

Much Marcle Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Evidence Base Summary

I. INTRODUCTION

This report is part of the first stage of the production of the Much Marcle Neighbourhood Plan (MMNP). The MMNP will set out a vision for the future, as well as policies, which will help shape development in Much Marcle parish.

Neighbourhood Plans

Neighbourhood Plans are a new type of planning policy document, which are designed to give local communities more control over development in their area by giving them the opportunity to establish general planning policies for development and use of land in their area. Neighbourhood Plans can determine where new housing and employment land should be located, what new development should look like and introduce policies relating to land-use.

Neighbourhood Plans, once adopted, become part of the statutory development plan and form an additional layer of planning policy. In Much Marcle's case the adopted Neighbourhood Plan will sit beneath the National Planning Policy Framework and the Herefordshire Core Strategy. Planning applications for new development in the parish will be assessed with regard to their compliance with the MMNP.

Work Undertaken So Far

A Working Group was established in September 2013, following an initial public meeting in July that year, to produce the MMNP. The Working Group is empowered by and reports to the Parish Council. Progress made to date has included:

- Response to Herefordshire Council's Strategic Environmental Assessment

Scoping Report for MMNP (September 2014);

- Residents' questionnaire survey (January 2015);
- First public consultation and report on issues raised in responses to residents' questionnaire (March 2015);
- Report on assessment of material constraints for proposed housing land allocations (June 2015) and re-use/conversion of redundant buildings (November 2015);
- Business questionnaire (July 2015);
- Consultations with Much Marcle Primary School and Parochial Church Council (June-July 2015);
- Evidence Gap Analysis (December 2015);
- Draft vision, issues, objectives and policies (version 1.9, January 2016);
- Second public consultation (April 2016).



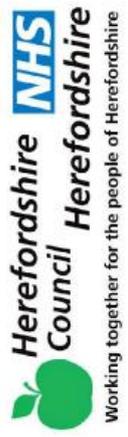
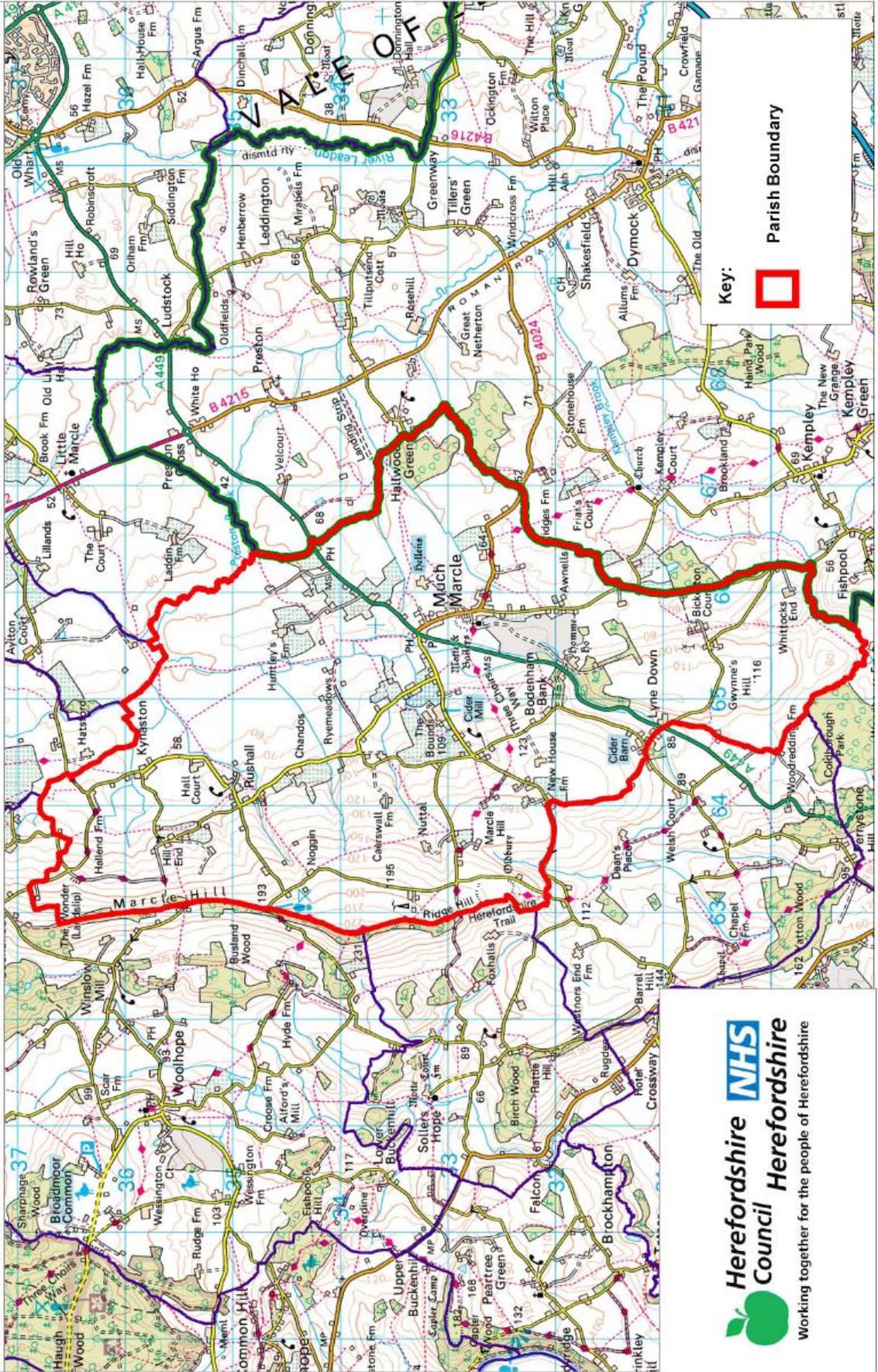
Members of the community at a consultation event

Much Marcle Parish Area

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Scale: 1:50,000



2. POPULATION & HOUSING

Population

Much Marcle parish has a population of 660 people according to the 2011 Census, an increase of 2% since 2001.

Fig. 1 – Population and Housing Facts

All Residents:	660
Number of households:	286
Average household size:	2.3
Children (0-17)	106
Working Age (18-64)	400
Retirement Age (65+)	154
Area (hectares):	1962
Population density (people per hectare):	0.34

Age & Lifestage

There are 506 people classified as being over 'working age' (aged 18+) in the parish and 106 under the age of 18. The average age in 2011 was 46.4 years, which is higher than the averages for Herefordshire (43.0 years) and England (39.3 years).

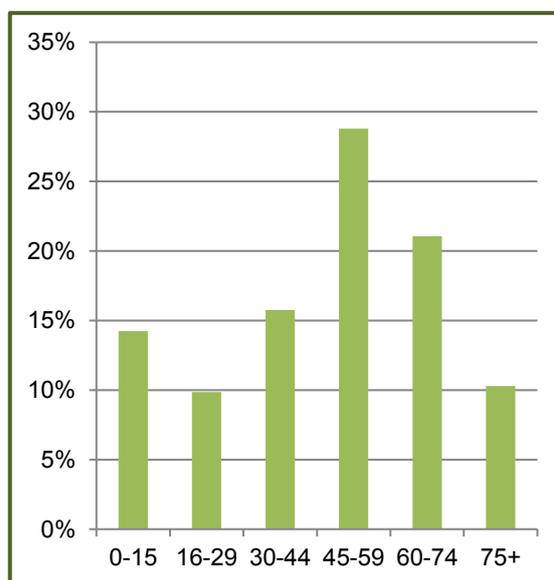
The proportion of those under 16 (14.2%) is significantly lower than the average of 17.0% for the county and 18.9% nationally. As demonstrated in Fig. 2, the number of 10 to 14 year olds is broadly in line with the regional and national averages. However, there are fewer 5 to 9 year olds and significantly fewer 0 to 4 year olds compared to the averages for Herefordshire and England – there are barely half as many 0 to 7 year olds in the parish as a proportion of the population than in England as a whole.

Fig. 2 – Young people in Much Marcle

	Much Marcle	Herefordshire	England
Age 0 to 4	2.9%	5.2%	6.3%
Age 5 to 7	2.3%	3.0%	3.4%
Age 8 to 9	1.7%	2.0%	2.2%
Age 10 to 14	5.8%	5.7%	5.8%
Age 15	1.7%	1.2%	1.2%
TOTAL	14.4%	17.1%	18.9%

The largest age group is those aged 45 to 59 and 29% of the population fall within this group. This compares to 21% for Herefordshire and 15% for England. The numbers of people of 'retirement age' (65+) is also higher than the national average at 23% compared to 16% for England. The numbers of those over the age of 75 is broadly in line with the county average (10%), but higher than the national average (8%).

Fig. 3 – Age distribution in Much Marcle



The proportion of population of 'working age' (18 to 64) currently stands at 60%, which is higher than the proportion for the whole of Herefordshire but lower than the national average (62%).

Overall, the population of the parish can be said to be aging, if not aged. Sixty percent of the population of the parish are 45 and over compared to 42% of the population nationally.

Household Size

The 660 residents of Much Marcle parish live in 286 households and the average household size in the parish is 2.31 persons, broadly in line with both the averages for Herefordshire (2.34) and England (2.40).

There are fewer one-person households in the parish than in Herefordshire and nation-wide, but there is significantly higher proportion of two-person homes.

Fig. 4– Household size

People	Much Marcle	Herefordshire	England
1	24%	29%	30%
2	45%	38%	34%
3	13%	15%	16%
4	13%	12%	13%
5	3%	4%	5%
6+	1%	1%	2%

Although there are a number of single retirees, there are fewer single young professionals than in Herefordshire and England, where the average age of the population is lower. However, a population that continues to age will result in an increase of single person households, which could lead to a slowdown in growth, or even a drop, in the population, as average household sizes decrease.

Ethnicity

The level of both ethnic and cultural diversity is very low within the community but it is not dissimilar to the overall analysis for Herefordshire. Ninety-seven percent of the population of the parish identify as 'White British' - slightly higher than the average for Herefordshire (94%) and significantly higher than the national average (80%).

Immigration

The incidence of cultural immigration to the parish is very low and represents no notable pressure on resources. As a proportion of the population, just 0.15% of the population (or one person) moved to the UK between 2010 and 2011 and just 0.75% (or 5 people) moved to the parish between 2001 and 2011.

Health & Wellbeing

People who live in the parish are statistically healthier than both the county and national averages. This is likely to be a key factor in the increasing life expectancy of residents of the parish. There are more people in very bad health in the parish than in Herefordshire or nationally, which may be a reflection of the aging population.

Fig. 5 – General Health

	Much Marcle	Herefordshire	England
Very good health	51%	46%	47%
Good health	30%	35%	34%
Fair health	13%	14%	13%
Bad health	4%	4%	4%
Very bad health	2%	1%	1%

Dwelling Type

Seventy-three percent of residential properties in Much Marcle parish are detached dwellings (including bungalows). As a proportion of the overall housing stock this percentage is much higher than both the county and national averages – 42% of properties in Herefordshire are detached while the figure nationally is 24%. It is expected in a rural parish such as Much Marcle that the majority of properties would be detached.

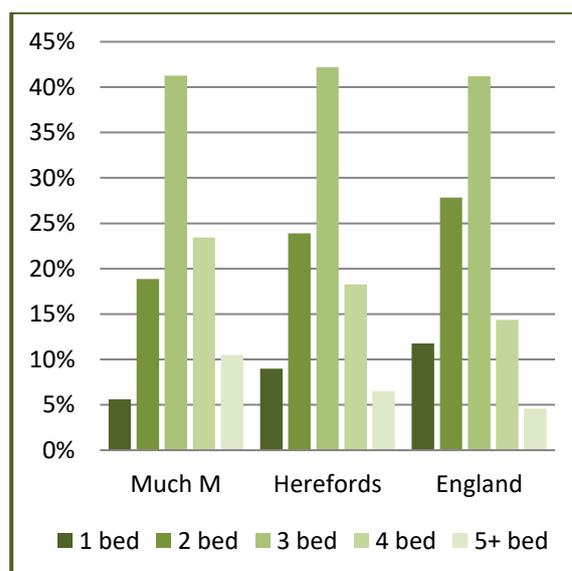
Fig. 6 - Accommodation type

	Much Marcle	Herefords	England
Detached house	73%	42%	24%
Semi-detached house	20%	28%	34%
Terraced house	5%	17%	26%
Flat/apartment	2%	11%	16%
Shared	0%	0%	0%
Caravan/temporary structure	0%	1%	0%

The number of flats and/or apartments in the parish is extremely low – just 2% compared to 16% of properties nationally.

Three-bedroom homes are the most common dwelling size in the parish, as in Herefordshire and England, although the parish has a higher proportion of larger homes. Nationally 19% of properties are 4 bedroom or larger while the figures for Herefordshire and Much Marcle parish are 25% and 33% respectively. Five bedroom properties represent ten percent of the housing stock in the parish – double the average for England as a whole.

Fig. 7 - Dwelling sizes



Overall the parish has a wide choice of properties and a type and size of homes that is broadly in line with the trend for England as a whole. The relatively small supply of one bedroom properties does not necessarily reflect the aging demographic of the village - i.e. the number of one person households in Much Marcle is likely to increase, which could lead to an increase in the demand for smaller properties.

Housing Tenure

Much Marcle parish has a rate of home ownership slightly above the average for Herefordshire and England. Two-thirds (66%) of households own their property either outright or with a mortgage. There are relatively few properties social rented in the parish – i.e. rented from a Housing Association or Registered Social Landlord.

Fig. 8 – Tenure

	Much Marcle	Herefords	England
Owned outright	40%	39%	31%
Owned with a mortgage or loan	26%	28%	33%
Shared ownership	1%	1%	1%
Social rented	10%	14%	18%
Private rented	19%	16%	17%
Living rent free	4%	2%	1%

The overall tenure distribution in Much Marcle parish is not hugely divergent from the Herefordshire norm and is broadly what might be expected from a rural community.

Affordability

Much Marcle parish sits in the Ross-on-Wye Housing Market Area (HMA) within Herefordshire. According to the Herefordshire Local Housing Market Assessment (HLMA) the average indicative income required to buy a 2-bed property in the Ross-on-Wye HMA is £32,860 while the average wage in the area is £22,947. The proportion of households unable to afford market housing without subsidy in Ross-on-Wye HMA is 53.4%, which is high but compares favourably with the proportion for Herefordshire (56.4%).

Housing Need

The HLMA found that in the Ross-on-Wye the size of affordable homes required was fairly evenly split between 1 bedroom (29%), 2 bedroom (37%) and 3 bedroom (31%) properties. The need for houses (73%) was

considered greater than the need for flats (27%).

In terms of market housing, it was found that in the Ross HMA the greatest need was for 3 bedroom properties (57%) and 2 bedroom properties (24.7%). Of the additional dwellings required in the Ross HMA over 95% are required to be houses.

3. EMPLOYMENT & ECONOMY

Agriculture

Agriculture is the major land use in Much Marcle parish and a relatively large employer of local residents - the fifth biggest sector. Nine percent of those employed in the parish work in agriculture according to the 2011 Census, compared to 5.4% of the workforce in Herefordshire.

Fig. 9– Top employment sectors in Much Marcle

Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles	13.4%
Manufacturing	11.1%
Education	10.0%
Human health and social work activities	9.4%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	9.1%
Construction	7.4%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	7.1%

Businesses

There are a small but strong range of businesses in the parish. Weston’s Cider, Much Marcle Garage and Graham Baker Motors are major employers. The largest employment sector in the parish is the trade and repair of motor vehicles.

Employment Land

The business survey carried out by the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group found that there were five businesses requiring additional space. Three of these were for areas less than 50m², one for more than 200m² and one identifying two buildings of over 200m². As the Neighbourhood Plan period is more than fifteen years, it would appear that there is no intent to greatly extend most business premises.

Tourism

Easy access and proximity to the Malvern Hills and the Wye Valley Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and to the Forest of Dean, make the parish a potentially attractive tourist destination. There is a good range of bed & breakfasts, self-catering and holiday cottage accommodation(s) available to rent throughout the parish.

Working

A higher proportion of residents of Much Marcle parish (72%) are economically active than nationally (70%). Conversely, however, the proportion of the population in full-time and part-time employment (46%) is lower than the national average (52%). This is the result of a higher proportion of the population being retired than is the case nationally, rather than a high rate of unemployment – the proportion of retired people in the parish is 3% higher than the national average.

Fig. 10 – Economically Inactive Residents

	Much Marcle	Hereford shire	England
Total	27.3%	28.7%	30.1%
Retired	17.3%	16.6%	13.7%
Student	3.2%	3.6%	5.8%
Looking after home or family	3.0%	3.5%	4.4%
Long-term sick or disabled	2.0%	3.4%	4.0%
Other	1.8%	1.6%	2.2%

The rate of unemployment in the village is lower at 2.2% than in Herefordshire (3.3%) and in England (4.4%). Given the demographics of the village, the proportions of students and

long-term sick or disabled are also relatively low.

Fig. 11 – Economically Active Residents

	Much Marcle	Hereford shire	England
Total	72.7%	71.3%	69.9%
Employee: Part-time	13.1%	15.2%	13.7%
Employee: Full-time	33.1%	36.0%	38.6%
Self Employed	22.5%	14.4%	9.8%
Unemployed	2.2%	3.3%	4.4%
Full-time student	1.8%	2.4%	3.4%

Much Marcle parish has a much higher proportion of people in self-employment than the county or national averages. There are fewer students as a proportion of the working age population than is the case nationally.

Qualifications, Occupation & Income

Fig. 12 – Highest qualification achieved

	Much Marcle	Hereford shire	England
No qualifications	17%	23%	22%
Level 1 qualifications	14%	13%	13%
Level 2 qualifications	18%	16%	15%
Apprenticeship	2%	4%	4%
Level 3 qualifications	10%	12%	12%
Level 4 quals and above	36%	27%	27%
Degree	20%	15%	17%
Other qualifications	3%	5%	6%

Residents of Much Marcle parish are better qualified than the average for both the county

and England – they are more likely to have degrees and less likely to have no qualifications at all than the average of England.

Nineteen percent of working age residents of the parish is in managerial, directorial or senior official positions compared to 11% of the population nationwide and 12% in Herefordshire. There are also more residents in professional occupations than is the case nationally, although there are fewer in associate professional and technical occupations than nationwide.

Fig. 13 – Occupations

All Residents Aged 16 to 74 in Employment	Much Marcle	Hereford shire	England
1. Managers, Directors and Senior Officials	19%	12%	11%
2. Professional Occupations	18%	14%	17%
3. Associate Professional and Technical Occupations	9%	10%	13%
4. Administrative and Secretarial Occupations	8%	10%	11%
5. Skilled Trades Occupations	17%	16%	11%
6. Caring, Leisure and Other Service Occupations	7%	10%	9%
7. Sales and Customer Service Occupations	3%	7%	8%
8. Process, Plant and Machine Operatives	9%	8%	7%
9. Elementary Occupations	10%	12%	11%

Overall there is a similar proportion of people in low-skilled work as is the case nationally. There are significantly more people in professional and managerial roles than in Herefordshire and England overall and this is reflected in the income profile of the village, which is significantly higher than in the surrounding areas and nationally. There are more people working as skilled tradesmen than the national average.

4. BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Settlement Pattern

The historic core of Much Marcle is centred on the Church of St. Bartholomew's (dating from the 13th Century) with its famous Yew Tree; the adjacent remains of Mortimer's Castle, motte and bailey; and Hellens (dating from the 13th Century). The village also boasts two other large houses of significance: Homme House (dating from c.1500) and Phillips House (1703).



Church of St Bartholomew

The village of Much Marcle contains most of the dwellings, but has no clearly defined edges. Views through to open countryside and farmland from the centre of the village are an important characteristic feature. Elsewhere the settlement pattern is more dispersed with isolated farms, houses and cottages. The vast majority of the buildings in and around the parish are randomly spaced and have been built at various orientations in relation to neighbouring buildings and along minor roads and country lanes.

Much Marcle has no central focus such as a village green although the A449/B4024 crossroads may be considered the centre, comprising the post office and general store, garage and one of the village's three public houses. The area surrounding the crossroads has been subject to serious flooding.

The highest densities of dwellings are:

- Along the B4024
- In the vicinity of the church
- On a small estate of executive-style homes adjoining the memorial hall; and
- To the south-east at Glebe Orchard.

Although roadside houses at Glebe Orchard reflect local character, the density, form and scale of other new housing developments (e.g. those which have occurred since 1990) are not as sympathetic to neighbouring buildings and the locality.

Rushall and Kynaston are smaller linear settlements, locally recognised as hamlets of Much Marcle.

Rushall consists of Graham Motors at the crossroads leading down to Rushall Club with Hall Court further down on the corner. There are 16 dwellings in the main settlement area, of which 10 are 1950's style council houses.

North from Hall Court is the hamlet of Kynaston, which then leads Hall End Farm. This hamlet has 12 dwellings within the main settlement area, of which 6 are council built houses. There are no community facilities within this area.



Kynaston Primitive Methodist Chapel

Character & Built Form



Dwellings in the parish

There is no dominant style of domestic building. A high proportion of dwellings are timber-framed which were originally built for farm workers. Some are still thatched but most are tiled. Others are solid and rectangular in shape, of natural stone or local brick (some of which have been painted white) and roofed with slate.



A timber framed dwelling

These were mainly built as farmhouses or for farm workers. With the exception of the new estate dwellings, most are cottages of two storeys with sizeable gardens and open farmland or orchards in between. A significant number of buildings are listed.

Much of the commercial property consists of farm buildings, some old and some new, which have in the main been sympathetically sited. Other commercial buildings such as Weston's Cider, the Much Marcle Garage and Graham Baker Motors are constructed in a variety of materials, not all of which is sympathetic to or in keeping with local character.



Much Marcle Garage

5. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Landscape

The overall character of the landscape consists of mixed farmland, orchards and hedgerows, with a large number of mature trees. To the west, Marcle Ridge reaches 231 metres above sea level and is surmounted by a high telecommunications mast visible from many miles away.



Homme Park

The ridge has one of the area's best footpaths along its length with splendid views to the west over the Woolhope Dome, part of the Wye Valley AONB, to the south towards May Hill and the Forest of Dean, and to the east towards the Malvern Hills AONB and the Cotswolds AONB.



Hall Wood

Modern intensive farming methods have led to significant landscape change since the 1940s with a gradual loss of traditional standard orchards, a marked increase in field size and a

consequential reduction in the extent of hedgerows.

Priority Habitats

The parish supports good examples of UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) priority habitats - e.g. lowland meadows and unimproved pasture, lowland mixed deciduous woodland, traditional standard orchards, ponds, rivers and streams, reedbeds, wood pasture and parkland; and locally important, characteristic habitats such as 'ghost' outlines of wild daffodils (a UK BAP priority species) along field margins and beneath roadside hedgerows along the B4024 Dymock Road and at Lyne Down.

Wild daffodil meadows occur around Hall Wood, and in two fields at SO669323 and SO667324 adjoining the B4024 Dymock Road along the South-East boundary of the parish. Together with an immediately adjacent field across the county boundary in Gloucestershire at SO668323, these wild daffodil meadows form part of a much larger contiguous and locally important site.

Significant areas of lowland mixed deciduous woodland are found only on the Homme House estate along the A449 and at Hall Wood on the eastern extremity of the parish. Hall Wood is an ancient semi-natural woodland and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). There are also several smaller parcels of ancient woodland (e.g. along Marcle Hill at Hooper's Oak) and new broadleaved plantations.

Despite past losses, traditional standard orchards remain a characteristic and widespread feature in the parish. They provide important habitats for birds, insects and fungi, and contain several indigenous varieties of cider apple and perry pear (e.g. Aylton Red and Gregg's Pit) much prized for their cultural history and vintage qualities.

Sources: Field surveys of priority habitats in April 2016 by J Marsden and H Woodman, and

Peoples Trust for Endangered Species Orchard Survey www.ptes.org.



A Gregg's Pit perry pear tree

Legally Protected and Priority Species

European Protected Species (EC Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, Schedule 2) recorded in the parish include: bats, dormouse, great crested newt and common otter.

Legally protected bird species (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) Schedule 1) recorded in the parish include: fieldfare, goshawk, hobby, kingfisher, barn owl, redwing and treecreeper.

Legally protected animals (WCA 1981 (as amended) Schedule 5) recorded in the parish include: badger, bats (all species), great crested newt, palmate newt, common otter and common toad, grass snake, and slow worm.

UK BAP priority species recorded in the parish include: birds - common cuckoo, lesser-spotted woodpecker, spotted flycatcher, common bullfinch, skylark, kestrel and grey partridge; animals - brown hare, grass snake,

slow worm, great crested newt and common toad; and plants - wild daffodil.

Sources: Data extracted from Herefordshire Biological Records Centre data package dated 12 April 2016, and local records by J Marsden and H Woodman.



Footpath from Bodenham Bank to Marcle

Designated Sites

Herefordshire Biological Records Centre has provided a map (overleaf) and a register with details for designated sites within the parish. Some of this data is more than 25 years old (1990), but many of the priority habitats recorded then were found again during recent field surveys in April 2016.

Herefordshire Wildlife Trust is currently developing a process for the review and designation of Local Wildlife Sites.

A Hall Wood Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

The citation details are attached as an Annex.

B Hooper's Oak Quarry Local Geological Site

C Sleaves Oak Quarry Local Geological Site

D Bodenham Farm Site 2 Local Geological Site

E Bodenham Farm Site 1 Local Geological Site

F Bodenham Farm Site 3 Local Geological Site

G Lyne Down Quarry Local Geological Site

For further information on sites B-G please contact Moira Jenkins at Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust: m.jenkins@worc.ac.uk.

SO62/08 Coldborough Park Local Wildlife Site

- adjacent to the South-West boundary of the parish. The register states: "A large area of ancient woodland which has been interplanted with oak and conifer. There are some fine, mature oak trees. The understorey is very dense, and includes coppiced alder and hazel. Bluebell, orchid and meadow saffron are present in the ground flora. The site is excellent for insects. White admiral has been reported."

- Date 1990

SO63/14 Woodlands along Marcle Hill and Ridge Hill Local Wildlife Site

The register states: "Greenhill Coppice. Hooper's Oak. Hoar Wood. A strip of ancient woodland with a small number of introduced species. Yew trees occur frequently and the ground flora is rich, including bluebell, spurge laurel and orchids. A few plants of spring cinquefoil, which is known at only one other site in the county, grow at the edge of Hooper's Oak.

The unimproved pasture at SO630327 has a varied flora, including wild liquorice and cowslip."

- Date 1990

SO63/16 Rushall road cutting Local Wildlife Site

The register states: "Exposed rocks of geological interest"

- Date 1990

SO63/17 Lower Walton Road Cuttings Local Wildlife Site

The register states: "Exposed rocks which have yielded interesting fossils."

- Date 1990

SO63/21 Field North-West of Bridges Farm Local Wildlife Site

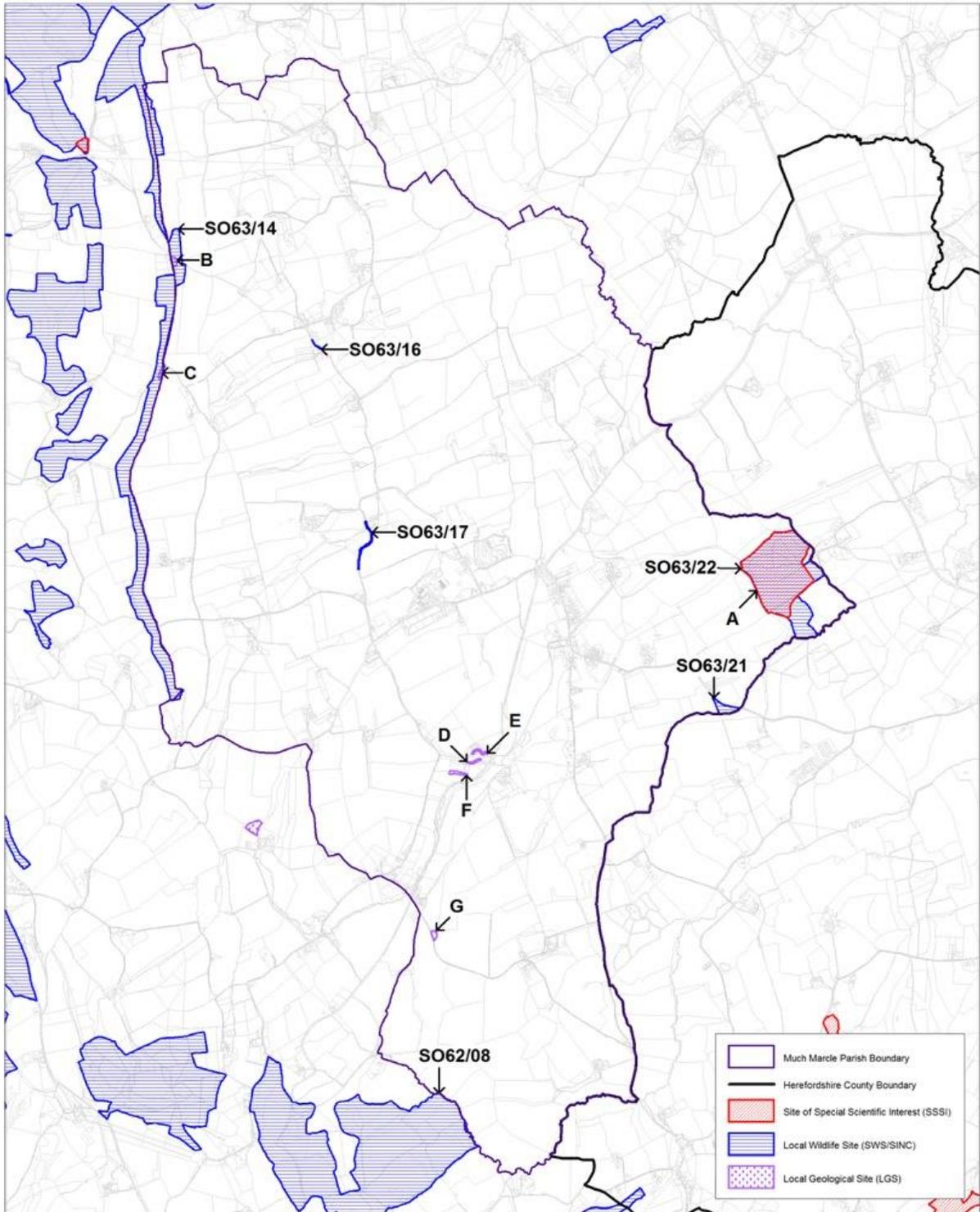
The register states: "An unimproved meadow cut for hay, except for a marshy area. The flora includes marsh-marigold, cuckooflower and abundant wild daffodils."

- Date 1990

SO63/22 Hall Wood and adjoining Meadow Local Wildlife Site

The register states: "An ancient woodland, mainly oak and ash, but the northern end is plateau alder woodland. The shrub layer is mostly hazel. Other species include guilden-wood, field maple and coppiced lime. Wild daffodil and meadow saffron are amongst the ground flora species. Some rare insects have been recorded on the site. The adjoining hay meadow has abundant wild daffodils."

- Date 1990



Map showing designated sites within Much Marcle Parish

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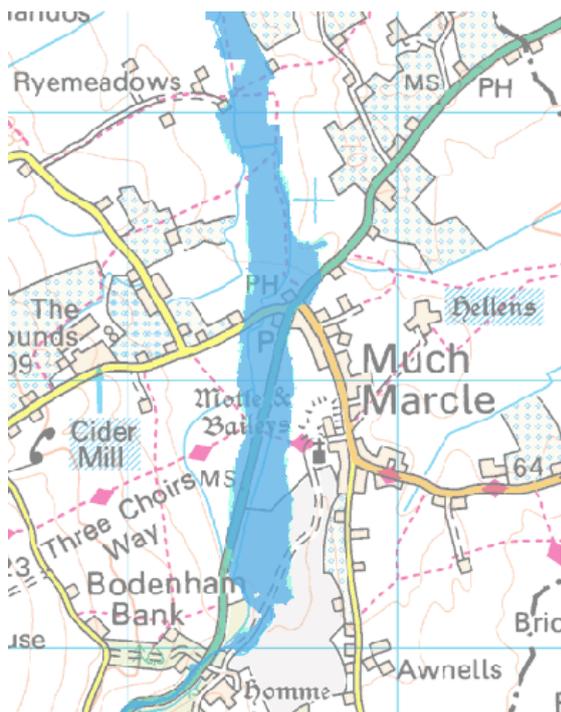
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Flood Risk Areas

The Environment Agency Flood Map for Much Marcle shows an extensive area of land within Flood Zone 3 (land assessed as having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding) and a wider area within Flood Zone 2, extending from Bodenham Bank to The Walwyn Arms, Ryemeadows and north to the parish boundary at Kynaston.



Agricultural Land

Arable rotations typically include autumn sown cereals, oil seed rape, grass leys, potatoes and fodder maize. There has been a recent increase in the area of maize cropping in recent years in response to livestock farmers' demand for maize silage.

There are extensive areas of permanent grassland, which support beef cattle, sheep, and some bloodstock/horse livery enterprises.

Traditional standard and bush orchards are widespread – e.g. around Much Marcle and on the lower east facing slopes of the Marcle Ridge.

All farmland within the parish is classified as either 'Grade 2' or 'Grade 3'. The agricultural land grade classifications are as follows:

Grade 2 - very good quality agricultural land

(blue on the map below)

Land with minor limitations, which affect crop yield, cultivations or harvesting. A wide range of agricultural and horticultural crops can usually be grown but on some land in the grade there may be reduced flexibility due to difficulties with the production of the more demanding crops such as winter harvested vegetables and arable root crops. The level of yield is generally high but may be lower or more variable than Grade 1.

Grade 3 - good to moderate quality agricultural land

(green on the map below)

Land with moderate limitations which affect the choice of crops, timing and type of cultivation, harvesting or the level of yield. Where more demanding crops are grown yields are generally lower or more variable than on land in Grades 1 and 2.



6. COMMUNITY & LEISURE

Community Facilities

The parish has a small number of community facilities and meeting places. St Bartholomew's Church holds regular Sunday services. There are three pubs: The Royal Oak, which has serves food and has accommodation; The Walwyn Arms, which also serves food, and The Slip; and one licensed restaurant (The Scrumpy House). The Much Marcle Post Office and Village Store enables the local community to withdraw cash and purchase staple foods without having to travel to Ledbury or another neighbouring town.

The parish is served by a primary school, Much Marcle Church of England Primary School, a maintained school catering for pupils between the ages of 5 and 11, and an ancillary nursery school. As of January 2014, when last inspected by Ofsted, the school had 98 pupils and was rated 'Outstanding'.

In addition to the church and school the parish boasts Much Marcle Memorial Hall and Rushall Club.



Much Marcle Memorial Hall

Sport & Leisure

'The Bartons' provides a grass-surfaced pitch (not full size) suitable for football, cricket, rounders and other sports.

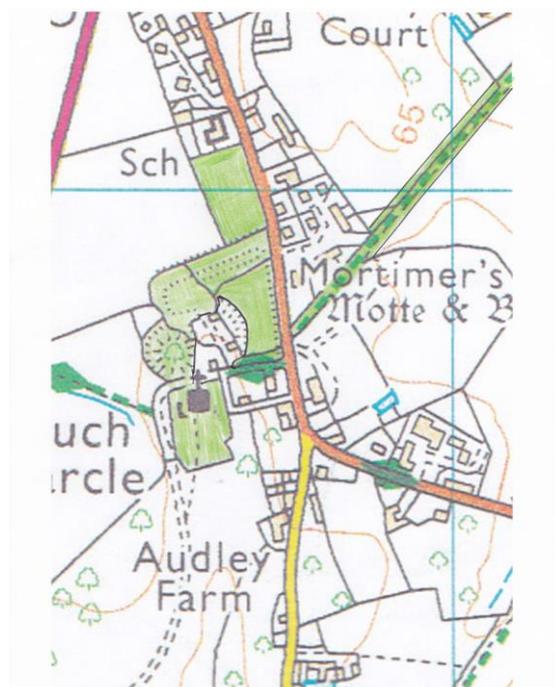
Herefordshire Council's Play Facilities Study and Investment Plan has assessed the village play area (The Bartons) owned and managed by the Parish Council as 'in need' of some refurbishment and replacement of equipment. A village the size of Much Marcle (population greater than 500) requires a local formal play area.



Grass football pitch at the Bartons

Open Space

Published evidence shows that access to the natural environment benefits people's mental and physical health, their sense of wellbeing and quality of life.



'Get the green space you want: 'How the Government can help' outlines the full range of measures that the Government has in place to support communities who want to get more involved in their local community and get access to the space they need. (www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/greenspacehelp)

The Working Group has identified green and open spaces in Much Marcle, which provide a variety of public benefits, including cultural and historic heritage, biodiversity and public access. The map on the previous page shows their location shaded in green.

7. TRANSPORT & INFRASTRUCTURE

Much Marcle parish is situated on the A449 road which connects Ledbury and Ross-on-Wye. This location means that the village has a good connection to the M50, which links this area of Herefordshire with Wales and the West Midlands.

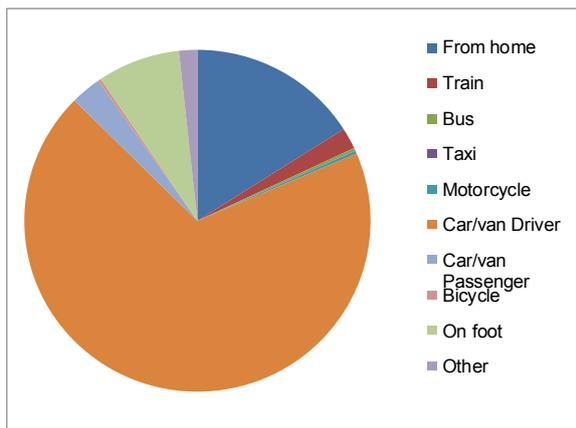
From Much Marcle it is possible to reach Ledbury by car in 10 minutes, Ross in around 15 minutes, Monmouth in 25 minutes, Hereford and Gloucester in less than 30 minutes, and both Worcester and Cheltenham in around 45 minutes.



Travel Habits

In the 2011 census of the 286 households in the parish, just 19 (7%) did not own at least one car or van.

Fig. 14 - Method of travel to work

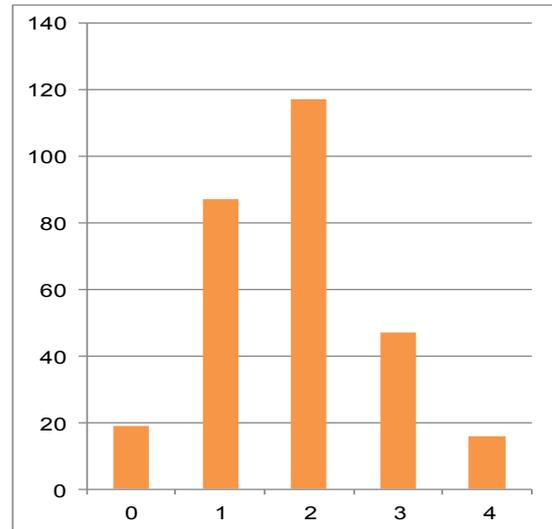


The 2011 census shows an active workforce of 490 and the method of travel to work is largely by private transport. However, given the limited bus service, rural village aspect and relative affluence this is not surprising, nor is the fact that more people work from home

than use any method of transport to work other than the private car.

A very small percentage of residents commute by bicycle or on foot, but this is likely to reflect the fairly limited employment opportunities in the parish.

Fig. 15 – Number of cars or vans in households



Public Transport

Much Marcle parish is not served by a railway station – the nearest is Ledbury station around 6 miles away. Ledbury station is one of only three in the county of Herefordshire, and it connects the town to Hereford, Malvern and Worcester locally, Bromsgrove and Birmingham regionally and Oxford, Reading and London nationally.

Fig. 16 – Morning commute times from Ledbury

Arrive before	07:30	08:00	08:30	09:00
Hereford	06:25		08:12	
Malvern	06:59	07:25	07:50	
Worcester	06:59	07:25	07:50	
Droitwich		07:25	07:50	
Bromsgrove				07:50
University (B'ham)			07:25	07:50
Birmingham				07:25
Oxford		05:45		06:59

The table above demonstrates the times one must leave Ledbury station in order to reach local and regional destinations by 7am, 7:30am, 8am, 8:30am and 9am respectively.



Bus stop next to the Walwyn Arms

Bus Services

Bus services to and from Much Marcle are sparse. There are 9 services in total serving the village during the average week. As a consequence, commuting from Much Marcle to local towns via bus is not a viable option.

Broadband

The Parish has one fibre-to-the-cabinet (FTTC) at Much Marcle crossroads (A449) and a fibre-to-the-premises (FTTP) supply at Rushall. Further FTTP supplies are planned for Kynaston and other areas of the Parish where there are concentrations of houses. Westons Cider has its own FTTP link, but all other premises in Much Marcle rely on existing copper wire connections from the cabinet. Here the speed drop-off over distance on standard (copper) broadband is exacerbated by the steeper decline in performance the further the distance from FTTC connections. In a February 2016 survey 30% local broadband subscribers received download speeds under 4 Mbps, while half of all respondents were very or quite dissatisfied with their current broadband service.

The community consultation indicated a very strong need for significantly improved Broadband, both to address the needs of present businesses and to provide a suitable IT environment to attract new businesses. In the February 2016 survey 48% respondents indicated that they run a business from home, with 87% of these business owners accessing the internet *at least* daily. 70% relying on a standard (copper) connection, with 39% receiving download speeds under 5 Mbps. Comments such as those below were common:

“Too slow for many uses, especially uploading large files for customers”

“The service is intermittent, particularly with multiple users online - frequent drop outs while corresponding with clients etc.”

Over half of local business owners (52%) are either very or quite dissatisfied with their current broadband service, with an overwhelming majority (91%) indicating interest in super-fast broadband.

A Broadband Group has been formed in an attempt to maximise future development in the Parish on a community basis and to offer advice to those who may not benefit from that.

Medical & Care Facilities

The nearest doctors' surgeries are St Katherines (01531-633271) and the Market Surgery (01531-632423) in Ledbury, and Fownhope Surgery (01432-860235).

The parish has three community defibrillators located at Weston's Cider (The Bounds) and the Memorial Hall in Much Marcle, and at Graham Baker Motors in Rushall.