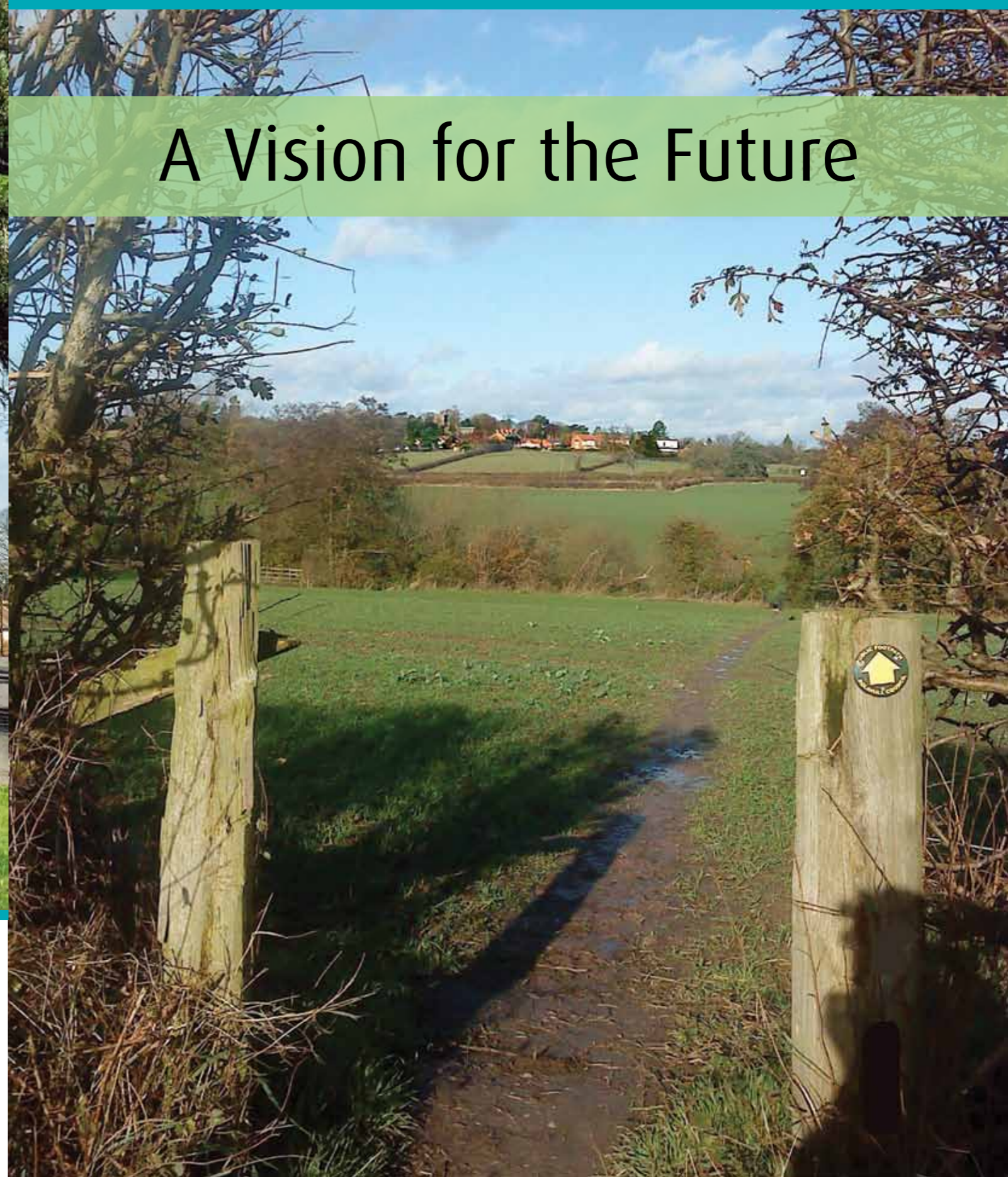


A Vision for the Future





Arial view of Hampton-in-Arden



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January 2010





HAMPTON-IN-ARDEN | VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Many residents of Hampton-in-Arden agree that our village is a great place to live, a wonderful place to bring up families and is a vibrant semi-rural community of natural beauty with a rich historic heritage. The sports, education and social facilities for all age and interest groups are comprehensive due to the commitment and hard work of many people in the community.

We can always do better.

This Parish Plan sets out your vision of what is important for your community. We have identified many key issues and services and have explored how we can safeguard and develop them in the future. The plan identifies issues that are at the heart of our community and describes how we want to develop in the next few years.

It reflects:

- views of sections of the community who responded to the consultation questionnaire,
- features of the community which people value,
- local issues and services which need to be developed and improved.

The writing and publication of this parish plan is only the beginning of the journey to make us more accountable and responsive to the needs of our community. Our recent re-accreditation as a quality parish council, the only one to achieve the status in Solihull, is an example of our continued commitment to employ the highest possible standards in the way we conduct ourselves on your behalf. Community involvement is critical to earning the confidence of our community so we have approved a "community engagement strategy" that sets out our commitment to take account of our local community in setting our priorities.

We hope you find this document both interesting and informative and a starting point to help us develop an even better community for all to enjoy now and into the future.

January 2010



Gill Lewis.
Chair.



BACKGROUND TO THE PARISH OF HAMPTON-IN-ARDEN

The parish of Hampton-in-Arden covers an area that includes the village of Hampton-in-Arden and part of the village of Catherine-de-Barnes. The parish is broadly bounded by the A45 and A456 trunk roads to the north, by a tributary of the river Blythe to the east, by another tributary of the Blythe to the south and by the Grand Union canal, Hampton Coppice and the M42 motorway to the west.

Hampton has been a settlement since Saxon times and is mentioned in the Domesday book of 1086. It was an important settlement in the original Forest of Arden and was on the salt route from Droitwich to Coventry. The Charity of George Fentham, set up in 1698 and managed by successive generations of trustees has had a significant impact on the village ensuring a range of excellent facilities through generous financial support.

The village of Hampton-in-Arden derives its special character from its rural setting and its historic roots, central to which is its parish church, sited on a hill-top and its collection of historical buildings many of which sit in the village's conservation area.

The publication of a Village Design Statement described the qualities and features of Hampton-in-Arden and acts as a point of reference to ensure that local knowledge of the village's character can be taken account of when changes to the village's landscape are proposed.

The village has a range of facilities for parishioners including a primary school with nursery unit, a library, doctors' surgery, a range of shops including a post office and chemist together with excellent sporting and recreational facilities. There are rail links and a bus service including access to "ring and ride" and the taxibus.

Hampton-in-Arden's parish council consists of a paid clerk and a team of seven elected, unpaid, councillors who serve for a term of four years. The council owns and maintains several areas of land on behalf of the village; the Recreation Ground and Spinney, the War Memorial, Village Green and Catherine-de-Barnes Common. The school playing fields, allotments and playground are leased by the parish council from the George Fentham Hampton-in-Arden Charity. The necessary funding is derived from the parish precept, decided each year by the parish council and collected from parishioners with Council Tax.





CONTEXT FOR WRITING THE PARISH PLAN

The Parish Plan describes how our community wants to develop and identifies the necessary action. It gives everyone a say in influencing the social, economic and environmental issues affecting our community and how they can be improved in the future. The major focus should be on the actions that the parish council proposes to undertake but can also influence policies, decisions and actions carried out by other public bodies.

In 2007 your parish council decided to prepare a parish plan and set up a steering group to find out what topics residents felt were important, so ensuring the priorities of the parish council were those of residents.

The steering group initiated the consultation process with an open day; the resulting questionnaire was circulated to all 727 households generating a 39% response rate. The results were analysed producing statistics reflecting residents' views on key themes of the questionnaire. The steering group met several times during 2007 and 2008 to produce a draft action plan which was approved by the parish council in November 2008.

The parish council's annual meeting with parishioners, in April 2009, gave residents the opportunity to raise questions about the draft action plan. Prior to this meeting all households had been circulated with the plan, an executive summary and questionnaire.

The steering group met with a representative from Solihull Council as many of the proposed actions can only be achieved through partnership, principally with Solihull MBC, but also with other bodies identified in the plan.

Some issues raised in 2007 may have altered; however we are already taking action on many of the findings and believe that the main themes still have relevance in 2010, the plan will act as a reference point for a number of years to come.



KEY THEMES OF THE ACTION PLAN

FEATURES OF HOUSEHOLDS

Questions concerning households gave a unique "snapshot" of the 39% of parish residents who replied. Summarised below are the relevant features.

You told us:

- The households who replied were made up of 696 individuals, 49% male and 51% female. The split of ages were 21% under 18s, 45% between 18 and 60 and 34% over 60s. 32% of households comprise of 1 resident.
- 43% of people were employed, 20% in education with 37% of responses from retired residents. 1 response registered as unemployed and 4 on a government training scheme. 17% worked from home, 32% worked more than 20 miles from home. There was an even spread of occupations, education and training 13%, health related 11%, a majority of respondents were classified as 'professional'.
- 52% of households are detached residences, 17% semi-detached, 14% bungalows and 17% other. 86% are owner occupied.
- You wanted to see more facilities and information for older people who make up a significant proportion of the population.

We propose:

- Publicising services available for our older community.
- Developing computer facilities and training for all age groups with Hampton Community Crafts.
- Investigating with other partners, such as Age Concern, provision of better facilities for our older community.
- Looking at national initiatives to enable very dependant older residents to remain within their homes.

HOUSING NEEDS AND FACILITIES

The survey told us that there were a number of people who had left the village to find affordable housing. Amenities for households were generally good but it was felt that provision of energy saving measures such as loft and cavity wall insulation could be improved.



You told us:

- 25 people were recorded as moving from the village to find affordable housing in the preceding 5 years. 10 residents stated that they needed separate accommodation.
- 95% of households have central heating and 79% have a computer, 73% have internet connection.
- 43% could improve energy saving measures in their household.

We propose:

- Continuing to monitor the housing needs of villagers. We are considering commissioning a full housing needs survey and we will always respond to housing appraisals carried out by Solihull MBC.
- Actively seeking to make available computing facilities in the village.
- Publicising the availability of grants for energy saving measures, we intend to appoint a green champion to promote energy efficiency.





TRAVEL, TRANSPORT AND ROAD SAFETY

The survey showed the need to liaise with the bus companies in order to improve bus services in the area. The promotion of car sharing schemes, traffic calming measures and awareness of car theft were identified.

You told us:

- 68% recorded that they never used buses, 17% caught the bus for social or leisure purposes, 61% thought buses too infrequent.
- Satisfaction with train services was high, 87% thought the frequency of the trains was satisfactory, 21% had never used the service.
- 73% of respondents used their car for travelling to work, 16% had "car shared" at some time.
- 62% of car owners park their car on their premises, 31% use a garage.
- The speed of traffic through the village was a concern for 84% of residents with 68% recording that the traffic calming measures had not had an effect.

We propose:

- Liaising with Centro to improve bus services.
- We have already established a Community Speed Watch scheme with West Midlands Police.
- We are actively discussing ways to reduce the volume and speed of traffic with Solihull MBC highways department. We hope that measures will soon be implemented to improve both pedestrian safety and our highway environment.



VILLAGE FACILITIES

The survey indicated the need to promote village shops and restaurants; the Parish Council web site should be improved and could be used by businesses and community groups for publicity. There is also a need to facilitate expansion of education and leisure facilities particularly for young people.

You told us:

- 5% of respondents never shopped locally, the most well used shop was the post office.
- The public houses and restaurants were well used.
- There was limited use of Fentham Hall, the School Hall and the Church Hall.
- You wanted more educational courses, foreign languages (14%) and computer literacy (21%) being the most popular.
- There was support for developing better youth facilities, 33% favoured a club for youngsters.
- 42 villagers would like to rent an allotment.
- There was little support for the concept of more information points within the village.
- 21% of respondents had used the Hampton-in-Arden website.

We propose:

- Actively supporting village businesses to promote themselves, particularly through the village website.
- Reviewing the website to increase its use and impact.
- Liaising with Hampton Community Crafts to extend the range of courses they offer.
- Developing a youth strategy to enable young people to engage with partners to improve youth facilities.
- Approaching The Fentham Trust to identify additional land for allotments.





ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

While the survey indicated a need to work closely with Solihull MBC on waste recycling, the arrangements introduced in late 2009 have alleviated many of your concerns. We need to liaise with Solihull MBC to improve roads, pavements and street cleaning and ensure that street lighting is enhanced in problem areas. The employment of a village “maintenance man” was felt to be a priority.

You told us:

- There was a fair degree of satisfaction with services provided by Solihull MBC.
- Services rated “poor” were refuse collection and recycling (18%), litter picking (15%) and street cleaning (14%).
- 25% were dissatisfied with street lighting, mostly at the bottom of Fentham Road, Old Station Road and Marsh Lane.
- Most households showed a strong commitment to re-cycling with 88% recorded as recycling paper. The lowest response was to re-cycling plastic. Many responses asked for a local recycling facility, a majority of people currently used Knowle and Bickenhill.

We propose:

- Working with Solihull MBC to develop a comprehensive street cleaning programme and influence the quality of environmental services in general. Urgently discuss improvement of street lighting.
- We have initiated the use of a “Maintenance Man” for occasional work; this could be expanded for some routine village maintenance.

HEALTH AND ACCESS

The survey indicated few problems in this area.

You told us:

- There were few problems with access to health services, problems had been encountered on 30 occasions.
- 40% asked for pavements to be kept in better repair.

We propose:

- Liaising with Solihull MBC to improve road and pavement maintenance.
- We are actively discussing the provision of a pedestrian crossing.



CRIME AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

The survey identified the need to promote Neighbourhood Watch schemes and publicise better security in homes.

You told us:

- The most commonly reported crime was drunkenness and anti-social behaviour (10%).
- Most crimes were reported to the police.
- 15% of respondents are already involved in a Neighbourhood Watch scheme; there was further interest in becoming part of a scheme.

We propose:

- Establish more Neighbourhood Watch schemes in liaison with West Midlands Police.
- Actively publicising community safety initiatives.



ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

The survey recognised the need to publicise the roles of elected representatives more effectively. The need for a village “information point” was identified.

You told us:

- Many did not feel that their locally elected representatives respond to people’s concerns, ranging from 80% for MEPs to 32% for Parish Councillors.
- 55% were satisfied with their Parish Councillors, 48% with the local MP.
- 51% of responses thought that a Parish Council access point would be a good idea.

We propose:

- Investigating the possibility of setting up a village information point, possibly in the disused phone box.
- Publicising the monthly parish council “surgeries” for villagers to access a parish councillor to share concerns.
- Encouraging our MP and MEPs to engage more fully with the community.

FUTURE PLANNING ISSUES

The survey identified the need to use our web site to publicise planning guidelines and planning applications. Views of respondents in relation to development of apartments would be noted when reviewing planning applications.

You told us:

- 70% supported the idea of the inset area in planning guidance.
- 67% were not clear what an inset area was.
- 81% were against the building of apartments in the village, 68% were against back garden development.

We propose:

- Using the web site more actively to give information on local planning guidance and applications.
- Taking account of residents’ views when considering our response to planning applications.
- Assisting parishioners in accessing Solihull MBC planning portal.





MONITORING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARISH PLAN

The parish plan steering committee will continue to meet to ensure that priorities identified in the action plan are implemented and improvements to services are achieved.

The parish council will receive reports on progress towards objectives at its regular meetings. The parish plan and the monitoring of targets will also be featured on the parish council web site. Where a major change or development affects the targets set in the action plan, the steering committee will propose an amendment which will be considered by the parish council. A full update concerning the parish plan will be presented at the Annual Parish Meeting so sharing any revised target with parishioners.

It is recognised that much of what is in the plan can only be achieved through partnership with other bodies, particularly Solihull MBC.

Your parish council is pleased to acknowledge the improved relationship which now exists between itself and Solihull MBC and is encouraged to hope for real progress on a range of shared issues now and in the future.

Our web site is in the process of being revised; we want it to be interesting and easy to navigate, an important source of information on all matters concerning village life including the parish plan.

We want you to have a voice in your village.

You are encouraged to attend parish council meetings which are all open to the public; the business of the council can be observed and individuals can speak briefly on any issue that they feel is of concern.

At the Annual Parish Meeting in April a report is presented to the village detailing the council's activity during the year. Progress towards previously determined objectives is reviewed; the parish plan will now form an element of the report. The second half of this meeting forms a lively debate allowing you to express your view on the work of the council.

Councillors are available throughout the year to respond to any concerns that you may have; we hold a monthly surgery in the bakery when we are happy to discuss any issues that relate to the village and if we can't supply an answer we will find someone who can.

Your parish council intends to continue to build on its achievements; with your help we will make Hampton-in-Arden an even more fulfilling community for each and every resident to enjoy in the future.



APPENDIX 1

HAMPTON-IN-ARDEN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Hampton-in-Arden Parish Council is committed to involving local parishioners in decisions that affect their community and providing clear communication streams that effectively engage local parishioners and encourage their involvement in decision making.

OUR COMMUNICATION NETWORK

The Parish Council communicates its priorities and activities through the following channels:-

- Web-site with regularly updated information on council meetings, names and contact details of councillors and clerk, village newsletter and other articles of interest and village diary.
- Monthly paper produced newsletter within the Village Chronicle, published by the Parish Church.
- Annual meeting with parishioners and publication of the annual report, (published on the web site.). Copy of annual report available to all who attend annual meeting.
- Has elected representatives on other village bodies, e.g. George Fentham Charity, to provide input into a broad section of village life.

OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Parish Councillors have allocated responsibilities to certain sections of the community and the parish council also nominates independent representatives to some village bodies.

- Two councillors are members of the governing body of the local primary school, actively encouraging children to understand the role of the parish council and participate in projects for the community e.g. school council recently requested an allotment for the school.
- We have strong links with the Scouting and Guiding movement in the village, the land for their club house is leased from the parish council.
- We work with the Hampton Society, a local group that promotes the village, records and researches its history and seeks to protect the village environment.
- The parish council nominates three trustees to the George Fentham Hampton-in-Arden Charity whose remit is to use its funds to promote the welfare of older people and youngsters of the village.
- The parish council is closely involved with the Sports Club which organises a range of sporting activities and leases the land for its club house and tennis courts from the parish council. The council also nominates two trustees to the Recreational Trust which manages the astro and football pitches.
- The parish council has representatives on many other local bodies such as the Airport Consultative Committee and the Standards Committee of Solihull MBC.





FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Parish Council in its Action Plan identified some key areas for development relating to community engagement;-

- The writing and publication of the Parish Plan giving Parish aims and objectives in the short and medium term.
- The launch of the Action Plan at the parishioners meeting in April 2009, with the publication of the Parish Plan before April 2010.
- More active promotion of local “surgeries” to respond to parishioners’ concerns and act as a point of information for other local services.
- Examining the feasibility of establishing a Youth Council to engage young people in sharing their priorities for their community.
- More active identification and progression of shared objectives with the primary local government partner, Solihull MBC.

APPENDIX 2

HAMPTON-IN-ARDEN PARISH COUNCIL ACTION PLAN

NOTES ON THE ACTION PLAN

The following Action Plan summarises the actions required by the parish council following an analysis of the household appraisal survey carried out in 1997.

Please see below for an explanation of priorities, abbreviations etc.

Impact on Community Ratings	Timescale
1 = High	24 months = Difficult to implement
2 = Moderate	12 months = Moderate difficulty / complexity
3 = Lesser	6 months = Easy to Implement

Abbreviations used:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| Solihull MBC | SMBC |
| West Midlands Police | WMP |
| Centro | C |
| Rural Housing Association | RHA |
| George Fentham Charity | GFC |
| George Fentham School | GFS |
| Hampton Community Crafts | HCC |



SUBJECT	ISSUES	PROPOSED ACTION	WHO CAN HELP	IMPACT	TIME SCALE
1.1. Housing: Dwellings	The majority (86%) of households completing the form lived in owner occupied houses. Private rented was 12% with 2% L/A rented. The village would benefit from more affordable low cost rented housing.	Contact Solihull MBC and Rural Housing Association to investigate the possibility of building more low cost rented housing in conjunction with SMBC's own targets to develop housing locally.	SMBC RHA	2	12 months
1.2. Housing: Amenities	95% of households are centrally heated therefore not much need to promote schemes 79% had access to computers while 72% had internet, indicating some need for availability.	Contact Library to publicise availability of computer facilities (within constraints of limited opening hours) Contact GFS to investigate possibility of access to school facilities	SMBC GFS	2	12 months
1.3. Housing: Future Needs	25 residents were identified who had to move out of the Parish to find affordable homes	See 1.1			
1.4. Housing: Energy Saving	There was a surprisingly low uptake of energy saving measures.	Contact SMBC /Energy Suppliers/Age Concern to investigate possibility of publicising energy saving measures and grants etc.	SMBC	1	12 months
2.1. Population: Gender & Age	34% were over 60 and 32% were in single households 49% were male and 51% were female. 21% were under 18.	Investigate with HCC more opportunities for leisure pursuits for over 60s. Contact SMBC for more info. Re Elderly Services and expansion of Services in village.	SMBC HCC GFC	2	12 months
2.2. Population: Employment	Most respondents below retirement age were in employment with 17% working from home. Most respondents (66%) worked more than 5 miles from village.	No action identified			
3.1. Transport: Travel to work	Most respondents (72%) travelled to work by car with few making use of car-share schemes.	Investigate Parish Council led initiative to facilitate car-sharing through web site		3	12 months
3.2. Transport: Buses	While 68% of people never used buses, of those that did the frequency of buses was an issue, including unreliable service.	Contact Centro re bus services with a view to improving frequency and routes.	C	2	12 months
3.3. Transport: Trains	Trains were more extensively used and the frequency was about right for the majority of respondents	No action identified			

SUBJECT	ISSUES	PROPOSED ACTION	WHO CAN HELP	IMPACT	TIME SCALE
3.4. Transport: Parking	(62%) of respondents do not garage their vehicle while 7% park on the road leaving cars more vulnerable to theft. Most respondents thought there was sufficient parking. No action identified	In conjunction with police publicise awareness of risk of theft	WMP	3	12 months
3.5. Transport: Traffic Calming	84% of respondents thought that speeding through the village was a problem. 68% thought that traffic calming measures had had little effect.	Pursue use of S106 funding with SMBC Further S106 funding in any new development (Hampton Manor?)	SMBC SMBC	1 2	3 months 12 months
4.1. Education: Training Courses	There was interest for further training opportunities in the village with foreign languages(14%) and computing courses (21%) being the most popular.	See 2.1 Extend leisure opportunities in conjunction with HCC and GFC and Local Colleges	HCC GFC Local Colleges	3	12 months
5.1. Village Facilities: Shops	The village shops were well used with only 5% never using them. The village post office (86%) was most well used and 79% used the village provisions shops. The hairdressers were less used (31%) but the village pub/restaurants used by 75% of respondents	Promote with local businesses the opportunity to use website to promote their business/ Open meeting to discuss this		2	6 months
5.2. Village Facilities: Delivery Services	There was not much uptake of delivery services apart from newspapers (25%)	No action at this time			
5.3. Village Facilities: Community	Community Buildings such as Fentham Hall, Scout HQ and Church Hall were not well used. The Sports Club was never used by 51% of respondents. The library was never used by 51% of respondents.	As 5.1		2	6 months
5.4. Village Facilities: Youth	There was a general feeling for more facilities for young people with a youth club with a professional worker being the most popular. 21% thought there should be more organised sports.	Investigate with other partners setting up more facilities. (Limitations of Church Youth Club)	SMBC GFC	3	12 months

SUBJECT	ISSUES	PROPOSED ACTION	WHO CAN HELP	IMPACT	TIME SCALE
5.5. Village Facilities: Sports	There was a high degree of satisfaction with sporting facilities in the village but disappointment that a cricket club no longer existed.	To continue working with the Sports Club and Recreational Trust to improve sports facilities.			
6.1. Environment: Access	Few respondents had difficulty getting around the village with access to shops, trains and better maintained pavements being top priorities. 40% wanted better maintained pavements and 37% wanted vegetation and other obstructions cleared.	Contribute to SMBC's Highways Maintenance Plan Village Maintenance Man	SMBC	1 1	6 months 3 months
6.2. Environment: Services	Generally there was a good level of satisfaction with services such as emptying bins, street cleaning, cutting verges etc. The biggest dissatisfaction (55%) was litter picking.	See 6.1 Village Handy man Contact SMBC to investigate improvement of services	SMBC	1	6 months
6.3. Environment: Street Lighting	There was general satisfaction with street lighting but specific problems were registered at the bottom of Fentham Road and Old Station Road.	Contact SMBC to investigate solutions to problem areas	SMBC	1	6 months
6.4. Environment: Village Caretaker	71% of respondents supported the principle of a village caretaker even with the consequent increase to parish Precept.	See 6.1			
6.5. Environment: Recycling	Many respondents wanted to see more re-cycling facilities with recycling plastic being the most needed.	Contact SMBC to investigate new contracts for re-cycling; publicise in village	SMBC	1	3 months
7.1. Elected Representatives: Parish Council/ Others	While there was some satisfaction with the responsiveness of the Parish Council, a high number, (32%) did not know what the Parish Council did.	More promotion of Parish Council role. Councillor as "Community Champion"?		1	6 months
7.2. Parish Council: Services Access	51% of respondents thought that a Parish Council Access point would be useful; A parish council surgery would make the council more responsive.	Liaise with SMBC re District Councillor role There is sufficient support to re-visit the idea of a Parish Council "surgery" perhaps on a pilot basis for 12 months, combined with the police surgery.	SMBC	2 1	12 months 6 months

SUBJECT	ISSUES	PROPOSED ACTION	WHO CAN HELP	IMPACT	TIME SCALE
7.3. Parish Council: Information	There was limited support (21%) for a computerised access point in the village and only 16% wanted more notice boards. More worryingly only 21% used the Parish Council website.	Review design of website through Communications Working Group.		1	12 months
7.4. Parish Council: Allotments	There were 42 respondents who would be interested in renting an allotment although currently there are none vacant	Investigate possibility of establishing more allotments.	GFC	2	24 months
8.2 Health: Access to Facilities	There was a very low response rate to difficulties of access with the library, train station and poor pavements cited as having the most significant problems.	Liaise with Solihull MBC and Centre re the access problems	SMBC C	3	24 months
8.3. Health: Access Improvements	The clearing of obstructions and vegetation and better pavement repair were cited as the most significant items to improve access.	See 8.2 above. Village handyman priority to clear vegetation.		2	12 months
9.1. Crime: Incidence	There was a very low incidence of reported crime from respondents with drunkenness and anti-social behaviour (10%) the "highest" scoring.	Liaise with West Midlands Police as to how to minimise crime in the village.	WMP	2	12 months
9.2. Crime: Neighbourhood Watch	Only 12% of respondents recorded that they were members of a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.	Investigate the setting up of more Neighbourhood Watch Schemes	WMP	1	6 months
10.1. Planning: Village Design Statement	Most respondents (70%) did approve the Village Design Statement but only 33% knew what an Inset area was.	Investigate possibility of using our website to publicise planning applications and criteria for objections		1	12 months
10.2. Planning: Apartment Development	81% of respondents thought that further apartments in the village should not be supported.	To note when considering response to planning applications		3	6 months
10.3. Planning: Back Garden Development	A lower percentage (68%) thought "back garden development" was a bad idea.	To note when considering response to planning applications		3	6 months