



COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

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Clarbeston, Clarbeston Road, Walton East & Wiston

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

Prepared in conjunction with



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Table of Contents

Contents	Page
Background to the Action Plan	3
The Action Plan Area	4
Local History	5
People & a Sense of Place	7
The Bigger Picture	8
The 21st Century Vision	8
Action Plan Proposals	9
Community Facilities, Activities & Communication	9
Youth, Sport & Outdoor Recreation	12
Environment, Enhancement & Recycling	13
History & Heritage	14
Transport, Traffic & Highways	16
Housing & Services	17
Implementation/Activity Groups	18

This Action Plan was agreed at a Public Meeting held on 1st March 2007 following the circulation of the Draft Action Plan to all households in the community

Background to the Action Plan

The Parish of Wiston is one of the largest in Pembrokeshire. It is an agricultural area with scattered settlement and the main population is concentrated in four communities - Clarbeston, Clarbeston Road, Walton East and Wiston village itself.

There is a strong sense of community spirit and self help. A Community Appraisal exercise was undertaken 10 years ago resulting in a small Action Plan which needs updating. Several projects have been discussed in principle but need further attention.

In the autumn of 2006 residents participated in two community visioning workshops facilitated by PLANED. This provided an opportunity to regenerate community action, involve newer residents and to discuss potential projects.

Information gathered at the workshops has been drawn up into this draft Action Plan. After reviewing it with the workshop participants, a draft will be circulated to the whole community. This will include an invitation to a public meeting, where the draft will be considered in detail and amendments discussed. The final version will provide an agreed plan for community action.

The 2006 Community Visioning Workshops consisted of the following exercises:

- Something Special – celebrating the special qualities of the parish.
- A Community Audit – listing the main features and facilities
- The Community in the Bigger Picture – considering global and local issues
- Weaknesses, Threats, Strengths and Opportunities
- The Vision for 2016 – an aspirational view of the future
- Skills and Resources Audit – illustrating the variety of local skills
- Translating Ideas into Action – using the information to plan projects
- Pledge Wall – identifying main issues considered to be important.

The Action Plan Area

The parish of Wiston lies to the north of the A40 road, about five miles north east of Haverfordwest. Wiston is the most southerly of the villages and Walton East is the most northern, with Clarbeston Road and Clarbeston in the centre.

The parish is set in spectacular countryside, with scattered farms and cottages served by a network of quiet, high banked lanes. Each community retains a distinct identity, despite many changes over the past half century.

Wiston village radiates out from the impressive parish church of St Mary's and opposite is the ancient castle site. Nearby, St Aidans VA Primary School stands alongside the original 19th century school building, which has been converted for business use. In addition to a number of large farms, there are several businesses in and around the village, including a carpenter in the old school and an upholsterer. Housing is of varying age and style and includes two small estates. There is no longer a post office but the village has a post box and public telephone.

Clarbeston Road lies about three miles north of Wiston and is the largest of the settlements. The original crossroads settlement was transformed by the coming of the railway and today it is a busy community which has retained its rail station and has good transport links. The village has a combined post office and shop, two public houses, a number of businesses, including a veterinary practice and a large agricultural machinery and fuel outlet.

There are several housing estates, a children's play area. Bethany Church stands south of the centre and a former chapel has been converted into a home. The Memorial Hall is a centre for social and education activities in the parish and incorporates recycling facilities within its boundary. The headquarters of the well known Football Club is also sited here, whilst the football ground is a half mile further east. Housing development is currently taking place on ground directly to the west of the Hall.



The small hamlet of **Clarbeston** lies a couple of miles further east. St Martin of Tours, the medieval parish church, forms the centrepiece, flanked by Clarbeston Farm and a scattering of houses. There is a post box but no public telephone.

Walton East is situated at the northernmost point of the parish. The community is L shaped with the southern approach marked by the Methodist Chapel, whilst the rest of the village clusters around the parish church of St Mary's, to the east. There is an attractive village green with a bus shelter and a village pond. A number of barn conversions are underway.



A rural view in Wiston parish

Local History

There is considerable evidence of early human activity in Wiston parish. Mesolithic flints have been found at Colby Moor and Woodbarn Rath, whilst evidence of Neolithic flint works have also been found. Remains of Bronze Age burnt mounds have been found in Wiston Wood. Like many Pembrokeshire communities, there are also remains of Iron Age settlements. Some, such as the now destroyed Merryborough Camp, were occupied in Roman times and possibly later.

The Norman period was very significant for **Wiston** as it became the power base of Wizo the Fleming, who gave the settlement its name when he founded Wiston Castle in the 12th century. Only part of the stone keep stands today but it is still an excellent example of a medieval motte and bailey castle. Cas Wis is the Welsh title for Wiston

A manor house, now Manor Farm, replaced the castle as the seat of local power after the unsettled times of the 12th and 13th centuries. It was home to a branch of the Wogans - a leading Pembrokeshire family in Elizabethan times who remained there until the 17th century. It stands on the site of a much earlier building and there are traces of fishponds which would have given a wider choice of food to the residents.

The large parish church was dedicated to St Mary in Norman times. A number of medieval house sites have also been found and the area around the church, castle and manor house is designated a Conservation Area.

The Presbyterian Church of Wales' Chapel at Wiston is situated on the left hand side of the Road between the villages of Wiston and Clarbeston Road some half a mile North of Wiston. The building was built on land donated by Earl Cawdor whilst canvassing for an election about 1812. The building has been enlarged and restored on 2 or 3 occasions since then and is possibly the largest religious building within the three parishes

Wiston held an annual fair on 20th October but a weekly market ceased in 1600. To the east is Colby Moor, where an important Civil War battle took place.



Wiston Castle stands opposite the Church

Clarbeston Road was originally a small village called New Cross, but gained its new name and developed rapidly after the arrival of the railway in the mid 19th century. Brunel chose it as the location for a station and goods yard on his South Wales Railway line. At the height of its working capacity it was a service centre for the surrounding district. Interesting buildings in the locality include a listed mansion, Pentypark, to the north of the village.

In the much smaller village of **Clarbeston**, medieval origins are apparent in the way two large farms are clustered around the parish church, St Martin of Tours. The building was restored in Victorian times and has a battlemented square tower. It lay on the pilgrim route between Llawhaden and St Davids. The early 19th century Carmel Baptist Chapel lies north east of Clarbeston and was rebuilt in 1874.

In Walton East, another medieval village, St Mary's parish church was restored in the early 19th century. A Methodist Chapel stands on the route to Walton East.

People & a Sense of Place

Local people describe the parish as a friendly and welcoming place with traditional values and a low crime rate. Quite unusually for such a rural parish, there is still a variety of local employment. In addition to the farms, there are two pubs, a shop, veterinary practice, large agricultural business, school, upholsterer, plant nursery and various home based work.

Residents are proud that they have retained the village school at Wiston and that local churches and chapel are still attracting congregations, including as Sunday School.

The long established Football Club is a great source of pride in Clarboston Road and locals are pleased to have retained a post office and shop there too. The Hall is thriving and is the centre for many activities, including a daily playgroup and active drama group.

The surrounding countryside is truly beautiful - a mix of undulating hills, steep banked lanes and dense woodland. It provides a safe and healthy environment which is enjoyed by people of all ages for a range of recreational activities.

There is pride in the variety of local heritage which encompasses characters as diverse as Wizo the Fleming and Isambard Kingdom Brunel. Local people are very aware of and proud of their heritage - whether large scale events, such as the civil war battle at Colby Moor, or living memories of using the old village pump,

Agricultural heritage can be traced through the centuries. The decline of dairying and rise of diversification is apparent – signs advertise organic eggs and honey whilst many farm buildings are now unsuitable for their original purpose. Some are being converted into homes that retain features such as the arches of the old cart sheds.

The low density of population, good transport links, mild climate and proximity to the coast and other areas of outstanding beauty are valued. Residents are also proud of the range of wildlife and birds that can be seen locally.

There is a thriving community council and a commitment to retaining the heart of local life through use of the Hall and support for the school and churches. Residents have a range of skills and talents and there is a history of getting on with things and organising community activities very effectively. 'Raising funds for good causes' and 'community co-operation' were highlighted as local characteristics in the workshops.

Workshop participants felt there is potential for further development of parish events and activities and the promotion of them through a regular parish newsletter.

The Bigger Picture

An exercise during the community workshops showed that local people are fully aware of global and local sustainability issues and are concerned about those that might affect their community in the future.

The cost of waste, the use of unnecessary energy, the decline in local services and the effects of poor diet were all highlighted. However, there was an alternative view - that concern for the planet should not stem development, citing the success of the Victorians who laid the way for modern entrepreneurship, exploiting the planet along the way. Some considered that cars are an essential element of social freedom in a rural area and that larger scale issues such as aircraft, industry and powers such as China and Russia, should be addressed first. Achieving a balance between such viewpoints is a challenge but raising awareness of sustainability issues ensures that there is an informed approach.

There was also debate on the topic of recycling aluminium cans, with some participants being content with government targets whilst others thought they were too low and showed a lack of commitment. Threats to the environment were a concern – from mobile telephone masts and traffic to global warming and changing weather patterns. There was also concern about threats to wildlife and the landscape.

The effect of supermarkets on local shops was discussed and the way in which ‘ready meals’ have an impact on health, causing poor eating habits which could lead to obesity. The importance of making the most of local produce to cut down food miles and packaging costs, whilst encouraging healthier eating habits, was stressed.

Participants mourned the decline of skills, such as cooking and gardening, being passed from generation to generation. The trading off of the ‘personal touch’ for ‘convenience’ and instant gratification where food is concerned, was also regretted. They felt that they had ‘no right to spoil the environment’ and there should be fairer distribution of worldwide resources.

The 21st Century Vision

During the Community Visioning exercise, participants were asked to envisage their ideal community in ten years time. They described an active and engaged community, with plenty of social interaction and support for all ages, set in a sustainable countryside, with year-round employment and affordable housing for young people.

Hopes for improvements to community life included:

- The Hall should have regular activities for all ages.
- Ideas for new activities included a youth club and an exercise group.
- Fewer restrictions for events organisers
- A community newsletter – to inform and link to all local organisations.
- Convenient recycling facilities, including orange bag, available to all
- Safe play areas for children in all the communities.
- Clearly signed and accessible public rights of way

- Affordable housing for first time buyers but not in estates
- Regular and reliable public transport for all
- No mileage restriction on school transport
- Improved highways and pavements - where appropriate.
- A dedicated police officer covering all the communities
- To retain the County Hospital

Wiston residents would like to see a community meeting place within the village.

Action Plan Proposals

Issues raised in the workshops have been grouped into broad themes and, where appropriate, related to specific sites, with specific proposals.

Each community will be given the opportunity to form a Community Forum – this would include representatives of the Community Council and local organisations.

They could apply for funding to implement the proposals – showing mutual support for each other’s projects, whether sporting, heritage or environmental and identifying any opportunities for collaborative working. All agencies who offer funding will require evidence of community participation and collaboration between organisations.

Implementation of the Action Plan will be assisted by PLANED which offers specialist help and funding for projects, including village enhancement, recycling and local history interpretation. Other advantages of a Community Forum include greater capacity when organising events, seeking insurance cover or public licenses.

It is recommended that a Community Forum be formed in each village to progress proposals. The main themes and proposals are as follows:

Community Facilities, Activities & Communication

Commentary:

There is a strong community spirit in Wiston Parish which sustains a number of different groups and clubs, enjoyed by residents of various ages and interests.

The majority of activities take place in the Memorial Hall at **Clarbeston Road** which continues to develop its programme, utilising a smaller meeting room as well as a main hall. Activities include: Community Council; Hall Committee; WI, and Drama Group. There is also a playgroup for local children, the playgroup also organise PET craft courses at the Hall.

Other venues include the Football Club, public houses and Bethany Church building.

Wiston residents, in addition to using the Clarbeston Road Hall, use several venues in their own village, including St Aidans School, the Vicarage and the parish Church.

Various activities include Parochial Church Council meetings at the School, which also hosts occasional entertainments, such as beetle drives organised by the Church. Annual events, such as carol services and a Harvest Lunch, also take place here.

Mothers Union meetings and Parish Prayer group meetings take place at Wiston Vicarage. Residents would, however, like a small dedicated meeting place to make it easier to organise events and to encourage community involvement. Another proposal is to explore greater use of the Church and School for community events.

Both **Clarbston** and **Walton East** residents also use their churches for various events and activities as they have no other meeting places.

There was a suggestion that the use of churches could be widened. Residents could walk to the venue, so cutting the environmental impact. This would provide more opportunities for socialising and help raise funds to maintain the church buildings. The wider community use would help to attract grants from various bodies. This might be a way of addressing concerns that local churches may close due to 'high costs.' This has been successfully achieved at Llandissilio.

St Mary's Church is currently assessing the feasibility for extending the use of the facility and St Aidens School is currently reviewing its letting process.

There is general enthusiasm for enlarging the range of activities and events available to residents throughout the parish. During the community workshops, suggestions included exercise classes, sewing classes, ballroom or line dancing, a gardening club, singing lessons, art classes and badminton classes. A proposal for Tai Chi classes was popular, as was a Film Club – either in the evenings or at lunchtimes. Activities for older people was also a favourite – suggestions included a Luncheon Club.

It is hoped to encourage more people to get involved in helping with organisation of groups and events, so that it is not always left to the same few stalwarts. Local skills, talents and experience include a variety of administration experience, graphic and other artistic skills. Other people have singing, composing, storytelling and drama talents to contribute to events. Time, enthusiasm and local knowledge were other valuable resources that were offered.

This, combined with some funding and support could improve social life for all ages in the parish. There is a history of committees working well together and supporting each other's events, which bodes well for future developments.

Ideas for events included incorporating sports, the Carnival and Clarbston Road show into a festival week. Some communities, such as St Dogmaels, link several events together over a week to form a Community Festival. This can strengthen community spirit and raise funds.

Before any of this can take place however, something has to be done to improve communication links. The scattered nature of the parish and the range of events and venues means that it is difficult to keep everyone informed of community activities, avoid date clashes and encourage involvement. Also to assess interest in any new proposals for events, groups etc.

A monthly Church newsletter is circulated but it is for the Haverfordwest Collegiate of Parishes and much as it is appreciated, it contains very general information, with only a small section relating to church activities in Wiston parish.

During the workshop session, participants considered effective communication to be a real challenge, stating that information was communicated 'badly' and even posters were not necessarily read by all residents who might not look at Wiston School fence or Clarbeston Road noticeboard. The Post Office was regarded as a good source of information. A notice board in each community would help.

The setting up of a Community Newsletter was seen as the solution and was strongly supported at the community workshops. In addition to advertising meetings and events, it could include news from all the local organisations and groups – the Hall, the School, churches and chapels. A list of contact numbers would be useful – for community councillors and local services. Residents have varied interests, so there could be articles on a huge range of topics – from arts and crafts to archery. They also have a range of skills which could help get it started. Some might prefer to help with this rather than community events or attend meetings – it would be a good way of getting a wider group of people involved in community life.

All sorts of help would be needed – someone to collate it; writing and graphic design skills and volunteers to deliver it. In the interests of sustainability it was agreed that as many issues as possible could be distributed electronically and someone would need to take responsibility for this.

Items to discuss include frequency of publication, colour or black and white? Would local businesses be willing to advertise in it to make it self sustaining? PLANED offers Newsletter Workshops which have proved effective in helping many Pembrokeshire communities start a newsletter.

Other forms of communication, including websites, were also discussed. Many feel strongly about the lack of Broadband in the area. A proposal to start a debating or discussion group was also raised and this could be advertised through the Newsletter.

Proposals:

- Undertake a Community Activities & Events Survey:
 - Ask people to indicate what their particular interest is eg art or aerobics
 - Whether they could offer help of any kind to get something underway.
 - Ask them to indicate WHERE they would like activity to take place to assess potential for extending use of venues like churches and School.
 - Include a question about events – show, carnival etc - to assess interest.
- Look at current facilities and assess what sort of changes might be needed to accommodate extra indoor activities eg badminton.
- Organise Public Meeting to start a Community Newsletter – invite a representative from each local group and organisation, as well as individuals.
- Ask PLANED to organise a Newsletter Workshop.
- Consider a parish website where newsletter could be posted.
- Obtain an update on Broadband provision – campaign for it if necessary.
- Site a notice board in each community to further improve communication.

Youth, Sport & Outdoor Recreation

Commentary:

Establishing a Youth Club in the parish is a long standing proposal and help to get one started was offered by participants in the community workshops. There was also interest in providing more local facilities for young people generally. Currently, their main social focus is provided by the Llys y Fran Young Farmers Club, which meets at the club house at Llys y Fran. This is a great resource but a survey of local young people would help to identify other local needs and preferences for location etc.

Wiston residents felt that the needs of younger children should be addressed too – they want a safe play area in the village. A site with sufficient room for a flexible games area would be ideal. In addition to providing a play it would also be a healthy outdoor option for all ages. Also a social meeting place for parents.

Local people feel that such a facility should be regarded as an enhancement to the village environment. It would save fuel and cut traffic - a positive impact on the environment, as parents would not have to transport their children to other facilities. Sustainable or recycled materials could be used in some elements of the construction.

The main challenge is to find suitable land to buy or lease for a sufficient period of time to secure grant aid. Detailed discussion about this is needed at a local level.

There is a general feeling that the community's young people should be helped in every way possible. They should feel encouraged to make the most of what is available locally and to find employment and live locally if they wish to do so. They should be given the opportunity to contribute to the social fabric of community life from a young age to ensure that it is sustained for future generations.

Sport facilities for young people were discussed at the visioning workshops and suggestions included a skate board park and a multi use facility for older children so that they could play cricket, tennis or other sports. Football is enjoyed at the Clarboston Road ground where training and matches take place. Widening the scope for sporting activities would be good for all ages, as there is interest in circuit training, tennis, badminton and archery. Another suggestion was to organise regular visits to a swimming pool or gym, giving everyone a chance to enjoy healthy pastimes and save fuel costs.

Outdoor leisure and recreation activities currently enjoyed by people of all ages include walking, gardening, riding, jogging, cycling, fishing and sailing. The rich and varied local environment provides many opportunities for these, including Wiston Woods, local footpaths and bridleways and the Cleddau river.

Some local people would like to see greater flexibility at Llys y fran Country Park to encourage leisure pursuits, such as sailing and canoeing. They feel that some rules and regulations prohibit, rather than encourage such healthy activities – one workshop participant suggested that control of leisure facilities should be 'handed over to the community'. A meeting with Country Park representatives could be called to discuss

this matter and assess whether there is scope for collaborative working to provide maximum opportunities for local people.

These measures could generally improve the quality of community life and have health benefits. Improving access to the surrounding countryside on existing rights of way and organising walks would also have a health benefit and would tie in with other factors such as healthy eating and making the most of local produce.

Proposals:

- Organise a Youth Survey to assess interest in starting a Youth Club and all the associated topics, such as preferred activities, venue etc. Also ask for commitment from parents to help supervise and run a Club.
- Contact Princes Trust to discuss potential for partnership so that support and training could be provided to help set up and sustain a Youth Club.
- Organise meeting at Wiston to assess how much support there would be for establishing a children's play area and whether there is any land available.
- Assess current sports provision and whether there is any way of extending programme to develop more opportunities for all ages.
- Investigate potential for a multi use games area at Clarbeston Road.
- Request a meeting with Llys y Fran Country Park management to discuss possibilities for greater community use of the facilities.

Environment, Enhancement & Recycling

Commentary:

The local environment is a great asset, with quiet lanes and public rights of way giving easy access to the rolling countryside. There is pride in features such as Wiston Wood, Wiston Pond, the Cleddau river and a little further away, Llys y Fran Country Park and the Preseli Hills. In addition to feeling pride in the environment, local people want to help sustain it.

Interest in conserving the public rights of way and encouraging people of all ages to use them, was quite a strong theme at the community workshops. Because local people all live close to farmland, everyone is aware of the importance of working in conjunction with farmers to carry out improvements, such as way marking. An initial step would be to survey the path network to identify where any improvements are needed. The highway authority, Pembrokeshire County Council, will not only provide advice about this but also distributes path Survey Packs to encourage communities to map their paths and assess their condition.

There was discussion of forming a Walking group to enjoy the local countryside and its many historical features. Once the paths are in good order, this should be a straightforward and enjoyable past time. It would have social and health benefits too.

There is a general interest in gardening and there was suggestion in starting Gardening Group. A practical suggestion was to start growing vegetables on a co-operative basis which could also provide a community composting resource.

Recycling is popular and people would like some facilities in each village to make this more convenient and effective as well as longer opening hours at the municipal facilities. Rubbish collection could also be improved - the 'orange bag' scheme, where rubbish is sorted ready for recycling collection was a popular suggestion. There would also be interest in learning more about opportunities for recycling a range of materials, including plastic and electronic circuit boards etc. Assistance could be provided by the County Council and the SRS scheme.

Raising awareness about sustainable living, including the impact of global issues and the potential for alternative sources of power, was another suggestion. Encouraging young people to get involved in caring for the environment could be a part of the efforts to start a Youth Club.

All these environmental interests could be covered by forming a local Environment Group that would meet regularly - carrying out practical work or inviting speakers to raise awareness and provide advice on various topics. All local organisations could be invited to take an interest. WI members are concerned about environmental matters and may be willing to get involved in projects, such as bulb planting or seed gathering. The School might also be interested in developing a wildlife habitat in its grounds. If a Youth Club was formed, young people could get involved in caring for their environment and gain experience from older members of the community.

There is good support available to such groups. PLANED's Valuing the Environment officer works with local environment groups, providing training and support. The Pembrokeshire Biodiversity Officer will assist in carrying out habitat and species audits; the County Council will give advice and support for rights of way issues. There is also a variety of funds available for community environment projects.

Proposals:

- Form an Environment Group which could cover different issues:
 - A Path Working/Walking Group could survey the paths and undertake improvements. They could then organise local walks and monitor path conditions at the same time as creating health and social benefits.
 - A Gardening Group would have these benefits too. It could also assess potential for co-operative growing and community composting.
 - A Recycling Group could hold meetings to raise awareness of global issues and look at practical improvements to current recycling practice in the community eg investigate possibility of 'orange bag' scheme.
- Link with other parish organisations through the Community Forums.
- Work with local landowners and the appropriate agencies to ensure an informed and effective approach to environmental matters.

History & Heritage

Commentary:

Wiston Parish is rich in heritage of all descriptions – spanning the ancient to the modern, via medieval battles, nineteenth century railway building and 20th century wartime. Right through to the present - the 21st century - when changes to agriculture and other trades - are history in the making.

What was life like when Wizo the Fleming commissioned the building of Wiston Castle, portions of which are still standing today, nine centuries later? Imagine the fierce battles that raged between Norman and Welsh forces.

Picture the tension, colour and excitement of the civil war battle at Colby Moor, when a large Royalist force advancing towards Narberth was met by a Parliamentarian force – the latter won the fierce battle and seized Haverfordwest.

What of the churches in the Parish – each with their story to tell for example the 17th century stone tablets in the porch of Wiston Church. Non-conformism must have been strong to have sparked the building of so many chapels in a small area – another story.

How many small rural communities have witnessed the influence of Brunel, which transformed a cross roads into the thriving commercial centre of Clarbeston Road.

What was life like in wartime? Was the railway a target – who was the local air raid warden? Are there still people alive to tell these stories – could they be interviewed so that these memories are preserved? What is the history of the Football Club? Its been running for nearly 50 years - are there lots of pictures and records of past glories?

So much history! This is just a taste of a parish with a very varied and fascinating past. Formation of a local History Group has been discussed for a long time. There is also interest in compiling a local history book. Many communities have done this very successfully and there is plenty of help to get this sort of activity started.

Proposals:

- Hold a public meeting to form a Parish History Society which should have representatives from each of the four communities. Invite other community historians to describe their work and how they got started.
- Once formed, the History Society could undertake all sorts of projects:
 - Audit local historical features – help is available from Cambria Archaeology's Ancient Sites and Monuments register.
 - Compile a village leaflet – PLANED can help with this.
 - Site interpretation boards at places of interest.
 - Record reminiscences – could be the start of an oral history project.
 - Collect photographs and other memorabilia of local life.
 - Organise a local History Exhibition – ask for old photographs – scan them and ask for names and stories behind the captured images.
- Seek advice, training and support from various agencies, including the County's Museums and Cultural Services Department

Transport, Traffic & Highways

Commentary:

This topic prompted considerable discussion at the community visioning workshops and more than any, it pointed up differences between the communities.

Whilst **Clarbeston Road** residents consider themselves to be quite well served by public transport systems, **Wiston** have one bus a week, whilst **Walton East** and **Clarbeston** have none.

It was suggested that the Country Cars service and Dial a Ride bus service should be enlarged as they offer at least some options.

A community bus service serving all four villages was proposed. People felt strongly and suggested lobbying the local MP and setting up an action group with representatives from each community. They proposed approaching a service provider directly with their ideas and to publicise them on radio and in the press.

Other areas have secured a Community Bus eg the Green Dragon service which serves the Crymych area. The Pembrokeshire Transport Co-ordinator can supply information and assistance.

Safety issues were raised by a number of participants. **Wiston** residents are concerned about speed of traffic, especially near the School.

Clarbeston Road residents are desperate for a pavement between the Hall and the Football Field to make the route safer. Lack of traffic speed signs is a concern in this village and this is felt to be a vulnerable stretch of road, especially for young people. It was also suggested that a separate footbridge across the railway is needed.

The 'Safety Footpath' has the full support of local parents and residents as well as football club members. The path, which could link right into the village, could double as a jogging trail and generally enhance the village environment, if designed properly. It was felt important to use a local contractor and recycled, or locally sourced, materials. The community has already lobbied MPs and the County Council but have still not achieved their aim. They propose a fresh, parish-wide approach.

There was a general comment about the poor condition of road surfaces and the need for maintenance of pavements in Clarbeston Road.

Proposals:

- Organise public meeting to discuss the Community Bus idea and invite county's Transport Co-ordinator to attend.
- Research services in other communities eg Green Dragon service.
- Meanwhile review Dial a Bus and Country Cars schemes.
- Undertake a traffic survey outside Wiston School. Inform County Council.
- Ask the County Council for a site meeting to progress the 'Safety Footpath' campaign for Clarbeston Road.
- Meanwhile organise a traffic survey to count number and type of vehicles that pass along the route within an hour – this will provide useful data.

- Investigate traffic calming scheme for the locality.

Housing & Services

Commentary:

Local people are keen to retain the character of their villages and surroundings and do not want more large scale housing development. However, they recognise that affordable housing (and employment) is needed if young people are to stand any chance of working and living in the area where they were born and brought up.

Currently PCC's Rural Enabler Officer is working with the Community Council to conduct a Housing survey to assess the housing needs of the Parish.

The parish currently has a good range of local services including a mobile library, Meals on wheels, the school, mobile hairdresser, fish van, eggs, mobile butchers, bakers, milk round and vets surgery.

Retention of local services was considered important. The fact that there is still a post office and shop in Clarbeston Road is appreciated by many people. It was suggested that more local produce could be promoted through the shop, providing the added advantage of a mini farm shop in addition to its existing stock. Some local products such as honey fudge are already sold here.

Medical services were valued – particularly Withybush Hospital and it was felt that there should be provision of more NHS dentists. Many people feel that it would be helpful to have a local policeman available to the parish.

Proposals:

- Meet with the Rural Housing Enabler to undertake a local needs survey to assess demand for homes for first time buyers.
- Ask for meeting with Clarbeston Road post office shop to assess possibility of marketing more local produce.
- Work with other local communities to assess the potential for a local produce network which might include the vegetable co-operative.
- Support county campaigns to retain hospital and dental services.

Implementation/Activity Groups

In order that the Action Plan can be progressed effectively it is proposed to form a Community Forum – an umbrella body with representatives from the Community Council, all local organisations and the County Council. Working Groups would progress the proposals – reporting back to the whole Community Forum – and in consultation with the relevant providers, for example the Highway Authority.

The Working Groups could be centred on:

- Community - facilities, activities and communications.
- Environment - including rights of way, energy & waste
- Heritage and History.
- Transport, Traffic & Highways
- Business, Housing, & Services.

It is important that the Groups would:

- Work within the agreed Action Plan and report to the main Forum –
- Work with existing groups and organisations, including the Community Council and other local authorities.
- Meet on a regular basis – at least four times a year.
- Keep the broader community informed of progress eg through the Newsletter.

Support, advice and funding would be offered by PLANED and partner organisations to help progress the Action Plan proposals. In certain instances, local proposals might feed into wider area strategies which would be supported by Area Enterprise Groups.