

# Yatton Parish Council

## Consultation Response: North Somerset Council Active Travel Action Plan

### Overall Strategy

Yatton Parish Council agrees that reducing the need for private car journeys in and between our local communities is an excellent goal. We are concerned, however, that the needs of older and less mobile members of the community must also be met.

Both Yatton and Claverham are linear settlements with long distances between important locations: in Yatton, it is over half a mile between the village centre and the railway station, and in Claverham it is nearly a mile from the border with Yatton to the village centre. Anyone living in the centre of Claverham and wishing to use Yatton railway station faces a journey of nearly two miles. The footways are in many places dangerously narrow and/or overgrown and many residents report being hit by the wing mirrors of vehicles whilst walking.

Older and less mobile people will therefore not be walking or cycling these routes; they need public transport links and at present neither village has any bus service at all. This defect must be rectified as a matter of the most urgent priority. Local residents will be extremely unimpressed when they see expenditure of their council taxes on active travel initiatives when they have no access to public transport. Telling them that we are “joining the dots between transport modes such as bus, rail, walking/wheeling, cycling and micro-mobility” will be greeted with angry disbelief in Yatton and Claverham.

### Action Plans

#### **20mph Action Plan**

We still await implementation of the 20mph scheme in Yatton, despite beginning discussions about improvements to our dangerous High Street just under seven years ago, in May 2016. Since then inflation has eroded the funds available by more than 20% and the delay is thus putting the whole scheme in danger. We are in the dark about the current state of play so are more than a little bemused to see a list of other such schemes being drawn up by North Somerset Council. Promises have to be kept.

In terms of areas that would benefit from new 20mph schemes, Claverham Road must be of high priority. It is an important local route with residential dwellings on both sides along its length. It is the

only feasible active travel route from Claverham to the shopping and transport facilities in Yatton. The complete absence of bus services in Yatton and Claverham forces residents to use their cars; the least we can do is try to make these journeys safer both for driver and active traveller by lowering the speed limit.

### **Active Travel Network Action Plan**

We agree that this is a worthy aim, but narrow main routes in Yatton and Claverham will make it difficult or impossible to create much-needed separate cycle provision. Given that the ONS 2016 data show that the majority of people would not use active travel modes for journeys of less than two miles, it is imperative that there are good public transport links within our two very long and narrow villages. At present there are none at all. The Action Plan says we need “joined-up networks” – any network at all would be an improvement for our local residents.

We would very much like to see the Yatton-Clevedon link implemented. Improving links from the centre of Claverham to Yatton, and from the centre of Yatton to the railway station (both by public transport and by making it easier to access the existing Strawberry Line), would make for a genuinely joined-up network that would be of great benefit to residents.

### **First and Last Mile Action Plan**

We agree that it is important to develop a coherent strategy in this area. Yatton and Claverham have particular issues because both are long and linear, which means that many intra-community journeys involve distances that militate against active travel. Our narrow and dangerous roads also discourage walking and cycling. At present, residents who are unable to make these journeys by active travel are forced to use their cars because there is no road public transport provision anywhere in our parish. Older and less mobile residents will not be using e-scooters for first and last mile journeys – they need buses.

One scheme proposal that we would like to put forward is to base a “destination hub” on Yatton railway station, to link it to the centre of Yatton, Claverham, Clevedon, Kingston Seymour and Congresbury. These settlements should be linked by electric buses in order to facilitate non-car travel in the area.

### **Liveable Neighbourhoods Action Plan**

We agree that this is a laudable aim, but are of course disappointed that it will not be possible to implement these ideas on the main roads through Yatton and Claverham. Our linear villages mean that the High Streets serve as both major routes and residential streets. Anything that can be done to

tip the balance towards the needs of residents and away from the needs of through-traffic is to be encouraged.

To this end, it will be important in Yatton to prevent Mendip Road and Stowey Road being used by motorists as rat-runs to avoid the 20mph zone in the High Street. We would therefore like to propose a new scheme designating these roads as Liveable Neighbourhoods.

### **Rural Lanes Action Plan**

We convened a meeting of local parishes nearly six years ago to try to implement a Quiet Lanes network in our county. It is nice to see that North Somerset Council have finally developed some enthusiasm for this idea, having initially been dismissive. We have a map of all the proposed and agreed Quiet Lanes should they wish to get a flying start on their initiative.

We would therefore like to propose new schemes in our parish, based on the existing groundwork, to add to the list in the consultation document:

- Ham Lane – Claverham Drove;
- Streamcross – Lower Claverham Road – Jasmine Lane – Brockley Way – Chelvey Lane – Meetinghouse Lane;
- Wemberham Lane;
- Wood Hill.

The other routes that came out of our initial work were within Congresbury, Cleeve, Puxton, Nailsea, Wraxall and Failand, and Weston-in-Gordano.

### **Safer Active Routes to School Action Plan**

We are fully in agreement with this important initiative.

We are pleased that there is now a much safer route to Yatton Primary School that largely avoids Yatton High Street. The school access from Stowey Road is protected by a temporary arrangement of traffic-calming planters but needs to be formalised and made permanent.

There are still issues with access to Chestnut Park Primary School because the crossing on the B3133 North End Road between Eaton Park and Chestnut Park has still not been completed. There is a danger that the anti-skid road surface will wear out before the crossing is put in place.

## **Transport Behaviour Change Action Plan**

We must reiterate that there are major challenges facing implementation of active travel in Yatton and Claverham. These include:

- The very long and linear nature of these settlements, meaning that roads are both major routes and residential streets, uses that are in direct conflict with each other;
- The lack of navigable footways;
- Narrow main roads precluding the implementation of separate cycle paths;
- The total absence of bus services.