

Community, Leisure & Recreation

The availability of good standards of Parish sport and leisure facilities is significant to the wellbeing of the community. Many local businesses are dependent on the continued high standard of maintenance and assured availability. The local community are also highly dependent for sustainability of local services and amenities within the parish.

Sport

Current outdoor sport within Whitchurch and Ganarew is focused around the utilisation of the natural habitat of the river Wye and the abundance of footpaths. Canoeing, fishing, walking and cycling are the main outdoor sporting activities. Other minority outdoor activities include mountaineering and horse riding. Indoor sport within Whitchurch and Ganarew includes martial arts, ballroom dancing and various styles of dancing associated with keep fit activities.

River Sports

Facilities for canoeing includes organised treks with journeys stretching over days through to short half day hire. There are six businesses within Whitchurch and Ganarew active with canoeing pursuits. Fishing along the River Wye is popular with locals and visitors alike. More than 30 species of fish have been recorded in the Wye, making it one of the most important river systems in Northern Europe. Some are characteristic of the river and others are migratory species such as the allis and twaite shad, sea and river lampreys, and the Atlantic salmon. The River Wye also boasts inclusion of molluscs (including six species of molluscs) and crustaceans such as the Atlantic stream crayfish.

Rights of Ways

Walkers and ramblers can choose from a total of 103 officially recognised rights of way, inclusive of 40 kilometres and much utilised by locals and visitors to the area. The maintenance a condition of the rights of way is regulated by the parish Footpaths Officer, who presents regular reports to the Parish Council.

Other Sport Activities not available within the parish with no evidence identified for their need

Bowling (there are bowling facilities available at Hereford)

Basketball /Baseball (there are sports facilities and leisure centres offering Basketball /Baseball facilities available at Hereford)

Cricket (there are cricket facilities available at Hereford)

Golf (there are golf facilities available at Hereford, Ross-on-Wye and Monmouth)

Tennis (there are Tennis facilities available at Hereford, Ross-on-Wye and Monmouth)

Other Sport Activities not available within the parish with evidence for their need

Football

Activity is not available within the parish. However, there is evidence for a need. The Parish Plan identified parishioners considered the availability of football coaching and training would be beneficial for the sustainability of community wellbeing. This would be an ideal outdoor and indoor activities for a range of age groups. A small number of volunteers were identified at Parish Plan public meetings. There are considerable facilities within the surrounding areas of Hereford, Ross-on-Wye and Monmouth.

Netball

Activity is not available within the parish and there is little evidence for a need. The Parish Plan identified a small number of parishioners considered the availability of Netball coaching and training would be beneficial for the sustainability of community wellbeing. There are sports facilities and leisure centres offering Basketball /Baseball facilities available at Hereford.

Rugby

Activity is not available within the parish. However, there is evidence for a need. The Parish Plan identified parishioners considered the availability of rugby coaching and training would be beneficial for the sustainability of community wellbeing. This would be an ideal outdoor and indoor activities for a range of age groups. A small number of volunteers were identified at Parish Plan public meetings. There are considerable facilities within the surrounding areas of Hereford, Ross-on-Wye and Monmouth.

Sport Facilities

There are facilities at Symonds Yat West to utilise outdoor grass fields where sports pitches could be developed for football, rugby etc. Also, an expanse of ground along the bank of the River Wye exists that could be reclaimed and developed for sport pitches and facilities.

Facilities for indoor activities are limited to the Memorial Hall, the Aisle at St Dubricius Church and Whitchurch Primary School, both are suitable for activities such as Keep Fit, Pilates, dancing and Adult Education. These activities are currently available, led and run by volunteers. Within the Parish Plan there is evidence for expansion of these activities.

Open Space

Open spaces within Whitchurch and Ganarew are very limited. Within the village there is a small play area adjacent to the main road that currently comprises of an outdoor table tennis board, a climbing frame and swing. There was evidence in the Parish Plan that improvement and expansion of this play area is required. In addition volunteer help was also evident. The Parish Council also have plans to expand and re-develop the village play area.

Parks, Gardens and Natural & Semi-Natural green space do exist within the Parish and include:

- The Millennium Walk that runs along the River Wye at Symonds Yat East. The walk allows walkers, ramblers and cyclists to journey from Symonds Yat East to Monmouth.

- The 103 rights of way are worthy of mention, many providing access to areas of natural beauty and sites of scientific interest and all providing access to open spaces.
- The River Wye along Symonds Yat West offer a vast amount of open space albeit much is in need of repair and development.

Community Facilities & Amenities

List all community facilities in the NP area, including:

- Community Halls within the parish comprises of the Village Memorial Hall.
- Churches & religious buildings comprise of two churches, Church of St Swithin, Ganarew and St Dubricius, Whitchurch.
- Pubs & Hotels within the parish comprise of
 (Symonds Yat West) The Old Court Hotel; Ye Old Ferrie Inn; Wye Knot Inn
 (Symonds Yat East) The Saracens Head Inn; The Royal Lodge
 (Whitchurch Village) The Crown Hotel
- Sports Clubs the Parish does not have any within its boundaries
- Other Community Rooms comprise St Dubricius Church that has been architecturally changed to allow an Aisle to be utilised
- Conference/Meeting Rooms & Facilities are available within the Memorial Hall, both local churches. The Old Court Inn, The Crown Hotel can host meetings with their availability of coffee areas
- The village has a vibrant shop, Woods of Whitchurch, with a coffee lounge that could host meetings etc.

Infrastructure

Public Transport

The nearest Railway connectivity is Hereford (13 miles), Newport (18 miles).

| | Swansea | Cardiff | London | Edinburgh |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Hereford | 2.2 hours | 1.4 hours | 3.5 hours | 6 hours |
| Newport | 1.4 hours | 2.8 hours | 2.6 hours | 7 hours |

Local Bus Service

| Service Provide | To Monmouth | To Ross-on-Wye |
|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Arriva | Freq – 1 hr 45 min | Freq – 1 hr 45 min |

| | | |
|------------------------|--------|--------|
| | 16 min | 45 min |
| <i>Local Transport</i> | 25 min | 25 min |

Method of Travel to work data

The data from the Parish Plan identified that public transport is not widely used by local residents, due to poor frequencies of services. Also, the age profile of many residents is such that they are not physically active to make use of current transport.

By far, data from the Parish Plan identified that people will use personal transport (cars, motorbike of cycles) or walk to their place of work. This data profile reflects transport of workers into the parish.

Footpaths & Cycleways

There is an abundance of footpath in the parish (103 registered total 25 miles), they are maintained and clearly identified with good road signage. The parish has a Footpaths Officer who submits a report to the Parish Council. The Parish Plan registered criticism of footpaths along the River Wye at Symonds Yat West.

No recognised cycle ways are registered within the parish. However, deployment of footpaths is common. Local businesses operate cycle hire that interface with other river sport such as canoe hire. There is a limited use of cycles within the parish for transport to and from work and local shops.

Broadband

Broadband speeds are improving within the parish. Those residents deploying “Infinity” have a speed of 80Mb/s, those not deploying “Infinity” have a speed 8MB/s. By far the biggest problem identified from the Parish Plan was breakdown and interruption of service.

High-speed/fibre-optic provision is being deployed throughout the parish and this is resulting in a more dependable service.

Medical Facilities

There are no medical facilities within the parish. There are medical facilities within easy at Monmouth and Ross-on-Wye that comprises of General Practitioners and town hospitals. Hereford and Newport City are the nearest accident and emergency hospitals.

Many residents are dependant taxis and local volunteers for transport to and from medical facilities.

Care Facilities

Local businesses that manage care facilities include the following:

Ganarew House, Ganarew – 35 Single Rooms, 1 Shared Room

Whitchurch House – 25 residents for residential care on a permanent or rest bite basis.

Gibraltar House, Monmouth – 95 Residential Rooms (all privately owned)

Education

There are no registered Private Nursery provision within the parish.

Primary School provision is provided by Whitchurch (Church of England) Primary School.

Secondary School provision is provided by schools outside of the parish at Monmouth, Hereford and Ross-on-Wye.

There is currently a concern amongst residence for the transfer of children out of the parish second or third choices.

Issues

Strengths

- The level of community involvement in river sports and activities. Canoeing and river trips are both thriving and highly sustainable. The business community utilise natural resources within the parish, offering local employment and influx of financial benefit.
- Help and support for those residents that are alone, isolated from family and friends and those who are frail is supported by churches, hostelrys and the local shop.
- The level of leisure and hospitalities available for a parish of the size of Whitchurch and Ganarew is vast. All are respectable to providing support for local community initiatives.
- The local village shop provides a central focus for our community for all age groups. Parishioners can be seen drinking coffee throughout the day and teenagers congregate around the shop at school bus times. The shop provides high quality local produce and opening hours commence early in the morning till mid evening.
- The local primary school is a major focus of the community. The school is smaller than average in size, which makes it ideal for size of our parish – 120 pupils. It has been independently evaluated and is Ofsted rated as outstanding in most areas and no rating less than good. The school is supportive of local issues.
- Both local churches are highly active in local community issues and offer help and support for the lonely and frail. Both have local social activities that include breakfasts, lunches and home visits.
- The Memorial Hall is a major strength to the local community offering a venue for many indoor sporting activities, clubs and meeting venues. There are regular “Flics in the Sticks” where major film productions are shown. The Memorial Hall hosts auctions, Christmas Fare and can be hired for personal use. The Parish Council use the Memorial Hall for its monthly meetings and occasional public meetings.

Weaknesses

- *The expansion of sport facilities to (1) expand river sports to increase parish sustainability and (2) develop other sport facilities, e.g. football, rugby and cricket. The need for making professionals available and the procurement of equipment. The availability of land will also need to be addressed.*
- *The co-ordination and administration of the current community activities need to be considered to make support, care and community help is needed. Co-ordination and administration is key to having a sustainable community.*
- *Co-ordination of local business and community support groups into a centrally administered, more effective Good Neighbourhood Scheme offering support for all - infants, children, teenagers and adults for existing parishioners and new residents.*

- **Appendix**

Evidence was extracted from the Parish Plan and websites for production of Community, Leisure and as well as local knowledge listed below.

| Evidence Collected to Date | Source | Additional Evidence | Source |
|---|---|----------------------------|---|
| Bowling | | | |
| Nearest Bowling Green is at Hereford Castle Green Bowling Club Available: May to October Cost: £1.40 /hour | https://herefordsire.gov.uk | None in village boundary | https://herefordsire.gov.uk |
| Basketball | | | |
| Westfaling Street, Hereford | https://herefordsire.gov.uk | None in village boundary | Local Knowledge |
| Cricket | | | |
| Nearest Cricket Club Widemarsh Common (1) | | None in village boundary | Local Knowledge |
| Football | | | |
| King George V Playing Field (5 pitches + 1 Junior) Newton Farm Open Space (2 pitches) Old School Lane, Hereford (1 pitch) Tupsly Quarry, Hereford (2 Junior pitches) Widemarsh Common, Hereford (1 pitch + 1 junior) Herefordshire Leisure Centre (7 pitches + 2 junior) | https://herefordsire.gov.uk | None in village boundary | Local Knowledge |
| Golf | | | |

| Evidence Collected to Date | Source | Additional Evidence | Source |
|--|---|--|---|
| | | None in village boundary | |
| River Activities | | | |
| Fishing | | | |
| -Thomas Wood Fishery, Lower Wye.Upper Courtfield, Kerne Bridge Herefordshire - Kerne Cottage, Falcon House, Kerne Bridge, Herefordshire HR9 5QT | www.wharetofish.co.uk | - Garren Brook, Garren Brook, Nr Whitchurch, Herefordshire - Brelston Court, Garren Brook, Brelston Court, Nr Goodrich, Herefordshire | www.wharetofish.co.uk |
| Fishing on the Wye and the types of fish stocks available. | http://wyevalleyaonb.org.uk/index.php/our-countryside/river-wye/ | | http://wyevalleyaonb.org.uk/index.php/our-countryside/river-wye/ |
| Tennis | | | |
| Bishops Meadow, Hereford | | None in village boundary | Local Knowledge |
| Rugby | | | |
| | | None in village boundary | |
| Baseball | | | |
| | | None in village boundary | |
| Play Areas | | | |
| | | Nearest registered play area is 4 miles | |