

CHELTENHAM BOROUGH

ENGAGING COMMUNITIES PROJECT REPORT

PART 2 – CHAPTER 1

BENHALL AND THE REDDINGS

January 2017

Report compiled by GRCC, working in partnership with Benhall
Residents Association

Chapter 1: Benhall

Report Context

GRCC was commissioned by Cheltenham Borough Council in 2016 to support twelve communities in Cheltenham Borough to consider their aspirations and present these in order to inform the Cheltenham Plan, a planning strategy document being produced by Cheltenham Borough Council during 2016-2017. The Cheltenham Engaging Communities Project builds on previous partnership working between GRCC and Cheltenham Borough communities in 2014-2015 which resulted in evidence gathering and recommendations by communities for designation of Local Green Spaces across Cheltenham Borough. The findings from that Local Green Spaces Study were summarised in a [report](#) presented to Cheltenham Borough Council in 2015.

The Cheltenham Engaging Communities Project Report is structured in 2 Parts:

Part 1 of the report provides an overview across Cheltenham Borough, summarising each community's approach and drawing out key messages.

Part 2 of the report contains 12 separate chapters, each devoted to one community, tracking their approach to the task and drawing out their conclusions, aspirations and priorities. Each chapter contains Appendices which provide fuller detail of a profile produced by the community and outputs from engagement activities they have conducted as part of this project and relevant previous activity.

This document forms Chapter 1 of Part 2 of the Cheltenham Engaging Communities Project Report and contains information about Benhall and The Reddings.

Introduction to Benhall and The Reddings

The area of Benhall and The Reddings is a mature, residential suburban area to the south west of Cheltenham Town centre. The area adjoins Fiddlers Green, St Marks and Hesters Way to the north, Up Hatherley to the south east, the town centre to the north east and open agricultural land to the south west.

How Benhall Residents Association approached the Cheltenham Engaging Communities Project

The community profile presented within this chapter represents both Benhall and The Reddings area. GRCC engaged largely with the Benhall Residents Association to prepare this Chapter, following on from the Local Green Spaces work conducted in 2014-15. They started the process in October 2016 and utilised GRCC help to support formulation of the community profile and to facilitate a number of meetings to discuss aspirations, priorities and action plans.

Benhall Residents Association's engagement with the wider community

In order to build an understanding of the vision, community aspirations / priorities and key issues in relation to the Benhall community area, the Association went through a number of key stages.

The first stage was to review and consider a community profile that included desktop evidence from national and local data. Members of Benhall Residents Association considered desk top evidence along

with information from previous work / discussions by the residents' group and used a basic framework provided by GRCC to produce a profile of Benhall and The Reddings. The profile contains sections on history, economy, housing, community services, transport, physical environment and the characteristics of the population. The full profile can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

Secondly the Benhall Residents Association organised and invited members of the community to participate in a workshop facilitated by GRCC in November 2016. 10 attendees worked together to consider the community profile and to start the process of capturing the aspirations and priorities for the community. A SWOT analysis was prepared and used to draw out aspirations and key issues for the community.

This work was further developed in a committee meeting organised by Benhall Residents Association in January 2017, with facilitation support from GRCC, to discuss and prioritise objectives and to define an action plan to move forward their key priority of Benhall Park.

The Association and the local Borough Councillor felt it was also important to gather the perspectives of community groups based in The Reddings. GRCC therefore also met with the Grace Gardens Residents Association in January 2017. Although the residents group felt they could not meaningfully engage with this project within the timescales available, they would wish to contribute to future discussions and initiatives for the Redgrove Park and The Reddings areas.

Outputs from community engagement activities

SWOT analysis

Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe & Friendly community • Local Pride and look after each other • An active volunteer group • Green space (park / hedge rows and tree lined roads) • Nearby shops • A wide range of ages groups • Generally a desirable place to live (school / public transport – car specific)
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No 'indoor' central place to come together • Reddings v Benhall (a defined boundary) • Limited youth activity (including representation on the residents group) • Transportation – car oriented not bicycle (car 'rat run') • Green space (park) not utilised effectively with potential for more inclusive use
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merge with the Redding's area (a combined community café) • Community space / building (coffee shop) • To give a 'voice' to the youth • To promote new idea projects such as a community garden / meadow project including 'habitats for animals'
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of any future 'youth' involvement when there has been objections to some of the previous projects (e.g. art project) • Residents Group being able to continue without increase in involvement

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation – increase in use of the area as a ‘rat run’ • No plan to maximise the underutilised green space
--	--

Aspirations

3 key elements were highlighted and an aspiration developed for each plus objectives to be met in order to achieve that aspiration:

Aspiration 1: Benhall community will be supported by appropriate ‘fit for purpose’ buildings and community activity space to take the community forward for the next 60 years.

The achievement of this aspiration requires the following objectives to be met:

- Address the current imbalance of residential community growth and managed / supported community buildings and space
- Improved / targeted local shops to serve the local community
- No additional ‘land grab’ for inappropriate development (housing numbers now maxed out)
- Creation of a social community meeting space for Benhall residents that is potentially aligned with the needs of the Redding’s residents (cross community considerations)

Aspiration 2: Benhall will be a safe place to cycle and walk around the community to get to shops / schools / park safely and efficiently

The achievement of this aspiration requires the following objectives to be met:

- Efficient traffic management- especially when considering any new development/ change of use applications in and around Cheltenham
- Cycling routes and space
- Tackling ‘rat run’ traffic
- Tackling ‘Inconsiderate parking’ (specifically by the park)
- Integration of public transport to growth areas in and around Cheltenham.

Aspiration 3: Maintenance and enhancement of the current provision for green spaces

The achievement of this aspiration requires the following objectives to be met:

- To maximise the community usage of the Park for all age groups.
- To create a wider sense of ‘conservation’ management within the Park land

Outputs from meeting in January 2017

Benhall Residents Association members felt that while the above aspirations and objectives may be considered by CBC when developing the Cheltenham Plan, they wished for this work to also lead to practical activity ‘on the ground’. Members recognised that the Association has limited capacity for action compared with some Neighbourhood Co-ordination Groups and parishes in Cheltenham therefore decided to use GRCC support to help them develop a pragmatic Action Plan to move forward its priority for local action. Therefore the meeting in January 2017 revolved around developing an action plan in relation to a key community facility- Benhall Park. This has been in existence since the estate was built

and is a focal point for many groups within the community. As a key open space it provides the best location in the community for people to meet and could therefore move forward Aspiration 3 above. Ideally it could be enhanced through a dedicated indoor space which would meet Aspiration 1.

Statement:

Benhall Park is a space with great potential at the heart of our community and we want to make sure it is not only protected as a local amenity, but is enhanced to offer greater service to more people both in Benhall and the wider Cheltenham population.

Benhall Park should:

- Remain – forever – a community facility
- Remain an open space
- Develop as a space with great biodiversity (less a grass monoculture, and more a mixed green space)
- Develop as a space for different users including:
 - A learning zone
 - A children's zone
 - A dog friendly zone
 - An exercise zone
 - A planting zone (might include a community vegetable garden for local children, a bee garden, a flower garden, a quiet space, a pond zone, etc.)
 - A nature zone
- Develop as an active hub, which is recognised as a Community Hub for meeting multiple community needs, which helps us to achieve our local vision.

In order to achieve this, the Benhall Residents Association has created a next steps / action plan which can be found in [Appendix 3](#).

[Appendix 4](#) contains information on previous consultations carried out by the group which were considered during workshops.

Appendix 1: Community Profile

This profile has been produced by Benhall Residents Association. GRCC provided a basic framework and some desk top researched data about the area as a starting point and the Residents Association reworked the section, using their local knowledge and perspectives. Any additional community commentary, giving a flavour of local feeling on topics is shown *in italics*.

Benhall and The Reddings forms part of the Neighbourhood Co-ordination Group (NCG) area that includes the following four wards: Benhall and Reddings, Warden Hill, Up Hatherley and part of Park. However, as this NCG is no longer active, the community profile provides data that is best fit to the Benhall and Reddings ward.

People and Households

Data

Data about people and households in Cheltenham is gathered at a ward level, so for the purposes of this research, the ward of Benhall and The Reddings has been used. The population of the ward is approximately 5,090 (MAIDeN mid-2013 population estimates).

Key facts

Census information (MAIDeN Neighbourhood Profiles) for the ward indicates that:

- Around 49.3% of residents are male and around 50.7% are female
- There are 27.61 persons per hectare in the ward, which means that it is in the top 35% most densely populated wards in the county.
- Some indicators related to children and young people are in the top 35%, indicating a higher level of need than average for areas such as emergency admissions of under 17s, achievement of Key Stage 2 pupils in Maths and English, and Key Stage 4 pupils' achievement in English.
- The ward ranks in the top 35% for the county in terms of disabilities experienced by its residents.
- Crime indicators show that crime levels in the ward are fairly average for Gloucestershire, although instances of criminal damage rank in the top 35%. Compared to other areas of the borough, indicators suggest that this ward experiences the lowest levels of crime in Cheltenham.
- The most critical area of need in the ward is in the areas of healthy living and older people. The number of social work and domiciliary care assessments in the ward are ranked in the top 10% for the county, with mental health assessments, use of day care services, use of independent living equipment and use of meal services all ranking in the top 35%.

Deprivation

A Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) is a geographic area designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. Each LSOA is graded based on where it falls in its score for multiple deprivation, across five divisions in the full range. Benhall and The Reddings ward is made up of three LSOAs. Of these, the two in the centre of the ward are in the highest quintile for deprivation while the other two are in the second-highest quintile. This indicates that there are generally low average

levels of deprivation for residents of the ward on the whole and that deprivation may not be a critical issue for most residents, but it does not rule out the presence of specific kinds of deprivation, or multiple deprivation in a small number of households.

Educational Achievement

The number of working-age residents of Benhall and The Reddings ward with no qualifications (15%) is roughly in line with the Cheltenham average (13%) but much lower than national averages (22%). There is a relatively high number of people with a degree-level qualification (35%), which again is in line with Cheltenham figures (36%) and is higher than regional and national figures (both 27%). Most levels of qualification between these two ends of the spectrum are roughly in line with other averages.

History and Heritage

- Benhall Wood was recorded as existing in the area as early as 1230.
- In Elizabethan times, the original Arle Court was built, but over the years it deteriorated and was eventually demolished, with its Victorian namesake being built nearby.
- The area has been a small settlement since the seventeenth century. Benhall Farm stood in the area, surrounded by mainly pastureland.
- In the mid-nineteenth century, a new Arle Court was built, its estate being part of the manor of Redgrove.
- At about the same time, the development of the Golden Valley railway line turned the area into a substantial village, with houses and smallholdings springing up.
- In the 1930s, the area was home to Dowty, and became the centre of aircraft manufacturing, with the buildings of Arle Court being adapted and expanded to accommodate the processes.
- In the 1950s and 60s, Benhall Estate was built on Benhall Farm's land.
- The Reddings was built over the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s to accommodate Cheltenham's growing population.

There are no conservation areas in the ward. Only a small number of older buildings remain, such as Arle Court, Arle Court Lodge and Redgrove Cottages, all of which are listed.

Physical Character

Much of the ward is residential, with most housing being built during the second half of the 20th century. Many streets tend to be fairly uniform, owing to the larger-scale development that occurred, rather than infill, but there is a reasonable variety of building styles, representing architecture from the 1950s through to the 1990s. Benhall consists of housing predominantly built in the 1950s and 1960s, and The Reddings was built in the 1990s.

Unlike the tight Victorian grids of more central Cheltenham areas, the street layout on both estates is looser, incorporating crescents, squares, courts, cul-de-sacs and curving road shapes. These road layouts allow for a slightly more spacious feel, as does the reasonable amount of mature greenery and open spaces such as Benhall Wood and the green space flanking Hatherley Brook, which runs through the ward.

The more modern nature of many of the houses means that nearly all homes have front gardens, which adds to the spaciousness, and abundant off-road parking takes the strain off on-street parking. Flats

tend to be three- or four-storey, and set out in squares or within lawns, again giving a more spacious feel.

Another fairly dominant feature of the ward is the commercial area off Hatherley Lane, which consists of modern buildings housing various large retail units, the Nuffield hospital, a supermarket, a hotel and Arle Court Park and Ride, which gives a public transport option for visitors coming in on the A40. Arle Court, a grand Victorian mansion, is on the edge of this commercial area and is now an event venue.

Roads, Transport and Access

Roads

The ward is bounded on three sides by busy roads: The major route of the A40 from Gloucester runs along the north-western and north-eastern borders of the ward, and Badgeworth Road, which runs between the A40 and A46 runs along the western border. Several arterial roads run through the ward: Hatherley Lane connects the A40 to the ward's residential roads and to Up Hatherley and beyond to the east, and Grovefield Way performs a similar function, but is located further out of town and is less heavily used than Hatherley Lane. Reddings Road joins Badgeworth Road with Hatherley Lane. North Road West joins Badgeworth Road with Grovefield Way. Most other roads in the area provide access for residential populations, although some minor arterial roads connect small residential streets with main routes in and around town.

Cycle ways

There are shared use footways that can be used by cyclists on portions of the A40 and along Grovefield Way. Elsewhere in the ward, cyclists must use the roads. Roads in the area have been graded by the Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Cycling Campaign as being either quiet, reasonably quiet or medium, apart from the A40, which has the highest rating for being busy and fast, and the portion of Hatherley Lane closest to the A40, which has a medium rating. A higher rating needs a higher level of skill from the cyclist.

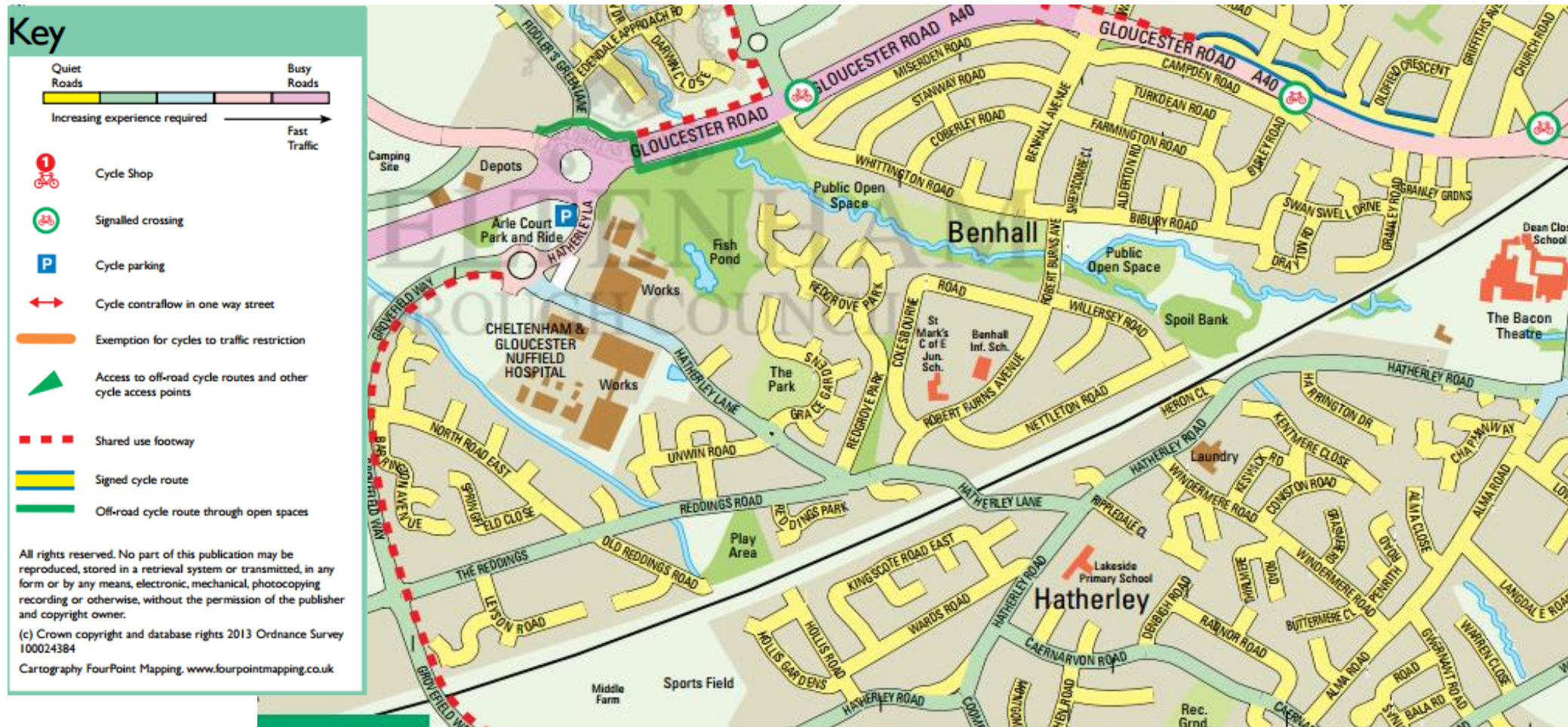
Public Transport

Cheltenham Railway Station is roughly 29 minutes' walk, or 1.5 miles, away from the geographical heart of the ward (Hatherley Lane, GL51 6PL - Google Maps). The bus station is a 2.3 mile or 46-minute walk, but some buses do go through the area, such as the J (Cheltenham – Benhall – Hatherley), K (Cheltenham – Up Hatherley), 99 (Cheltenham Racecourse – Cheltenham Hospital – Gloucestershire Hospital), 94 (Gloucester – Cheltenham), 97/98 (Gloucester – Innsworth – Churchdown – The Reddings – Cheltenham) and 511 (Arle Court Park & Ride – Cheltenham.)¹

Parking

The vast majority of houses in the area have an off-road parking option, meaning that on-road parking is relatively easy for visitors. However, parking spaces are more scarce for residents of flats. There are no council car parks in the ward. Commercial units, and neighbouring buildings such as the hospital, have their own car parks, meaning that their employment and customer parking is largely self-contained.

¹ ThinkTravel website http://www.thinktravel.info/files/uploads/Cheltenham_Bus_Map_V2.pdf



Extract from Cheltenham and Tewkesbury cycle map (<http://www.cyclecheltenham.org.uk/docs/cyclemap.pdf>)

Community Services and Facilities

Healthcare

There are no GP surgeries within the area, with Hatherley Surgery on Glebe Farm Road, and Hesters Way Healthy Living Centre on Cassin Way being the nearest. There are no dental surgeries in the ward either, with the nearest dental surgeries being Coronation Dental Practice in on Princess Elizabeth Way and 8 Libertus Road Dental Practice on Libertus Road. There is no pharmacy in the ward, and there has recently been a petition with the aim of Badhams Pharmacy coming to the area. At present, the closest pharmacy is on Windemere Road in Up Hatherley.

Libraries

The nearest library is in Up Hatherley and is roughly a 20-minute walk from the geographical centre of the ward.

Places of Worship

The area has one active place of worship: Christian City Church on Hatherley Lane. It offers some degree of community engagement and activity.

Community Spaces and Facilities

There is one dedicated community centre in the area: The Reddings Community Centre on North Road West.

Pubs can sometimes offer a community space. The ward contains one pub: The Redgrove, on Hatherley Lane. It is not known whether the pub offers any community spaces.

A recycling bank is based at Asda Superstore, near the centre of the ward.

Recreation and Leisure

There are tennis courts located just off Hatherley Lane, as well as a sports ground off Grace Gardens.

There are several playing fields in the ward, such as Redgrove Park, Humpty Dumps (with play areas for children and for young adults) and Benhall Park (with children's play area). The nearest swimming pool is Leisure @ Cheltenham on Tommy Taylor's Lane, which is 1.6 miles away, or 31 minutes' walk, from the heart of the neighbourhood area.

Green Spaces

There are a lot of green spaces in the area, including Redgrove Park, Benhall Park, Humpty Dumps and greenery along the A40 corridor and Grovefield Way. Benhall Residents' Association took part in the Local Green Spaces Study conducted in 2015, in partnership with GRCC and Cheltenham Borough Council, applying to designate (as local green space) the A40 corridor (decision pending at time of reporting). There are some allotments in the ward, of Reddings Road; the plot is a medium size, and there is a fairly long waiting list (3 years at time of writing).

Some of the green open space on the western edge of the ward forms part of Cheltenham's green belt.

Educational Facilities

The area contains two primary schools:

- Benhall Infant School (Robert Burns Avenue)
- St Marks C of E Junior School (Robert Burns Avenue)

There is no secondary school in the ward, and the nearest is Bournside School (Warden Hill Road), which is around 1.2 miles away, or a 24-minute walk from the heart of the ward. Dean Close School (independent, 3-18) is one mile away from the heart of the ward, and Chosen Hill School in Churchdown is around 3 miles away, both of which may be options for some residents.

The ward is home to several early years settings, including:

- Foxcubs Day Nursery (Old Reddings Road)
- Benhall Nursery (Robert Burns Avenue)

Economy

Employment

Benhall and The Reddings ward is fairly residential, so many residents are required to travel out of the area to get to work, although they may not have to go far. However, opportunities within the ward include the Asda superstore, Travelodge, B&Q superstore, TGI Fridays, Premier Inn and Ultra Electronics (manufacturing). GCHQ is just outside of the north-western boundary of the ward, providing specialist, professional and administrative employment. The ward is a medium-length bus ride away from central Cheltenham retail and administrative employment, with the town centre being around 2.5 miles away.

Income

The ward area is also a Middle Layer Super Output Area (MSOA), which is a small geographical area used to analyse average household income in England and Wales 2007–8. Benhall and The Reddings falls within an MSOA known as Cheltenham 010, and area that had an average weekly income of £730 at that time. This is in the second-highest quintile for income nationally.

Retail and Services

The area off Hatherley Lane provides numerous retail and service units and includes Asda Superstore, B&Q and Pets At Home, attracting local and county-wide customers. There is also a row of shops on Benhall Avenue, which includes a convenience store, takeaways, and an estate agent, and a newsagent on The Reddings. There is a post office just outside of the ward, in Up Hatherley.

Housing²

Housing Tenure – proportions

More houses are owned in the ward than the national, regional or borough averages, and mortgaged properties are more common in the ward too, although there is not such a gap. Social rentals are very low (around one third the proportion of social rentals than Cheltenham's social rent proportion overall, and around one fifth of the national average). Private rental numbers are at only half the overall Cheltenham level.

Area	Owned outright %	Owned w mortgage %	Social housing shared ownership %	Social housing rent from CBC & HAs %	Private rent %	Other %
Benhall & Reddings	45.7	39.6	0.7	2.9	9.1	2.0
Cheltenham	32.1	32.4	0.7	12.2	20.1	2.4
Gloucestershire	35.5	32.0	0.8	12.9	13.8	3.0
England	30.6	32.8	0.8	17.7	15.4	2.7

² All information in this section taken from the 2011 Census

Appendix 2: Workshop Output- November 2016

The workshop in November 2016 was organised by the Benhall Residents Association and attended by 10 Benhall residents. A SWOT analysis was completed and a high level vision produced (see main body of report). The following table contains more detail to support the aspirations and objectives.

Aspect	Aspiration	How we know this	Other points raised (e.g. potential solutions/ next steps to meet aspiration)
Community Spaces - buildings	<p>High level aspiration</p> <p>Benhall community will be supported by appropriate ‘fit for purpose’ buildings and community activity space to take the community forward for the next 60 years.</p> <p>The achievement of this aspiration requires the following objectives to be met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address the current imbalance of residential community growth and managed / supported community buildings and space • Improved / targeted local shops to serve the local community • No additional ‘land grab’ for inappropriate development (housing numbers now maxed out) • Creation of a social community meeting space for Benhall residents that is potentially aligned with the needs of the Redding’s residents (cross community considerations) 	<p>Community Profile</p> <p>Pharmacy Survey 2013</p> <p>Residents Association AGM 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To start to create and manage ‘community annual’ events to support community space aspiration • Identification of suitable location – within the local shopping area or Park. • Community wide needs assessment for a social community meetings space • Managed change is required to ensure the area is brought ‘up to date’ (health check required) so that a balance can be achieved between social / economic and the environment. • Centrally promoted and supported ‘community Hub’ to the area which will require a ‘needs assessment’ carried out to ascertain what the community would like to see.
Transportation (Getting Around)	<p>High level aspiration</p> <p>Benhall will be a safe place to cycle and walk around the community to get to shops /</p>	<p>Residents Association AGM 2016</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To redesign Robert Burns Road to a ‘one way’ only • Address parking restrictions on the roads by the park.

	<p>schools / park safely and efficiently</p> <p>The achievement of this aspiration requires the following objectives to be met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient traffic management- especially when considering any new development/ change of use applications in and around Cheltenham • Cycling routes and space • Tackling 'rat run' traffic • Tackling 'Inconsiderate parking' (specifically by the park) • Integration of public transport to growth areas in and around Cheltenham. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns that the development of West Cheltenham will negatively impact on Benhall with an increase in traffic and cars parking. • A concern that there was not been a wider view taken by CBC planning for the area in respect to the roads and pathways. Specifically up keep as well as growth in cars transiting through the area and using roads which are by the school and which have parked cars already on. Limited integrated bus transport placing more focus on use of cars to get to central and outside Cheltenham town destinations.
Community spaces – green /open spaces	<p>High level aspiration</p> <p>Maintenance and enhancement of the current provision for green spaces</p> <p>The achievement of this aspiration requires the following objectives to be met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To maximise the community usage of the Park for all age groups. • To create a wider sense of 'conservation' management within the Park land 	<p>Strong link between community spaces and increase in community involvement/ community cohesion</p> <p>Residents Association AGM 2016 & community workshop</p>	<p>Local survey / consultative activity (potentially in association with GRCC)</p> <p>Recognition that making use of the green space is what makes a community - not just space itself.</p> <p>Consideration of zoning in the Park (from Kids Zone to wildlife areas)</p>

Appendix 3: Benhall Residents Association Meeting January 2017

The meeting aimed to concentrate on Benhall's key facility – Benhall Park. The GRCC facilitated discussion led to defining a statement of aims plus a list of actions.

Benhall Vision:

Be a model of how Communities everywhere can change for the better by being healthy, safe, environmentally friendly and all-inclusive.

Long term planning focus for Benhall:

Benhall Park - Benhall has a unique asset in the form of its large Benhall Park. This was agreed as a community asset when the estate was first built and remains a focal point for many groups within the community.

Aspiration - This space has great potential at the heart of our community and we want to make sure it is not only protected as a local amenity, but is enhanced to offer greater service to more people both in Benhall and the wider Cheltenham population.

There is a recognized need for a Community Hub, in some form, as an important aspiration for community cohesion, located somewhere within our community, preferably situated reasonably centrally and easily accessible. The parks green space enables most of this to happen, though an added indoor space would be desirable. It would:

- Encourage social life and integration.
- Be a place for youth to meet.
- Provide an area for interest groups to book and use, including keeping fit.
- Provide space for other social events such as children's parties, wedding receptions etc.

Benhall Residents Association (BRA) has objectives for the Park which include:

1. It remains – forever – a community facility
2. It remains an open space
3. It develops as a space with great biodiversity (less a grass monoculture, and more a mixed green space)
4. It develops as a space for different users including:
 - a) A learning zone
 - b) A children's zone
 - c) A dog friendly zone
 - d) An exercise zone
 - e) A planting zone (might include a community vegetable garden for local children, a bee garden, a flower garden, a quiet space, a pond zone, etc.)
 - f) A nature zone

Not all zones are mutually exclusive, but we want to diversify and make good use of the space we have.

5. The Park develops as an active hub, which is recognised as a Community Hub for meeting multiple community needs, which helps us to achieve our local vision.

Next Steps / Action Plan

There are a lot of activities we need to think about to move this plan forwards. Much of it relies on the good will of the Benhall community and the buy-in from decision makers and stakeholders who can help us turn this vision into reality. Next steps include:

1. Talk with Local Planners about how we can protect the space, how to influence its future, how to make this a core outcome both for Benhall and the wider Cheltenham community and how to plan improvements without destroying the very thing we are trying to create (e.g. greater access to green space v transport to get there).
2. Consult with local residents, and in particular consider the needs of different communities of interest within the area. E.g.:
 - a) Mums with toddlers (pushchairs) and young children
 - b) Dog walkers
 - c) People who want quiet space
 - d) School(s) and school children
 - e) Young teenagers
 - f) Older folk
 - g) People wanting a space for outdoor exercise, etc.
3. Consult with exemplars. There are other local communities who have made great use of their local park (e.g. Pittville Park). There is also some great national best practice (e.g. Lottery Funded Park Projects). There is a lot to learn from other places to get us started and help us avoid early mistakes in taking this forwards.
4. To consider having a separate, dedicated group to move forward the aspirations for the Benhall Open Space (e.g. "Friends of Benhall Open Space/Park") and set up a Trust that could support added events for community benefit – might include "The Big Benhall Picnic" or "Benhall Festival" etc.
5. Look for stakeholders who can help us. Local Planners are one of these, but this might include Lottery, local sponsors, neighbouring communities who might like to 'buy-in' to the park as an asset, etc. Funding sources are key to success.
6. Consider unwanted 'knock-on' effects that we need to take account of as part of the strategic planning process. These might include:
 - a) Managing how people get to the park. If we make it very attractive, the people will come from further afield. This presents transport challenges around parking, competing road users (car versus bike versus pedestrians). Well-managed sustainable access is going to be a key aspiration,
 - b) Managing air quality
 - c) More use may destroy the very thing we are creating – how do we make zones sustainable and resilient?
 - d) How do we avoid traffic and air pollution spoiling the 'natural and quiet spaces'.
7. Consider positive knock-on effects and how to capitalise on these. For example:

- a) Will a good Park bring added patronage to support the pub, shops (we have lost our local shop recently, but have a chip shop and a Chinese take away), and potential new amenities. E.g. Many in the Benhall community would welcome a community café. Pittville Park, Sandford Park and Crickley Hill Country Park have all opened popular cafes that depend on park visitors.
- b) Can the Park serve as an asset for a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS). We know that the underpass on the A40 roundabout flooded to within inches of the roof early last year. All predications are that these events will become more severe and more frequent. Well-managed green spaces have great potential for reducing flood risk whilst providing local amenity (e.g. ponds and bog habitats).

Appendix 4: Previous Consultations and events

The community has taken advantage of opportunities to participate in consultations by the borough or county council. In its meetings it has also considered issues raised by community members. Knowledge of these responses and issues were brought to the discussions when considering Benhall's future priorities.

- Pharmacy survey -this was carried out approx. early 2013 and there was "strong local support for the potential usage and benefits a local Pharmacy would provide "In spite of this an application for a Pharmacy was rejected on the grounds that there was access to public transport and existing services were satisfactory. (AGM Address March 2015)
- Transportation - many references in the past Benhall Residents Association minutes to the traffic congestion and danger to children along Robert Burns Avenue. Also references to inconsiderate parking by sub-contractors along many of the Estate roads, both a danger by blocking views at junctions and nuisance value as roadside parking areas are filled for complete working days not allowing local residents and visitors to park easily in the community. Reference to both these problems in March 2016 AGM address.
- Reactive comments to local situations and polls at the AGM regarding important local issues e.g. A40 bus lane/footpaths/parking restrictions.