

SUBJECT: **NAPTON PARISH PLAN**
LEAD OFFICER: **KAREN JOHNSTONE**
CONTACT ON 01789 260332
**LEAD MEMBER/
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:** **COUNCILLOR STUART BEESE**

SUMMARY

This report sets out the assessment of the Napton-on-the-Hill 2006 Parish Plan. Napton Parish Council adopted the Plan on 4 September 2006.

RECOMMENDATION

- (1) That the Parish Plan is adopted as a local information source to offer advice to the relevant departments of Stratford-on-Avon District Council.**
 - (2) That the Parish Plan is adopted as a material consideration in processing planning applications, in accordance with Policy COM.1 of the Local Plan Review.**
 - (3) That the Parish Plan steering group, Parish Council and the residents of Napton be commended for preparing their Parish Plan and that they are encouraged to implement and review their Action Plan.**
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1 BACKGROUND/INFORMATION

- 1.1 Parish Plans are community-led projects identifying and surveying the assets, needs, opportunities, problems and solutions of a community. Through 'Capacity' and 'Consensus Building', Parish Plans provide communities with a framework to take stock of the present and to plan for the future.
 - 1.2 The momentum for Parish Plans is continually increasing with half of the communities in the District having completed or in the process of undertaking detailed Parish Plan or Appraisals with associated recommendations and Action Plans. Further background information on the process is included in Appendix B.
 - 1.3 **Background to the submitted Napton Parish Plan**
 - 1.3.1 The Parish Council organised an initial meeting in November 2003 that was advertised through the Parish Magazine and a letter drop to all
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households. From this first meeting, 15 volunteers formed a Parish Plan Steering Group. The initiative received a grant of almost £5000 from the Countryside Agency, a contribution from the Parish Council, and contributions in kind from many volunteers. Throughout the project, progress was reported regularly through the Parish Magazine. The Parish Plan was developed in close partnership with the Parish Council and other key local organisations such as the school and church, with representatives of these on the Steering Group.

- 1.3.2 Preliminary information was gathered through engagement with many local groups and clubs, and consideration of the topics covered in the previous 1995 Napton Parish Appraisal. This informed the preparation of 3 questionnaires: one for residents aged 18+, one to all 11-18 year olds that could be identified, and one to a sample of businesses based in Napton. The main questionnaire was distributed to all 425 households in the Parish with a statistically sound response rate of 65% (average figure as this varied from question to question). There was a similar response rate to the young persons' survey, and around a 30% response rate to the business survey. An open public meeting was held with over 80 people attending, the junior school in Napton ran an exercise to involve year 5 and 6 children, and the Steering Group held stands and talks at local events and clubs.
- 1.3.3 The results of the main questionnaire were processed by Warwick Networks, and a draft Action Plan drawn up based on the information and views collected throughout the process. The draft Action Plan was presented at a second open public meeting, together with displays of information and survey results. Again over 80 people attended and were invited to give comments and criticisms.
- 1.3.4 The Parish Plan presents a clear picture of the needs and issues facing the community. The Parish Council has adopted the Action Plan and it is intended that a Parish Council 'implementation group' will be formed to take recommendations forward once the Action Plan has been confirmed by the Area Community Committee.
- 1.3.5 The Plan has not yet been printed to allow for amendments following discussion with SDC and the comments of the Area Community Committee. It is suggested that the current draft version of the Parish Plan could be improved in two ways:
 - The inclusion of a section summarising the process and consultation exercises undertaken to produce the Plan.
 - The inclusion in the Action Plan at the end of a reference to all actions put forward by the Plan.
- 1.3.6 The Napton Parish Plan steering group has expressed a willingness to adapt the Parish Plan to reflect the above suggestions.

1.4 **Napton Parish Plan findings**

- 1.4.1 The findings of the Parish Plan, which have informed the Action Plan, cover:
 - Information and communication
 - Environment and heritage
 - Views from the next generation

- Transport and parking
 - Tourism, recreation and the canal
 - Population
 - Housing
 - Education
 - Religion and spiritual life
 - Napton Village Hall
 - Business and employment
 - Planning and design
- 1.4.2 The Parish Plan has been prepared employing a range of community participation techniques, including questionnaire surveys, public forums and a transparent process of reporting back to the community on progress. The process has generated a range of statistical data and qualitative material that has informed the Action Plan and which provides a useful information source.
- 1.4.3 Suggested response: Endorse – that the findings of the Napton Parish Plan be endorsed as a true representation of the topics addressed by the Parish Plan.
- 1.5 Napton Parish Plan Action Plan**
- 1.5.1 Analysis and responses to the Action Plan are provided in Appendix C, and the following analysis and comments should be read in conjunction with the Parish Plan Action Plan.
- 1.5.2 The policy position of the Local Plan Review is supportive of the Action Plan points relating to planning, the environment and land use. Many of the actions identified can be undertaken entirely by the village itself.
- 1.5.3 The Housing section encourages the further investigation of the need for affordable housing of all forms, which is to be welcomed. The Parish has been working closely with the Rural Housing Enabler for Warwickshire to undertake a detailed Housing Needs Survey. An additional survey of 'local open market housing needs' is well underway. The District Council can provide additional help in this area.
- 1.5.4 Progress has already been made in taking forward, and in some cases achieving, several aspects of the Action Plan. Achievements include a new pedestrian route to the school, a new sports club, facilities for St. Lawrence Church and progress on a new sports pavilion.

2 OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO THE COMMITTEE

- 2.1 A) Adopt the Parish Plan fully: This is a good, well-prepared Parish Plan that would be a valuable local information source and material consideration. It has been suggested that the Parish Plan is amended before the date of the Area Community Committee to include a section summarising the processes and consultation undertaken, and to reference all actions within the Action Plan. If this is the case, there are no issues identified to suggest disadvantages of following this option.
- 2.2 B) Adopt parts of the Parish Plan: If there are any concerns with certain aspects of the Parish Plan, this option would allow the District Council to

use selected aspects of the Plan in its decision making and as a local information source. No reasons have been so far identified to make this option necessary.

- 2.3 C) Not adopt the Parish Plan: The District Council would miss the opportunity to adopt a useful source of local information, and a material consideration to aid planning decision-making.

3 MEMBERS' COMMENTS

- 3.1 Cllr Nigel Rock, District Councillor for Napton and Stockton, requests that the Planning Services Conservation team consider and respond formally to the request for a Conservation Area from the community. The short suggested response to the request set out in Appendix C is unfortunately determined by a lack of resources.
- 3.2 Councillor Rock comments in general that "This represents a considerable amount of work by the Parish Plan Group over an extended period and they are to be congratulated. An excellent response from residents was generated and, I believe, was collated and analysed in an objective manner by a third party. I support the recommendations of Officers."

4 IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL

4.1 Financial

- 4.1.1 Projects developed through this Parish Plan may need funding to take them forward and the recommendations contained in this report should be contained within existing budgets. The District Council operates a Community Grants Scheme aimed at funding these types of projects, and the Community Grants team may be able to help search for appropriate funding sources. It is hoped that the Parish Council and local residents will consider and pursue funding in order to develop their identified action points.

4.2 Environmental

- 4.2.1 Many of the actions within this Parish Plan aim to improve the local environment of the village and its surroundings. A few actions could increase the environmental sustainability of life within the Parish by reducing local people's need to travel for work and leisure.

4.3 Corporate Strategy

- 4.3.1 The Parish Plan is a useful source of information about local community perception of their locality. The Community Plan and Corporate Strategy for the District support the range of topic areas and policies in the Action Plan. The Parish Plan also complements and helps move forward the District Council's Agenda 21.

5 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The actions recommended in this report are to commend those involved in the preparation of the Plan, adopt the Parish Plan as a local information source, and adopt it as a material consideration. There are no identified major risks associated with these actions.
- 5.2 Choosing to not adopt the Parish Plan would risk losing the chance to adopt a valuable source of local information and a useful material consideration to aid planning decision-making.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The Parish Plan Steering Group, the Parish Council and residents of Napton should be commended and congratulated for completing their Parish Plan, and are encouraged by Stratford-on Avon District Council to implement and periodically review the Action Plan. As discussed in para 1.3.5, it is suggested that certain amendments are made to the draft Parish Plan before printing and distribution.
- 6.2 The Napton Parish Plan is a good example of how a rural community can prepare a Parish Plan that is both a good source of local information, and provides a sound basis through the Action Plan to address the needs and aspirations of the community.

PAT REID
HEAD OF PLANNING SERVICES

Background papers:

Napton Parish Plan 2006

Stratford District Community Plan; the future to 2015

Stratford-on-Avon Local Plan Review 2006

Appendix A - Guidance for the Assessment of Parish/Town Plans

- 1.1 In assessing Parish Plans, the following considerations should be taken into account:

Evidence and extent of research work to justify conclusions.

Evidence and extent of analysis related to conclusions.

Public involvement and endorsement at local level.

Level of implementation available to District Council services, (e.g. the District Council Planning Authority, Leisure and Arts etc.).

Conformity with District Council's policies, (e.g. Planning policies etc.).

- 1.2 The above five criteria will enable the production of recommendations regarding the acceptance of each of the Parish Plan's detailed conclusions and Action Points.

- 1.3 A response to each of the detailed conclusions and Action Points will be one of the following:

(A) ENDORSE

The specific recommendation will be accepted and taken into account on the decision making of the District Council. (For example, "Small scale development with a 'craft' emphasis should be looked at sympathetically").

(B) ACTION

The specific recommendation will be accepted in principle and, subject to financial, procedural and legal constraints, implemented by or with the support of the District Council. (For example, "A social housing scheme of ten units on land next to the Green should be provided").

(C) INVESTIGATE

Further information to be obtained by the Parish/Town Council or other agency may be required in order that the District Council may establish if the specific recommendation can be supported. (For example, "An existing Conservation Area should be extended").

(D) SUPPORT

The specific recommendation relates to a matter, which is not the responsibility of the District Council. However, the proposal is supported and will be forwarded to the appropriate authority. (For example, "Traffic calming measures are required and the County Highway Authority should prepare a scheme").

(E) NOT SUPPORTED

The specific recommendation relates to a matter, which is in contrary to the policy of the District Council or is beyond the powers of the authority or that insufficient and/or unsatisfactory information has been submitted to substantiate their commendation. (For example, "No development of any kind should take place within the settlement").

Appendix B – Further Background Information

- 2.1. Communities produce Parish Plans for a number of reasons:
 - To increase the awareness of community issues, foster community spirit and encourage a sense of pride;
 - To act as a strong basis for local action (the Action Plan);
 - To collectively represent the views of residents, to positively influence others to the benefit of the community.
- 2.2. In the 1980s the concept and practice of Village Appraisals first emanated nationally from the Rural Development Commission in conjunction with the Countryside Commission.
- 2.3. Nationally, Parish Plans have a role to play within the 'modernising Local Government' agenda, for example, shaping local services, public participation, decision-making and greater democratic legitimacy.
- 2.4. One of the aims within Chapter 12 of the Rural White Paper (Our Countryside: the future – A fair deal for rural England) includes involving people living in rural areas in developing their community, safeguarding its valued features and shaping the decisions that affect them – developing a vision for the future. Parish Plans are a recognised method of achieving this aim.
- 2.5. In line with guidance from the Countryside Agency issued in August 2000 ('Planning tomorrow's countryside', advice to local planning authorities, government and developers on how the planning system should operate and evolve), Parish Plans are a recognised community planning method to help achieve key objectives. In March 2003 the Countryside Agency produced detailed guidance for parish and town councils on the preparation of Parish and Town Plans.
- 2.6. Policy RA3 in the Warwickshire Structure Plan 1996-2011 encourages local planning authorities to use 'Appraisals' when establishing the views of local communities and when identifying local housing and industrial development need.
- 2.7. Stratford-on-Avon District Council is committed to the encouragement of Parish Plans as a means of identifying local issues and will respond to them positively. Much faith has been placed by the Government, the County Council and the District Council on local appraisals and their role in assisting the formulation of strategic policy.
- 2.8. Parish Plans can now play a broader role within the production of the statutory Community Plan for Stratford District.
- 2.9. The recommendations and Action Plans can both inform and help deliver the Rural Strategy for the Stratford-on-Avon District.
- 2.10. Policy COM.1 of the Stratford-on-Avon District Local Plan Review 2006 states:

"The views of the local community as expressed preferably in a Parish Plan (or equivalent) or in its absence an alternative source of reliable evidence, will be fully taken into account in the planning process. In particular they will be used:

 - To help assess the merits of schemes promoted by communities to meet needs which they have identified;

- As a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and to assist in identifying the scope and nature of associated planning obligations which might be sought; and
- To identify opportunities for environmental and other forms of enhancement.

In the case of Main Rural Centres and Local Centre Villages only, as defined in Policy STR1, small scale schemes which meet housing (particularly affordable housing) and employment needs will be encouraged in this way..."

- 2.11. Nationally, Parish Plans are broad, holistic documents addressing local issues at a local level. Whilst in this District 'appraisals' have had a close association with planning, they are no longer 'planning-led'. Parish Plans address both planning and non-planning related matters and this is reflected in their assessment at Committee.
- 2.12. Parish Plans can and do act as a tool to assist in giving many of the services provided by the District Council greater community focus. Vice versa, many of the services provided by the District Council can and do feed into the Parish Plan process creating more informed Action Plans.

Appendix C

Summary of key action points

Abbreviations

SDC - Stratford District Council

WCC - Warwickshire County Council

All page numbers given in this table refer to the Napton Parish Plan 2006.

Recommended Action	SDC Proposed Response
Information and communication	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop email lists for distribution of Parish Council information. • Inform local activity providers that residents would like more information. • Local jobs to be advertised in the village. 	<p>Support – These action points are supported in principle</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform District and County council about people’s opinions on the effectiveness of how information they receive from the respective Bodies reaches them, whether or not they understand it, whether or not they know who their elected representatives are and how to contact them. 	<p>Support and Investigate - the Council welcomes the opportunity to gain more feedback on this topic.</p>
Environment and Heritage	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve certain views identified as highly valued on p.7, e.g. of Folly Locks, the windmill and from the churchyard. • Preserve and restore traditional features in the village and of the landscape listed on p.9. • Parish Council to ensure that the appropriate legal measures to protect valued village greens in perpetuity have been taken. 	<p>Endorse – Policy PR.1 of the Local Plan Review 2006 aims to protect landscape and settlement character, including the protection of distinctive local features, especially those valued by the local community.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out an audit of natural wildlife habitats in the village and make recommendations to improve these and develop new wildlife areas, due to strong local support. 	<p>Support and Action – The Community Plan supports this Action Point as it aims to increase the number and variety of natural habitats, with an indicator specifically measuring the acreage devoted to nature reserves, SSSIs etc.</p> <p>The District Council Community Grants team offer help locating funding, and can advise if this project may be eligible for the Council’s Community</p>

Recommended Action	SDC Proposed Response
	Grants scheme.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform SDC that 35% of people would be interested in purchasing processed compost. 	<p>Investigate – WCC collects green waste and the resulting compost is used on agricultural land. The compost is not of a high enough standard for sale to households. Composting at home can be a more sustainable method of producing compost. These comments will be forwarded to WCC.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider designation of a Conservation Area in village centre. 	<p>Support - The Conservation Area request is noted. Unfortunately the current resources of the Conservation team are devoted to reviewing the existing 75 Conservation Areas and there is no further capacity to consider more. The community could do a project themselves, such as a Village Design Statement, to define what is special about the character of the area. This could be used in determining planning applications, in accordance with Policy PR.1 of the Local Plan Review.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish Council to review street and low-level lighting 	<p>Support – The review will contribute to the Community Plan’s aim to improve public confidence and safety in communities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider opportunities for improvements to street environment including street drain provision and cleaning, and litter. Some services, such as litter, are provided by SDC. 	<p>Investigate – the community views will be forwarded to the SDC Land Drainage and Waste and Street Management teams. Suggest that the Parish contacts WCC to discuss street drainage.</p>
Young people	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up Youth Club (already achieved). Encourage ‘Sport for Napton’ to consider young people’s wishes for a shelter at sports field and slide at Playing field. 	<p>Support – The Community Plan aims to increase the number of young people participating in activities. The Parish should be congratulated on achieving this action.</p>

Recommended Action	SDC Proposed Response
Transport and parking	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate encouraging alternative flexible solutions to replace bus service (see p.13) and inform local service providers about lack of suitability of current bus service. 	<p>Action and support– SDC is a partner of the Community Links and Volunteer Centre Medical Journey schemes that may be able to provide transport. SDC Social Inclusion team will support the implementation group in giving more targeted publicity in the village. The Parish are also recommended to contact their Village Liaison Officer for support in this.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support and explore creation of cycle routes, especially to Southam. 	<p>Support – this action point is consistent with the Community Plan’s aims to improve the environment, reduce car-use and reduce traffic accidents. The scheme could be discussed with the WCC cycling officer and Sustrans.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve pedestrian access and consider more continuous pavement to be provided, if practicable /appropriate throughout village (Fells Lane already improved to provide safe route to school). Seek 20mph limit in the village centre. Liase with authorities to consider options for dealing with parking problem. Liase with authorities to provide pedestrian crossing on main road. 	<p>Support – these action points are all consistent with the Community Plan’s aims to improve the environment, reduce car-use and reduce traffic accidents.</p>
Tourism, recreation and the canal	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review provision of information for visitors and consider promoting to tourists bearing in mind the divided opinion in the village. 	<p>Support – this Action Point can be supported as it seeks to further review the situation and take into account residents’ mixed opinions.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate setting up of new clubs and evening classes for which there are demand. Provide sport pavilion at sports field (already commenced). Encourage promotion of allotments. 	<p>Support and action – the Community Plan aims to increase participation in sports, clubs and lifelong learning. The District Council Community Grants team offer help locating funding, and can advise if these projects may be eligible for the Council’s Community Grants scheme.</p>

Recommended Action	SDC Proposed Response
Housing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Housing Enabler and local authorities to research local housing need further (already in-hand). 	<p>Action and Endorse – the policies of the Local Plan Review (COM.1 and CTY.5) allow for the provision of local occupancy housing on a basis of identified need.</p> <p>The District Council will work with the Parish Council and Rural Housing Enabler to develop a clear picture of local need.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be aware of local preference for traditional design for new housing, support for smaller homes and housing for local people and need groups. 	<p>Endorse – as set out in Policy COM.1 of the Local Plan Review, a scheme to meet local housing need would be prepared in close conjunction with the community and planning permission is only likely to be granted for schemes which have the expressed support of the community.</p>
Community facilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide toilets, kitchen facilities and disabled access at the church (already part completed). Parish Council to provide additional capital funding towards new village hall replacement or refurbishment. 	<p>Support – The Community Plan aims to support communities and their facilities.</p> <p>The District Council Community Grants team offer help locating funding, and can advise if these projects may be eligible for the Council’s Community Grants scheme.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider options for the future use of the Old School Building taking into account residents’ opinions. 	<p>Endorse – Policy CTY.2 of the Local Plan Review supports the re-use of rural buildings for industrial, commercial, tourism and recreation uses subject to certain conditions. Policy COM.3 encourages the provision of new shops and services to meet the needs of local communities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage support for local businesses including post office and village shop. 	<p>Endorse – Policy COM.2 of the Local Plan Review seeks to retain shops and services which serve the needs of local communities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss possibility of about having a Community Police Beat Officer with authorities. 	<p>Support – The Community Plan aims to improve public confidence and safety.</p>
Planning and Design	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request that SDC considers the views of the community expressed in the Parish Plan when determining 	<p>Endorse – The Parish Plan and the community views expressed within it will be used as a material consideration</p>

Recommended Action	SDC Proposed Response
<p>planning applications. In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 20-50 homes to meet local need may be acceptable, but large scale development will not be supported. - decisions should take account of the visual impact on the landscape, especially of external storage and lighting. - design features should reflect the heritage of the village and be predominately red clay brick or Hornton Stone. - all new development should have adequate parking to the maximum allowed standard. - the amenity of the canal and other walking routes should be protected. - the creation of more large marinas or numbers of moorings is opposed. - The community wish to see moderate-scale canal-based development on former brickworks, with design to reflect the history of the area. - consideration should be given to the important views identified by the community on p.7. 	<p>when determining planning applications, as laid out in Policy COM.1 of the Local Plan Review.</p>

REPORT INFORMATION SHEET

Please complete and submit to Committee Services with draft report

COMMITTEE/DATE	DASSETT AREA COMMUNITY COMMITTEE – 10 TH OCTOBER 2006	
ITEM No/TITLE OF REPORT	NAPTON PARISH PLAN	
CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN		
CONSULTEE	✓	DETAILS / DATE OF CONSULTATION / COMMENTS RECEIVED
WARD MEMBERS	✓	CLLR NIGEL ROCK/ 15 TH SEPT 2006/ SUPPORTIVE OF PARISH PLAN AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADOPT
COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN/ PORTFOLIOHOLDER * <i>*Required</i>	✓	CLLR JOHN APPLETON/ 15 TH SEPT 2006/ SUPPORTIVE CLLR STUART BEESE/ 15 TH SEPT 2006
FINANCIAL SERVICES * <i>*Required</i>	✓	RICHARD BURRELL/ 15 TH SEPT 2006/ NO COMMENTS TO ADD
LEGAL SERVICES * <i>*Required</i>	✓	DAVID SWEETING/ 15 TH SEPT 2006
OTHER SERVICES	✓	HOUSING/ 12 TH SEPT 2006/ SUPPORTIVE, WELCOME INCLUSION OF HOUSING SECTION AND ACTIONS, REQUEST FURTHER INFO ON PLAN PREPARATION POLICY AND PR/ 12 TH SEPT 2006/ WILLING TO SUPPORT PUBLICITY OF COMMUNITY LINKS SCHEME LEISURE AND LOCAL ECONOMY/ 12 TH SEPT 2006
OTHER ORGANISATIONS	✓	NAPTON PARISH COUNCIL/ 15 TH SEPT 2006 WARWICKSHIRE RURAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL/ 12 TH SEPT 2006/ HAVE ALREADY BEEN VERY ACTIVE IN SUPPORTING THE PARISH ACHIEVE THE PLAN AND ITS ACTIONS. REQUEST AMENDMENT OF ACTION PLAN TO INCLUDE ALL ACTIONS. WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL/ 12 TH SEPT 2006
FINAL DECISION BY THIS COMMITTEE OR RECOMMENDATION TO ANOTHER COMMITTEE/COUNCIL ?		FINAL DECISION RECOMMENDATION TO : EXECUTIVE / COUNCIL COMMITTEE
DOES THIS REPORT CONTAIN EXEMPT INFORMATION? IF SO, UNDER WHICH PARAGRAPH(S) ?		No YES, PARAGRAPHS : <i>Delete as appropriate</i>
DOES THIS REPORT RELATE TO A KEY DECISION (REFERRED TO IN THE EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN)		No YES, FORWARD PLAN ITEM – SCHEDULED FOR (date) <i>Delete as appropriate</i>

