road maintenance.

Difficulties occurred over the transportation of the coal. The roads were in such a bad condition mine owners lost money in transportation. Canals were built in 1800's and the first canal was cut through alongside the river to transport the coal. Then in the 1850's steam trains took over all the transportation business.

The coal mined in Westfield was "hand cut" from 1763 to the 1940's, when mechanical cutters were introduced. This mechanism caused the eventual closure of the mines because the coal seams were very narrow and unprofitable. There was also the added difficulty of extra dust. The last mines closed in the 1970's.

Wellsway Pit

Wellsway Pit in Westfield was owned by Lady Waldegrave. The Wellsway Pit engine room is still in existence as well as the pit pony stables. It has been suggested that these stables are the last remaining relics in the country.

Pit ponies were used to drag the wagons through the topple paths to the top surface. Despite rumours, pit ponies were not blind, their wellbeing was second to none. If a pony's flesh had been broken there was a major enquiry, calling for attendance by a Vet, special reports written and an inspection by an independent mining official.

The miners were happy in their assumption though that if for any reason their lamps had gone out, the ponies were able to find their way out. The ponies were taken out of the pit for a fortnight's holiday. The ponies were sturdy but quite short legged and were used in the local mines until 1952.

Community Aspiration 3 Developer Contributions



Funds collected under the provisions of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and s.106 will be targeted at the following heritage scheme: Preserving the Pit Pony Stables

There was usually one Pit Manager for the five pits in Radstock and Wellsway. Mr James McMurtrie who was born in 1839 and died in 1914 was the manager of the pits in the late 1800's. His chief job was to forward £2,000.00 a quarter to the Countess Waldegrave, or explain why not. These working conditions caused many bitter disputes, remembered to today. Mr McMurtrie lived in the South Hill Manor, with the estate and grounds running down through Waterside to St Nicholas Church. This property was demolished in the 1950's and the grounds now taken over by Bath College.

The Earl of Waldegrave eventually leased the remaining working pits, Wellsway included, to Sir Frank Beauchamp for an annual fee of £10,000.00.

Railways

In the mid 19th Century railway fever gripped the country and in 1871 the Bath extension of the Somerset and Dorset Joint Railway was built. This railway line provided opportunities for the coal mining companies. The Midsomer Norton station was built on the south of the town at the junction of Silver Street and Charlton Road which meant that Westfield had immediate access to a station. Around 1900 a new deep mine, Norton Hill pit was constructed on the hill above the railway line to enable the coal freshly mined to be carried by rail.

Elm Trees

In the 1900's Elm Trees flourished in Westfield, one was supposedly haunted. New properties built at the turn of the century were named Elm Terrace, Inner Elm Terrace and Westfield Terrace, which all fronted the main road, which had no pavements.

The land behind those terraces remained rural until the 1950's when there was a need of new housing.

Community Aspiration 4 Elm Trees

Elm trees, where appropriate, should feature in the planting schemes of all new developments.



Schools

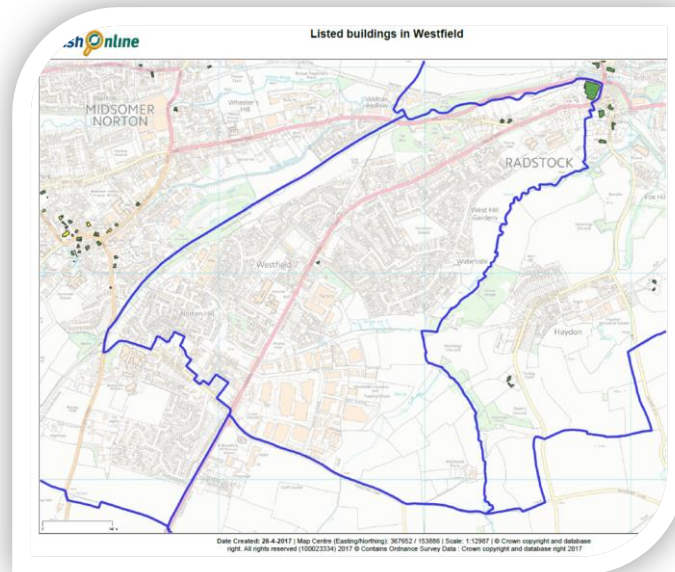
In 1922 any child who lived in Westfield walked to Radstock or Midsomer Norton to go to school.

A temporary army hut was commissioned by the Council and an infant school was opened in Westfield on 3rd July 1922. Nine pupils were registered on this first day.

This school grew until during the 1950's a new school was opened on the opposite side of the road, with playgrounds and playing fields.

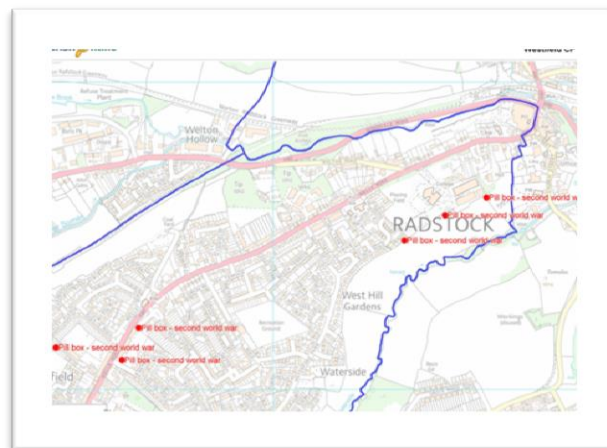
Listed buildings

- Westfield House Grade 2 listed, was possibly an isolation hospital for smallpox patients: 5120 WELLS ROAD Westfield. Westfield House ST 65 SE 2/100 II 2. Circa 1830. Three storeys, coursed limestone with coved eaves course to slate roof. Coped verges, stone end chimneys. Three windows, glazing bar sashes. Central ½ glazed door with cut brackets to flat hood. Gable lit garret. Extension to rear, forming 'L'-plan.
- Another listed building in Westfield is the public house called The Railway Inn which was built in the nineteenth century. There were two public houses on the site, built side by side, one called the 'Railway Inn' and the other 'The Wellsway Inn'. In the 1950's a Mr Kenneth Mitchard took over the licence of the public house, the Wellsway having closed. The structure of the Wellsway Pub was incorporated into the Railway Inn as one building. A Grade II listing refers to the front façade of the building only.
- CO-OPERATIVE HOUSE, Wells Hill, This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest. List entry Number: 1115181



Pill Boxes

A point of historical interest in Westfield is that during the second world war pill boxes named British Hardened Field Defences World War II were erected, and these pill boxes still exist. There were 28,000 of these defences built in 1941 and 6,500 have survived. Erected to protect the pits, six pill boxes remain in Westfield, three in Waterside Valley, one in Inner Elm Terrace and two either end of Westfield Terrace.



Churches



There are three remaining churches in the parish of Westfield, St Peters Church, Longfellow Road, the Methodist Church, Wellsway and the Radstock Baptist Church.

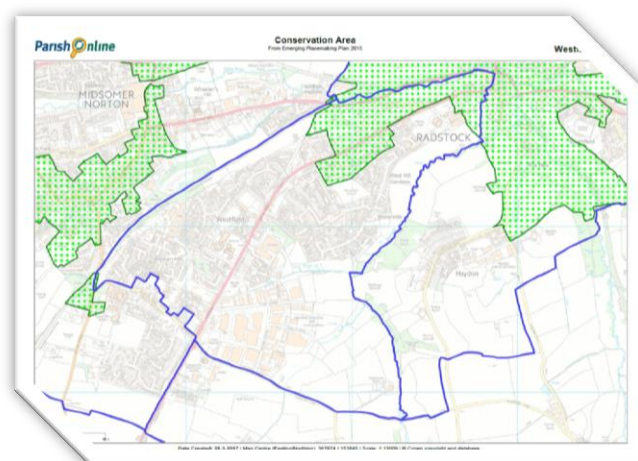
St Peters Church was completely rebuilt in 1988. It is now quite beautiful.



St Peters Church before demolition. Photo courtesy of Mary Barnett, donated by her son Ian Barnett

The Methodist Church was built in 1869 and it became a temperance church.

St Hugh's Roman Catholic Church was housed in a former Purnells printing works and the church acquired the building after the First World War.





Economy, Industry and Jobs

Westfield has a buoyant local economy with many long-established businesses mainly focussing on a manufacturing base. Within the research carried out for this Plan residents and businesses alike have demonstrated their enthusiasm to promote economic prosperity and encourage growth in local employment, particularly for young people.

Over the years, many businesses have prospered and then closed, namely Clarks factory, Prattens, Mardons, Dando & Dark, but many more have taken their place in the Industrial Estate, they are thriving and have a good future.

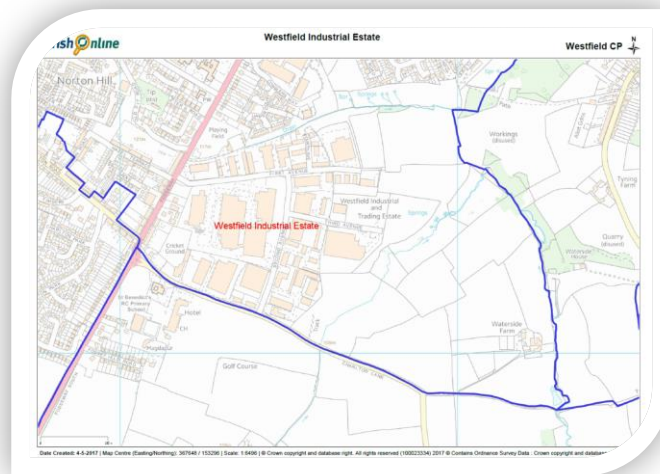
Charltons Wood Manufacturers are still in existence, their company had supplied wooden props for the miners and Mr Brian Mitchard's family butcher business which started in 1913, has just celebrated its centenary. Many people live in Westfield and work independently for their own businesses, many commute to Bath and Bristol, many are self employed. It has always been a very industrious place to live.

The Plan is designed to encourage growth by helping existing employers to stay and grow, enabling Westfield to act as an employment centre for the outlying settlements and encouraging new businesses to invest and create a wide range of new jobs for local people.

The industrial estate has a main entrance on the A367 and a second entrance on Charlton Lane. It consists of a mix of light industrial units from 500 sq ft to very large printing works. The smaller buildings are brick, whereas the larger ones are metal clad. Roofs are pitched and metal clad. It is completely flat, grid like and linear with ditches buildings set well back from the road. The roads are wide and straight with some cul de sacs. All units have parking. There are many gaps between buildings with green spaces and trees, flowers and shrubs which make it a pleasant walking environment. It is an access point for walks into the waterside valley. The estate backs onto farmland and wildlife and beautiful views are in abundance.

These policies aim to contribute to sustainable development by:

- Promoting a strong and sustainable economy throughout Westfield.
- Encouraging a high quality inward investment, and supporting existing businesses to expand and diversify.
- Reducing the need of people and businesses to travel.



B&NES is working to establish a Business Enterprise Zone which incorporates sites within Westfield with a principal strategic objective of balancing the local employment opportunities with housing development. This is to be achieved by managing and encouraging significant inward development within the Zone to diversify and strengthen the local economy and in that way ensuring Westfield does not simply become a commuting settlement.

Our research for this Neighbourhood Plan has shown that the population has shown considerable disquiet over Westfield's fragile state in respect of highway capacity and the associated dangers to pedestrians, pollution and the ability to move around the parish, so much so that capacity development proposals will also need to be able to demonstrate that they do not have an unacceptable impact on HGV / public transport and private car movements. Comprehensive transport assessments will be the most appropriate way of so doing.

Proposals for the development of employment

The Plan will help businesses both create and preserve existing jobs by:

- Allocating land for business use.
- Making sure that existing employment sites are kept for employment use wherever possible
- Supporting the creation of new business premises in suitable locations.
- Maximising the potential of B&NES Enterprise Zone proposals
- Protecting the dynamic vitality of Westfield.
- Supporting new mixed use developments, so that where appropriate, people can combine work and home life.
- Encouraging appropriate and sustainable green tourism activities.

Westfield has a relatively high level of self-employment and home based working



which the plan aims to encourage. Self-employment adds to the character and viability of the local economy and supports the community's aim to avoid Westfield's population becoming over-dependent on outward commuting. This process will be encouraged and developed by the provision of ultra-fast broadband and potential provision of purpose built working hubs with flexible accommodation patterns and controlled rental costs.

New business development

Where consideration is being given to alternative uses of employment land or premises, any such proposals must ensure that the proposed use does not conflict with the character of the surrounding area and other policies and proposals within the Plan, or any other material considerations.

In looking to encourage growth and reduce outward commuting our research has clearly shown that the community is concerned to protect the parish from unsuitable development which will have an adverse impact on residents, the road network and the environment. To this end, our policies in the traffic management and accessibility section are relevant to securing growth which does not add unduly to the existing problems of heavy traffic.

Land use

Our research showed that residents and business owners are in favour of the re-use of brownfield sites, but were concerned about the impact of HGV traffic on the road network and the resultant loss of wildlife habitats.

Our policies aim to strike a balance between these views by supporting small scale employment uses where appropriate and opposing redevelopment of mining waste (batches) where the biodiversity is greatest.

Rural Tourism

In line with NPPF 3 the Plan seeks to support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respects the character of the countryside. Westfield has many resources to support sustainable tourism including

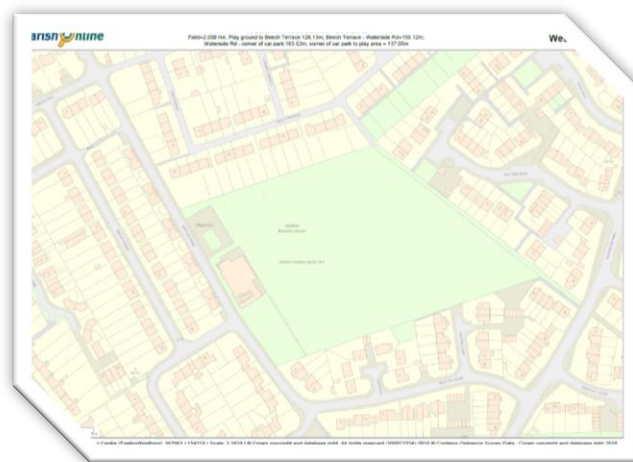
- the historic Somerset minefields and the associated historic mining infrastructure,
- the close relationship with the Fosse Way and its Roman British history,
- the opportunities for quiet recreation on the many green areas that surrounds it
- and the tourism directly generated by close proximity of the City of Bath

These policies should be read in conjunction with the air pollution policy in the Traffic Section.



Amenities and Infrastructure

The single largest theme emerging from consultation with local people is the need for a community facility in Westfield. As a result the Parish Council commissioned a Feasibility Study which highlighted Westhill Recreation Ground as the most suitable site.



When planning permission is being considered and granted for development or modification in Westfield, opportunities will be taken to provide facilities and amenities of community value, subject to viability, in accordance with priorities identified in this Neighbourhood Plan or otherwise determined by Westfield Parish Council in consultation with the local community.

Community Aspiration 5 Developer Contributions

Funds collected under the provisions of the S.106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be targeted at the following schemes. Contributions towards new community facilities such as: - check whether consultation is needed.

- Doctors surgeries and pharmacies expansion to support a growing neighbourhood with increasing health support requirements
- Community centre for Westfield
- Primary and secondary school expansion to support increase in family units entering the parish



- Leisure facilities/social hubs – gyms, cinema, theatre, clubs to support the community spirit and general wellbeing of people in the parish
- Hotel accommodation to support increased business activities and facilitate family visiting particularly in light of smaller home sizes.
- Libraries to provide a function to enable access to learning resources for low income families and the wider population of the parish
- Colleges/universities to provide an attractive place to grow business through use of apprenticeships, alternative to Bath and Bristol and create opportunity for future entrepreneurs.
- Care/nursing care homes to support the requirements of an aging population in the parish
- Contributions towards road improvements, including new cycle routes and facilities, as well as safer pedestrian crossings.

When planning permission is being considered and granted for development or modification in Westfield, full consideration will be given to the impact on infrastructure and supplies identified in this Neighbourhood Plan or otherwise determined by Westfield Parish Council in consultation with the local community.

- Essential services supplies such as water, electricity and gas
- Drainage and sewerage
- Telecommunications/Digital comms
- Street lighting

Community Action 6 Street Lighting

Our Neighbourhood Plan supports the provision of energy efficient street lighting in residential areas. Decisions on street lighting should be taken in consultation with local residents and should consider the impact on residents and wildlife.



Traffic

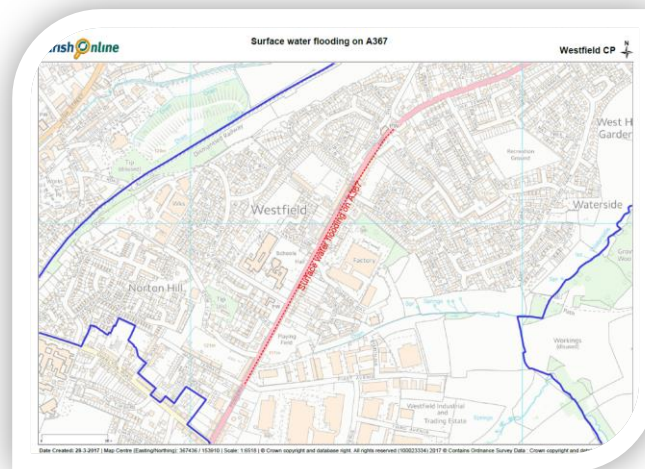
The main A367 which dissects Westfield is an area where children, parents and shoppers congregate and cross the busy road. The increasing traffic, especially HGVs, is a source of noise pollution and harmful emissions and danger for pedestrians, cyclists and residents accessing or leaving their properties on foot or by car.

Particular consideration to transport links is required to help bring cultural, community and employment activity to Westfield. Maintaining ease of access in and out of the area is a priority of the Westfield Neighbourhood Plan. Where development directly in Westfield or neighbouring parishes is likely to impact this policy traffic, infrastructure and service impact studies are to be undertaken as a part of determining sustainability

Drainage and Flooding

Local knowledge has also highlighted another major problem which is the poor maintenance of drains, and the locations thereof, causing flooding of the footpath on the A367 at St Peter's Glade, meaning that children are walking through flood water to get to the adjacent Westfield Primary School. Monitoring of drains, and objecting to anything that will prevent the hillsides being natural sponges are vital to stop this problem worsening. The Waterside/Snails Brook needs to be kept clear to enable natural drainage. The green open spaces serve the same function. The mature trees in the Waterside estate and the Janes estate also have important functions in keeping the verges drained.

There is high flood risk in Waterside Valley the area by the Miner's Pool and the graveyard at the Radstock end of the valley. "We once had so much water in the Westfield end of the graveyard that someone slipped and fell into the grave itself." (2008) The other issue is the retaining walls, which can be badly affected and collapse if there is too much rain. Again, the drainage should be watched.



Traffic hazards

The Parish is effectively split in half by a busy main road (A367) into a northern and southern part. The A367 is a main arterial route from Bath to the south of England, with 14,100 traffic flow for an average day in 2014.

The 2014 B&NES Traffic survey found that the A367 has one of the highest levels of congestion in BANES with some 14,100 two way total traffic for an average day. For this reason air pollution is high on the agenda. The Parish Council has asked B&NES to undertake air pollution monitoring at three places on the A367 and one location on the Radstock Road during summer months.

The Parish Council has also requested a safety audit of the A367 through Westfield in order to address some important safety issues

- The pedestrian refuge at the Welton Road junction is situated on a particularly narrow section of road. Cars are parked on the A367 from here up to the Dring and passing these, especially with buses is hazardous. Is it possible to narrow the footpath outside the College?
- Parking times should be restricted at the lay by outside Costcutters due to restricted visibility. The crossing should be better lit, with markings upgraded, possibly LED lights to control light pollution.
- Highfields crossing should be looked at by the Road Safety Engineers
- The cyclists lane outside the Methodist Church hall goes across the path of pedestrians.
- The grass at the top of Elm Tree Avenue could be grass-creted to enable more parking outside the local shops.



- Parking on the A367 at the junction with Waterside Way makes it dangerous for those coming out of the side road and facing vehicles trying to pass the parked cars.
- Parking on Cobblers Way close to the traffic lights means that the lights are triggered needlessly and cars waiting to come out of Cobblers Way have to wait behind the parked cars. Drainage at this location is a serious issue with surface water flooding a recurring feature.
- The pedestrian crossing close to First Avenue should be moved to Old Pit Road because in order to get to the crossing in its current location pedestrians have to first cross First Avenue, which is a wide road, very busy, with lots of HGV's. Since this is a route to both St Benedicts and Norton Hill School, young people have to navigate this dangerous crossing without any help.
- Is the refuge between Charlton Road and Charlton Lane in the right place?
- The safety of the route at Longfellow Road / Ruskin Road for buses, including the road markings.

All proposals for significant new development which have an impact on known traffic hazards must make provision for appropriate mitigation or improvement measures to improve road safety.

Where proposed developments in Westfield in the vicinity of known traffic hazards are being considered Traffic Impact Assessment is to be undertaken.

Community Aspiration 7 Through Traffic

Through Traffic - Design and highways proposals that mitigate the impact of through traffic within Westfield will be supported. These proposals may include traffic management measures to minimise the impact of through traffic on residential streets.

Community Aspiration 8 Residential Traffic

Residential roads - Proposals to protect and militate against the impact of traffic within residential areas will be supported. Such proposals may include:

- a) Traffic calming
- b) Making some areas "Access Only".



Air Quality

Given the volume of traffic, Bath and North East Somerset Council has agreed to consider monitoring air quality on the A367 through Westfield. The impact of further traffic growth without alternatives in place will increase the health and safety risk for residents. They will move the current diffusion tube monitor by Westfield Primary School to the main road side of the school and to install a second diffusion tube opposite the entrance to Bath College on the A367. Each analyser will be exposed for one month and then analysed in a laboratory, the results take approximately one month to come through. They normally recommend a minimum of 3 months data from this type of analyser to get an approximation of the annual average. The first 3 months data is likely to be available in September 2017.

Footpaths

Improving access through the use of increased footpaths and cycle ways to encourage safe routes to school using alternatives to cars and improved connectivity of the parish to surrounding countryside and neighbouring parishes is seen as essential to the future sustainability of the parish.

Community Aspiration 9 Footpaths

Our Neighbourhood Plan supports the provision of safe walking paths to community assets such as allotments, schools and halls.

Parking for Domestic Dwellings

Statistics from the Census 2011 show that properties in our area have more vehicles per dwelling than in other areas of BANES and the UK. For example 3.3% of Westfield households have 4 or more cars compared to 2.5% in BANES and 1.9% in England. 7.9% have three cars, compared with 6.1% in BANES and 5.5% in England and 33% have two cars compared with 27.1% in BANES and 24.7% in England.

Schedule 2 of the parking standards indicated within the B&NES Placemaking Plan for Policy ST7: Transport Requirements for Managing Development, states: “the minimum standard for outer areas is: 1 space per dwelling, 2 spaces per two to three bed dwelling, 3 spaces per four bed dwelling and above with 0.2 space per dwelling for visitor parking, and that garages are excluded from the prescribed minimum standards.” Based on the rationale above, Policy T4b is an alteration to this, making the baseline minimum 2 spaces per dwelling (to allow for the fact that many couples



will require 2 cars to enable them to get to work), and also increasing visitor spaces to become 0.5 per dwelling because visitors will in general also need to rely on cars.

Community Aspiration 10 Parking – Domestic Dwellings

Not to the detriment of good urban design and green spaces, to be supported proposals for all new residential developments must provide a minimum of:

1. Two spaces per dwelling up to three bed dwelling
2. Three spaces per four bed dwelling and above
3. Half a space per dwelling for visitor parking.

Garages are excluded from the prescribed minimum standards. If no garage or secure area is provided there must also be provision for cycle parking as per 1 secure covered stand per dwelling in a communal area for residents, plus 1 stand per 8 dwellings for visitors.