

MELKSHAM COMMUNITY AREA PARTNERSHIP



Annual Report 2015-16

1. INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the local community, MCAP seeks to:

Identify the community's priorities for action

We have established a wide-ranging network of community organisations, groups, clubs, societies, schools, churches and businesses as well as interested individuals in order to connect with as many local people as possible.

Reflect local concerns and ideas

We are looking to bring about positive change through a combination of encouraging local projects and finding ways to raise awareness.

Maintain strong links with town and parish councils

We engage with councils and other partners to build effective participation, consultation and community engagement across the community. We serve as an advocate for civic engagement and enable the creation of strong, resilient and empowered communities. We provide excellent meeting and event facilitation, administration and management.

- **DEVELOP:** To develop the capacity and skills of our community groups, enabling them to perform their roles
- **SHARE:** We endeavour to provide a platform for the community organisations to share information, ideas and best practice so as to foster efficient and informed working.
- **PROFILE:** To raise awareness, understanding and support for the organisations and the work they carry out in our community area
- **NETWORK:** One of our primary aims is to build and maintain relationships with partner organisations and key stakeholders. We are skilled in networking and encourage engagement via social media such as Facebook and LinkedIn, and have links to well over 1,000 Twitter users.
- **SUSTAIN:** We seek to ensure an independent partnership that is fit for purpose, sustainable and able to support the community organisations in their work.

Below are just some of the highlights of Melksham Community Area Partnership in the previous year.

2. DEVELOP



Melksham Neighbourhood Plan

Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Council are working together to support and facilitate the production of the Melksham Neighbourhood Plan, and a Steering Group has been formed with their support to oversee the process.

A key element of the process is



the effective participation of the public in the plan preparation process and support of local residents for the final Melksham Neighbourhood Plan. MCAP has been engaged in this process since December 2014 and forms a key element of the Steering Group.

Partnership staff also played a key role in the development of a **Sustainability Scoping Report** for Melksham, an eighty-page document covering such diverse issues as:

- Land and Soil Resources
- Water resources and flood risk
- Air quality and environmental pollution
- Climatic Factors
- Historic Environment
- Landscapes
- Population and Housing
- Healthy Communities
- Ethnicity
- Education and Skills
- Transport

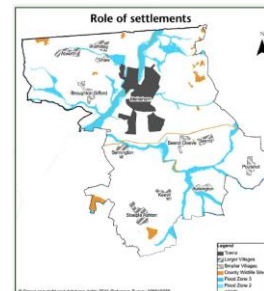


Fig. 4.3.1 Distribution of County Wildlife Sites in Melksham Community Area - source: [Local Strategy](#). Note that to the South of Melksham, Berryfield is considered a small village and Rotherhithe a Village.
 COUNTY WILDLIFE SITES - As might be expected from a town bisected by a river, much of our richest biodiversity is found in our riparian meadows and banks. In consequence many of these areas along the floodplain of the River Avon are now designated County Wildlife Sites by Wiltshire Council. This is a

2. SHARE and NETWORK

Our network of **theme groups** look at specific issues and arrange projects and report direct to the partnership Officer. We also link to existing groups that are active in the community.

Theme: Environment

Partnership volunteers undertook an extensive campaign stressing that “There’s No Such Thing As The Dog Poo Fairy” in 2015, attending fetes and functions and distributing information and free disposable, flushable doggy poo bags



Melksham Community Area Partnership Environmental Group presents

Apple Pressing

Community Events:

the White Hart
 Bath Road, Atworth
 Sun. 21st September 2014
 12 noon – 2.00pm

Well House Manor
 Spa Road, Melksham
 Sun. 5th October 2014
 2.00 pm – 4.00pm

Bring along apples from your garden plus a few empty bottles or containers, and take some delicious freshly pressed apple juice home with you that's ready to drink.

Be prepared to roll your sleeves up and get stuck in! The apples will all need to be washed, chopped and pressed - it's very much a community effort.

If you already have an apple press of your own, feel free to bring that along too and help your neighbours turn their apples into juice (or even cider!)

Community Apple Pressing Day was held in September 2015. These events have become very popular since we started them in 2012. Area Board grants were applied for and kindly awarded which enabled the Environmental Group to purchase a powerful pulping machine and a much larger apple press.

It's planned to hold similar such events again later in 2016.

Community Seed Swap events.

This is something else which the Environment Group has established as a regular attraction in the Melksham community area calendar of events. Anyone that's been a gardener for any length of time, whether simply growing a few flowers in a border at home or keeping the kitchen well stocked on an allotment or two, will be bound to have a few spare packets of seed lying around.

The Melksham Community Seed Swap is a great opportunity to exchange some of those seeds, crowns or sets for something else. We welcome flowers, vegetables, any kind of seed. People simply have to turn up with seeds to swap (clearly labelled and saved in packets or envelopes), take a look at what's on offer and swap seeds either directly with other gardeners or from the Community Collection.



Theme: Community Safety

This group meets on the last Thursday of every month and has been successful in introducing a volunteer-run state-of-the-art digital CCTV system to Melksham Town Centre and a highly commended Safe Places scheme, as well as serving as a focal point for Neighbourhood Watch, Community Speedwatch, the PCC, and the Neighbourhood Policing teams to ensure that community safety priorities are identified and tackled. The group undertakes a great deal of work in the Melksham Without area in particular. It is hoped to continue to introduce SmartWater across the whole community area in 2016 to make it a safer place to live and work in.

MCAP's Sue Stoker was voted volunteer of the year in 2015's Neighbourhood Policing Awards for her dedication to the community.

Mrs Stoker beat three others for the title after being nominated by Melksham Without Parish Council for her tireless work in reviving Neighbourhood Watch schemes in the area and supporting new ones.

Community Speedwatch in and around Melksham has also been a major success, notably in Atworth, Steple Ashton, Seend, Snowberry Lane, Shaw & Whitley and Semington Road.

Theme: Transport Trains

The transport group has been building on the success of earlier campaigns to increase rail passenger figures for Melksham (which is now the 7th fastest growing station in the UK in terms of passenger numbers). The partnership nevertheless strives to facilitate cross-partnership working regarding both Buses and Trains, and retains close ties with the Trans Wilts Community Rail Partnership.



Theme: Health & Well Being

Project: Establish a Health Forum

Working closely with the Spa Medical Centre's Patients Reference Group, MCAP volunteers have successfully launched a series of public health forums which have been extremely well attended. These have tackled issues such as men's health, obesity, mental health and diabetes.

Volunteers also manned an information stall at the Food and River festival during the summer which saw 5,000 people pass by during the day.

5. SUSTAIN

The Melksham Community Area Partnership is committed to continuing the good work undertaken in line with the community's wishes but is reliant on grant funding in order to continue. Wiltshire Council's Area Board has previously been tremendously supportive and we look forward to working closely with them, however they are no longer able to provide revenue funding. Organisations such as the Police and Crime Commissioner will provide small grants to achieve specific projects, and mindful of this we are applying for grants where relevant – for example, purchasing SmartWater kits to protect householders' belongings. What is harder to fund however is the revenue costs that keep the organisation running, successful and impactful. This is largely the admin cost of the Coordinator, with some expenses cover for mileage, venue hire, printing, refreshments and other incidental costs. Other than the Coordinator role, all roles are voluntary and delivered by a very dedicated committee. We are looking for about £5k per annum in all.

The Wiltshire Council Business Plan states that WC will be “creating stronger and more resilient communities” and we fit into Outcome 2- *“People in Wiltshire work together to solve problems locally and participate in decisions that affect them.”* MCAP has experience in involving people in service design and delivery to achieve a better outcome and to help people trust each other and the outcomes for the community. MCAP will add value for money in working with the local community to achieve their needs and wants. MCAP has already shown by its community plans and projects that we are skilled and confident with community consultation, so our actions speak for themselves.

For further information please contact:

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