

Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Development Plan

Report of the Community Infrastructure Task Group

1. Introduction

1.1 The Community Infrastructure Task Group (CITG) was set up by the Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan Working Group (WG) in December 2015. Its initial work programme was focused around the following questions:

- *How do we prevent the loss of valued community facilities? What are these crucial assets?*
- *What are the infrastructure priorities on which CIL funds should be targeted?*

At the outset of the CITG's work there was an understanding that the quantum of development on the former Molins factory site would be at the upper end of the spectrum and generate significant CIL funds. As it has become clear that such a scale of development opposed by Wycombe District Council's (WDC) appeal case it has been necessary to amend the remit of the CITG to identify infrastructure priorities where PC funds (including and in addition to CIL) *might* be spent.

1.2 The CITG was composed of local residents all of whom, by virtue of being either long-standing residents of the Parish or through their roles in various local organisations, have demonstrated a competency to undertake the work of the CITG.

During the work of the Task Group the following Stakeholders have been contacted directly in order to seek their input into the output of the Task Group and into this report.

- Bledlow Ridge School
- Bledlow Parish Church of Bledlow with Saunderton and Horsenden.
- St Paul's Church, Bledlow Ridge
- The Country Store, Chinnor Road, Bledlow Ridge
- Meadow Styles Trustees
- Bledlow Village Hall
- Bledlow Ridge Village Hall
- Bledlow Ridge Cricket Club
- Bledlow Cricket Club
- The New Boot Company
- Chinnor and Princes Risborough Railway Association
- Saunderton Vale Management Company
- Lewis Stringfellow – Haw Lane/Deanfield landowner.

1.3 This report contains the CITG's policy recommendations to the Working Group for inclusion in the Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Neighbourhood Plan.

2. Background

2.1 Bledlow-cum-Saunderton Parish is formed of three main settlements (Bledlow, Bledlow Ridge and South Saunderton) with a number of loose knit hamlets and isolated houses spread across the rest of the rural parish.

2.2 Whilst the community facilities present in the Parish are few they are relied on heavily by local residents and are regarded as important for developing a sense of community in the settlements. The Parish Survey revealed that overall there was felt to be an active social network and community pride in the Parish respondents to the survey considered the Parish to

be well located for vital services (doctors/hospitals). This was balanced by comments on the lack of facilities in relation to older residents and young people/teenagers, for example, in certain areas a lack of a community hub or place to meet (such as a village hall), poor or no village shop and the lack of public transport at weekends isolating some residents. Like other rural parishes within the District, Bledlow-cum-Saunderton is ranked within the 5% most deprived in England with regard to *geographical* barriers to services (distance to a doctors, shop, primary school & post office).

2.3 The most common negatives raised by the survey were traffic and highways issues, the lack of public transport and the poor broadband speed in the village.

2.4 **Question 18** of the Parish Survey asked residents to rank in order of priority from high to low which facilities they thought were a priority for the community. The results are shown in Fig 1 below.

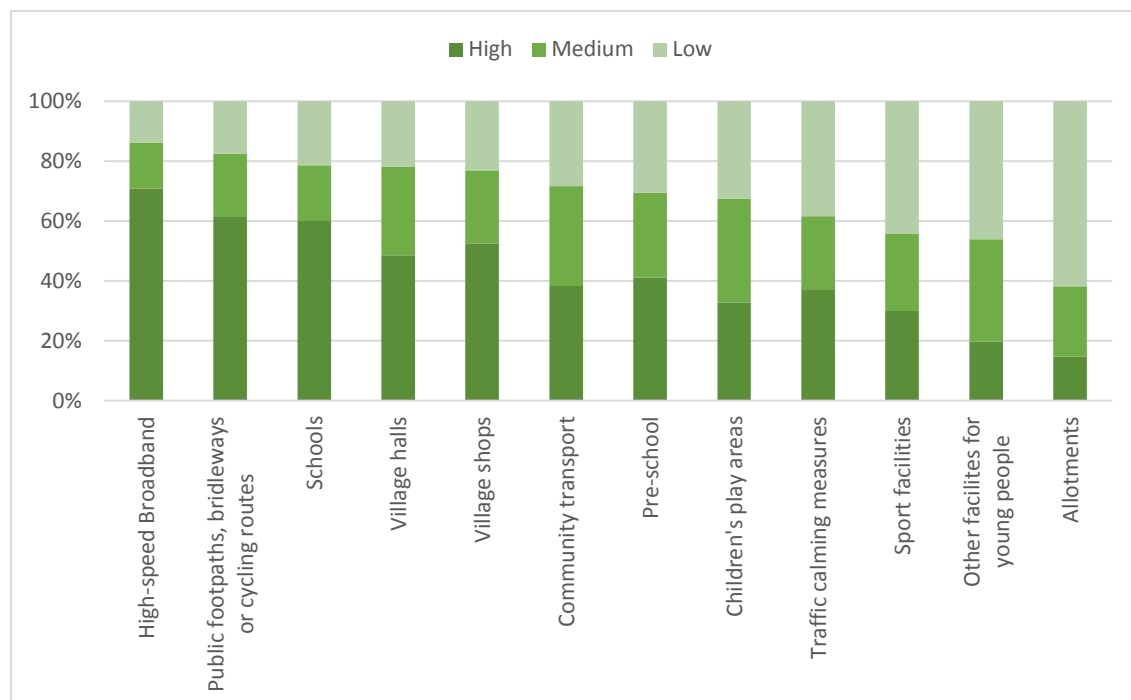


Fig 1: Local priorities for local community infrastructure.

With the exception of allotments all the categories of facilities listed were given either a high or medium priority by the majority of respondents.

2.5 Broadband

With regard to community amenities, poor broadband connection was seen as one of the worst and most frustrating things about living in the Parish, being cited by a large number of residents. This was also seen to have a negative effect on businesses in the area, for those working from home and for students/school children who also require good internet speeds for study.

2.51 Figure 2 shows where Superfast Broadband is available. Examination of the map shows clearly that Superfast Broadband is currently only available in the 'South Saunderton' area of the Parish – broadly the area comprising of the 'Saunderton Vale' development, the Golden Cross pub and the properties adjacent to the A4010.

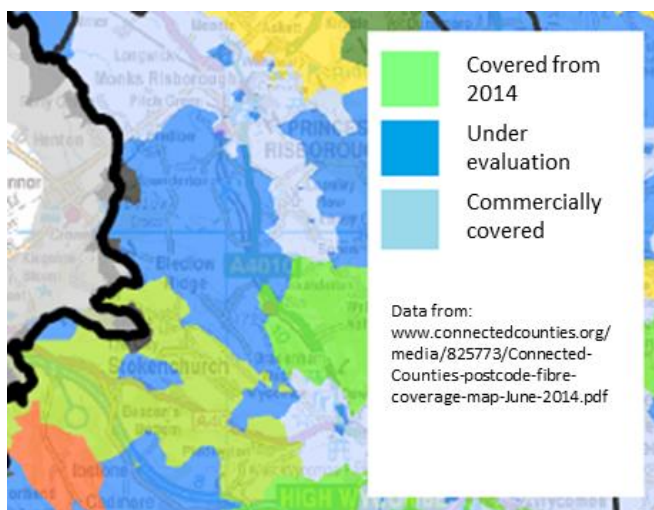


Fig 2: Superfast broadband coverage in Bledlow-cum-Saunderton¹

The map clearly shows that the rest of the Parish does not have Superfast Broadband. Neither, at the time of publication, were there any plans for further roll-out.

2.52 In order to collect evidence of ‘real life’ Broadband experiences, a small sample of residents were asked to provide the CITG with the following information:

- Download Speed (as per actual line speed rather than the speed advertised by their ISP).
- Whether High Speed Broadband was available (recognising that not all users require or can cost justify Superfast services)
- The survey was supplemented by random post-code sampling via the Bucks and Herts Connected Counties website and use of the Public Wi-Fi at the Golden Cross Pub and Bledlow Village Hall. The Connected Counties website was also used to identify which exchange/cabinet the Councillors were served by.

2.53 The survey mirrored the information shown in Figure 2, but at more granular level. The survey showed that true Superfast Broadband was only available in ‘South Saunderton’. Respondents living in Bledlow Ridge typically experienced download speeds in the region of **6 – 7Mbps**. A similar speed was experienced in the Shootacre Lane area.

2.54 Speeds experienced in Saunderton Lee, Bledlow village and the outlying settlements were considerably less, typically between **2 and 3 Mbps**. Respondents in these areas also experienced frequent ‘drop-outs’ (up to seven in one day) and occasions where speeds dropped below 1 Mbps during busy periods.

2.55 **Impact on Education.** Bledlow Ridge School is rated as ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted and is recognised as one of the best Primary schools nationally. Pupils at the school benefit from a dedicated IT suite, and hardware is kept up to date through the generosity of the school parents through the efforts of the Parents Association. In addition to the IT suite, there is IT provision in the classrooms and teachers have the benefit of laptops. The head teacher and deputy head teacher have been asked to comment on the impact the lack of Superfast Broadband is having on the quality of education provision.

2.56 Both have commented that although the school is well equipped, the educational benefits accruing from the hardware are being *increasingly put at risk due to low speeds* (sites take time

¹ <http://www.connectedcounties.org/media/825773/Connected-Counties-postcode-fibre-coverage-map-June-2014.pdf>

to load and streaming video is not always possible) and poor bandwidth which means that performance drops away when multiple devices are being used.

2.57 Beyond the Primary Sector, Students in Secondary and Further Education are also disadvantaged by poor broadband provision. Much homework is set, completed and submitted for marking via VLEs (Virtual Learning Environments) and students in the Parish are at an immediate disadvantage compared to their peers in Princes Risborough, Naphill and High Wycombe, for example.

2.58 **Impact on Business.** 104 out of 360 survey respondents have a business based in the Parish, of which over 50% were home based. 40% of all respondents to the survey work from home for at least 1 or 2 days per week with nearly 10% of respondents indicating that there was at least one person in the household working from home for a minimum of 5 days per week. Poor broadband provision is a detriment to these businesses and homeworkers.

2.59 Finally poor broadband is seen as a barrier to community cohesion.

2.6 Rights of Way

The Parish has an excellent network of rural footpaths and bridleways as befits an area with high value landscapes, nationally important wildlife sites and rich in archaeological and heritage features.

2.61 The Parish sits at the edge of the Chiltern Hills which has a total of over 2000 km of footpaths, with 70 cycle and horse riding routes. The two most important being the Icknield Way and the Ridgeway, both dating back about 5000 years, run through the Parish. A number of rather more modern route designations also pass through the Parish including the Chiltern Way, the Chiltern Cycleway, Swan's Way, the Bledlow Circular Ride and the Phoenix Trail.

2.62 Many respondents to the Parish Survey enjoy the network of footpaths around the Parish and the quieter lanes, the Phoenix Trail was also highlighted. Cycling and horse riding were cited a number of times. Rights of Way were the most commonly raised issue for the CITG in response to the Community Consultation events.

2.63 The many Rights of Way that have to be maintained are enjoyed by both local and large numbers of visiting walkers, horse riders and cyclists. In the Parish Survey a number of residents had some concerns about the poor upkeep, misuse and lack of maintenance of public footpaths in the Parish. This work should be actively encouraged and supported by the Parish in order to promote a healthy lifestyle and to allow families to use paths to avoiding ever busier roads. In addition maintaining and improving Rights of Way would encourage visitors to the area.

Since 1949 the Rights of Way and accessible routes have been listed on the definitive map which will be closed to further alterations in **2026**. In the meantime, working closely with the Local Access Forum on "Restoring the Record" will ensure all existing Rights of Way in the Parish are recorded and maintained as part of our heritage.

2.64 In addition identifying and reinstating any lost Rights of Ways and making new links where appropriate will improve connectivity across the parish for the local and wider community. In some instances it will be appropriate for the Parish Council, working with external partners and landowners, to help facilitate the maintenance of some parts of the network.

2.65 Particular issues have been identified at the following locations:

- A lack of footpaths/pavements along Chinnor Road (Bledlow Ridge) and Haw Lane were mentioned several times in the Parish Survey and in response to the Community Consultation events; particularly in regards to connecting the existing pavement in Haw Lane

with any development on the former Molins factory site and the existing bridleway network at the Deanfield/Haw Lane junction. The CITG held preliminary discussions with the owner of the largest tranche of land on the south side of Haw Lane between the existing pavement and the crest of Slough Hill. Whilst the landowner was happy to enter in to negotiations over this land detailed proposals have not been pursued; indicative costings of £130,000 previously received by members of the CITG for such a footpath mean that it would be financially prohibitive without a scale of development on the Molins site that is widely opposed by the community, other TG reports and WDC. However the issue is one that should be considered by the WG and PC dependent upon the eventual scale of development supported by the Neighbourhood Plan.

In other areas such as along Chinnor Road towards Routs Green improvement to the existing Rights of Way network may provide an alternative off-road route. Such work would need to be delivered through means other than the Neighbourhood Plan.

- The footpath from Bottom Road to Meadow Styles (BCS/69/1) is in need of maintenance with the steps in poor and dangerous condition. The CITG have not been able to identify the ownership of this path.
- Bridleways BCS/59/1 and BCS/67/1 have become narrow and rutted making them unsuitable for use by horses (BCS/59/1 is part of the Bledlow Circular Ride).

2.66 A cohesive approach will be provided by liaison with the Chiltern Conservation Board and all other interested parties both locally and nationally.

2.7 Schools

It is clear from the Parish Survey and from the Community Consultation events that the local primary school, Bledlow Ridge School (BRS) is highly regarded within the local community. The school is currently rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted and is recognised as one of the best primary schools nationally.

2.71 Several respondents to the Survey and to the Community Consultation events were concerned that the school was already over-subscribed and would not be able to accommodate the increased numbers of children that would be generated from the developments at West Yard, the former Molins site and from any extension to the GB4 boundary in Bledlow Ridge. Some respondents commented that they did not think that there was scope for the necessary extensions to accommodate the required expansion.

2.72 The CITG liaised with the Governors of BRS in relation to dealing with an expansion of the primary age population within the school catchment. The initial response would be to work with the LEA and local schools to use up excess capacity. The school would need to restrict taking in children from out of catchment, which could include siblings. If there remained a capacity issue then it would need to work with the LEA to extend the school. The capital work would be LEA funded, on the assumption that BRS doesn't go down the Academy route (response was received prior to the 2016 Budget statement on the compulsory conversion of all schools to academies). Running costs above capital expenditure would be self-financing as the schools funding from the LEA is calculated on Headcount.

2.73 There is a flourishing Pre-School based at Bledlow Village Hall and a popular private nursery based in Haw Lane, Bledlow Ridge. Very few comments were received on pre-school provision within the Parish.

2.8 Open Space and Assets of Community Value

Question 17 of the Parish Survey asked residents to list any community assets that they felt the Neighbourhood Plan should seek to protect. There was a lot of support for many of the existing community assets. A particularly high number of Parishioners mentioned the local pubs, notably the Boot and the Golden Cross, local shops e.g. the Country Store, village halls and sports facilities including the cricket clubs the tennis club and the Meadow Styles playground.

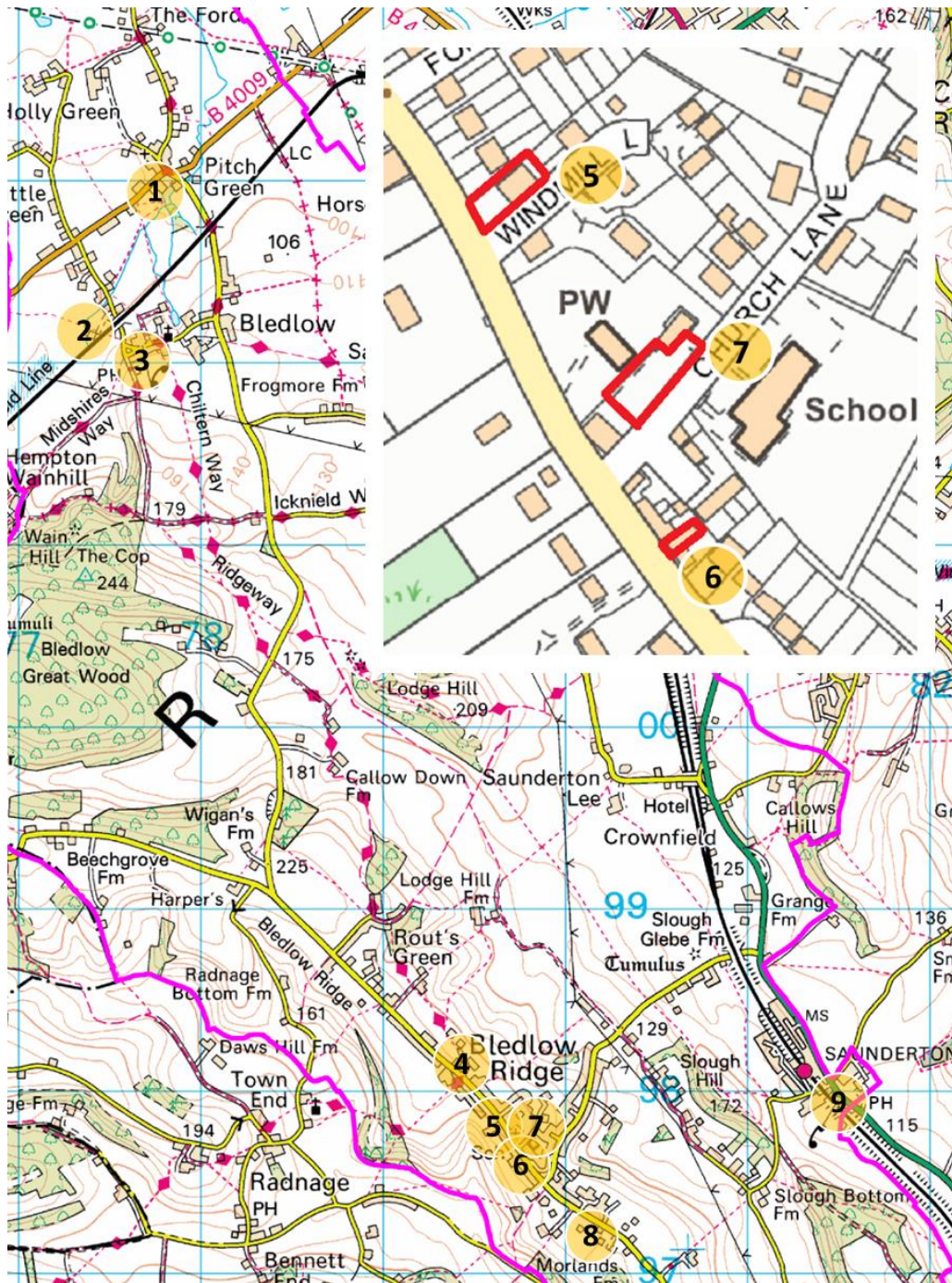


Figure 3: Open Space and Assets of Community Value. Bledlow Ridge detail inset.

1) **Bledlow Village Hall, Car Park and Playground.**



Fig 4: Bledlow Village Hall, Car Park and Playground.

Bledlow Village Hall is used by local groups as well as available for private hire. Bledlow Pre-School is based here. It is proposed by the Housing Development Task Group that the site be included within a new Settlement Boundary for Pitch Green. As part of this they have requested that the CITG seek to have the hall and its associated amenities Registered as an Asset of Community Value. The site as outlined is subject to recommendation 3.23.

2) **Bledlow Cricket Club**

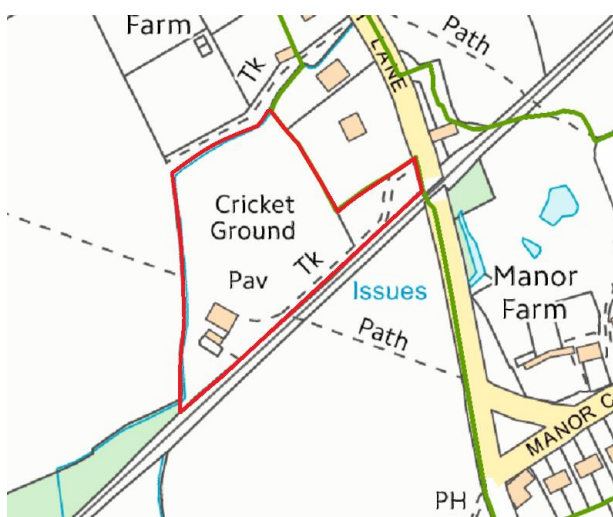


Fig 5: Bledlow Cricket Ground.

The site is currently registered as Green Space under WDC Policy DM12. It is proposed that the site also be subject to recommendation 3.23.

3) **The Lions of Bledlow PH**, Church End, Bledlow, HP27 9PE

‘The Lions of Bledlow’ Pub is the only pub in Bledlow Ward and is listed on the WDC Register of Assets of Community value². Its registration will end on 20/05/2020 and the PC should undertake to have it re-registered. It is proposed that the site also be subject to recommendation 3.23.

4) **The Boot PH**, Chinnor Road, Bledlow Ridge, HP14 4AW

The Boot is the only pub in Bledlow Ridge. It was purchased in 2010 by The New Boot Limited, a company formed from local shareholders. The objects of the company extend to taking all reasonable measures to ensure that the tenancy of The Boot Public House is managed to seek maximum shareholder value, whilst helping to ensure that the pub remains an amenity to the village³. In essence the pub is owned by the village residents and further shares are available for purchase as of February 2015. It is proposed that the site be subject to recommendation 3.23.

² <http://data.wycombe.gov.uk/View/planning/assets-of-community-value>

³ https://sites.google.com/a/brvh.co.uk/new_boot/home

5) Bledlow Ridge Village Hall (see inset on Fig 3.)

Bledlow Ridge Village Hall is located in Chinnor Road adjacent to St. Paul's Church. It is utilised for a range of village activities as well as being hired out for private use. The property is held in trust for the benefit of the village. It is proposed that it be subject to recommendation 3.23.

6) The Country Store (see inset on Fig 3.), Chinnor Road, Bledlow Ridge, HP14 4AJ

The Country Store is the only convenience store in the Parish. It is relied on by residents for essential groceries, newspapers etc., as well as offering a parcels and dry-cleaning collection service. It was regularly cited by respondents to the Parish Survey as a facility they wished to see protected. It is recommended that it be registered as an Asset of Community Value and be subject to recommendation 3.23.

7) Church Lane car park (see inset on Fig 3.)

The maintained car park opposite Bledlow Ridge School in Church Lane, Bledlow Ridge is heavily used during School drop-off and pick-up times as well as by those using the church and as overflow car parking for the village hall. In the Parish Survey and in the Consultation feedback there were numerous concerns cited with regards parking particularly around the school, church and village hall during busy times. As such the existing car park is critical in minimising the impact on Chinnor Road during these busy times. As such it is proposed that the car park be subject to recommendation 3.24.

8) Meadow Styles

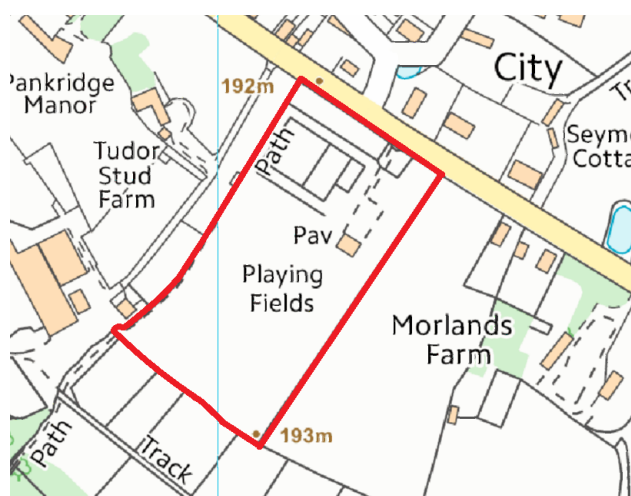


Fig 6. Meadow Styles Playing Fields.

Meadow Styles playing fields are held in trust for the purposes of village activities. Currently the site is leased by Bledlow Ridge Cricket Club, Bledlow Ridge Tennis Club and the Parish Council for the purposes of providing a children's playground. They were highlighted as a key community asset in the Parish Survey and in the feedback from the Consultation events. A small number of respondents indicated they thought that the site should be used

as a site for replacement village hall and shared community facility with the various village sports clubs. It is recommended that it be subject to recommendation 3.23.

9) The Golden Cross PH, Wycombe Rd, Saunderton, HP14 4HU.

The Golden Cross is the only pub in Saunderton Ward and is currently listed on Wycombe District Council's Register of Assets of Community Value⁴. It will remain on the register until 20/05/2020. It is proposed that the pub be subject to recommendation 3.23.

10) Other sites not identified on the map:

Princes Risborough Golf Club, Lee Road, Saunderton, HP27 9NX: Owned and managed by Buckinghamshire Golf Club. A small number of people commented on the Princes Risborough Golf Club as being an asset they valued.

⁴ <http://data.wycombe.gov.uk/View/planning/assets-of-community-value>

2.9 Common Land and Village Greens

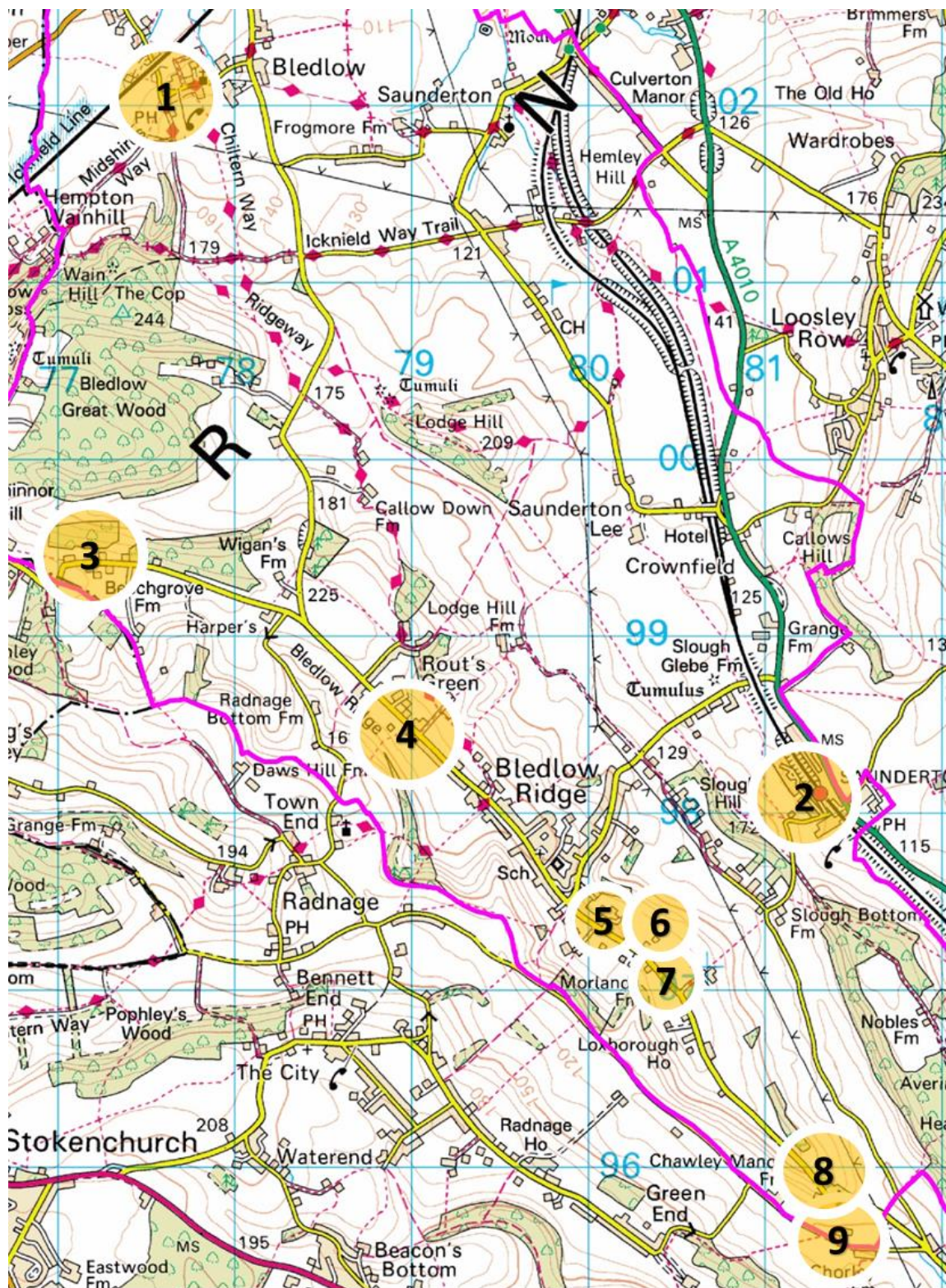


Figure 7: Registered Common Land and Village Greens.

- 1) **Bledlow Village Green.** Registered as a Village Green and protected from development under section 29 of the Commons Act 1876, together with section 12 of the Inclosure Act 1857.

- 2) **Saunderton Vale area of open green space.** The CITG has been informed by Dr Bob Newell of the Saunderton Vale Management Company that SVMC is currently in the process of registering the area of open green space in Saunderton Vale immediately opposite the entrance to Saunderton Station as a Village Green.
- 3 – 7) **Bledlow Ridge Dewponds.** The 18th century dewponds along spread along Chinnor Road are the responsibility of the Parish Council. In the cases of those identified on the map as 3 (opposite “Beechgrove Cottage”), 5 (in City adjacent to “Windermere”) the boundary of the Common Land area is the pond edge. In the case of 6 (adjacent to “The Old House”) the boundary of the Common Land area includes a limited area of bank immediately around the pond on the northern, southern and western edges. This pond is regularly visited by children from the local nursery ‘to feed the ducks’. In the instances of 4 (opposite the entrance to Chapel Lane) and 7 (opposite Wood Furlong) the Dewponds have ceased to hold water except in the wettest weather.
- 8) **Common Land at Loxborough Hill.** The largest area of Common Land in the Parish. The wooded areas, immediately either side of the road at Loxborough Hill are registered Common Land.
- 9) **Chawley Green.** The small strip of Chawley Green on the north side of Bottom Road is registered Common Land.
- 10) **Other sites not identified on the map:**

A small number of respondents to the Parish Survey commented on the area of open green space at the top of Haw Lane adjacent to The Crest. They wondered if this area could be better utilised as a village green to act as a focus for village events.

2.10 Public and Local Community Transport

The lack of regular public transport, particularly buses within the Parish, and especially during late afternoons, evenings and at weekends, was commonly raised in the Parish Survey, with some residents noting the lack of a community bus service. Some highlighted how this led to a feeling of isolation for some residents. In Saunderton and Bledlow Ridge bus services are very restricted after the mid-afternoon making it an impractical commuting option, even for those only commuting locally.

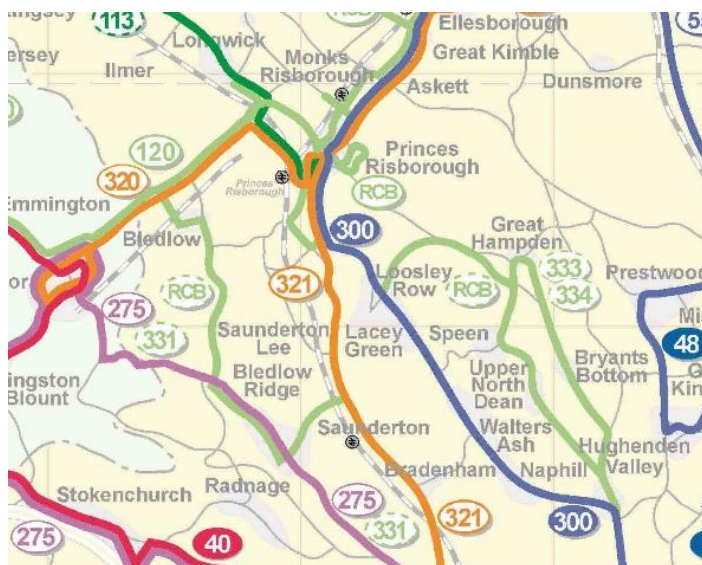


Fig 8: Bus Services in Bledlow-cum-Saunderton.

All areas: RCB 3x Weds and Fri only.

Bledlow: 120/121 4x Mon – Sat / 320 7x Mon – Fri.

Bledlow Ridge: 275 3x Mon – Fri / 331 1x Mon – Fri (term time only)

Saunderton: 321 7x Mon – Fri
Aylesbury – HW / 621 1x Mon – Fri (term time only).

2.101 Bledlow Ridge is particularly poorly connected to the wider public transport network as it no direct public transport connection with rail services. Residents in Bledlow Ridge are particularly reliant on a private vehicle for access to facilities and places of work.

2.102 On 15th March 2016 Oxford County Council decided to withdraw all subsidies paid to run 118 bus services in Oxfordshire from 20th July 2016. This included routes 120 & 121 from Chinnor to Princes Risborough and route 275 from Oxford to High Wycombe via Bledlow Ridge (this is also partly subsidised by Bucks County Council (BCC))⁵. As yet it is not clear what the impact of this withdrawal of subsidies will be on services but a loss of Saturday bus services from Bledlow and the loss of all but a single school bus service from Bledlow Ridge seems likely.

The CITG also received comments that it would be helpful if the Risborough Community Bus could run through the Parish on market day in Risborough (Thursdays).

2.103 Saunderton Station is located in South Saunderton and is on the main Chiltern Rail line between Birmingham and London Marylebone. Currently there is on average about one service per hour in either direction 7 days a week from between 0530 and 0000 weekdays and 2300 at weekends. Passenger numbers for 2014/15 were 58,978 (at current service levels this represents 4.1 passengers per service for the year). There has been a long-standing concern over the continuation of services from the station. Those residents in the north of the Parish use rail services from Princes Risborough, which can be accessed directly by bus from Bledlow.

2.11 Traffic Safety and Calming

A key issue raised by a majority of respondents to the survey was the volume and speed of traffic on the Risborough Road (A4010) in South Saunderton, Haw Lane in Bledlow Ridge and 'rat-running' on certain roads (Perry Lane & Haw Lane both frequently mentioned). Traffic speeds and volumes on Chinnor Road were also raised regularly in the feedback from the Community Consultation events.

2.111 Many residents felt that the traffic levels were increasing and were worried about the effect of this. Some noted that speeding was left 'unchecked' by local police and speed limits are not enforced. No traffic calming measures were in place. Many respondents highlighted the destruction of country lanes by larger vehicles (HGVs, farm vehicles) and increasing volumes of traffic. For example, the Phoenix Trail cycle way crosses a rural lane which is National Speed Limit, making it potentially very unsafe for walkers/cyclists due to speeding traffic. Some felt the Bledlow Waste Recycling Centre generated increased traffic and increased numbers of larger vehicles through our villages and quiet rural lanes.

2.112 Many residents highlighted concerns regarding parking along Chinnor Road and Church Lane during the school run or when the church or pub is in use, causing traffic problems/safety issues.

2.113 Five of the six routes from the A4010 across the High Wycombe to Aylesbury railway are restricted by height or weight limits and the two bridges in Bledlow are also narrow and low. This means that heavy lorry traffic heading to Bledlow via Saunderton or to Bledlow Ridge from the north is restricted to just one route, the Upper Icknield Way. This section of road has sharp bends and inclines and is only just wide enough for 2 cars to pass. As well as being an ancient byway in its own right, it is also a signposted part of the Chiltern Cycleway and is crossed by the Ridgeway National Trail and the Bucks Circular Trail. This represents a significant conflict between recreational users and motorised traffic. There should be no need for through traffic to be using this route. At the Consultation events it was proposed that some roads be

⁵ https://consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult/ti/stconsultation/consultationHome?utm_source=FURL-1&utm_medium=stconsultation&utm_term=nil&utm_content=&utm_campaign=stconsultation

designated as Quiet Lanes; whilst supported by legislation this is not a policy currently being supported by BCC.

- 2.114 Only a limited quantity of speed data could readily be sourced by the CITG. This is included in Appendix 01 of this report. It covers a small number of police speed monitoring operations in early May 2012 at a range of sites across the Parish. In those locations where the monitoring was carried out in the 30mph zone the average speed of vehicles was a minimum of 10% above the speed limit.

3. Recommendations

3.1. Broadband Provision for Homes, Businesses and Schools

The issue of very poor broadband speeds in the Parish was the primary infrastructure concern of residents, having a demonstrable impact on business and education in the parish. It is recommended that the following policies be adopted.

3.11 Policy 1a

All new business and residential development in the Bledlow-cum-Saunderton should be served by Superfast Broadband. For the avoidance of doubt the policy minimum will mirror the Ofcom minimum criteria [currently 25Mbps]⁶. Applications should demonstrate how any development will contribute to and be compatible with local fibre or internet connectivity. This should be through a 'Connectivity Statement' provided with relevant planning applications. Such statements should include details of;

- The intended land use and the anticipated connectivity requirements of the development.
- Known nearby data networks and their anticipated speed (fixed copper, 3G, 4G, fibre, satellite, microwave, etc).
- Realistic viability and delivery assessments of connection potential or contribution to any such networks.
- Measures taken by the applicants to work with Telecomm providers (e.g. BT Openreach, Virgin) to ensure that Superfast Broadband is available at the point of occupation.

This policy aims to see new development connect to the internet with a minimum symmetrical speed of 25Mbps and with realistic future proof upgrades available.

3.12 Policy 1b

Where delivery of the Ofcom minimum criteria is not viable, and subject to NPPF Paragraph 173:

- Suitable ducting that can accept fibre should be provided either to: the public highway; or a community led local access network; or another location that can be justified through the connectivity statement.
- Developer contributions will be sought in order to contribute towards the delivery of Superfast Broadband to the wider area of the development. Costs associated with additional

⁶ The European Union (EU) in its published Digital Agenda defines superfast broadband as speeds of 30Mbps and above. Ofcom and the UK Government have recently increased their definition from >24Mbps to >30Mbps whilst Broadband Delivery UK's (BDUK) states: "speeds of 30Mbps or in any event more than 24Mbps." (Source 'Connected Counties for Bucks & Herts' website <http://www.connectedcounties.org/questions-and-answers>)

works can be considered alongside affordable housing, or other contributions in a Viability Assessment, submitted to the Council.

3.13 **Policy 2**

In support of Policies 1, 3 and 4 the Parish Council will support of any works reasonably required to install or upgrade Superfast Broadband infrastructure – this could include (but not limited to) the installation of telecoms cabinets, overhead line equipment, sub-surface cabling, mobile phone/data masts or satellite dishes – provided that their placement, scale and design is in compliance with other relevant policies contained in the plan.

3.14 **Policy 3**

The Parish Council fully support the aims and objectives of Bucks and Herts Connected Counties. Parish Councillors and nominated officers will engage with Connected Counties (and other related groups such as Bucks Business First) to promote the interests of the Parish and ensure that the Parish receives its fair share of investment funding.

3.15 **Policy 4**

Notwithstanding Policy 3, the Parish Council will engage directly with Telecoms providers and relevant landowners to encourage the provision of Superfast Broadband to those areas of the Parish not covered by Policy 1. This policy is ‘solution neutral’ – e.g. the PC would consider ‘Mobile’ based solutions and/or satellite technologies in addition to the more established fibre based solutions.

3.2 **Rights of Way**

Whilst it is accepted by the CITG that there is a need for a pavement from the end of the existing pavement in Haw Lane to the entrance to the Molins site uncertainty over the scale of development proposed on the Molins sites means that any proposal for such a provision would be deemed deliverable on account of the projected cost outlined in paragraph 2.12 above. Furthermore the NP is unlikely to propose any scale of development that would be able to meet such an onerous provision and therefore should such a development be given approval it will have been outside the remit of the NP policies. It is therefore *not* recommended to include a policy for the provision of a footpath along Haw Lane from Bledlow Ridge to the former Molins site.

3.21 The maintenance and promotion of our local Rights of Way is demonstrably an important issue for residents. The concerns raised with regards to Rights of Way are not issues that can be readily dealt with under a development control policy tool such as is represented by a Neighbourhood Plan. It is therefore recommended that the Parish Council establish a sub-committee for the purposes of:

- Liaising with the Local Access Forum on "Restoring the Record" in order to ensure all existing Rights of Way in the Parish are recorded and maintained as part of our heritage by 2026.
- Co-ordinating between local land owners and external bodies, including funding bodies for the purposes of ensuring the Parish's network of footpaths and bridleways is properly maintained with a specific focus on those locations (some of which were highlighted in the Parish Survey and Consultation responses) where maintenance costs are particularly onerous on landowners as a result of local conditions.
- Establish a project in order to identify and investigate ‘missing links’ and improvements in the network that would, in particular, improve local connectivity between those parts of the

parish where the only current alternative is to use local roads in areas where there are no pavements.

3.22 **Schooling**

The future of our local school at a time of increasing development pressure is a clear concern for residents. In order to maintain the outstanding educational outcomes that are achieved at Bledlow Ridge School they may need the freedom to expand the school premises. It is therefore recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan adopt a policy supportive of any reasonable expansion of Bledlow Ridge School provided that any such development makes reasonable efforts to minimise its impact on the amenity of those residents living immediately adjacent to the site. Any proposals for increase in the scale of the school should include an appropriate Transport Management Plan demonstrating how an increase in the size of the school population will minimise any increase in the volume of traffic to and from the school.

3.23 **Community Assets**

As evidenced by the responses to the feedback from the Parish Survey and from the feedback from the Consultation events there is a strong desire to ensure the long-term futures of the sites identified in Figure 3 of this report. It is therefore recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan adopt the following policy to be applied to Sites 1 – 9 as identified in Figure 3:

“Proposals to redevelop or change the use of an existing community facility or land or buildings last used as a community asset will only be permitted where one of the following conditions is met:

- 1. A replacement facility of sufficient size, layout and quality to compensate for the loss of the existing facility is to be provided on an alternative site within or immediately adjacent to the same settlement. Or*
- 2. It has been satisfactorily demonstrated that it would not be economically viable or feasible to retain the existing community facility and there is no reasonable prospect of securing an alternative community use of the land or building.”*

- 3.24 It is clear from the Parish Survey responses and the Consultation feedback that there is significant concern with regards road safety during busy times at Bledlow Ridge School, St. Paul’s Church and/or Bledlow Ridge Village Hall. In order to ensure that the risk of these safety concerns is negated it is recommended that:

“No proposals for development on the site of the Church Lane car park will be considered unless Bledlow Ridge School, St. Paul’s Church and Bledlow Ridge Village Hall have all ceased to operate on their current sites or have moved to alternative sites such as that the car park is no longer deemed to be a viable location to park for access to these facilities.”

- 3.25 It is further recommended that the Parish Council, separately from the Neighbourhood Plan process register ‘The Country Store’, Chinnor Road, Bledlow Ridge, HP14 4AJ as an Asset of Community Value, and ensure that ‘The Lions of Bledlow’ PH and ‘The Golden Cross’ PH are both re-registered as Assets of Community Value in May 2020.

3.24 **Village Greens and Common Land**

All the sites identified in Figure 7 are protected by virtue of existing legislation. Whilst the Bledlow Ridge Dewponds and the areas of Common Land identified in Figure 7 are the responsibility of the Council in all cases the opportunities for the improved management or presentation of these areas is limited either by their nature (isolated bodies of water where the PC has no responsibility for the immediately adjacent land) or their location (sufficiently removed from the settlement centres that such work would not generate increased use or

enjoyment of these areas). Therefore no recommendations are made with regards Village Greens and Common Land.

3.25 Public and Local Community Transport

There is no scope within a Neighbourhood Plan to tackle issues of Public or Community Transport. However it is recommended that the Parish Council closely monitor the situation with regards the withdrawal of bus services within the parish.

3.26 Traffic Safety and Calming

With the exception of the former Molins factory site (where traffic safety policies particular to large scale development have been incorporated in to the South Saunderton Task Group report) it is not anticipated that there will be any development in the parish that will require a specific traffic safety or traffic calming policy included within the Neighbourhood Plan.

However traffic safety issues were ones which drew strong responses from residents in both the Parish Survey and in the Consultation feedback and there are some areas where it is clear that consideration needs to be given to immediate action by the Parish Council with regards to both current planning matters and the longer-term management of the parishes roads:

- The proposals contained within the draft Princes Risborough Town Plan (P RTP)⁷ are highly likely to have an overspill impact on the adjacent rural road network within Bledlow-cum-Saunderton and currently outside the area of the P RTP. It is recommended that the Parish Council work with WDC, BCC and Transport for Bucks (TfB) in order to ensure that the management of the Upper Icknield Way, Lee Road and Bledlow Road, Saunderton is focused on reducing traffic speeds and volumes in order to encourage their safe shared use by walkers, cyclists and horse-riders as well as motorists.
- Traffic volumes and speeds along the A4010 were raised as a significant concern in the Parish Survey. The Parish Council should urgently engage with the A4010 HS2 Consortium which has been identifying priorities for improvements as part of HS2 mitigation work.
- Empirical data on traffic speeds in the varying locations around the Parish mentioned in residents' responses and comments was hard to come by and it is therefore recommended that the Parish Council undertake a programme of informal speed surveys for the purposes of then prioritising where work on reducing traffic speeds needs to be focused. The following locations have been identified as priorities by residents:
 - In South Saunderton to assess the effectiveness of the 40mph zone.
 - Haw Lane to assess the effectiveness of both the 30mph and 40mph limits.
 - Chinnor Road, Bledlow Ridge to assess the effectiveness of the 30mph limit at locations other than outside the village hall.
 - Chinnor Road to assess the effectiveness of the 40mph limit between Routs Green and the 30mph zone.
 - Perry Lane, Bledlow to assess the effectiveness of the 30mph limit.
- On completion of the speed survey project outlined above the Parish Council should, if appropriate locations where mitigation work could be carried out are identified, establish a shortlist of priority projects in liaison with relevant local partners and funding bodies. The CITG suggest that with regards current approaches to reducing traffic speeds in rural villages that are appropriate within an AONB the Parish Council refer to the Dorset AONB

⁷ <http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/council-services/planning-and-buildings/planning-policy/new-local-plan/princes-risborough.aspx>

Partnership 2011, *Traffic in Villages – Safety and Civility for Rural Roads; A toolkit for communities.*

4. References & Attachments

- <http://www.connectedcounties.org/media/825773/Connected-Counties-postcode-fibre-coverage-map-June-2014.pdf>
- <http://data.wycombe.gov.uk/View/planning/assets-of-community-value>
- https://sites.google.com/a/brvh.co.uk/new_boot/home
- https://consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult.ti/stconsultation/consultationHome?utm_source=FURL-1&utm_medium=stconsultation&utm_term=nil&utm_content=&utm_campaign=stconsultation
- <http://www.connectedcounties.org/questions-and-answers>
- <http://www.wycombe.gov.uk/council-services/planning-and-buildings/planning-policy/new-local-plan/princes-risborough.aspx>

Appendix 01: Traffic Speed Data in Bledlow-cum-Saunderton for May 2012. (Sourced from TVP)

- On the 02/05/2012 the SID was deployed on PERRY LANE, BLEDLOW, between 12-30 – 1 pm, in the 30 mph section (camera pointing towards B4009). 15 vehicles went through the device and the average speed recorded was 34 mph. Eight vehicles that went through the device exceeded the speed limit.

- On the 02/05/2012 the SID was deployed on CHINNOR ROAD, BLEDLOW RIDGE (Outside BLEDLOW RIDGE VILLAGE HALL) between 3 - 3-30 pm, in the 30 mph section (camera pointing towards Chinnor). 15 vehicles went through the device and the average speed recorded was 36 mph. Six vehicles that went through the device exceeded the speed limit.

- On the 03/05/2012 the SID was deployed on HAW LANE, BLEDLOW RIDGE between the 07-50 – 08-30 am in the 40 mph section (camera pointing towards Chinnor Road). 39 vehicles went through the device and the average speed recorded was 33 mph. eleven vehicles that went through the device exceeded the speed limit.

- On the 04/05/2012 the SID was deployed on B4009 BLEDLOW between the 09-30 – 09-45 am in the 40 mph section (camera pointing towards Princes Risborough). 34 vehicles went through device and the average speed recorded was 33 mph. No vehicles that went through the device exceeded the speed limit.

- On the 04/05/2012 the SID was deployed on B4009 BLEDLOW between the 09-45 – 10-00 am in the 40 mph section (camera pointing towards Chinnor). 46 vehicles went through the device and the average speed recorded was 39 mph. One vehicle that went through the device exceeded the speed limit.