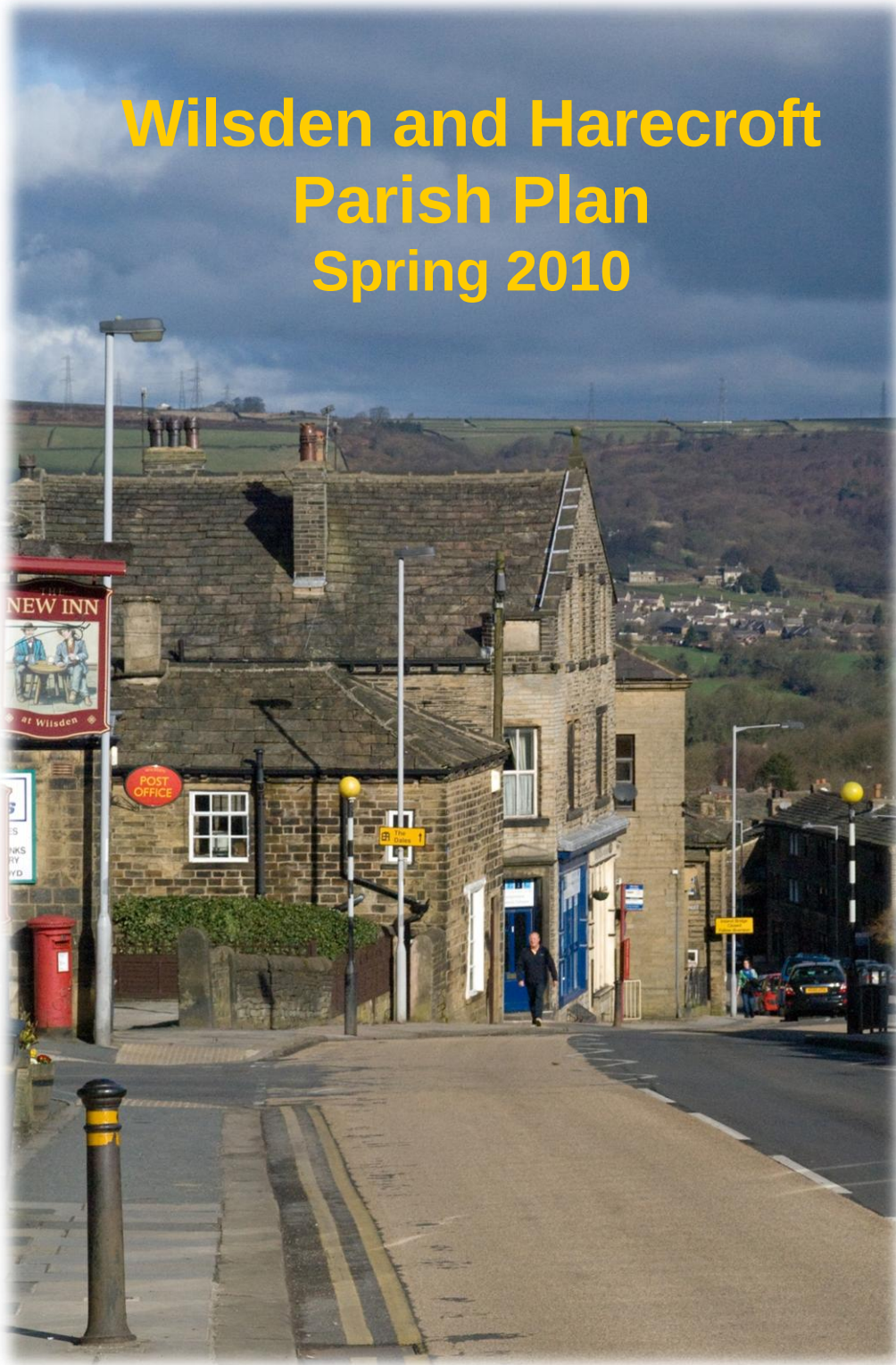




Wilsden and Harecroft Parish Plan Spring 2010



Wilsden Parish Council
www.wilsdenparishcouncil.gov.uk

Wilsden and Harecroft

Wilsden is a former mill village lying to the west of Bradford and the south of Bingley and is a part of the Bingley Rural ward of Bradford Metropolitan District Council. The population of the Wilsden Parish Council area, which covers the villages of Wilsden and Harecroft and the surrounding farms and houses, was 4,182 at the 2001 Census.



The Parish Council area contained 1944 dwellings in January 2010 compared to the 1768 dwellings in 2001, representing a 10% increase..

Wilsden dates back to Saxon times, flourishing in the nineteenth century when the presence of coal, water and wool transformed an

agricultural area into an industrial landscape based on textiles.

With the decline of the textile industry Wilsden is now a pleasant dormitory village for people who work elsewhere. Fortunately, the shape of the valley, with a degree of vigilance, has ensured the survival of the character of this independent community, even after a second wave of growth.

Wilsden Village Society was formed in 1970 and considered it had a responsibility to act as both a watchdog and to speak out strongly in the interests of the village and its residents. It also set out to provide a new focal point for community activities in the shape of the Village Hall, to revive former social activities and to encourage new ones.

In 2004 Wilsden Parish Council was created to represent the interests of this distinct community within Bradford. Since then it has been active on a number of fronts to improve Wilsden as a place to work and live; a refurbished play area and revitalisation of the hanging basket scheme being two visible examples.

The Parish Plan

Wilsden Parish Council has taken the lead in preparing a plan for Wilsden and Harecroft that will provide guidance for further work. The Plan is the result of wide-ranging consultation within the community but must be seen as work-in-progress. Further and ongoing work is essential with **all** residents to ensure continued relevance for all those who live and work here. **It is a plan for the two villages, not just for the Parish Council.**

Formal consultation has been through a special Neighbourhood Forum, input from members of Wilsden Primary School, a forum for local businesses and through analysis of a questionnaire circulated to all households. Informal comments were also welcomed.

Thanks must go to Bradford Council's Neighbourhood Service at Shipley Area Co-ordinator's Office who provided both financial and practical support and to Rural Action Yorkshire who analysed the data on our behalf.



Prosperity, Regeneration and Highways

“The 2001 (latest) Census records that 73.9% of villagers aged between 16 and 74 were economically active.”

What you tell us:

The questionnaire identified that of the 183 respondents, 23 worked in Wilsden, Bradford (40%) being the most popular place of work. Based upon 2001 Census records this would mean that about 275 people live and work in the Parish Council area. If people who travel to work into the area are taken into account there are an estimated 450-500 people in active employment in the area, predominantly female.

- ❖ There are around 100 operating businesses within the area most of which employ fewer than ten people. The two largest employers are the Laurel Bank Nursing Home and Wilsden Primary School.
- ❖ Local businesses feel disadvantaged by a lack of knowledge about the business support available, an ignorance of local developments and an absence of local places in which to advertise their services.
- ❖ Several residents feel that offices, light industry and commercial developments are the preferred choice for economic developments and would improve employment opportunities. Converting disused mills into places of work rather than into residential properties would also encourage local employment.
- ❖ Conversely, some residents feel that Wilsden should remain primarily a residential community.
- ❖ Local shops are in general well-supported and appreciated, especially the Post Office. Private car travel is the most common mode of transport; 206 out of 233 households who responded to the questionnaire own a roadworthy vehicle.
- ❖ Travel by car is the most common way of travelling to work.
- ❖ Parking is a significant problem, particularly around Tweedy Street at the start and end of the school day.
- ❖ Bus travel is used by 10% of questionnaire respondents to get to work or education. Buses are more heavily used for social and leisure purposes and the service is rated as reasonable or good by the majority of questionnaire respondents.

Priorities for Action:

Improve support for local businesses

A presumption against conversion of commercial property for residential use

Encourage the establishment of new businesses within the area

Address parking issues

Achieved by:

General promotion and support of local businesses within Wilsden and Harecroft, through Parish Council outlets, including liaison with Bradford Council and Bradford Chamber of Commerce

Rigorous application of planning policies to safeguard land or buildings designated for commercial use

Working with Bradford Council on a Traffic Survey Plan

Liaising with Bradford Council on highways issues

Continuing dialogue with Bingley Rural Ward Councillors



Safer Communities

“Wilsden Parish Council is an active participant in The Shipley Safer and Stronger Communities Partnership, and operates a Contact Point and Community Speedwatch in conjunction with West Yorkshire Police where crime and any other community issues can be reported.”

What you tell us:

- ❖ The rate of crime in Wilsden is low; however one-third of the questionnaire respondents sometimes feel unsafe in some areas of the Village, particularly around the Village Hall, Townfield and the Co-op.
- ❖ Particular annoyances identified are anti-social behaviour and the consumption of alcohol by under-age drinkers in public places.
- ❖ Other irritants are speeding motorists (slowing down speeding motorists on Main Street is the top priority improvement wish of Wilsden Primary School children) and owners who let their dogs foul.
- ❖ Over half of the respondents to the questionnaire feel that there is room for improvement in police coverage in the village.



Priorities for action:

Address anti-social behaviour

Address dog fouling

Continue efforts to control speed of traffic

Achieved by:

Continuing close links with West Yorkshire Police, in particular the Bingley Rural NPT

Encouraging reporting of anti-social behaviour to the Police Contact Point

Exploring measures to counteract dog fouling, in conjunction with Bradford Council Partnership with Neighbourhood wardens

Expanding Speedwatch

Health and Well-Being

“In 2001 7.8% of census respondents from Wilsden reported that their health was ‘not good’. This compares with a 10.1% response for Bradford as a whole”.

“14% of the population of Wilsden is aged 65+ (2001 census)”

What you tell us:

- ❖ Whilst most people find it easy to reach local medical services, a minority find access to Wilsden Medical Centre and to local hospitals difficult. Those who experience such problems tend to be aged over 65.
- ❖ 23% of car owners are willing to participate in the voluntary car share scheme which is primarily used to access health care for those who experience difficulties.



Priorities for action:

Improve access for people who need it

Encourage more drivers to participate in the car share scheme

Achieved by:

Promoting the Village Hall Access project in conjunction with our District Councillors

Widening the car share scheme by working with neighbouring Parish Councils

Attracting more volunteer drivers

Stronger Communities

“There are a variety of activities throughout the community for all ages.”

What you tell us:

- ❖ 82% of questionnaire respondents have never attended an Annual Parish Meeting.
- ❖ Although there is general satisfaction with the Parish Council, a significant number feel that it publicises its decisions and activities poorly.
- ❖ Village Hall activities are a mystery to a significant number.

- ❖ Few questionnaire respondents use the local library, although the Neighbourhood Forum indicates a demand for improved facilities and better opening hours.
- ❖ 28% of questionnaire respondents cite 'community' as being the most valued aspect of living in Wilsden.

Priorities for action:

Improve communications of village facilities to residents

Encourage more people to use the library and campaign for better facilities

Achieved by:

Improving the Website and ensuring that it is up-to-date

Improving "The Wilsdener", in conjunction with the Village Hall Management Committee

Promotion of/ support for village activities

Encouraging more villagers to use our local facilities

Liaising with Bradford Libraries and Wilsden Primary School



The Environment

“People choose to live in Wilsden because it is an attractive area. Much of Wilsden is part of a Conservation Area and both Wilsden and Harecroft are surrounded by Green Belt countryside.”

What you tell us:

- ❖ The Wilsden environment is the most common reason for living in Wilsden according to the questionnaire. Particularly appreciated are the dry-stone walls, the proximity of woodlands and Goitstock.
- ❖ The natural landscape features need to be protected.
- ❖ A significant number of questionnaire respondents (74%) feel that there has been excessive new housing in Wilsden in the last 10 years and 63% feel no further homes are needed. 64% also consider that insufficient publicity is given to planning applications affecting Wilsden.
- ❖ There is a demand for more affordable housing.
- ❖ There are mixed views as to whether the external appearance of new buildings is sympathetic to the village.
- ❖ Initiatives to deal with litter and street cleanliness would be supported. More diverse recycling schemes would also find favour.



Priorities for action:

Ensuring the protection of the countryside whilst enabling the village to thrive
Maintaining and enhancing the Wilsden Conservation Area

Achieved by:

Monitoring of planning applications and liaising with other organizations
Developing a Village Design Statement for Wilsden and Harecroft, focusing on ensuring that developments within the Conservation Area and at the boundaries of the village maintain their character
Liaising with the Neighbourhood Wardens
Supporting the Wall-building Group
Undertaking activities to address litter

Children and Young People

“Questionnaire response rates for these age groups were disproportionately low, particularly for 11 to 18 years old. More work needs to be done to capture their views, however an enthusiastic response was received from Wilsden Primary School.”

What you tell us:

- ❖ Townfield and the recreation field are considered important in the lives of the children. Benches would be welcomed by the side of the recreation field. [Some additional benches have now been provided]
- ❖ A quarter of questionnaire respondents feel that the Townfield recreation facilities should be improved. [Now done!]
- ❖ A quarter of questionnaire respondents are unaware of the Youth Club facilities.

Priorities for action:

Seek the views of Wilsden teenagers
Further improvements to the Townfield area

Achieved by:

Liaising with the Youth Club and Wilsden school



Bulb Planting

Further information can be obtained from the Wilsden Parish Council website, where a complete analysis of the questionnaire may be found (www.wilsdenparishcouncil.gov.uk).

Parish Council meetings are held on the first Monday in the month (except in August) and the Annual Parish Meeting is held in May. All are welcome.

Neighbourhood Forums (arranged by Bradford District Council),Neighbourhoods Service (in conjunction with the Parish Council) are also held twice a year.

The Police and Parish Council Contact Point at the Village Hall is regularly staffed on a Saturday morning between 10.30 and 12.00 and on Thursday afternoons between 1.30 and 4.00pm.

Your **Parish Councillors** are:

Peter Ketley (Chair)
Peter Allison (Vice-Chair)
Bob Armstrong (Harecroft)
Jane Callaghan
Tony Caunt
Ray Graham
Terry McNamara
Les Mosley
(Vacancy)



Parish Clerk: Barbara Thompson
Wilsden Village Hall
Townfield
Wilsden BD15 0HT
Tel: 07875635203
e-mail: barbara.thompson@wilsdenparishcouncil.gov.uk

Your **District Councillors for Bingley Rural Ward** are :
Simon Cooke
Dame Margaret Eaton
Michael Ellis

Your **Neighbourhood Services** (Bradford District Council) Ward Team covering Bingley Rural are :
Ali Mantle / Chris Murdoch (Job-share)
Dave Horsman, Area Development Officer
Joanne Smith and Michael Edser, Neighbourhood Wardens

All these officers are based at Shipley Area Coordinator's Office, Town Hall, Shipley,
BD18 3EJ
Tel: 01274 437146
e- mail: shipleyareaneighbourhoodforums@bradford.gov.uk
(www.bradford.gov.uk/neighbourhoods)

Bradford Council Contact number: 01274 431000.

If you have any views on this Plan, either critical or supportive, please let the Parish Council know; you can either e-mail us, call in at the Contact Point, or write to the Parish Clerk (as detailed above). Please include your name and contact details so that we can get back to you.

