

Forthampton Parish Plan May 2011

“Our plan for our village”

Introduction

At the Forthampton Parish Council AGM held on June 3rd 2010 it was proposed and agreed to establish a ‘Parish Plan Steering Group’ whose purpose was to develop a ‘Forthampton Parish Plan’ which could be presented at the Parish Council AGM on May 19th 2011.

The aim of the plan is to set out the community’s vision for the future. “Our plan for our village.”

The Steering Group met regularly throughout the year to gather facts and information to include in the plan. With the support and guidance of the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council a household questionnaire was developed. As the ‘Forthampton’ **civil** parish, **church** parish, and Forthampton **Estate** do not share common boundaries the Steering Group felt it appropriate to give all households with a Forthampton postal address the opportunity in November 2010 to complete the questionnaire. 72 households responded (a 60% return) with an 80% return from the ‘core’ of the village. An excellent response for a survey of this kind. A meeting was held in February 2011 where representatives of ‘Organisations’ linked to the village, such as the Women’s Institute or British Legion were able to contribute ideas and issues which could be incorporated in the plan.

At the heart of the plan is a series of ‘action points’, some of which can be more easily addressed than others, but all of which will hopefully make a positive difference and improvement to life in Forthampton, without detracting from its wonderful character.

Members of the Steering Group

Hazel Andrew

Alan Brown

Gary Loader

Joanne Robinson

Teresa Wright

Richard Atkinson

John Holloway

Peter Remmer

Peter Stone

Back ground Information about 'Households'

People like living in Forthampton!

In section F1 of the questionnaire there were positive responses to the statement **'What we in this household really value about living in Forthampton is...'** These included:

"How fortunate we are."

"The mutual respect of the inhabitants for the privilege of living in such a beautiful and historic village"

"The location between Tewkesbury, Gloucester and Cheltenham."

"Having open fields on our doorstep where we can enjoy walking in the countryside."

"The peace and quiet."

"The beauty of the village, the people who live here and share our lives."

"That we have good neighbours around us that care for one another."

"We appreciate our neighbours, and enjoy being involved in some ways in their lives, offering and giving help when needed."

"That it is as near a perfect environment to live in as is possible in these modern times."

"Traditional British Country village, it's a lovely place."

A2: Do you feel that the area in which you live is part of Forthampton Parish?

Of the 72 questionnaires that were returned 85% of the respondents felt that the area in which they lived was part of the parish. Although not part 'The Civil Parish' there are households in all areas which feel they are attached to the village. However, for some households, 'Forthampton' is just a postal address. "The inclusion of Forthampton in our postal address is just a quirk of Royal Mail." "Most of the issues relevant to Forthampton do not affect where I live, it is just a postal address'.

A3: How many years have you lived in your home?

(Please answer for the person who has lived here the longest.)

From the 70 responses to the question, 22% have lived here for less than five years, with 47% for over 20 years, and 10% 'all their lives.

A4: Which age groups normally live in your household?

The breakdown of the 103 ages of the people living in the household is as follows:

0-4: 3% 5-11: 7% 12-17: 18% 18-25: 9% 26-59: 35% 60-75: 33% and over 76: 5%

15% of the respondents are of school age, with 74% aged 26 or over.

The above two sets of figures indicate a fairly settled 'mature' population in the village. **Compared with borough and county averages, Forthampton has a lower than average proportion of young people and a higher than average proportion of older people.**

A6 shows an almost equal number owning or renting their properties. In households where at least one person 'works' **A5** shows 29% of people working from home; 10% working elsewhere in Forthampton; 44% within a 15 mile radius and 19% outside a 15 mile radius of the village.

PROPOSALS

Proposed point'	'Action	Evidence of need	Support given to Parish Council	Comments
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Section B: Services

1

<p>The layout and maintenance of the roads and verges are developed and improved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish responsibility for verge maintenance. • 'Passing points' to be developed as vehicles using the village roads are becoming much larger. • Establish a system to alert Glos. C.C. when road repairs are required. • Encourage the use and development of drives on all properties to stop the need for parking on the roadside or on verges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question B1: 50% 'not satisfied' with road maintenance. <p>Questionnaire comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Repairs are often late and shoddy." • "Destruction of verges by large vehicles." • "Car parking on grass verges is cutting into the verge soil." • "Grass verges are disappearing." <p>Road maintenance and the disappearance of verges noted as a major concern at the 'Organisations meeting.'</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gloucestershire County Council/ Highways 2. Forthampton Estate 3. Local residents 	<p>Our strong relations with the County Highways Department and with their prime contractor continue to ensure repairs and maintenance are carried out. Most recently the drains along the road towards Forthampton Court have been cleared, and marker posts have been installed in various places around the village to prevent vehicles from damaging the verges by parking or driving on them.</p>
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2

<p>Develop ways to improve the maintenance of ditches</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish responsibility for ditch maintenance. Regular inspection and clearance of ditches. Investigate the cause and deal with the sewage smell from some ditches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question B1: 51% 'not satisfied' with the maintenance of ditches and drainage. <p>Questionnaire comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "In some cases the road is lower than the ditch, therefore the ditch is useless." "Ditches that smell of sewage." "Ditches to be kept clear and regularly maintained to avoid flooding." "The smells of sewage as you walk along the Bishops Walk." 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Forthampton Estate Local landlords Local residents Severn Trent Tewkesbury Borough Council / Environmental Health 	<p>Owing to the continued legal dispute between the estate and the Highways Department regarding ownership and, therefore, responsibility for roadside ditches, and because of the poor response to our request for volunteers to help with the work, the Parish Council has taken the decision to hire a contractor to clear those ditches which cause the most problem during the rainy season.</p>
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3

<p>Investigate ways of improving mobile phone reception</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question B1: 51% 'not satisfied' with mobile phone reception <p>Questionnaire comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Having such poor mobile reception means that even mobile broadband is not effective." 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Local Businesses Village Agent County Councillors Borough Councillor MP 	<p>The lack of progress on this action is the result of Mobile Phone companies not being prepared to extend their network into rural areas.</p>
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4

<p>Investigate ways of improving broadband access</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question A1: in households where someone works 39% work from home or in the village. • Question B1: 53% 'not satisfied with broadband access. <p>Questionnaire comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Broadband access is paramount." <p>The 'Organisations' Meeting highlighted that improved broadband is essential for any future business development.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local Businesses 2. Village Agent 3. County Councillors 4. Borough Councillor 5. MP 	<p>The situation regarding Broadband access continues to be somewhat frustrating. Most recently, Gigaclear have agreed to lay fibre-optic cable from Tirley through to Chaceley and Forthampton but no timings have been given and the resulting service is still unclear.</p>
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5

<p>Periodic 'Forthampton Clean Up Days' are organised</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a system to alert Tewkesbury BC when fly tipping has taken place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question B2: 54% would participate in 'Clean Up Days' <p>Questionnaire comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I hate litter and would encourage 'Clean Up Days.'" • "Clear up days for rubbish would be useful." <p>Concern about rubbish and fly tipping was also expressed as an issue that needs to be addressed at the 'Organisations' Meeting'.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local Residents 2. Tewkesbury Borough Council 	<p>These have occurred on a regular basis, the next event is scheduled for Saturday 14th April 2018 starting at 10 a.m. The Parish Council would like, publicly, to take this opportunity to thank all those who participated – Well done everyone!</p>
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6 (Also linked to Section E Community Life and Communication – point 12)

<p>Develop a 'Welcome / Services Information / 'Organisations' pack which can be given to people who move into the village.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Letting people know 'what's available' and 'what's going on'. Improved Information boards Improved signage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question B3: Many are not aware of the 'services' within the village e.g.s. 32% for the bus service 18% for the milkman 17% for the mobile Library <p>Questionnaire comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Despite living here for six months I have yet to receive Parish information." "I was not aware of whist drives or the table tennis club" "I would participate if there was more information." <p>Giving better information to help 'welcome' and develop 'community cohesion' was strongly expressed at the 'Organisations' Meeting.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Service Providers such as Cotteswold Dairy Lower Lode Hotel 'Organisations' in the village giving details of times of meetings, times of services etc. Village agent Forthampton Estate 	<p>A Service Information sheet continues to be given to all new residents as they move in. Many thanks to Lynda Remmer for producing the sheet and for continuing to welcome new residents.</p>
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N.B. Only 13 households, 18%, felt that members of their household would use a children's playground. However if one was to be developed the favoured location was by the Village Hall.

Section C: Environment

7

<p>Raise the awareness of 'collective purchasing' or grant applications to improve homes' energy efficiency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question C1 showing 50% interested in high efficiency boilers 43% interested in 250mm loft insulation 42% in solar water heating 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Forthampton Estate Tewkesbury Borough Council Village Agent 	<p>Collective purchasing of domestic heating oil is now firmly established. New members can join the group by contacting Tony Saxton at: tonysaxton@tiscali.co.uk</p>
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	39% in solar electric generation panels 39% in tapping ground heat.		
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8

<p>Restrict the speed of traffic through the village by investigating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic calming • 'Pinch points' • Solar speed limit signs (being mindful of the proliferation of 'street furniture') 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question C3: 56% concerned about speeding traffic <p>Questionnaire comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Motor bikes racing through the village from the Lower Lode Hotel." • "6 moorhens were killed in 5 weeks on the road outside the Old Post Office this summer. So far it has only the moorhens have been endangered but at some point it will be a child." • Not every car speeds, but 1 in 4 appears to be driving beyond the speed limit." 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gloucestershire County Council/Highways 2. Tewkesbury Borough Council 3. Tewkesbury Police 	<p>Following the inconclusive "Speed Monitoring exercise", it has been agreed that we should install some sort of Traffic Calming mechanism, starting with a series of White gates or fences on either side of the road at the entrances to the village.</p>
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N.B. Despite the smell of sewerage from some ditches, 54% of were against a small scale sewerage system to replace septic tanks

Section D: Housing / Business Development

9

<p>Identify and plan support for any future housing / business development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Particularly supporting the change of use for redundant farm buildings. • Ensuring the 'character' of the village is not adversely affected. • Suitable infill sites for new build. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question D1:25% feeling there is 'no need' for any future housing development • Question D3: 29% would like to see greater business development and increased employment opportunities • Question D5: 50% are in favour of changing redundant farm buildings to mixed housing / business use <p>Questionnaire comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "We need more houses and all areas should take their share." • "Development should be where existing buildings are." • "There are plenty of old farm buildings which could be developed as they are no longer needed for agriculture." • "If the buildings are left they will become more derelict." • "Buildings should be used to sustain the local requirement. Businesses that provide local employment should be 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tewkesbury Borough Council and Councillors 2. Forthampton Estate 	<p>A meeting between the Parish Council, the Forthampton Estate and Tewkesbury Borough Council Planning Department is scheduled for march 2018 to discuss options for future housing development.</p>
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	<p>encouraged.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Existing buildings should be converted to housing in preference to new build.” <p>The development of redundant farm buildings and changing use to housing / business was strongly supported at the ‘Organisations’ meeting.</p>		
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Section E: Community Life and Communication

10

<p>Ensure public rights of way are maintained</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify which footpaths have become overgrown. Re-erect damaged signs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question E1: 58% stated that public rights of way are important to their household. <p>Questionnaire comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Public rights of way to be cut and kept tidy.” “Public rights of way kept clear so they can be walked / used all year round.” 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Local landowners Local residents Ramblers Association County Rights of way Officer 	<p>Regular efforts are made to keep footpaths clear of foliage, and styles and gates are repaired/replaced when necessary.</p>
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11

<p>Support the ‘modernisation’ refurbishment of the Church and Village Hall leading to increased use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Church to review the times and styles of service. Village Hall to extend the range of activities on offer. Investigate new and alternative uses for both buildings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question E1: 54% regard the Church as important to their household and 46% regard the Village Hall as important <p>Questionnaire comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Toilet facilities and a kitchenette are required in the Church.” “Village Hall refurbishment must be continued.” “More social events needed.” 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Parochial Church Council Village Hall Committee Local residents Forthampton Estate 	<p>Various improvements have been introduced to the church -refurbished organ, churchyard maintenance, redecoration etc. and a grant submission has been made to cover the cost of the tower repairs. Similarly, improvements have been made in the Village Hall – improved heating system, refurbished toilets, new curtains, redecoration etc and efforts are now underway to ensure access is improved for the less able.</p>
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12

<p>Develop enhanced 'Communication' to help foster improved 'Community Spirit'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved communication between Forthampton Estate and the Parish Council • The Parish Council fostering regular meetings to develop greater 'co-ordination' between the Clubs and Associations in the Village. • Consider a Community Newsletter or improved use of the Parish magazine • Development of a 'Forthampton' website 	<p>Questionnaire comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Greater awareness of events needed." • "Better co-ordination between the various groups" <p>The 'Organisations' meeting' strongly supported and emphasised the need to foster community cohesion</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Clubs and Associations 2. Lower Lode Hotel 3. Local Residents 4. Village Agent 	<p>A monthly newsletter is distributed widely; Parish Councillors meet quarterly with representatives of the Forthampton estate to discuss and resolve any issues; a Parish Council web site has been established, and good use is made of the Parish Magazine to advertise social events.</p>
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13

<p>Investigate the possibility of establishing a Neighbourhood watch scheme</p>	<p>Questionnaire comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "With increased rural crime it would be a good way of communicating a warning to others." <p>Consideration of the establishment of a Neighbourhood Watch scheme was raised at the 'Organisations' meeting'</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tewkesbury Police 2. Village agent 	<p>Information provided by the police and Neighbourhood Watch scheme is disseminated regularly and widely via email.</p>
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14: To maintain the momentum generated by the 'Parish Plan' the Steering Group propose that an 'Action Group' is formed to assist the Parish Council to realise proposals, with a progress report given at the 2012 AGM.