



Martock 2030

Martock Neighbourhood Plan

Newsletter 2 - April 2017

Martock Traffic

When we comment about housing developments in Martock, we write more about traffic than any other subject.



Good Morning Bower Hinton!

So what can we do about it?

Unfortunately not much because traffic is not really a planning matter

What a Neighbourhood Plan can do

- Influence the design of roads and parking areas in new estates
- Promote the upgrading of footpaths and cycle tracks

- Oppose (but not stop) building in areas which will create difficult and unsafe traffic flow problems.

What a Neighbourhood Plan can't do

- Build new roads (except in new developments)
- Widen existing roads
- Redesign junctions
- Improve public transport
- Change speed limits, road designations and other traffic control measures

Who pays for new roads and paths in new developments?

Developers sign a contract to build them as part of the permission. The money comes from things like 'I06 agreements' and 'CIL' - see the box below.

There has been talk for years about a **new Relief Road**, more or less along the old railway line, from Cartgate to Yandles Garage. Lorries will get straight to the Industrial site without clogging up the village centre.

But who will pay?

The road will cost millions and only a few thousand will come from each new house.

Martock will have to have well over a thousand new houses to pay for it. That will almost double the size of the village.

If the village is doubled in size it will no longer be a village; it will almost certainly become officially a Market Town. This will mean that it will not be protected from large scale development like it now is because it is classed as a village.

Maybe we should, instead, try to come to love out traffic jams.

What does the planning jargon - 'Section 106' and 'CIL' mean?

These are the ways to ensure that developers pay for a number of things that the development will need, like additional school places, affordable homes, drainage, access roads, and many other community needs.

'Section 106 agreements' (from Section 106 of the 1990 Planning Act) are signed between the Local Authority and the developers to fund all the additional things that are needed to make the development possible. Most of it goes on things like access roads and drains but some has, in the past, been spent on things like sports facilities, Huish swimming pool and the Octagon Theatre. A big problem with these agreements is that there are lawyers who specialise in helping developers wriggle out

of many parts of them - as we have learnt in Martock.

The CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) is a newer idea, starting here this April, and it is a planning tax (that, they say, is less easy to wriggle out of). The current rate here is £40 per square metre (or about £4000 for an average house) and most goes to South Somerset. It will not be used to fund the basic things like drainage and access roads but it will take over from Section 106 to fund the other things in the community.

The good news is that a successful and approved Neighbourhood Plan will allow Martock Parish to use 25% of the CIL rather than the 15% it will get without a plan.



Relief Road? The old Yeovil to Taunton railway line where it enters the village near Foldhill Lane on its way to the old station (now Paulls). It is now crossed by footpaths and is an area particularly rich in wildlife.

What about more and better footpaths instead of the car?

The government wants us to stop using our cars for short journeys. This is all part of making our way of life more environmentally sustainable. Should we be thinking more about making our (off-road) paths safe for walking and also for cycling and electric buggies?

We are fortunate in Martock in having many footpaths. Most are of ancient origins from the days when commoners in

the village needed to get to their grazing lands and their strip fields. There are also some well-built ancient tracks that allowed villagers to get carts and livestock round to the backs of their houses.

And we also have a few 'permissive paths' where use by the public is allowed by the landowner rather than by right. These also often follow ancient tracks that may have fallen into disuse

Getting to Martock Centre by footpath.

It's not that easy but could be made more so from some parts of the village. One possibility may be the path from Dimmocks Lane in Bower Hinton to Water Street.

Can (and should) some of the paths be upgraded to cycle tracks?

Changing the use of a path.

Most footpaths are owned by the farmers. We have a right to walk them but not to damage them or to widen them or surface them, or replace styles with gates without permission of the owner.

Some footpaths are old byways which cyclists may use legally. But most don't go where cyclists want to go.



Martock is at the bottom of a shallow bowl so we get fine views from paths on the lip. This is Foldhill from Ringwell Hill

Some tracks are 'white roads' These are marked on maps with a double line like roads but left white, not coloured like roads. Some of these are public but many are not and even if they are public they may not be open to bicycles.

Bridleways can be used by cycles and horses but we don't have many

We don't have any roads or tracks that are part of the National Cycle Network.

Changing the use and ownership of a path can be a legal minefield. But tell us if there are paths you think should be developed into alternative and safe ways to get into the village.



This is Ringwell Hill from Foldhill

Tell us what to put in the Plan

- ▶ Are there any (affordable) ways of reducing the traffic problem?
- ▶ Do you want some footpaths to the centre upgraded to they can be used by bicycles and buggies? Which?

Contact the Plan team

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