

Bourton
Village Plan
2008

1. WHAT CAN A VILLAGE PLAN DO FOR BOURTON?

The Bourton Village Plan 2008 will be important in so many areas of village life over the next decade. Based on the views of local people from the 2007 household survey, the Village Plan sets out aspirations for our village, its services, facilities and environment. Priorities are listed within an Action Plan included to deliver results. Achievements will be monitored and reported.

2. INTRODUCTION

Bourton Parish Council has sponsored the preparation of this update of the original Village Plan adopted in 2004.

To establish the interest of the community in the creation of a new Village Plan, a stall was set up and manned at the Village Roadshow in July 2006. The benefits of a new plan together with information on issues that could be addressed were set out and explained. A positive and encouraging response resulted and 46 completed questionnaires were received and analysed. This was reported to the Parish Council, who decided to set up a steering group to undertake a household survey and the preparation of a new village plan.

The Parish Council approved a constitution for the steering group, and nominated a chairman, a further 12 village residents became members of the steering group; over time there were two resignations and an additional member was co-opted.

Considerable encouragement, support and advice has been provided by Kevin Morris of North Dorset District Council, Simon Thomson of Dorset Community Action and Susi Calder from Three Rivers Partnership.

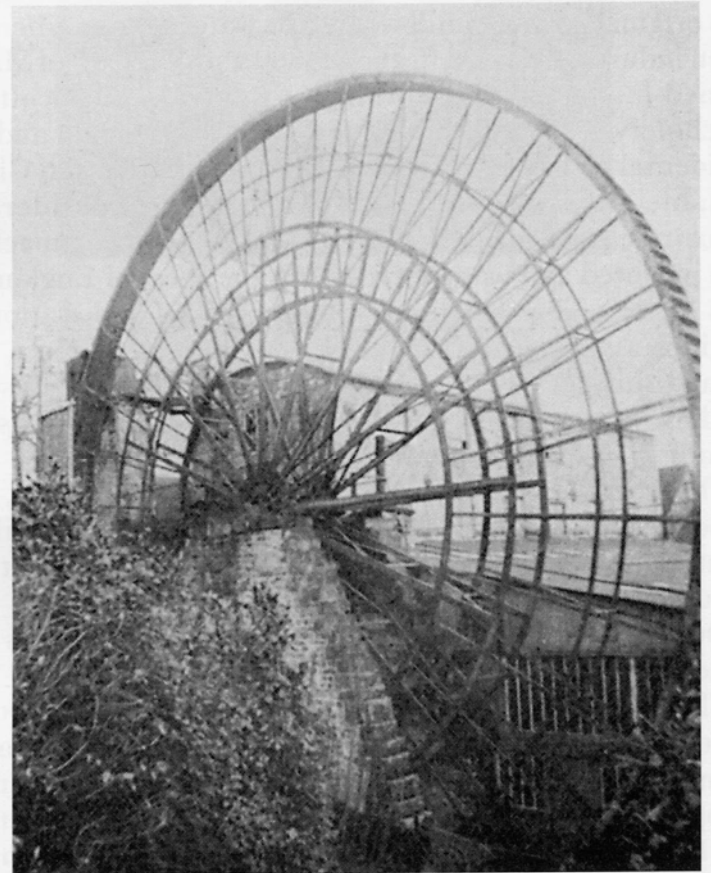
It had originally been hoped to complete the Village Plan by the end of 2007, however, towards the end of that year it was decided to undertake a further survey relating specifically to the then proposed development of Bourton Mill. This inevitably resulted in slippage to the programme.

3. BOURTON HISTORY AND BOURTON TODAY

Bourton is the most northerly village in Dorset. It nestles in a corner made by the boundaries of Wiltshire and Somerset and is today separated from the rest of Dorset by the dual carriageway of the A303.

The village largely lies on either side of the former trunk road from London to Exeter. There is a small hamlet at West Bourton whilst Chaffeymoor is on the north western edge of the parish. Egbert's Stone near Bullpits marks the historic meeting place of the Saxon Witan.

Situated on the edge of the Blackmoor Vale, Bourton is surrounded by farmland, mainly devoted to milk production. However the river Stour runs south through the village and in the 1800s enabled the establishment of a thriving flax industry. When that failed in the 1880s, the river provided the motive power for an engineering foundry (Messrs. E. S. Hindley and Sons) via what was said to be the second largest waterwheel in England. The foundry at Bourton Mill was at its peak during the First World War when it made Mills bombs and torpedo parts but was forced to close as a result of the depression which followed. Subsequently the factory premises were used for the processing of milk products; this continued under a succession of owners until 2000 subsequently the site was sold, it is currently owned by a developer and is derelict.



Big Wheel, Bourton Foundry

Road names such as Tan Lane and Brickyard Lane give clues to other industries which were once important activities in the village.

Until 1992 the main road through the village was the A303 and the heavy traffic was noisy and dangerous to the detriment of village life. However since the by-pass was opened the village is much quieter, to the benefit of the community. A considerable degree of infill development has subsequently occurred .

The village is well furnished with much used facilities, having a Church, Primary School, general store, filling station and shop, Post Office, Doctor's surgery, pub and even a golf course.

4. THE VILLAGE SURVEY

The steering group, first met in September 2006 when it decided to address matters relating to the village environment, roads and transport, the welfare of the young and old, recreational and leisure activities and also planning. Subgroups were set up to give consideration to each of these topics, and to report back to the steering group. The views of the individual subgroups on the various topics were debated and draft lists of questions were produced, these were further refined and included within a questionnaire.

A public meeting was held on 26th February 2007 to explain the process for creating the new plan and to launch the household survey. The questionnaire was hand delivered to each of the three hundred and forty five households in the village by a team of volunteers, who also called back at each property to collect the completed survey documents thus providing the views of the village on almost 100 key questions. Supplemental questionnaires were also issued to obtain the views of the young people of the village and of the elderly and retired. The hand delivery and collection arrangements by volunteers proved most successful with a result that some 301 completed questionnaires were collected – 90 % of those delivered.

On 26th June 2007, a public meeting was called, in order that the results from the survey could be shared with the village. The meeting was attended by some 90 people. Whilst noting that it would take many months to complete the detailed analysis of the results and to prepare the draft plan, the meeting, on a show of hands, indicated near unanimous support for the proposal to promote action in respect of six points in advance of the formal adoption of a Village Plan. These were:-

1. To seek a 20 mph speed limit on all roads around St George's School –i.e. Main Road, Church Track and West Bourton Road.
2. To seek the early re-surfacing of the A 303
3. The retention of a Settlement Boundary
4. A Village Design Statement to be drafted
5. Village Communications to be improved
6. To undertake a feasibility study for a new village hall.

The Parish Council subsequently endorsed these preliminary actions.

5. ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES

With 92 prime questions, many with five or more sub-questions, the individual number of pieces of information to be processed from the 301 respondents was in excess of 100,000. The mammoth task of entering all of the data was undertaken by members of the steering group who also listed each of the numerous written comments made by local residents. Information from the two supplemental questionnaires was also entered.

Having entered the responses to individual questions and comments into a master database, the individual subgroups of the steering group were provided with extracts, covering their area of interest. These were debated within the steering group and a consensus reached regarding the significance of information and comments, this in turn led to the production in the autumn of 2007 of a series of considered reports containing recommendations for action. Subsequently the information from the Bourton Mill questionnaire was analysed and reported to the Parish Council.

6. ADOPTION OF THE BOURTON VILLAGE PLAN

Following approval from the Parish Council to the Draft Village Plan produced by the Steering Group, public consultation was undertaken during August 2008. The consultation was publicised in the local press and in the Parish Magazine, residents were invited to view and comment on the draft plan at the Village Hall, more than 60 residents attended these exhibitions. The plan was also placed on the Parish Council web site. Written comments were received from 13 members of the public. A list of other consultees including adjoining parish councils and village groups is given at Appendix 4.

The draft Village Plan was positively received during the public consultation and changes have been made to reflect comments. In November 2008, following approval by North Dorset District Council, the Bourton Village Plan was adopted by the Parish Council.

7. OVERVIEW OF INFORMATION

The survey returns from 301 households recorded a total of 676 residents. Of these, 15% were of school age, 52% between the ages of 18 and 60 with 30% aged 60 or over.

Those residents working amounted to 45% and the retired represent 30% of the respondents, 22% of the households have been in the village for over 25 years, 16% between 25 and 16 years, 53% between 16 and 1 year and almost 10% for less than one year

Owner occupied homes amount to 82% of the households returning information, 16% of homes are rented.

Vehicle ownership averaged 1.65 per household with over 50% needing to use their cars for transport to work.

A total of 32 residents, 10% of the working population, work from home.

50 people also put forward their names as volunteers for various initiatives and activities.

8. TOPICS

8.1 Environment

There was a good response to the environmental questions in the survey, showing both interest in enhancing the village and also concern over a range of issues.

8.1.1 Main Road

The softening of the appearance of the former trunk road through the village should be considered together with the planting of bulbs and trees to enhance the main road and approaches the village, this has 83% support. Creating landscaped “gateway” entrances to the village at each approach on Main Road would create a feeling of identity.

8.1.2 Nature Reserve

Some 64% of respondents gave their support to the suggestion that a nature reserve might be provided within the village and there was a similar level of backing for land being purchased for the benefit of the village.

8.1.3 Footpaths and bridleway

Undoubtedly one of the benefits of living in Bourton is access to very pleasant countryside via the many footpaths and bridleways. The village should continue to work through the Parish Council with the local landowners and farmers to maintain and develop this access and also to achieve the maintenance and repair of gates and stiles, the clearing of brambles, overhanging branches and other obstructions.

8.1.4 Informational Map

With 75% support, there was significant interest shown in the provision of an informational map of the local area. This could provide details of footpaths, bridleways and local places of interest.

8.1.5 Village Walks

There is interest from 40% of respondents in Bourton for village walks.

8.1.6 A303 Traffic Noise

Disturbance caused by the noise from the A303 was reported by 49% of respondents. The level of noise varies with wind direction, weather, humidity and traffic volumes.

Resurfacing of the Bourton Bypass, opened in 1992, is much overdue and the Parish Council has been informed that when resurfacing does take place the latest noise reducing material will be used, similar to that laid on Mere bypass where there has been a clear and much appreciated environmental improvement as a result. The case for the resurfacing of the road is assessed annually, unfortunately, at this time, the Highways Agency has no budget for resurfacing works on this section of the A 303.

8.1.7 Waste collection and Recycling

Whilst almost 50% of respondents were satisfied with the current collection system, those who were dissatisfied were only marginally fewer in number.

8.1.8 Sustainability

Some 61% of respondents, supported renewable power projects as a general principal. In response to further questions, 60% indicated support for a hydro-electric

scheme at Bourton Mill whilst those supporting individual wind power and wind farms amounted to 28% and 18% respectively.

It should be noted that the responses on wind power and wind farms were given in spring 2007, before the recent publicity regarding a possible wind farm scheme at Silton

8.1.9 Heating Fuels

Support for the bulk buying of heating fuels was recorded by 33% of respondents. This degree of interest indicates the potential for achieving savings. Recent price increases in heating fuels will provide an additional stimulus to establish volunteer groups to investigate the possibilities of the bulk purchase of both heating oil and LPG.

8.1.10 Litter and pollution

58% of respondents considered that there were problems with litter and dog fouling . 84% thought that the laws on littering, dog fouling and on fly tipping should be more strictly enforced. Comments have been received that existing bins are not well placed. 31 people volunteered for a village litter pick.

8.1.11 Road, pavement and verge maintenance

The questionnaire responses show that there is a need for a more rigorous programme of inspection and maintenance of pavements and verges to bring the dissatisfaction level down. Comments were received on the impact of vehicle parking on a regular basis along Main Road. The issue of overhanging hedges, cracked pavements and litter (including plant debris) were all identified as being very high on the list of concerns.

8.1.12 Pollution and Flooding

A significant minority of households recorded problems with pollution (20%), problems arising from surface water (19%) and storm drains (11%).

8.2 Transport Matters

8.2.1 Traffic Speed

The speed of traffic through the village and on the side roads was an issue for many respondents.

Enforcement of the speed limit of 40 mph on Main Road had the support of two thirds of the respondents. Other opportunities for reducing speed on Main Road should also be investigated, together with the enhancement proposals suggested by the environmental subgroup. The possibility of introducing dedicated parking areas along sections of Main Road could assist in reducing speed and also remove parking from verges.

Following an approach from BPC to the Highway Authority after the June 2007 Public Meeting, preliminary speed checks were carried out; one site for a Speed

Indicator Device has been identified. Three quarters of the respondents considered that the speed limit on side roads should be 30 mph and those in the immediate locality of the school should be 20 mph. Initial efforts by BPC to achieve action has been rebuffed by DCC.

8.2.2 School Parking and Signage

Concerns have also been expressed over the parking of cars in West Bourton Road, particularly in the vicinity of the school. The introduction of additional road markings and signs should be investigated in order to improve safety at the drop-off and collection times. The lack of street lighting and road signage generally in this area was also raised.

8.2.3 Public Transport

Given the low level of public transport service available to and from the village it is not surprising that the overwhelming majority of householders are dependent upon the motorcar for their essential journeys to work, for hospital and dental appointments and to visit the surrounding local towns.

8.2.4 Bus Services

There is a general lack of understanding of the availability and timing of the limited bus services: information could usefully be provided within a village newsletter, or in the parish magazine, and perhaps through a village website. It was felt that the Parish Council should seek to press for improved bus services to enable local residents to commute to work in adjoining towns. Information on access to free or subsidised bus services should be publicised.

8.2.5 Developer Contributions

Contributions from developers towards identified highway improvement initiatives and to subsidise or improve local transport services should be sought through the planning system.

8.3 Village wellbeing and welfare

This section seeks to see what could be done to sustain and to improve village facilities and to promote the continuing wellbeing and safety of the Community.

8.3.1 Services, facilities and communications

Bourton is fortunate to have a good range of local services, these are much appreciated, and well supported by the local population. Good communication of the availability of all services and support is essential to provide access to all. Some information on services, organisations and events is provided through the Upper Stour Parish Magazine, it is limited in content and not accessed by all.

The village shop, post office, petrol station and garage shop are shown by the survey to be well used facilities. A post office in the village was considered essential by 91% of respondents.

St George's Church has regular monthly services and is valued by the community with 63% of respondents indicating a willingness to contribute towards its upkeep.

The White Lion public house was, at the time of the 2007 survey, going through a difficult period; however, now under new management it is, once again, providing a valuable contribution to village life.



St George's First School is thriving with almost 90 pupils on the register at the end of 2007, the Local Education Authority has set the capacity of the school at 117. It provides not only for the needs of the village but also draws pupils from the wider rural catchment area.

Bourton also has a well established and much appreciated pre-school Play Group based in the village hall. In the

autumn of 2007, Hollyfields School, teaching children between the ages of 4 and 9, relocated from Mere to West Bourton.

8.3.2 Medical services

The results of the survey showed that the majority of people are content with the medical services available to them. However, 65% of respondents wished to have access to physiotherapy and chiropody clinics in the community. The planned enlargement of Silton surgery will provide additional medical support and benefits for local people.

93% of respondents use a private motorcar to attend hospital appointments; 4% rely upon hospital transport with mixed opinions on satisfaction, with some finding the experience stressful.

8.3.3 Minority and special needs

Just under 6% of the households responding consider that they are part of a minority group and 55% of these consider that the group's needs are not being met. 8% of households responding reported a member of the household with special needs and 37% of these consider that those needs are not being dealt with adequately.

8.3.4 Schools

The village school, St George's First School, is flourishing and, together with the Play Group in the village hall, provides a valuable start to education for village children. The school has offered to provide occasional activities for the elderly and it is wishing to increase its direct involvement with the community

8.3.5 Library

The mobile library visits the village weekly, but is little used. A review of stopping places, together with more information on the service would improve usage. It is clearly an important facility for the current users and could attract more borrowers.

8.3.6 Policing

The survey of households indicated that the majority (78%) felt that the policing presence in the village was too low; local policing in Bourton is provided by a community beat officer with support from Gillingham. There is an active Homewatch community service in Bourton.

8.3.7 Volunteers

50 local residents put their names forward as volunteers for a variety of activities including planting, litter clearing, provision of transport, work with teenagers, a 55+ club, visiting the elderly and arranging local walks

8.3.8 The elderly & retired

56% of respondents considered that there is need for more support and services for the elderly; with social activities and an Afternoon Club with volunteer support, being the most frequently mentioned requirements; these needs were endorsed in the supplementary survey of older residents.

The recent closing down of the Bourton and Zeals Welcome Club has further reduced social contact for the elderly. The holding of a meeting of potential helpers and volunteers may lead to useful initiatives.

8.3.9 The young

The supplementary survey of young people showed that there is great need for recreational activity and facilities for them. Apart from a play area for children aged up to ten, there is no provision for the young people of the village. This is a problem common to most small villages.

8.4 Recreation and Leisure

8.4.1 The Village Hall

The Village Hall, built in the 1970s serves not only Bourton but also the wider community as it larger than those in neighbouring villages and can thus meet needs that otherwise could not be serviced locally. It is clear from the responses to the questionnaire that the village hall is a much used facility despite the limitations of the present building.

The existing building is of a concrete frame construction with asbestos cement cladding externally. It has been surveyed and is considered to have a limited life. Energy consumption is high and heat loss from the building is considerable. Other problems identified within the responses to the questionnaire included lack of parking, difficulty of access, particularly for the disabled, inadequate toilet and kitchen facilities.

Some 68% of respondents recorded that they attend events in the Village Hall. This does not take into account people from the surrounding area who come to functions or who book the Hall, it being one of the largest venues in the locality.

The Hall is hired for children's parties, bingo nights, quiz nights, funeral teas etc. but households indicated that they are reluctant to rent it for larger parties and wedding receptions in its current state and on its present site. The Committee Room is hired for meetings of small groups but is only available out of Playgroup hours and often is unsuitable to potential hirers if the Hall itself is in use because of the lack of soundproofing.

98% of those responding to the question think the Village Hall needs improving, indicating that they would like to see better facilities, a more attractive structure, designated spaces for different activities, adequate parking and easy access to the Hall. The Village Hall Management Committee has taken professional advice on the possibility of remaining on the current site and upgrading the existing hall building. This is not considered feasible given the constraints of the site and the nature of the construction of the hall.

A preliminary report, in respect of the village hall was made to the public meeting in June 2007. There was overwhelming support for a feasibility study for a new village hall to be built on a convenient and accessible site; the Parish Council subsequently resolved to support this initiative.

The Village Hall Management Committee has given careful consideration to its position, has set up a Steering group to consider options and has approval from the Charity Commissioners to undertake a feasibility study for a new hall.

8.4.2 Activities

Amongst the indoor activities local people would like to see continued or introduced are:- Bowls Club, Garden Club, Monthly Lunches, Keep Fit, Scottish Dancing, Plays, Films, Concerts, Cultural Talks and Lectures, Bingo, Over 60's Club and Quiz Nights. Adult Education Classes for computing, languages and Arts and Crafts were also requested.

Age Concern has visited the hall and their local representative outlined exercise activities for the over 50s which they can assist with. They could also help with the setting up a monthly Chiropody Clinic in the Hall

Sports and recreational needs identified in the survey include:-

An outside play area for the Playgroup, which is an Ofsted requirement.

A green field recreation area for the older children and teenagers to play football, cricket etc.

An all weather surface play area with equipment.

A tennis court.

A sheltered sitting out area for the elderly in particular.

A barbeque and family picnic area.

An undercover sports area.

Somewhere safe for teenagers to meet.

Many of the recreational and leisure aspirations of those who replied to the questionnaire can be achieved if the Village Hall Management Committee is able to secure a suitable site with easy access and enough land for recreational purposes.

8.4.3 Funding for the new hall

A designated fund raising account has been set up and all money raised from Artsreach, Moviola, Scottish Dancing, and the Stour Valley Dining Club, as well as money from other one off events will be invested in the New Village Hall Account and it is planned to launch a fund raising appeal when a site has been identified. The feasibility study is ongoing.

The responses to the survey also showed that 89% of those who replied would like to see any developer contributions from any further development approved within the village being spent in the village and 80% of those would like to see funds specifically going towards a new village hall with adjacent leisure facilities.

8.4.5 Village History

The survey responses indicated considerable interest in the history of Bourton and in volunteering to assist in a village history project. Offers of participation and/or leadership of such a project should be sought. Some 10% of respondents indicated that they had historical record information, it may well be that many others have photographs and other useful material.

8.5 Planning Matters

8.5.1 Conservation Areas

Conservation Areas are intended to protect both the built and the natural heritage. Alterations, extensions and new buildings must respect the setting and require prior approval through Conservation Area Consents.

Trees are also protected within a Conservation Area. The Steering Group notes the views of respondents and agrees that there are small groups of buildings and areas of the village worthy of Conservation Area status.

The survey results on the creation of conservation areas in the village show 44% respondents in favour with 9% opposed. A total of 61 suggestions were made for areas to be considered. These ranged from small groups of buildings to the entire village and will need be taken into account in the formulation of proposals.

8.5.2 Village Design Statement

A Village Design Statement is intended to define the development criteria for a village, dealing with scale, siting, design approach, construction materials etc.. Following adoption by the Local Planning Authority it becomes an element of the local planning documentation and therefore can be helpful to promoters and to the community in approaching development proposals for both new buildings and also alterations and extensions to existing buildings.

Some 73.3% of respondents were in favour of the production of a Village Design Statement, this was reported to the June 2007 Public Meeting and received the support of the public. This was subsequently endorsed by Bourton Parish Council. In turn, North Dorset District Council has formally agreed that Bourton can begin the drafting of a Village Design Statement. The Parish Council has agreed to set up a team to undertake this task following completion of the Village Plan adoption process.

8.5.3 Financial Contributions from Developers

These are contributions sought by planning and highway authorities from developers in support of local infrastructure. No suitable projects for the village having been previously identified by the Parish Council, those contributions emanating from recent developments in Bourton have generally been allocated to projects in Gillingham on the understanding that these also benefit the surrounding villages. However, 89% households want to see such contributions used within the village, a clear majority of these (80%) think that the Village Hall should be the principal beneficiary.

42 households made suggestions on how contributions might be used, these have also been considered by the Steering Group.

8.5.4 Employment

Support for local employment from 73% households was indicated in the survey responses. The most favoured types of employment, with between 64% and 75% support, were horticulture, agriculture, craft workshops and rural industry.

These preferences clearly reflect the village's rural situation in spite of its industrial past. Office work and information technology received support at a level of over 40%.

There were 48 responses to the question "How to encourage employers to the village?" They included providing tax breaks, providing financial incentives through grant funding and providing light industrial units ready for occupation. There were suggestions that the Mill area would lend itself to rural and craft businesses.

8.5.5 Housing

8.5.5.1 Housing Needs

6% respondents indicated in the survey that within the next five years they are likely to need alternative accommodation in the village, whilst a further 16% will possibly need alternative accommodation in the village. There were 19 written comments which mainly indicated a need for affordable starter homes consisting of limited (2 to 3 bedrooms) but spacious accommodation. The provision of truly affordable accommodation for local people is seen as a priority.

8.5.5.2 Type of housing required

The overwhelming need recorded from 70% respondents is for small family homes, homes for the single and elderly were each supported by 32%. The results and comments emphasise the need for affordable starter homes, whilst some 20% insist that there should be no more building.

It is clear that the majority of households want to see housing development directed mainly for small family homes followed by homes for the disabled, elderly and single people. It should be noted that the latter three classes often overlap.

8.5.5.3 Residential development

To the simple question "Do you think that there should be any new residential development?" 44% respondents were against any further residential development, with 43% for and 13% with no opinion. The outcome of this question is not conclusive and therefore it has been carefully addressed in the light of the answers to other questions regarding limited development.

8.5.5.4 Size of developments

The comments resulting from this question are extremely wide ranging. Principal concerns expressed were:-

The village cannot sustain large developments.

The village must grow, but not unreasonably.

Small developments must be done sensitively.

There is a need for affordable starter homes to accommodate growing families that want to stay in the village.

There are already too many houses in the village.

The preference of 60% of households responding on the size of future developments is for schemes of less than 7 houses and this would certainly help to retain the village atmosphere.

8.5.5.5 Where to site housing development

48% propose brown field sites, 35% propose new sites within defined village boundaries and 6% think it should be allowed anywhere.

8.5.5.6 Use of redundant farm buildings

The question asked if farmers should be encouraged to convert such buildings. The majority support was for change of use to small craft workshops (65%) or for conversion for affordable housing (72%).

8.5.5.7 Meeting the needs of local people

A clear majority, 84%, responded Yes to the question “Should residential development be targeted at the needs of local people”.

8.5.5.8 Who should build new developments?

Housing Associations develop and manage affordable housing which is offered for rent or shared ownership to those on the District Council’s housing list. Housing Trusts are charities that also provide rented or shared ownership housing but which is specifically reserved on a permanent basis for local people. Again comments were wide ranging.

Housing Trusts are preferred by 53% households for the provision of homes for renting by local people, and by 32% for shared ownership, again restricted to local people. Housing Associations received support from 34% respondents for houses to rent and 32% for shared ownership.

Individuals and small developers secured some support but large developers are demonstrably not popular!

8.5.5.9 Housing – Conclusions

With at least 15 households reporting a need for additional accommodation in Bourton in the next 5 years there is, therefore, a requirement for further limited, development.

Developments of up to 6 houses, to meet the needs of local people are supported and should consist mainly of small family homes, some designed for disabled, elderly and single people. The preferences expressed for the providers of new homes are Housing Trusts, Housing Associations, small private developers and individuals in that order.

8.6 Bourton Mill - The supplementary questionnaire, December 2007

At the time that the main questionnaire was being prepared and distributed it was thought that the future of the Mill site had been determined following a successful appeal by the developer. There appeared, therefore, in Spring 2007 to be no merit in including questions on that subject. However North Dorset District Council subsequently launched a High Court Challenge which resulted in the appeal decision being quashed. The case was then resubmitted to appeal for the second time. Since that new appeal would have provided the village an opportunity to comment on the proposals, a supplementary questionnaire relating to the Mill site was distributed to each household in December 2007. However, in May 2008, the latest appeal was withdrawn and the site owners subsequently requested informal consultations with the Parish Council.

From 345 questionnaires distributed by hand a total of 166 responses were received, a reasonable success rate of 48.1%, given the pressure of time, each household received stamped and addressed envelopes for the return of the questionnaires.

8.6.1 The Planning Appeal Process

Concerns were expressed by 94% who wished the new appeal to be dealt with by a Public Inquiry held locally and not through accept the Written Representations procedure proposed by the appellant. Furthermore, 70% objected to the involvement of the original Inspector in the new appeal. Strong representations by the public, the Parish Council, North Dorset District Council and the Member of Parliament, supported by the results of the survey, resulted in the appointment of a new Inspector for a Public Inquiry (now abandoned by the developer).

8.6.2 Health & Safety

96% of those who responded consider the mill in its present condition, to be a Health and Safety hazard and 98% would like NDCC and/or the Health & Safety Executive to take enforcement action, requiring the owners to deal with Health and Safety issues. Bourton Parish Council has over many years endeavoured to persuade the landowner to adequately secure the site and has also sought advice and action from NDCC in this respect. There can be no doubt that the Bourton Mill site is unsafe and urgent action is needed to remedy this situation,

8.6.3 The dam and flood alleviation

93% would like the Environment Agency to review the proposals for dam repairs and flood alleviation proposals and 70% want a public consultation regarding proposed flood safety works to the existing dam and waterways including repairs, improvements and long term maintenance.

8.6.4 The site

95% wish to see the currently defined "Important Open or Wooded Area" (IOWA) protected from development and 54% believe that the historic buildings on the site should be retained and restored.

8.6.5 Traffic

87% do not believe that Bridge Street, Mill Lane and the junction of Bridge Street with the Main Road will be capable of safely absorbing the increased vehicular traffic resulting from the new development. 86% consider that there is a need to provide a foot/cycle path along Bridge Street. 86% believe that the County Council should be asked to reconsider its position of non-objection in respect of highway and road safety issues.

8.6.6 Development

73% would, in principle, accept development on the Mill site west of Factory Hill. 50% would accept development on the allocated housing site to the east of Factory Hill but 86% do not want development on the "Important Open or Wooded Area". Only 17% supported development on all three areas.

79% would support a hydro-electric generating scheme as part of any development at the Mill.

Of those who support some development in principle:

Only 2% would support a development of 40+ houses but 89% were against; 12% would support a development of 30 - 40 houses but 80% were against; 43% would support a development of 20 - 30 houses but 50% were against; 60% would support a development of 10 - 20 houses but 32% were against; 51% would support a development of less than 10 house but 37% were against.

It is concluded that the weight of village opinion is against a development of more than 20 houses at Bourton Mill.

8.6.7 Affordable Housing

Current N.D.C.C. housing policy is to require up to 20% of affordable housing on residential sites.

59% supported the NDDC policy whilst 47% considered that the number of affordable housing could be adjusted to reflect the developer's costs arising from dealing with contamination and flood works.

8.6.8 Financial contributions

90% wish any developer contributions from development at Bourton Mill to be used for the provision of community facilities in Bourton and 93% agreed that such contributions should be directed to projects supported by the Parish Council through public consultation.

8.6.9 Bourton Mill - Conclusion

It is considered by the Steering Group that the results of the supplementary questionnaire are of material importance, particularly in any consideration by the Parish and District Councils of new proposals for the development of Bourton Mill.

9. THE ACTION PLAN FOR BOURTON

9.1 The Action Plan

To deliver the improvements and benefits that are sought by the community as identified from the survey an Action Plan has been prepared. This, at Appendix 1, lists summary of issues, proposed actions, timescale and responsibilities. It should be noted that there is overlap on a number of the actions listed with current initiatives being promoted by the Parish Council for which the Action Plan provides an endorsement from the community.

A supplemental list of issues that were raised through the surveys but have not been included in the Action Plan is attached at Appendix 2. The Steering Group considers that it is important not to overlook these matters and includes them in this further appendix with a view to the Parish Council taking action where and when considered appropriate.

9.2 Monitoring Proposals

It is proposed that the Clerk should review and report to the Parish Council all actions on a six monthly basis and also to report to the community on progress at the Annual Parish Meeting. This will provide members of the public the opportunity of examining progress achieved on the Action Plan and of discussing any issues that arise.

Adopted by Bourton Parish Council on 24th November 2008

The Action Plan

Issue	Action	Responsibility/ Or Lead	Support	Time Scale	Priority
Environment					
1. Main Road	Approach DCC regarding preparation of a scheme for enhancement with roadside planting and to include dedicated parking areas and works to restore verges within the public highway	BPC	DCC Volunteers	2 – 3 years	Medium
2. Informational Map	Allocate funds for a pictorial and informational map showing walks within the parish and adjoining areas	BPC		2 – 3 years	Medium
3. A303 Resurfacing	Seek assessment of the technical case for resurfacing and liaise with adjoining Parish Councils and, with support from their local Members of Parliament, maintain pressure on the Highways Agency to achieve early resurfacing.	BPC	DCC MP	2008/9 and ongoing	High
4. Sustainability	Advise NDDC and the site owners of the majority support for a hydro-electric scheme at Bourton Mill	BPC		2008	High

Transport					
5. Side Roads Traffic Speed	Press DCC strongly for reduced speed limits particularly in the vicinity of the school	BPC		2008 and ongoing	High
6. School, Parking and Signage	Ask DCC to review parking, signage and street lighting in West Bourton Road.	BPC		2008 - 2009	High
7. Public Transport	Seek improvements to bus services and publicise timetables	BPC		2 -5 years	Medium

Local Services					
8. Signage	Encourage and support local services by requesting DCC/SCC to provide road signs indicating "Local Services" at approaches to access points on A303.	BPC	Local businesses	2009- 2010	Medium

Wellbeing and welfare					
9. Communications	Explore options and achieve improvements in communications to provide details of all services, activities and facilities available to the local community.	BPC	Village Clubs, VHMC Church, Volunteers,	2009 -2010	Medium

10. Medical services	Monitor availability of new services locally and, to explore possibility of clinics for physiotherapy, chiropody etc to be provided within village	BPC	VHMC	ongoing	
11. Interaction with the elderly	Explore possibilities for occasional concerts and for pupils to visit elderly residents etc.	St George's School	VHMC	2009 and ongoing	Medium
12. Library	Review with DCC the stopping places and the provision of information regarding this service to increase usage.	BPC	Welfare Group	2009	Medium
13. Volunteers	Meeting of volunteers to appoint leaders for selected activities - i.e. litter pick, village walks, history project, bulk fuel purchase etc.	BPC	Village Clubs, VHMC Church, Volunteers, School,	2008/9	Medium
14. Welfare Group	Facilitate a meeting of interested parties to review needs of young, elderly, disabled and disadvantaged and to set up a Welfare Committee to promote facilities and support	BPC	VHMC, Church, Volunteers.	2008/9	High

Recreation and Leisure					
15. Activities for the elderly	Explore and deliver additional social activities for the elderly.	VHMC/Welfare Group	BPC, Church St George's School	1 – 3 years	High
16. Recreation and leisure activities and facilities for the young	Review needs and explore the provision of activities and facilities	VHMC/Welfare Group	BPC St George's School	2008 - 2009	High
17. Village Hall	Identify and secure a preferred site and to achieve planning permission, funding and construction	VHMC	BPC	2008 - 2012	High
18. Recreation, sports and leisure	Seek to provide additional indoor and outdoor facilities	VHMC	BPC	3 – 5 years	Medium

Planning matters					
19. Conservation Areas	Work with NDDC to specify areas that could benefit from designation as a Conservation Areas and to commence the necessary processes to achieve that status	BPC	NDDC	2 - 3 years	Medium
20. Village Design Statement	Produce a Village Design Statement.	BPC	NDDC	1 – 2 years	High
21. Financial Contributions from Developers.	Ask DCC and NDDC to review policy to achieve benefits to local community and advise DCC and NDDC regarding support for a new Village Hall and other nominated projects	BPC		Immediate and ongoing	High
22. Sustainable Village Development	Promote Bourton within the Local Development Framework as a sustainable community, maintaining a Settlement Boundary with scope for limited residential development primarily to meet the needs of local people	BPC		2008/9	High
23. Planning	Promote the views of the community as expressed in the Village Plan Survey in all consultations and representations on the Local Development Framework	BPC		2008/9	High
24. Housing Needs	Open consultations with the Rural Housing Trust to promote homes reserved for local people	BPC		2009 - 2010	High
25. Employment	Make representation for Rural Industry, Craft Workshops, Horticulture and Agriculture to be permitted and encouraged in the evolving Local Development Framework.	BPC		2008/9	High
26. Planning Applications	Use the Village Plan survey conclusions in the formulation, at Parish level, of responses to individual Planning Applications.	BPC		Ongoing	High

Bourton Mill					
27. Health & Safety	Action: BPC to continue to apply pressure to achieve appropriate security for the site and that the derelict buildings are made safe or demolished	BPC	NDCC and MP	Immediate and ongoing	High
28. The dam and flood alleviation.	Request the Environment Agency to advise on the present flood risk to existing properties from Bourton Mill dam and the catchment area above the village and to provide considered comment on recent publications by Dr C Clark	BPC	NDCC and MP	1 year	High
29. Planning	Bourton Parish Council to promote the wishes of the community as expressed in the Village Plan and the Bourton Mill Supplemental Surveys in any consultations or consideration of development proposals; particularly to seek the retention of the IOWA, the restoration of historic buildings, the restriction of development to land to the west of Factory Hill and for the full quota of affordable housing in any residential scheme.	BPC		Ongoing	High

Appendix 2

Supplemental list of Issues also supported by the community but not included in the final Action Plan.

The survey gave rise to a number of recommendations or suggestions which have not been included in the Action Plan. The Steering Group is anxious that these items should not just drop out of sight. This document therefore lists these and the Steering Group recommends that the Parish Council takes note of them and, if and when appropriate, initiates action to follow them up.

1. Communications

Make known the process for liaison and action in matters relating to public rights of way.

Publicise contact information for the local community beat officer.

Explore the provision of a village website to provide details of all services, facilities and events.

Explore a possible expansion of information in the Parish Magazine.

2. Relations with North Dorset District Council

Inform NDCC of the level of dissatisfaction with the waste collection arrangements and seek improvements.

Review with NDCC the siting and emptying of litter and dog waste bins.

Advise NDCC that only a minority of households support wind power schemes, either individual or in wind farms.

3. Relations with Dorset County Council

Press DCC to achieve an acceptable standard of road, pavement and verge maintenance.

4. Relations with multiple authorities

Press for enforcement of speed limits and investigate other means of reducing speed on Main Road such as road narrowing.

Advise utility companies, NDCC, DCC and the Environment Agency in respect of flooding from overloaded sewers.

5. Environmental initiatives

Note that there is support in the village for the acquisition of land for public benefit and specifically for a Nature Reserve.

Appendix 3

Acknowledgements

Considerable help and encouragement has been provided by Simon Thomson of Dorset Community Action, Susi Calder of Three Rivers, Kevin Morris of North Dorset District Council and from Geoffrey Miller and Andrew Cattaway, our District and County Councillors respectively. North Dorset District Council has kindly printed this Village Plan.

This Plan results from the sustained commitment of the members of the Steering Group. Particular thanks are due to Chris Yates who produced the software for the analysis of the survey responses

The Steering Group wishes to thank all those local residents who assisted with the task of delivering and collecting questionnaires.

This plan reflects the interest and support of the whole community in the future wellbeing of our village,

The Steering Group

The following served as members of the Steering Group from 2006 up to the adoption of the plan. Harriet Palmer, Cathy Moorby, Sue Matthews, Sue Rankin, Viv Sturt, Chris Yates, Nick Hall, Brian Martin, David Watkins and Andrew Sturt (Chairman). Sally Yates and Mike Creal were members from 2006 to 2007, Fran Summerfield joined the group in 2007.

Appendix 4

List of Consultees

North Dorset District Council
District Cllr Mr G. Miller
North Dorset Primary Care Trust
Three Rivers Partnership
Dorset Community Action
County Cllr Col Cattaway
The Parish of the Upper Stour.
Chairman of School Governors, St George's School.
St Georges School
Zeals Parish Council
Penselwood Parish Council
Silton Parish Meeting
Bourton Village Hall Management Committee
Dorset Police
CPRE

Appendix 5

Survey Questionnaires and Responses

The Survey Questionnaires complete with details of responses are listed below, they can be viewed on the Bourton Parish Council web site at:

http://www.north-dorset.gov.uk/index/about_your_councils/parish_councils/bourton.htm

- Questionnaire.
- Bourton Mill Survey.
- Young Persons survey.
- Older Persons Survey.

Alternatively copies of these documents can be inspected by prior arrangement with the Bourton Parish Clerk.

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