

NOTES FROM A MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 1st 2011 TO REVIEW THE ACTIONS LISTED IN THE PARISH PLAN DOCUMENT AND TO RECORD PROGRESS MADE IN IMPLEMENTING THESE ACTIONS.

This meeting was held in the Village Hall on Tuesday November 1st 2011 at 7.30pm. All the members of the Parish Plan Steering Committee and all Parish Councillors were invited to attend.

Present: Tom Pattinson, Peter Hignett, Bob Dutton, Dorothy Wilson, Roger Styring, John Wright, Judy Pattinson, Tom Wilson.

Apologies: Carol Southern.

The meeting was chaired by Tom Wilson, Parish Council Chairman.

Chairman's Opening Remarks: The meeting was opened with an explanation of the role of the Parish Council.

1. The Council's 1st priority is to respond to the basic needs of the community and to maintain the fabric and facilities of the Parish. To achieve this, the PC works closely with Northumberland County Council and with Northumberland Estates.

2. The PC's 2nd priority is to look for enrichment and development ideas which could improve the quality of life for those who live and work in the Parish.

The value of the Parish Plan is that it shows what has already been achieved and can assist the decision process on how further progress can be made. County Council Officers have copies to which they can refer when decisions about changes in the Parish must be made.

There are 68 actions listed in the Parish Plan and of those, 60 have been addressed or are being addressed.

Some of the suggested Parish Plan actions need the formation of volunteer groups of interested residents. This is mentioned where appropriate in the following charts.

The members of the PC have not worked through the Parish Plan actions as though these actions were a box-ticking set of instructions. Instead the Parish Plan has been used effectively to demonstrate the views of the community as a whole and to indicate how progress can be made.

Natural Assets	Task		
Env 1	Obtain support from local and County Councillors for the establishment of an effective "Green Belt" around the present settlements to avoid ribbon development.		New Local Development Framework document in production by NCC. Draft for consultation expected by PC before Easter 2012 giving opportunity for this.
Env 2	Lobby for the amendment of the previous District Council's policy of treating the parish as a "sustainable village centre" suitable for future development.		As Env 1.
Env 3	Produce an information document on the attractions in the Parish's salt marshes, sand dunes and beaches.		Volunteer group needed. To be highlighted in Parish Council newsletter.
Env 4	Reduction of random local noise pollution from the shooting range.		Station Commander has been contacted but he has explained that its random nature is necessary for training prior to posting to Afghanistan.
Env 5	Discuss with the operators of the Coal Yard on South View, the landowners, the Planning Authority and Network Rail with a view to re-locating the operation.		NCC already in discussions regarding this.
Env 6	Support [a] the Government's Farming Stewardship programmes. b] official initiatives to protect and enhance habitats for flora and fauna in AONB and SSSI in the Parish's salt marshes, dunes and beaches.		PC has helped and encouraged the work of the 4shores project.

Env 7	Monitor the presence and condition of native trees and hedgerows and produce a plan to restore, enhance and manage them.		PC in discussion with local farmer concerning this.
Env 8	Monitor the condition of public green spaces and produce a plan for management and planting where appropriate.		PC already active here particularly in the Pond Field community space.

History	Task		
HI 1	Consult with the County Council's Conservation Officer to help owners of Listed Buildings understand their obligations and availability of possible financial help.		Not yet addressed.
HI 2	Raising the status of certain buildings to the list of historically important structures e.g. Church Cottages in Lesbury Village.		Not yet addressed.
HI 3	Define the procedures necessary to de-list other structures of little historical or architectural importance, including the much-altered Village Hall. This would provide an opportunity to re-develop it for the general public benefit.		Not yet addressed.
HI 4	Support the efforts of the PCC and congregation of St Mary's to maintain the fabric of the Grade II* Church building and the integrity of the Closed and Open Churchyards via the Parish Newsletter.		The PC has given £400 per annum to St. Mary's Church in recent years and there have been articles about church events in the Parish Council newsletter.
HI 5	Produce an informative leaflet and location map of historic structures based on the information given in the Parish Plan.		Volunteer group needed here. (A group has already been formed to investigate publishing a booklet of walks in the Parish and 2 walks are already available on the Parish Council website.)

HI 6		Encourage and support detailed research by interested residents into all the Listed and other significant buildings and structures in the Parish, leading to the publication of a new booklet.		Volunteer group needed here.
HI 7		Provide an interpretation board near the Old Bridge, describing the history of the bridge and remnants of the ancient mill structures and mill race.		Volunteer group needed here. There have been preliminary discussions with Northumberland Estates regarding access to parts of the mill race.

Economy	Task		
E 1	encourage existing and potential new providers of bed and breakfast accommodation to co-operate in the provision of leisure activity breaks.		Little scope for this at the present time.
E 2	include details of any such offers on the suggested Information Board at the Railway Station.		Little scope for this at the present time.
E 3	Encourage local support for the Shop / Post Office and for the Coach Inn by means of articles and free advertisements in the Parish Newsletter.		The reopening of the Shop/Post Office has been the subject of a number of articles, including photographs, in the Parish Council newsletter.
E 4	Encourage and support any proposal for tourist service businesses such as a Tea Room.		Little scope for this at the present time.
E 5	Support planning applications for small-scale Commercial re-development of redundant farmstead buildings, modelled on the Hawkhill project.		To date there have been no further planning applications of this sort.

Community	.Task		
C 1	Determine if there are needs in the parish for additional Community facilities and identify sourcing of finance to fund any proposed development.		At present, no evidence of proposed activities or events which cannot find a venue.
C 2	Encourage the Village Hall Committee to assess the existing Village Hall and explore its potential for extension/improvement. Consider at this time any necessity for the creation of a new Community Centre.		New Village Hall Management Committee embarked on this.
C 3	Initiate a review of usage of existing buildings within the Parish to see how they might be developed more effectively for Community events.		At present, no evidence of proposed activities or events which cannot find a venue.
C 4	Encourage residents (young and old) or external organisations in the creation of activities for young people over 10 yrs in the parish		PC would give serious consideration to giving support to any initiative of this kind.

C 5	Assess the requirements to provide quality sports facilities for all age groups and investigate potential funding of a practical scheme.		Some facilities already exist in the Parish and in the immediate area.
C 6	obtain funding to maintain Parish Council Communication e.g., the Newsletter, Notice Boards and web site and continue to update regularly the Parish Notice boards with information that can be easily read.		Included in the PC budget each year (after initial grant).
C 7	Encourage and support with publicity existing local activity groups to increase their present scope or to develop new activities for all ages.		
C 8	Assess the potential of existing open spaces as informal play areas for “kick-around” games etc. for older children.		Cricket Club, Football club, Hipsburn School and Pond Field all offer venues for unsupervised responsible recreation.

C 9	Encourage and support any proposal to provide an informal meeting area and/or café possibly providing Internet access.		No proposals made. Post Office offers teas, coffees and biscuits.
C 10	Continue to monitor dog-fouling and similar nuisances and take action against owners where necessary.		An on-going continual problem. PC has publicised, in the PC newsletter, the work of the CC Dog Warden.
C 11	Extend the Neighbourhood Watch schemes throughout the parish.		This now operates under a new format and the PC hopes, with the help of residents and Community Police, to implement the scheme throughout the Parish.
C 12	Actively support the continuation of the County Council's mobile library service to the parish.		The county-wide service is to be reduced from 4 vehicles to 3. New timings for the mobile library to be published in the Parish Council newsletter.

C 13	Encourage and support Community efforts and events organised by Community organisations.		This can be done via the Parish Council newsletter if organisations supply the details.
C 14	Using volunteers develop a "Welcome Pack" for newcomers to the parish.		This has been put in place by a volunteer group. Welcome Packs have been delivered to all known newcomers to the Parish.
C 15	Encourage and facilitate occasional Parish-wide Events.		The Village Hall celebrates its 40 th year in 2012 and the PC will support the Village Hall Management Committee in their organising of a celebration.
C 16	Promote the existence of, and access to, the range of services for residents available within the wider area, for example, the Community transport service TINN based in Alnwick.		Already done recently for the Citizens Advice Bureau and Age Concern by Parish Notice Board postings.

C 17	Initiate the formation of a group of volunteer residents to undertake Community tasks as the need arises.	<p>Some groups already exist.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Newsletter production (ii) Newsletter distribution (iii) Hedge cutting (near to Lealands) (iv) Maintenance of shrubs near Village Car Park (v) Pond Field (vi) Village Hall Management Committee <p>but there is scope for many more, some of which are mentioned in these charts. Volunteers will be encouraged to come forward via the Parish Council newsletter.</p>
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Traffic and transport	Task		
T1	Meet with councillors and senior officials to discuss the issues of access and parking at the rail station and to request the County Legal and Highways departments and Network Rail to produce a workable, costed plan to improve the situation.		Car park completed, resulting in free parking and a possibility that it may remain free.
T2	Address the provision and control of adequate off-street car parking including the issue of Residents' Parking Permits in Hipsburn. Organise public meetings in the Parish to inform residents on progress.		Police have handed over all parking issues to NCC officials who are working on this at the present time.
T3	Discuss the implementation of the new car park with Network Rail and the authorities concerned with a more convenient controlled ground-level crossing of the tracks for use at all times by elderly and/or infirm passengers and for those with heavy luggage.		Lifts for access to the bridge already at the planning stage by Network Rail.
T4	Work with NCC and the Police for a reduction of the vehicle speed limit from 30mph to 20mph in the built-up areas (with the exception of Lesbury Road -A1068).		PC advised by NCC (meeting with Highways official 21/10/2010) that this is not proved to work except in housing estates and even 30mph is difficult to enforce.

T5	Request County Highways and the County Conservation Office to obtain Statutory Orders for the reduction of speed limits, and then to implement them.	See T4. Also see more details at the end of this transport section.
T6	Obtain local and County support to position well-designed "gateways" bearing the name of each settlement - Lesbury Village, Hipsburn and Bilton - on the roadside at the entrances to each, to give motorists a "sense of place".	The PC must bear the cost of these £1000 - £2000 each --- to be discussed by PC when expedient.
T7	Work with NCC to remove existing white-painted road centre lines in Lesbury Village and South View and introduce defined car parking bays on first one side and then the other side of the road, to reduce vehicle speeds.	More discussion and advice needed and evidence that it does work.
T8	Propose a scheme in Lesbury Road (A1068 in Hipsburn) for on-street car parking in defined bays on both sides of the road leaving the footpaths free to be returned to the original pleasant visual features of grass and trees.	To be pursued when expedient.

T9	With the County Highways Department of seek a comprehensive technical study of the road and footway problems at the S-bend beside St Mary's Church, Lesbury.	PC advised that this is not possible (meeting with Highways official 21/10/2010). There are no reports of accidents in this section of road and in fact the difficult bend slows the traffic down.
T10	With NCC Highways department review the present variable standard of street lighting throughout the parish. This should cover the types of lamps and look to ascertain if some can be switched off after midnight to reduce cost and light pollution.	Ongoing. Regulations determine the design of lamp according to whether the road is a highway or not. Midnight switch off - more advice needed as to safety aspects. Light pollution - names of two interested residents passed to NCC Area Rep.
T11	Monitor the problem of road drainage on roads in the parish, particularly where flooding occurs from overflowing field drains, and lobby the County Council Highways Department to take appropriate action.	Ongoing - this is one of the major problems in the Parish. Drain clearing has been requested.
T12	Monitor the extent of road surface deterioration in the parish and lobby NCC Highways Department to improve their current haphazard "drop and slap" treatment of potholes.	Photos taken and sent to NCC. Much resurfacing already done including Longhoughton Road. South View and Hipsburn Roundabout to be done in the near future.

T13	Monitor the sections of road where outgrowing hedges at bends can cause dangerous loss of driver sightlines, and ask the Highways Department to manage the hedges in good time at these locations.	Photos taken. Explanation of responsibilities and action that can be taken will be highlighted in a future newsletter.
T14	Obtain County Councillor support for NCC to provide a paved footway from The Coppice to the Lesbury Bridge on the east side of the A1068.	Impossible because of the position of the substation near the entrance to The Coppice and it has been pointed out that there is already a path on the other side of the road.
T15	Review with County Councillors and landowners (primarily Northumberland Estates) on the practicalities of providing a footway / cycle track alongside the A1068 from the new bridge at Lesbury to Hawkhill.	Very difficult because of the railway viaduct. Sustrans are considering a cyclepath along the old Alnmouth - Alnwick railway line and if a safe river crossing at Greenrigg could be provided this could provide a cycle route to Hawkhill. The PC would fully support this.
T16	With local and County Councillor support ask NCC to provide a high-visibility pedestrian crossing of the A1068 just north of the Hipsburn roundabout to link South View to the Alnmouth road, mainly for the benefit of children walking to school.	Inadvisable (meeting with County Official 21/10/2010) because of existing island and drives at entrances to houses. No evidence of any accidents or injuries to those crossing.

T17	Seek local and County Councillor support to provide wheel-chair and child push-chair ramps at each end of the footbridge linking Steppey Lane to Lesbury Village.		Too expensive at this time.
T18	Discuss with the County Council the removal of "National Cycle Route" signs from roads in the parish to improve safety for cyclists and vehicle drivers.		Some already removed - ongoing.
T19	Take a policy decision to oppose any proposal that could affect permanently the public use of the track bed of the abandoned Alnwick Branch railway line.		Decision already taken.
T20	Discuss with both the owner (Northumberland Estates) of the narrow strip of land beside the river and the present owner of the adjoining fields, to explore the possibility of opening a public footpath linking the Steppey Lane footbridge to the old A1068 road bridge.		This land believed to be now in private ownership.

T21	Work with the County Council, Natural England and the Community to institute the legal and practical steps to develop the path, if it proves feasible.	See T20.
	The PC has requested the police to take a number of steps to try to reduce the heavy traffic/speeding problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) letter expressing concerns on speeding trucks sent to manager of Tarmac from police inspector.(ii) speed education/indicator board at Meadowlands.(iii) increased police presence in the Parish.(iv) speed monitoring strips to be laid to build up statistical evidence of traffic flow and speeding.

Housing	Task		
H 1	Confirm to the Unitary Authority the general support by the PC for the provision of more affordable housing in the Parish using small pockets of land available within the existing settlement envelopes.		As in the past, the PC will look critically at any planning application.
H 2	Press for a re-assessment of the current method of control and allocation of affordable housing, to ensure local representation in the decision-making process.		PC feels that it must NOT interfere here.
H 3	Obtain local and County Councillor support for the separation of Lesbury Parish from Alnmouth Parish in the “sustainable village centres” Housing Allocation Policy shown in the Alnwick District Council Core Strategy document.		New NCC Core Strategy consultation document expected soon. PC will then move forward on this. The 2 parishes are very different and have very different needs and should not be banded together.

H 4	Ensure that the housing allocation table is adjusted accordingly by the new Planning Authority in its forthcoming review of the Strategy.		New NCC Core Strategy consultation document expected soon. PC will then move forward on this. The 2 parishes are very different and have very different needs and should not be banded together.
H 5	Press for a weekly, rather than fortnightly service collection of household refuse from the green bins.		A national issue. It was agreed that our refuse collectors offer an excellent service in spite of the constraints imposed by fortnightly collections.
H 6	Work with the electricity suppliers to persuade them to reduce the power cuts that plague the parish at present.		No recent complaints.
H 7	Lead a vigorous campaign to induce the Post Office to improve its delivery and collection services in the parish.		A national problem.

H 8	Support the control of the quality of housing design within the Conservation Area but adopt a flexible approach to designs of new housing and alterations to existing houses elsewhere.		This is already happening.
H 9	Oppose any proposals from the Unitary Authority, if it seeks to impose additional housing allocation outside the existing village boundaries, unless it brings significant additional public benefit.		As in the past, the PC will look critically at any planning application.
H 10	Monitor broadband provision in the parish and support any campaign to improve the existing, painfully slow service in this area.		NCC trying to achieve this. Cost £7million +fund matching from NCC. Would result in 90% of the county getting superfast broadband - not necessarily fibre optic.