

WHITEGATE AND MARTON PARISH



Neighbourhood Plan 2015-2030



EVIDENCE BASE SUMMARY

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This report is part of the first stage of the production of the Whitegate and Marton Neighbourhood Plan. The Whitegate and Marton Neighbourhood Plan will set out a vision for the future of the parish, providing a regeneration and land-use planning framework to guide development within the parish until 2030.

The work on the Whitegate and Marton Neighbourhood Plan started in 2012, with the appointment of a team comprising of parishioners including members from the parish council with support from Navigus Planning Consultancy.

The evidence base and community engagement programme provided an understanding of the area and helped to identify key issues and a vision for the area, these were translated into policies and proposals. The community engagement occurred throughout the process and everyone's views were considered.

This document brings together a summary of reports, documents and outcomes of consultations with parishioners to form the 'Evidence Base' for the Neighbourhood Plan.

A wide range of issues have been considered in producing the Plan. There were grouped under six key issues:

Housing

Local Character and the Built Environment

The Natural Environment

Transport and Communication

Local Economy

Local Facilities

This report is structured as follows:

Chapter 2: Setting the Context explains Whitegate and Marton's location / role in the region, provides an overview of socio-economic characteristics, and sets out key information in relation to businesses, housing and employment.

Chapter 3: Physical Analysis provides an analysis of the various physical issues that may need to be addressed in improving existing places or may influence where new development is located.

Chapter 4: Opportunities and Constraints provides an overview of the issues that will affect the growth of Whitegate and Marton.

Chapter 2: Setting the Context

Whitegate and Marton parish's wider area

Whitegate and Marton is a rural parish in the unitary authority of Cheshire West and Chester (CW&C). Whitegate and Marton boundary adjoins Winsford, Hartford, Cuddington and Sandiway parishes. The nearest town is Winsford 3.4 miles (5.5km) to the south-east and Northwich is 4.4 miles (6km) north-east. Additional mileages to other neighbouring towns and cities is in Appendix I.

The present parish occupies an area of approximately 17 sq. km.

The Neighbourhood Plan boundary corresponds with the parish boundary of Whitegate and Marton.

Whitegate and Marton is within commuting distance of Manchester, Liverpool and Chester.

Analysis of the 2011 Census data reveals that the parish has a very small employment base. This means that the majority of residents have to commute to jobs many miles outside Whitegate and Marton parish. There is no public transport to speak of so the majority travel to work by car.

In 2011 49% of residents were economically active, with 11.2% of these residents working from home, which is higher than national average of 3.5%. There are 34 farms in Whitegate and Marton mainly dairy, beef and arable.

Socio Economic Characteristics

The population in the parish of Whitegate & Marton was 971 in 2001, it had increased by 17% to 1,172 by 2011. The population of the parish is increasing at average rate of 1.7% each year.

The general demographics of the 1,172 residents were:

3.6% under 5 (42) and 17% under 16 (197).

24% aged 65+ (283), 40 of these were over 80 years old.

The national average of the 65+ group was 16.3 % while in the parish it is 24%.

In the 2011 Census, 93% of people in Whitegate & Marton said they were either White British or other White, which was similar to CW&C (94.7%) and that 84% of them were in good or very good health (CW&C 81.5%).

There are 188 householders aged 65 or over 91% (171) who own their property. Of all households there were 13.5% (66) which contained one person where the resident was aged 65 or over, an increase of 2.5% (55) since 2001.

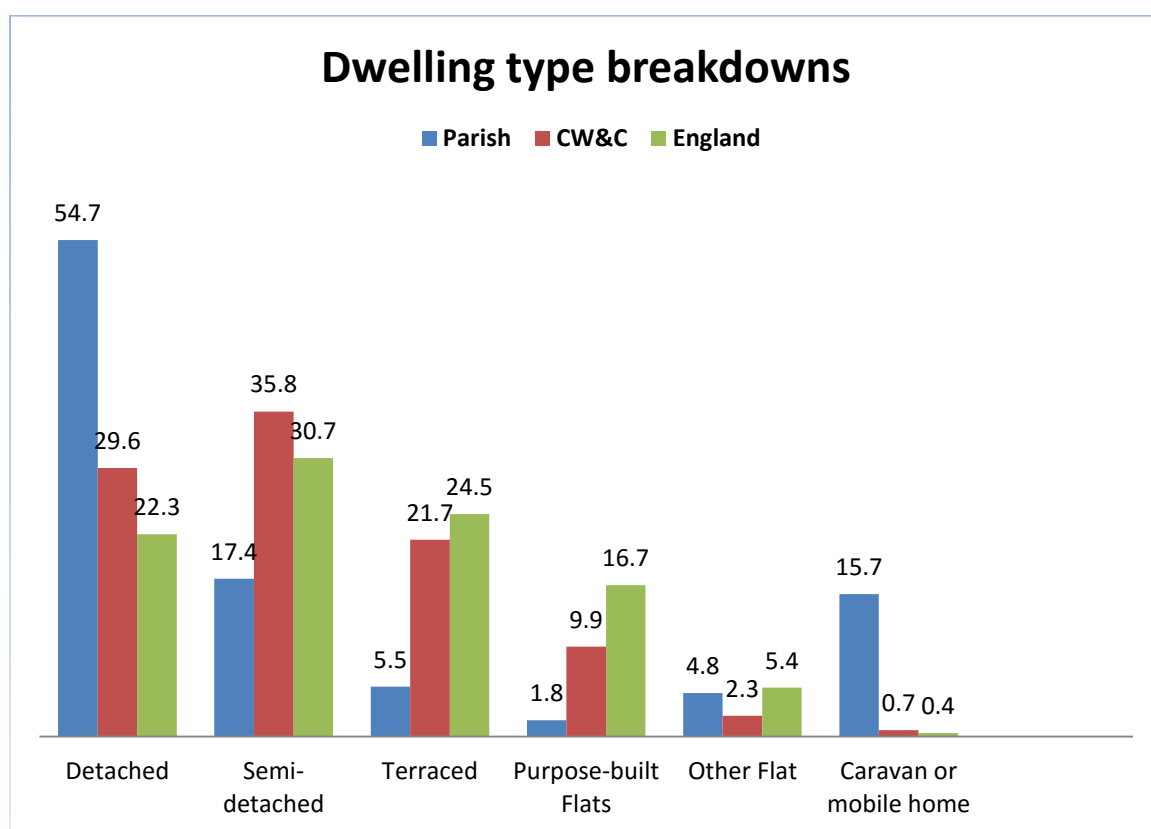
Of all households, 6.8% (17) had a lone parent with dependent children, compared to 27.9% in England (2010 data). Six children in 'out of work' households in 2011 i.e. 2.4%, the national average is 19.2%.

Based on the ‘Index of Multiple Deprivation’ (IMD) in 2010 there were no local areas in deprivation.

There are in 490 households in Whitegate & Marton, giving an average occupancy of 2.4. There were 410 households in 2011, an increase of 16% that is an average of 8 houses per year.

The majority of households are owned by the occupier, which is 86.9% (426 households; containing 1,039 people). In November 2014 the estimated average house price in Whitegate & Marton was £639,000 when the average house price in UK was £372,159. This is reflected by the household size based on the Council Tax Bands which shows that 74% are band E or above.

Only 7.6% are in band A, with 3.5% band B, 5.8% in band C and 9.3% in band D. There are 8.5% rented households and 69 unoccupied household spaces (12%) as at 2011 Census.



Source: Census 2011 (table KS401EW)

There are no shops in Whitegate & Marton. There are 34 working farms and working from home is well above the national average. In addition to agriculture there are some other employment opportunities in a school, car maintenance garage, riding stables, residential park homes, public house and a hotel and golf course plus a community café, bike hire and office hire above (Old Whitegate Station House).

The city of Chester is the ‘major regional centre’ and is appropriately 40 minutes drive from the centre of the parish. Other centres that lie within easy reach are Winsford, Northwich and Crewe, which provide all other services.

More statistical details can be found in Appendix A and Appendix I for details on Key Services in the area.

Chapter 3: Physical Analysis

Landscape Setting

Individual buildings and hamlets are scattered throughout the Parish and are interwoven with a variety of attractive landscapes. From fairly flat to undulating hills and valleys including farmland, woods and coppices, lakes, streams and pools. There is access to this varied and beautiful landscape by a comprehensive network of footpaths, bridleways and cycleways that includes the Whitegate Way (disused railway line) which passes through the middle of the Parish.

East of Whitegate Lane the landscape has a parkland appearance reflecting the character of the former Vale Royal Abbey Estate, with farmland, golf course and tree lined watercourses all falling down to the pretty River Weaver valley.

To the north and west of the parish large tracts of woodland dominate the landscape and the south is characterised by fields and hedgerows around country lanes. West of Marton the landscape is more open due to the larger fields. While between Marton and Whitegate the field pattern are to a smaller, more intimate scale.

There are many large areas of water, some historical fishing waters for the former Vale Royal Abbey (e.g. Rookey Pool, Petty Pool and New Pool), others of later origin, mainly comprising of water filled sand quarries (e.g. lakes around New Church Common and Nunsmere Hall) or created by former brine subsidence (e.g. Marton Hole and Sixes Hole).

These features reach into all settlements within the Parish, giving almost every dwelling a direct view over attractive open countryside.

A Village Design Statement (VDS) for Whitegate and Marton Village was adopted by Vale Royal Borough Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance in 2003. The statement was to manage change in buildings and landscape in a way which reflects and harmonises with the local character of its building, spaces and landscape settings. This still reflects the views of villagers so is relevant to the Neighbourhood Local Plan and a copy is shown in Appendix H. The VDS gives more details on a diverse range of data e.g. Landscape Setting, Settlement Pattern, Historical Context (including listed buildings), Architectural Heritage & Style, Conservation Area, Public/Private Open Spaces, Boundaries and Trees, Highways/Traffic.

Environmental issues

The Weaver Valley and its immediate environs are designated as Areas of Special County Value (ASCV) for their high landscape quality. Between Sandiway and Whitegate village, there are attractive areas of woodland and lakeland, some of ancient origin, and some of which are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and Sites of Biological Interest (SBI).

Petty Pool and many of the other lakes and ponds within the parish are used for recreational fishing. They are also home to various species of flora and fauna, as are also the many areas of woodland and copse which form wildlife corridors, giving cover and continuity for wildlife, particularly the larger forestry areas around Petty Pool, Abbots Moss, Sherratts Rough and the wooded slopes of the Weaver Valley.

Vale Royal Abbey Great House in what was Vale Royal Park, which is now Vale Royal

Abbey Golf Course, demands an appropriate landscape setting, particularly because of its proximity to the Weaver River Valley environment (ASCV and SBI).

No evidence found of any significant flood zones in the Parish.

Transport & Movement – There is no scheduled bus service within the Parish.

There are two railway stations outside the parish at Cuddington and Winsford. A good road network provides access to neighbouring towns and cities, while a large number of public rights of way that only access to country walks, cycleway and bridleways. A disused railway line called The Whitegate Way links the village of Cuddington to the north with Winsford to the south, passing through the middle of the Parish, with access to it for walkers, cyclist and horses at various points.

Appendices

Appendix A: Approach to looking at the evidence and summary of statistics

Initial Analysis

The NP Development Group first summarised the data obtained from the various sources listed at the end of this document at Bibliography. These enable them to begin to bring together themes that informed the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Summary of Basic Statistics with the Development Groups initial comments

1) Social & Cultural – Who lives in our Parish?

POPULATION

In 2001 the population in the parish of Whitegate & Marton was 971, it increased by 17% to 1,172 by the 2011 national census.

The general demographics of the 1,172 residents were:

3.6% under 5 (42) and 17% under 16 (197).

24% aged 65+ (283), 40 of these were over 80 years old.

93% white British (including Northern Irish);

6% born outside the UK;

72% are Christian.

3.6% Black or minority ethnic group (42). In 2001 there were 35 i.e. 3.5%.

What did this information tell us?

The majority of people are white British & Christian. The population is increasing at average rate of 1.7% each year.

The national average of the 65+ group was 16.3 % while in the parish it is 24%.

2) Equity & Prosperity

HEALTH & DISABILITY

84.4% of the parishioners are in good or very good health (CWAC 81.5% and 81.4% nationally) and 3.8% in bad or very bad health (CWAC 5.5% and 5.4% nationally).

Data on people experiencing poor health and disability:-

- 15.6% of residents find their day to day activities are limited because of a long term health problem or disability. Of these 10.9% are between 16-64 (nationally 12.8%) and 4.7% over 64.
- Disability Living Allowance all claimants 2.3% (May 11) nationally 5.1%.
- Attendance Allowance claimants 6% (May 11) nationally 16.7%.
- 12% of residents provide one hour or more of unpaid care per week. Only 1% (14) provides 50 hours or more per week.

What did this information tell us?

The vast majority of residents are in good health. There is less than half of the national average claiming disability allowances and those with bad /very bad health is 1.6% lower than the national average in 2011.

15.6% of residents say they are limited in their everyday activity by disability or long term health problems. This may suggest there is an issue of social isolation that we need to try and address.

We may need to consider whether improved housing, connectivity and/or transport would help those with living or travel difficulties.

HOUSEHOLD HEATING

There are 1.6% (8) households in the parish without central heating. The majority use gas 65.5%, 16.8% on oil, 4.5% solid fuel and 2.8% on electric central heating including storage heaters. 7.8% said they had two or more types of central heating with 1% (5 households) on other.

16.2% (75) households are estimated to be in 'Fuel Poverty' (16.4% nationally). The ACRE report defines Fuel Poverty as a situation where a household needs to spend more than 10% of its income to keep the home heated to 21°C in the living room & 18°C in the rest of the house, and on page 33 it declares that the highest levels of non-decent homes are found in smaller rural communities.

What did this information tell us?

We appear to be close to the national average for fuel poverty, this may be due to the age and size of our houses.

3) Housing and the Built Environment

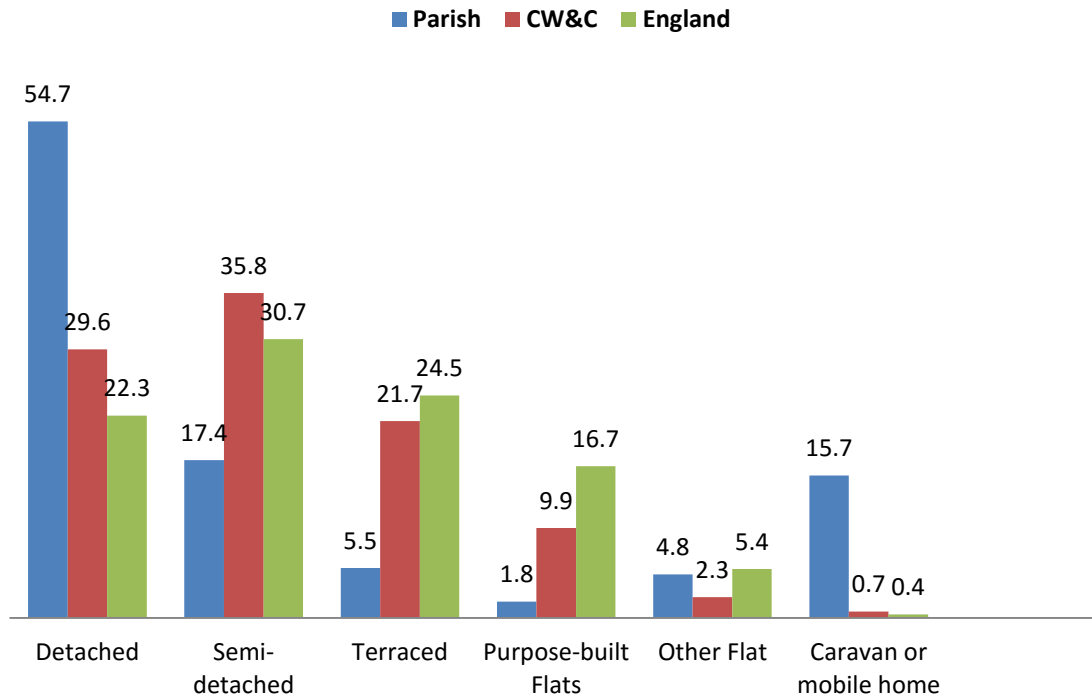
HOUSEHOLDS

The 1,172 people lived in 490 households, giving an average occupancy of 2.4. There were 410 households in 2011, an increase of 16% that is an average of 8 houses per year.

The majority of households are owned by the occupier, which is 86.9% (426 households; containing 1,039 people) with an estimated average house price of £639,404.17.

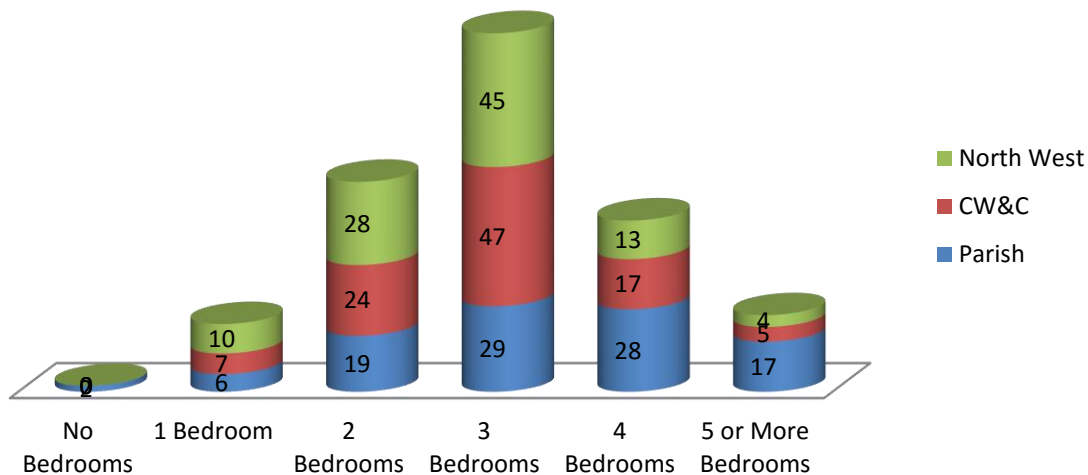
There are 69 unoccupied household spaces (12%) as at 2011 Census.

Dwelling type breakdowns



Source: Census 2011 (table KS401EW)

Percentage Number of Bedrooms



HOUSE PRICES

As at 09/11/14 there were twelve properties for sale in Whitegate & Marton total: 9 Detached (£6,647,950); 2 Semi-detached (£789,900); 1 Flat (£235,000) = Total £7,672,850. The average property price in Whitegate & Marton was £639,404 compared to average house price in UK is £372,159.

Average detached price is £738,661 and Semi and flat average £341,633. (source www.zoopla.co.uk)

RENTALS

Privately rented households make up 6.5% (32) with an average rental of £1,595cm. Social rented accommodation is only 2.2% (11) of the households (5 Local Authority & 6 Other social rented), Other rented 1.3% (8) and 3% (13) living rent free.

COUNCIL TAX BANDS

The household size based on Council Tax Bands shows that 58.4% are band F or above. Only 7.6% are in band A, with 3.5% band B, 5.8% in band C, 9.3% band D and 15.6% band E.

STATISTICAL DETAILS ON INHABITANTS

There are 188 householders aged 65 or over 91% (171) who own their property. Of all households there were 13.5% (66) which contained one person where the resident was aged 65 or over, an increase of 2.5% (55) since 2001.

Of all households, 6.8% (17) had a lone parent with dependent children, compared to 27.9% in England 2010 data). In 2001 there were 10 lone parents with dependent children.

Six children in 'out of work' households in 2011 i.e. 2.4%, the national average is 19.2%.

There are 8% of residents have a second address (47 within UK and 43 outside UK).

There are 5 residents in the parish where English is not their main language and who cannot speak English well.

Based on the 'Index of Multiple Deprivation" (IMD) in 2010 there were no local areas in deprivation.

What did this information tell us?

This is an affluent area borne out by high house prices, levels of ownership and the majority of houses in council tax bands F and above. The data also indicates that there is a lack of affordable dwellings to purchase in the parish. There is only 13% rented property which is well below the national average of 35.9% and means there is a lack of opportunity for people to live in the parish unless they can afford the high prices. This does not lead to a balanced community.

There is a decrease in younger families (age 1 to 14) and an increase in people aged 65+. This is evidence that the limited supply of lower priced properties results in younger people and young families who have grown up in the parish being unable to stay in the parish and that new younger families find it difficult to move into the parish. The low proportion of smaller properties also makes it difficult for older householders to downsize within the parish and therefore results in under occupation of larger houses which could become family homes.

The parish has well below the national average of children in out of work families; people on pension credit and income support and we do not have a high % of people out of work with dependent children.

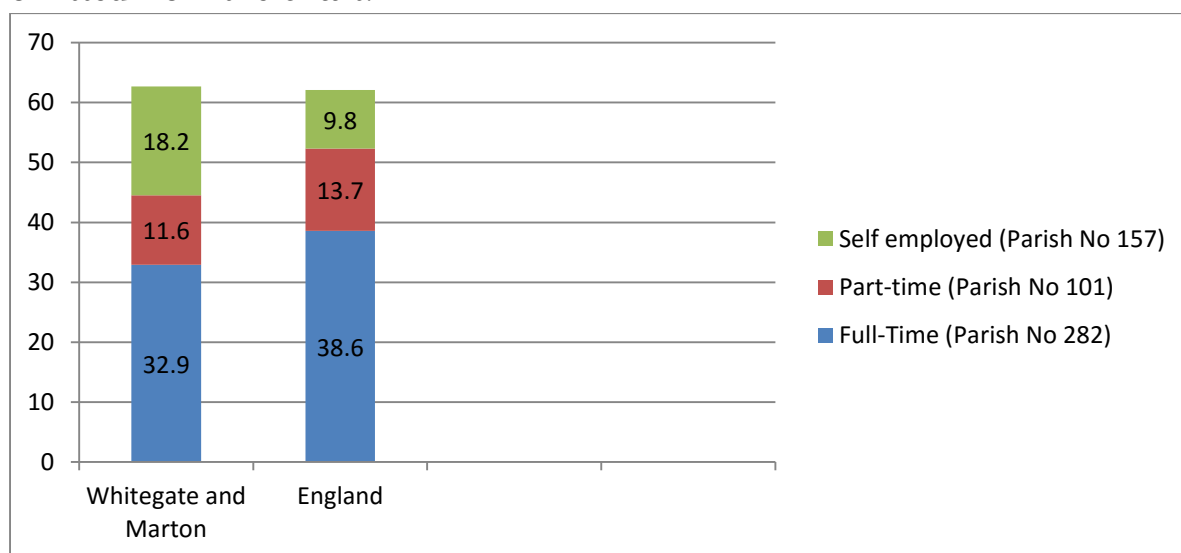
4) Economy

EMPLOYMENT

According to 2011 Census (KS601EW report) 66.1% the residents aged 16 to 74 (i.e. 868) were economically active (574) and 33.9% (294) inactive. In 2008-10 there were 73.5% of the 16 to 74 in employment.

Based on 2001 figures (no in-depth parish details for 2011 available) the economically inactive split for 2011 would be 31% retired; 2% long term sick; 1% looking after home or family (9) or student (1).

The percentage employment status of the economically active aged 16-74 is shown in the chart below. Note that 30 individuals were classed as economically active but not employed (FT Students & Unemployed) at the time of the 2011 Census, therefore are omitted from the chart.



There are 20 (2.3%) unemployed residents, 5 were aged 16 to 24 and 45 full-time students aged 16 to 74. Of these 16 are in employment, 3 unemployed and 26 inactive.

Jobseekers allowance claimants (Feb 13) = 14. No-one claiming over 12 months.
Employment Support Allowance (Aug 12) = 14.

11.2% aged 16 to 74 work from home compared to the national average of 3.5%.

The economically inactive has increased 6.2% since 2001 and is 3.9% higher than the national average.

What does this information tell us?

There is a larger than the national average of those aged 16 to 74 working from home or inactive and near to national average working part-time. Many of these people will be in the local area during the day and may be in need of additional services and facilities e.g. leisure, broadband connectivity, improved mobile phone signal.

FARMS

There are 34 farms in the parish, these are owned as follows:

Cheshire West & Cheshire Council	2
Known to be rented	12
Owned by farmer	15
Owned by user	2
Unknown	2
Rented to Forestry Commission	1

Type of farms:

Equestrian	4
Arable / beef	7
Arable	4
Dairy	8
Mixed	7
Mixed / Forestry	1
Livestock	1
Non Commercial	2

What did this information tell us?

Assuming one household per farm this means 7% of all households are farms. There is a recognised national issue of rural poverty in farming communities. Evidence from activities of support organisations and local farming chaplains indicates our parish is not immune from this problem. Currently (2014) milk prices are holding up but beef prices are not, so there is likely to be issues of poverty that are hidden. We can only help by making provision for affordable housing, encouraging a thriving community and encouraging economic diversification where appropriate.

5) Transport , Connectivity & Key Services

TRANSPORT

There are 962 cars and vans in the area with 4.7% of households without a vehicle (25) but 64% have 2 or more cars.

75% (422) of all residents in work travelled to or from employment by car or van. There is no railway station in the parish but there are stations in neighbouring parishes which 2% (12) of the commuters use.

4 people used bicycles to travel to work and 19 travelled by foot.

2001 data showed that only 6.9% of people aged 16 to 74 travel less than 2km to work (national average 20%).

There are a higher number of people working from home than average (11.2% 95 people) but car travel is still necessary to get to local amenities. This is due to distance as well as the danger from lack of safe footpaths in certain key strategic places in the village.

The local Whitegate Primary School does not have a large proportion of pupils from the village but even local children cannot safely walk to school from The Beeches due to the lack of a safe footpath the whole distance of Cinder Hill.

ACCESS TO KEY SERVICES

The Old Post Office has been taken as a central point for the Parish of Whitegate and Marton in order to discover the distance that needs to be travelled by car to access Key Services. Only the primary school, pre-school nursery, church, public house, garage and café were within the parish boundary.

All other services were available in the neighbouring parishes and key settlement centres. The average distances were within a few miles e.g. medical services average of 3 miles, shops 2.5 miles, secondary schools & college 3.8 miles. Railway Station 3 miles.

What does this information tell us?

The parish is not well served by amenities and the majority of residents need their own transport to get to work and to services in surrounding centres.

Consideration should be given to the improvement of access to public transport and linking to train station(s) / other key services.

Access to the amenities we do have (pub, church, leisure) by bicycle and on foot needs to be addressed and improved.

Parking is essential when planning new buildings as access on foot or bike is not easy.

6) Environment

DATA ON ENVIRONMENT

There is a lack of good environmental data available at parish level; data collected at local authority level (CWAC) in 2010 for CO2 emissions and recycling. Population density of 0.69 is based on local population and geographical area, England average 4.1 persons per hectare.

- CO2 EMISSIONS – In 2008 emissions per head was 9.4Kt (England = 6.6Kt).
- HOUSEHOLD WASTE – 41% was recycled or composted (England = 35%) and 560kg waste per head (England = 618kg). No recycling centre in parish.
- AIR QUALITY - There are no significant air quality issues or air quality management areas in Whitegate and Marton.
- POPULATION – The density of people per hectare 0.7in parish; CWAC = 3.6 and England = 4.0.
- WATER - Flood alert area around river(s) from Bradfords Mill / Farm through Whitegate to Petty Pool.

- LAND - There is some historical landfill up Dalesford Lane, Span's garage area (and the other side of the road which could be just out of parish).

Having assessed environmental issues none are considered relevant to the NP.

Appendix B: Comparison of evidence to objectives

LINKING RESULTS OF STATISTICS AND ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

POLICY 1: HOUSING STOCK APPROPRIATE TO THE NEEDS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Objective: Housing Development permitted by STRAT 9 (Local Plan Strategy for Green Belt and Countryside reflects the needs of the local community for smaller homes.

Policy: Housing development permitted under STRAT9 of the CWAC Local Plan, including replacement buildings and reuse of existing rural buildings for conversion to residential dwellings, should meet the needs of the local community for smaller properties.

Planning applications to deliver dwellings should normally provide properties that are between one and three bedrooms in size.

Redevelopment of existing residential properties will be expected to provide a similar number of bedrooms to the existing property. The significant enlargement of an existing property is generally considered to be unacceptable.

STATISTICAL BASED FIGURES & ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF OBJECTIVE & POLICY 1: 2001 Census compared to the latest Census in 2011:

- There were 971 people in 2001 and 1,172 people in the parish in 2011, that is an average increase of 1.7% in the population each year.
- In 2011 the national average age of people 65 and over was 16.3%. However in the parish 24.1% (i.e. 283 people) of the population were 65 years or over, this is an increase of 64% since 2001.
- The Census in the 2011 Household Lifestage report (QS111EW) showed 38.4% of households in the parish were occupied by people aged 65 and over and of these 13.5% lived alone, an increase of 2.5% since 2001.
- Residents under 5 years old reduced by 9%, while families with older children increased by 49%.

The Council Tax Bands

Council Tax bands records indicate a lack of affordable* houses in the parish.

- 19% were in council tax band A to C.
- 60% band F or above and have four or more bedrooms.
- 10% were rented out.

***Footnote** the use of the word affordable is in common language and does not refer to the defined term used to describe property supplied at below market value.

This does not encourage young families to settle in the parish and makes it difficult for older residents to downsize, while remaining in the parish. These concerns were also raised at the consultation meetings in March 2013 and March 2014.

Questionnaires

The questionnaire in 2014 issued to all residents showed that the majority agreed or strongly agreed that:

- Mixed affordable housing should be encouraged in existing settlement areas, generally where more than three houses are clustered - 84% of respondents agreed.
- No large scale development - 97% of respondents agreed.
- One single plot housing should be permitted, in exceptional cases (windfall sites), to meet a local need and where the development does not have an unacceptable impact on visual landscape - 78% of respondents agreed.

Discussion groups

Comments from group discussions at the March 2014 consultations made it clear that new houses would be accepted only where there was a demonstrable need and be affordable.

POLICY 2: DESIGN AND USE OF MATERIALS

Objective: To ensure that the design and use of materials for new buildings and changes to existing stock of dwellings, is in keeping with the existing character of Whitegate & Marton.

<p>Policy: Proposal for new residential properties, replacement properties or extensions requiring planning permission must demonstrate the following criteria.</p>
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- That they have sought to reflect the local vernacular architecture, the details for which can be found in the Visual Design Statement; and
- That they have sought to use building materials that reflect the style of other traditional properties in the surrounding area; and
- The traditional materials have been selected for boundaries, for example sandstone or Cheshire style railings and boundaries are softened by the use of appropriate planting such as hedgerows; and
- Consideration had been given to the guidance offered in the Village Design Statement.

STATISTICAL BASED FIGURES & ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF OBJECTIVE & POLICY 2:

Consultation questionnaires were hand delivered to every resident in the parish in 2014. All residents that responded supported the criteria bullet points above.

POLICY 3: LISTED BUILDINGS, SCHEDULED MONUMENTS AND THE CONSERVATION AREA

Objective: To protect the character of listed buildings, scheduled monuments and the Conservation Area.

Policy: Development which is likely to have a significant detrimental impact on designated heritage assets (including listed buildings, scheduled monuments and the Conservation Area) and their settings will not be permitted.

STATISTICAL BASED FIGURES & ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF OBJECTIVE & POLICY 3:

The questionnaire in 2014 issued to all residents showed that the majority agreed or strongly agreed the following:

- Support the local distinctiveness of the parish - 97% of respondents.
- Enhance village character and create a clearly identifiable village focal point - 83% of respondents.
- Include traditional features such as a village notice board, village sign and seating - 88% of respondents.
- Develop a drop off point at Whitegate School, St Mary's Church, The Mews and the Recreation Room - 100% of respondents.

POLICY 4: LANDSCAPE

Objective: To ensure that any development respects the landscape and views that make the parish a special place to live and work.

Policy: Development proposals must ensure that the countryside is maintained and protected and new development should maintain and enhance the wildlife, hedgerows, woodlands, pool and waterways and the open rural character of the parish in general. Planning permission will not be granted for development proposals that have a significant detrimental impact on the rural character of the parish.

STATISTICAL BASED FIGURES & ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF OBJECTIVE & POLICY 4:

The questionnaire in 2014 was issued to all residents showed that the majority agreed or strongly agreed the following:

- Protect local green spaces and woodland and maintain a focus for nature conservation - 98% of respondents.
- New development should not detract from the open rural character that exists throughout the parish or detract visually from the setting of the numerous woodlands, pools and waterways - 98% of respondents.
- Respect the traditional farm landscape with its pattern of trees and hedgerows that should be maintained - 100% of respondents.
- No operations to significantly alter the landscape e.g. sand extraction 98% 5(e).
- Embrace the local distinctiveness of the parish. Value our rural way of life and that village life with easy access to the countryside should be promoted through provision of footpaths, cycle routes, bridleways and roadways that are appropriate to a rural area - 97% of respondents.

POLICY 5: ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

Objective: To support economic activity in the parish through appropriate small-scale improvements or development of existing buildings, and through the protection of existing commercial activity.

Proposals for employment –generating uses (including tourism) will be supported, provided it can be demonstrated that they are appropriate uses in the countryside.

Planning applications incorporating proposals for employment-generating uses or commercial activities from existing residential properties will be supported.

There will be a strong presumption against the loss of commercial premises or land which provides employment or future potential opportunities.

STATISTICAL BASED FIGURES & ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF OBJECTIVE & POLICY 5:

The questionnaire in 2014 issued to all residents showed that the majority agreed or strongly agreed the following:

- Allow mixed-use development so appropriate business can operate from homes and dwellings - 86% of respondents.
- Resist the change of use of sites currently designated for business purposes - 81% of respondents.
- Encourage visitors to the area and the development of local tourism ensuring conservation of our rural environment and countryside - 97% of respondents.

Comments from group discussions at the March 2014 consultations

- Convert Whitegate Station House into a café, shop etc.
- Better broadband access needed.
- Disagree that industry should be promoted but offices supported.

POLICY 6: ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE

Objective: To continue to provide good access to the countryside by supporting and encouraging maintenance and improvement to footpaths, cycleways and bridleways.

Policy Any proposals close to the Whitegate Way will be expected to demonstrate that they will not have an unacceptable detrimental impact on its role as a unique local leisure and connection with neighbouring parishes. If such impacts cannot be fully mitigated then planning shall be refused.

Whitegate and Marton Parish Council will work with Cheshire West and Chester and other interested parties to put in place these and any other improvements to rights of way. Proposals to develop or improve new and existing walking, cycling and horse-ridings paths between key parish facilities will be supported.

STATISTICAL BASED FIGURES & ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF OBJECTIVE & POLICY 6:

The questionnaire in 2014 issued to all residents showed that the majority agreed or strongly agreed the following:

- Requested development of pedestrian connections between key parish facilities and maintain Whitegate Way as a unique local leisure feature with connection to neighbouring parishes - 95% of respondents.
- Encouraging visitors and development of local tourism ensuring conservation of our rural environment and countryside -96% of respondents.

Comments from group discussions at the March 2014 Consultations highlighted the following concerns:

- Connecting the footpath from Cinder Hill to The Beeches was raised a number of times (i.e. 7 times in the groups).
- Ensure all year round walking route from village to Beauty Bank & Foxwist Green.

NON-POLICY MATTERS

TOURISM & LEISURE

Objective : To support the development of existing and new leisure and tourist spaces and facilities consistent with the rural character of Whitegate & Marton.

Identify, develop and support further tourism and leisure facilities. Examples might include:

- a recognisable “Village Centre” identifying the Whitegate & Marton parish and providing local information to visitors,
- a small public park near to Whitegate Village
- to develop the community café adjacent to the Whitegate Way.

COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELLBEING

Objective: To establish, and implement plans for traffic management, community activities, community well-being and voluntary groups:

1. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

- To address concerns, where possible on speed and volume of traffic.
- To improve car parking at Recreation Room, Whitegate School and St Mary’s Church.

2. SUPPORT FOR THE ELDERLY AND INFIRM

- To encourage voluntary groups and community support for health and wellbeing and establish a system to ensure the community supports elderly people living alone.

3. COMMUNITY SPIRIT

- To enhance the feeling of community in Whitegate & Marton by developing and supporting village community activities.

STATISTICAL BASED FIGURES & ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE IN SUPPORT OF OBJECTIVE & POLICY :

The following had 100% support from those completing the 2014 Questionnaire (sections 6 and 7):

- Aim to have access to suitable facilities for all sections of the community from within the parish or in neighbouring parishes.
- Ensure the continuing success of the Whitegate Primary School.
- Utilities should be able to meet the needs of a developing rural parish.
- Digital connectivity will be a priority and we will seek to achieve broadband connectivity equivalent to the major UK centres.
- Establish a system to ensure that those living alone are supported by the community.
- Enhance the feeling of community in Whitegate & Marton by developing and supporting village community activities.

Comments from group discussions at the March 2014 consultations:

- Slow the traffic on Whitegate Road, Daleford Lane and Whitegate Lane
- Create priority roads scheme through the village, add automated speed signs or speed bumps.
- Consider changes to mitigate the increased congestion and build-up of traffic through Whitegate & Marton due to new developments in neighbouring parishes.
- Improve areas without footpaths for example along Daleford Lane and to Sandiway.
- Provide a bus service
- Improve mobile phone coverage.
- Litter disgrace – litter bins suggested.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Objective: To encourage community involvement in the process of planning and delivery of this Neighbourhood Plan.

Everyone who completed the 2014 Questionnaire supported the Neighbourhood Plan being reviewed every five years to ensure that it is focused on the needs of the community.

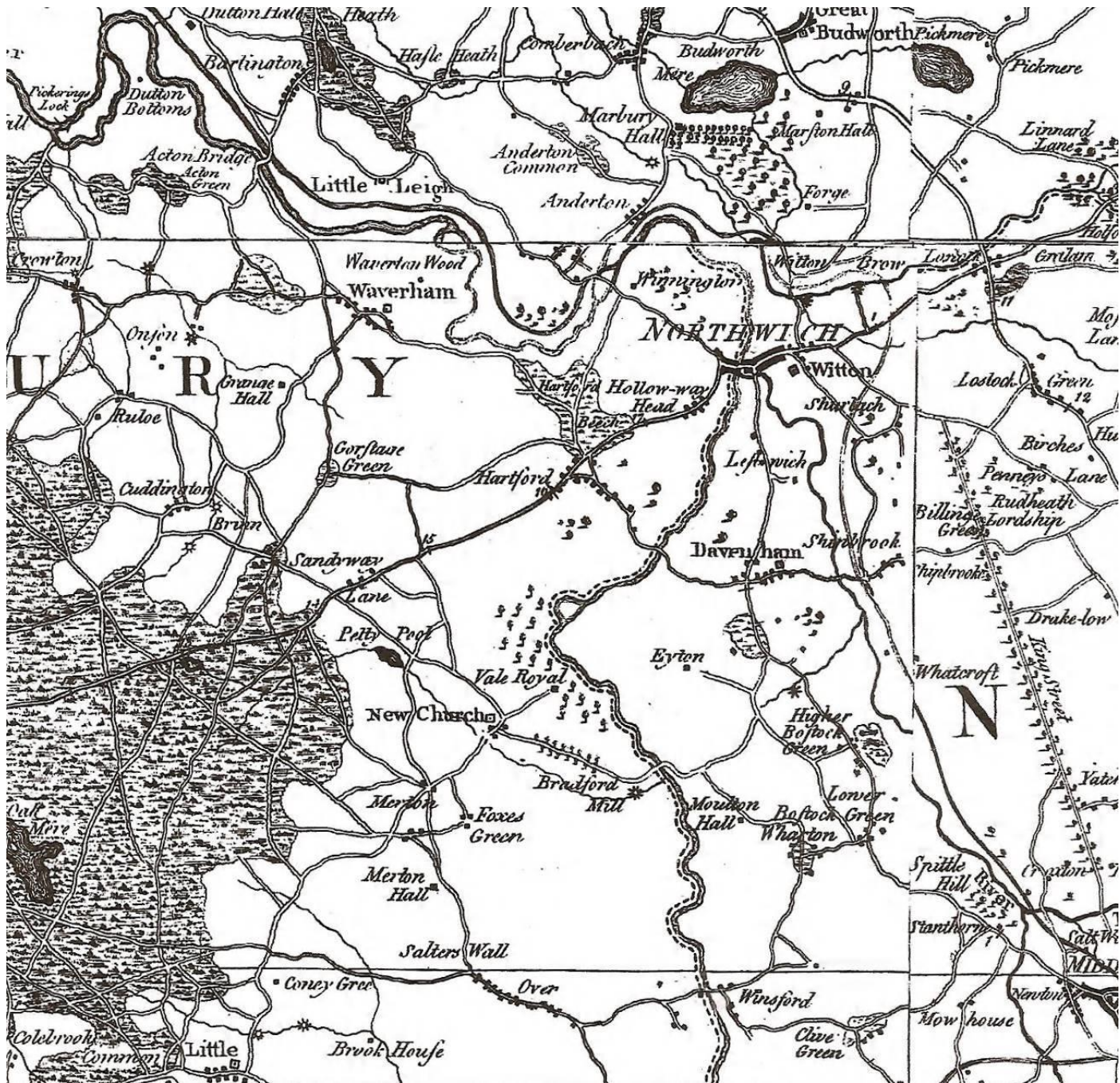
Appendix C: Consultation with Parishioners

There were two questionnaires hand delivered to every household and these were followed up with open consultation meetings.

The full results of questionnaires and consultations can be found in the Consultation Statement on the parish website (www.whitegatemarton.org.uk) under Neighbourhood Plan/Consultation Statement.

Appendix D: Maps

REGION MAP 1777.



Source Burdett's Map 1777

Whitegate was called New Church for some time after the rebuilding of the Parish Church in 1728.

PARISH BOUNDARY MAP

A print of the parish boundary map is reproduced in the main Neighbourhood Plan.

Appendix E: Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan - STRAT 9 Green Belt and countryside.

STRAT 9 Green Belt and countryside

The intrinsic character and beauty of the Cheshire countryside will be protected by restricting development to that which requires a countryside location and cannot be accommodated within identified settlements.

Within the countryside the following types of development will be permitted;

Development that has an operational need for a countryside location such as for agricultural or forestry operations.

- Replacement buildings.
- Small scale and low impact rural / farm diversification schemes appropriate to the site, location and setting of the area.
- The reuse of existing rural buildings, particularly for economic purposes, where buildings are of permanent construction and can be reused without major reconstruction.
- The expansion of existing buildings to facilitate the growth of established businesses proportionate to the nature and scale of the site and its setting.

Development must be of an appropriate scale and design to not harm the character of the countryside.

The general extent of the North Cheshire Green Belt will be maintained. Policy [‘STRAT 3 Chester’](#) sets out the proposed release of Green Belt to meet the development needs of Chester. In settlements and areas of the countryside that are within the Green Belt, additional restrictions will apply to development in line with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Explanation

5.72 The rural area of Cheshire West and Chester and the high quality of its landscape and environment is recognised as a key asset and is highly valued by the borough’s residents. The quality of the environment enables Cheshire West and Chester to attract a highly skilled workforce, businesses and visitors. The policy restricts new development to that which requires a rural location. For the purposes of this policy the countryside is taken to mean those areas outside Chester, Ellesmere Port, Northwich, Winsford, the key service centres and local service centres.

5.73 The policy seeks to support farming and forestry operations as well as rural diversification that is sensitive to its rural location. The Council will encourage the re-use of rural buildings particularly for economic purposes such as rural offices or tourism accommodation. There are many existing rural businesses who may seek to expand their premises and sensitive expansion schemes will be supported. Additional guidance on the types of development permitted in the countryside will be provided in of the Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies Plan.

5.74 Forty-two percent of the borough is classified as Green Belt with Chester, Ellesmere Port and Northwich either encompassed or adjoining the Green Belt. The key service centres of Cuddington and Sandiway, Frodsham, Helsby and Neston and Parkgate are inset within the Green Belt although there are a large number of the

smaller rural settlements that are washed over by Green Belt. There are a number of smaller settlements and employment sites that are currently inset in the Green Belt and this position will be reassessed in the Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies Plan. The extent of Green Belt in Cheshire West and Chester is shown on the Key Diagram and any changes have been identified through changes to the Policies Map in Appendix [B 'Proposed changes to Policies Map'](#)

5.75 National planning policy allows for amendments to Green Belt boundaries through Local Plans in exceptional circumstances. A key focus of the Plan's strategy is to channel the majority of new development towards the main urban areas. In order to meet future development needs to 2030 and to promote sustainable patterns of development, it has been identified that only in the case of Chester are there exceptional circumstances to amend the Green Belt boundary.

5.76 In line with national planning policy, inappropriate development is by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be allowed except in very special circumstances. The construction of new buildings within the Green Belt is considered inappropriate, however exceptions to this are identified in the National Planning Policy Framework. Exceptions allow for the following development, providing they preserve the openness of land and purposes of including it within the Green Belt;

- Buildings for agriculture/forestry
- Outdoor sport and recreation
- Replacement buildings
- Limited infilling in villages
- Limited affordable housing for local community needs
- Limited infilling or partial redevelopment of previously developed land
- Mineral development
- Engineering operations
- Local transport infrastructure
- Re-use of buildings that are of a permanent and substantial construction
- Development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order.

5.77 Across the borough there are a number of large operations that are identified as Major Developed Sites in the Green Belt including the Countess of Chester Health Park, Urenco Capenhurst, Marley Tile Works, Delamere and Chester Zoo. The NPPF no longer uses this term but sets out that limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of all brownfield land (excluding temporary buildings) can be considered appropriate where there is no greater impact on the openness. Policies relating to Major Developed Sites will be reviewed through the Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies Plan.

This Appendix is the exact wording from Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan.

Appendix F: Village Design Statement

A Village Design Statement (VDS) for Whitegate and Marton Village was adopted by Vale Royal Borough Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance in 2003. It gives more details on Landscape Setting, Settlement Pattern, Historical Context (including listed buildings), Architectural Heritage & Style, Conservation Area, Public/Private Open Spaces, Boundaries and Trees, Highways/Traffic.

A copy can be found on the parish website (www.whitegatemarton.org.uk) under Neighbourhood Plan/W&M VDS.

Appendix G - Key Services in Parish with Distances From Services Outside

Key Services to be found within the Parish:

Church – St Mary’s Whitegate, Anglican

Primary School – Whitegate Church of England Primary School

Pre-School – Whitegate Pre-School Nursery

Hotel – Nunsmere Hall Hotel, AA 4 Red Stars and two Rosettes.

Public House – The Plough Inn

Golf Club - Vale Royal Abbey Golf Club

Community Halls – Whitegate Recreation Room & The Mews, both halls available for meetings and events.

Garage – Spann’s Garage.

Community Café – Station House, Whitegate Station.

Distances to the nearest services outside the parish

The Old Post Office has been taken as a central point for the Parish of Whitegate and Marton in order to discover the distance that needs to be travelled to access Key Services. The postcode for the Old Post Office (CW8 2BH) is the same for the whole of Cinder Hill and has been used to calculate the distances.

Service / facility	Name	Approx. Distance
Place of Worship:		
Catholic	Saint Joseph’s Catholic Church Winsford	2.6 miles
Methodist	Chester Road Methodist Church, Winsford	1.8 miles
Free Church	Russell Building, Verdin Exchange, High Street, Winsford	2.9 miles
Doctor’s Surgery	Danebridge Medical Practice, Sandiway, part-time surgery	2.3 miles, HQ – 5.4 / 6.4 miles
	Firdale Medical Centre	4.9 miles
	Swanlow Practice, Dene Drive, Winsford	3.1 miles
Pharmacy	Rowlands, Sandiway	2.6 miles
	The Co-operative Pharmacy or Boots or Asda, Winsford.	3.2 miles
Dentist	Mere Lane, Cuddington	2.4 miles
	A D P Winsford	2.9 miles
Optician	Winsford Eye & Footcare, Deleamere Street, Over	2.5 miles

Service / facility	Name	Approx. Distance
Library	Sandiway Library	2.5 miles
	Winsford Library	3.6 miles
Banking facility	Cash Machine with Tesco Express, Delamere Street	2.5 miles
Post Office	Winsford	3.3 miles
	Spar Store, Fir Lane, Cuddington	2.6 miles
Convenience Goods	Spar Store, Fir Lane, Cuddington	2.6 miles
	Tesco Express, Delamere Street	2.5 miles
Supermarket	Asda	3.3 miles
Newsagents	Handley's Newsagents	2.4 miles
	One Stop Shop	2.5 miles
Butcher	Sandiway	2.4 miles
	Winsford	3.6 miles
Greengrocer	Fruitlands	2.4 miles
	Asda or Market, Winsford	3.3 miles
Baker	Asda, Winsford	3.3 miles
Cafe, restaurant, takeaway	Sandiway	2.2 – 2.4 miles
	Winsford	2.5 miles
Secondary School	Weaverham High School	4.5 miles
	Hartford Church of England High School, Chester Road, Northwich	3.7 miles
	The Winsford E-ACT Academy, Grange Lane	2.6 miles
College	Mid Cheshire College, Hartford Campus, near Chester Rd, Northwich	3.7 miles
Police Station	Winsford Police Station, part-time	3 miles
	Northwich Police Station	4.8 miles
Play area / park	Boundary Lane Green Jubilee Play Area	2.9 miles
Fire Station	Winsford Fire Station	3 miles
	Northwich Fire Station	4.8 miles

Service / facility	Name	Approx. Distance
Sports Facilities	Norley Road Playing Fields & Tennis Courts	2.6 miles
	Knights Grange Sports Complex, Winsford	3 miles
	Brio Leisure Centre, Winsford	3 miles
Hospital	Victoria Infirmary, Northwich	4.9 miles
	Leighton Hospital (nearest A&E)	9.2 miles
Railway Station	Cuddington Station	3 miles
	Winsford Station	4.7 miles
Residential Homes	Sandiway Lodge Dalefords Lane, Northwich, Cheshire CW8 2DR 01606 889211 · springcare.org.uk	2.0 miles
	Sandiway Manor Residential Home Norley Rd, Northwich, Cheshire CW8 2JW 01606 883008 · cheshire-residential-care-homes.org.uk	2.6 miles
	Morningside 52 Swanlow Lane, Winsford, Cheshire CW7 1JE 01606 592181 · morningside-rest.co.uk	2.6 miles
Nursing Homes	Redwalls Nursing Home 80 Weaverham Rd, Northwich CW8 2ND 01606 889339 · redwalls.net	2.4 miles
	Overdene House Care Home in Cheshire - Southern Cross Healthcare John St, Winsford, Cheshire CW7 1HJ 01606 861666 · hc-one.co.uk	2.8 miles

Additional to above services at least one of each of the following are within 3 miles:
Hollybank Vets, Lovia Bridal, The Hair Studio, John Dudley Hair Shop, J.P Moores Garage, Define Wine Shop, Red Carpet Hair & Beauty, Blakemere Craft Centre, The Studio (Face, Hair, Body), Greenwood Lighting, The Hair Company, Sandiway Dry Cleaners, Allsops Estate Agents, Surf and Fix It Computer Repairs.

Distances from centre of parish to towns and cities

Town / City	Miles	km
Chester	15.9	25.5
Crewe	11.1	17.9
Liverpool	32.8	52.8
Manchester	31.4	50.5
Middlewich	7.2	11.6
Northwich	4.4	6.0
Runcorn	15.0	24.1
Warrington	14.7	23.7
Winsford	3.4	5.5

Source of data AA Route Planner

Bibliography

Sources of Evidence

Office for National Statistics - ONS website with particular reference to www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk for census details 2011.

UK Government for Census 2011 - National web site for census analysis www.gov.uk.

Rural Profile for Whitegate & Marton produced by Cheshire Community Action (CCA) in conjunction with Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE). This review highlights a set of characteristics that looks at the quality of life in the parish under headings such as Social & Cultural, Equity & Prosperity, Economy, Housing & Built environment, Transport & Connectivity and the Environment.

Cheshire West & Chester Council - Council Tax Bands and number of houses within each band and Waste and Recycling Facilities.
<http://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk>.

Commission for Rural Communities for rural services 2010.

Environment Agency - www.environment-agency.gov.uk for Flood Map and landfill information.

Domestic Estate Agents - House and rental prices from commercial internet sites (June 2013).

Zoopla - UK's most comprehensive property website, they research the market by combining hundreds of thousands of property listings with market data, local information and community tools. www.zoopla.co.uk

Cheshire West and Chester (CW&C) Local Plan this defines the policies and strategy for development in the area.

National Planning Framework to guide development decisions in the future.

Winsford and Tattenhall Neighbourhood Plans for guidance and links to local census details. <http://www.ukcensusdata.com/winsford-over-and-verdin-e00094361#sthash.cUQeXdJc.7xYQfkja.dpuf>