



Priors Marston

Looking ahead with the Parish Plan



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Priors Marston

Looking ahead with the Parish Plan

The decision to prepare a Parish Plan was taken by Priors Marston Parish Council in June 2003. This was in response to the Government White Paper *Our Countryside - The Future*.

The purpose of the Plan is to:

- set out a vision of what is important,
- determine how new development can best be fitted in,
- establish and set out the design and quality standards it should meet,
- agree on how to preserve valued local features, and
- to map out the facilities which the community needs to safeguard the future.

A Parish Plan is therefore a blueprint for the future of the Parish according to the needs and views of the community. Because the Parish Plan is based on local opinion, those villages that possess a Plan generally have a significant advantage when making bids for future funding; this is because proof of public consultation is often a fundamental requirement of those organisations allocating grants

The decision having been made by the Parish Council a grant was applied for and obtained from the Vital Villages programme of the Countryside Agency in April 2004 to help cover the cost of production as part of the Government's commitment to Parish Plans; and a small Steering Committee was set up to see the Parish Plan to fruition.

The first major step, and the keystone to the Plan, was to prepare a Survey of the Community, the prime objective of which was to find out what were the concerns of the community and to invite suggestions as to what might be done to improve life in the village and to formulate an Action Plan. The Survey, which was in two parts, one for Households and the other for Young Persons, was carried out in September 2004.

According to the Register of Electors 2004, there are 218 properties in Priors Marston and 398 registered electors as at 1st December 2003.

180 completed Household Questionnaires were returned which represents 83% of the properties on the Register. In addition, 26 young people (13 - 17 years of age) returned their completed separate questionnaires out of a total of 27 issued which represent 96% of the teenagers surveyed. It can therefore be regarded as truly representative of the views of the community of Priors Marston.

Arising out of the response to the Survey, an Action Plan was drawn up which sets out:

- the actions to be undertaken,
- the priorities and timetable,
- the partners,
- the lead responsibilities, and
- any resource implications.

This Parish Plan fully recognises the value placed by the community on village life, including services, facilities and institutions.

Full consultation opportunities have been given to the community during all of the various stages of the preparation of the Plan and the Priors Marston Parish Council, being the main partner, has given it its endorsement on 13th July 2005.

The Parish Council has already put some of the items of the Action Plan in hand before and since they were identified by the response to the Survey.

In order to implement the Action Plan, working groups will be established reporting back to the Parish Council who will monitor progress and keep the Action Plan under constant review.



2.1 The Village

Priors Marston is a large Warwickshire village located on the eastern edge of the County lying on a north to south axis immediately to the west of Marston Hill in the district of Stratford-on-Avon with easy access to the motorway network and central to the main towns of Leamington Spa, Coventry, Northampton and Banbury.

The village lies within the Special Landscaped Area, and part of the village centre is designated as a Conservation Area within both the adopted Stratford-on-Avon Local Plan and the Local Plan Review.

The village still resembles its traditional form even though recent development has intensified the built area within the old village envelope.

Priors Marston is approached by no less than six routes; Hardwick Road and Byfield Road from the south, Hellidon Road descending from Charwelton via Marston Hill in the east, with Shuckburgh Road from the north and Southam Road from the west. Keys Lane, a narrow road at the northern end of the village, winds its way down Marston Hill and enters the village at its northeastern tip.

It is predominantly a residential and farming community with no retail and support services in the village. There is one Inn, The Holly Bush, a privately run primary school that is free to children of homeowners of Priors Marston and of neighbouring Priors Hardwick. St. Leonard's Church lies at the centre of the village but is screened by trees and buildings from the village roads. There is a Village Hall, which contains five business units, and there is also a business unit in the disused garage. A sports club is situated on the Southern edge of the village.

The principal characteristics of the village are its overall setting, the impact of Marston Hill and its landscape links into the village, the importance of the gardens, paddocks and orchards holding together the scattered groups of buildings and terraces, etc.

The overall ambience of the village is attractive with large expanses of well maintained grassed verges in key areas, rich foliage in the form of hedgerows, shrubs and trees that do much to enhance the overall quality. They screen some of the most unsympathetic buildings and provide strong edges and borders to the roads and paths in the village.

The community clearly cares about the environment at Priors Marston; this is evidenced by local road signs, careful siting of street furniture, well-maintained public areas and an obvious pride in property and gardens.

The village has several key areas that are of particular quality and do much to raise the profile of the settlement and these are discussed in a later section.

The Conservation Area encompasses most of the village and although there are some weak areas, standards of development within the Conservation Area are generally high. Improvement and refurbishment work on old buildings is sensitive to the character of the village.

2.2 Its Residents

Approximately a quarter of Priors Marston's 500 or so residents are aged under 18, another quarter aged over 60 with the remainder being in between. They are equally divided between male and female and 46% go to work, 23% to school and 19% are retired.

Of those in work or at school, approximately 50% travel out of the village, some as far away as London.

A third of the respondents have lived in the village for less than 5 years and a fifth for over 25 years.

2.3 Landscape Setting

2.3.1 Landscape and Topography

Priors Marston is situated on gently sloping land that rises 12 metres over one kilometre from north to south. The village is virtually level on its east to west axis, but on its eastern periphery the land rises steeply from circa 144 metres to 188 metres to the crest of Marston Hill and lies within ironstone Uplands of the District.

As a consequence, Marston Hill provides a backdrop to the village when it is viewed from the west; views and vistas are mainly introverted with the longest along roads and these are generally limited to between 100 to 200 metres.

The village can be seen almost in its entirety from Marston Hill, but hardly at all from the western and northern approaches.

View from Marston Hill



2.3.2 Approaches

Approaches to the village are via small country roads that bend and curve their way towards Priors Marston. The accesses into the village as a result are incidental rather than monumental; the greatest impact occurs at The Green where the richness of mature trees, wide expanses of grassed verges and attractive buildings give a sense of arrival.

The greatest vehicular movement is in the vicinity of The Green with traffic entering and passing through the village from Southam, Byfield and Hellidon.

The other three approaches from Napton and Shuckburgh; from Priors Hardwick and the alternative approach from Hellidon through Keys Lane are much quieter.



Approach from Southam

As a consequence the northeastern and central parts of the village being comparatively quiet with less traffic movement.



Approach from Hellidon



Approach from Byfield



Approach from Napton & Shuckburgh



Approach from Priors Hardwick



Approach from Keys lane

2.3.3 Key Landscape Features

The landscape at Priors Marston is characterised by the abundance of trees and shrub planting that line roads, paths and define borders, edges and gardens. Species are rich and varied.

The most notable landscape feature of Priors Marston has to be the Churchyard which contains two magnificent Cedars of Lebanon, mature Yews, mature



Cedar of Lebanon

Ash, an Incense Cedar, Laburnum trees and scattered groups of Holly and Laurel shrubs.

The wide grassed verges at Priors Marston are a key component in the landscape and these must be fostered; at present they are well maintained. There are fine examples of Weeping Ash in the vicinity of The Green.



Weeping Ash

In Priors Marston, there are three main greens (See Appendix A), which reflect the development of the village through the ages. The earliest village was to the north and northwest of the existing, on both sides of Shuckburgh Road almost as far as the old watering pool and into the field where the Village Hall and adjacent houses now stand.

This (Northern) Green was part of all this and extended to the east up Keys Lane and Vicarage Lane, linking to the churchyard in front of The Orchard. It is generally recognised that, with the earlier greens, the Church is always very close. On a Spencer Estate plan of about 1750, this is shown as 'the Common'.



The Northern Green

As the village developed further south, another open space or Green was established running from where the telephone box now stands to the east as far as Westwood House, back to the churchyard wall to the north side where the remnants of the Village Pound still exist. This was where stray livestock would be kept until claimed by the owners who would have to pay a fine. Up to about a hundred years ago, village workshops and a smithy stood where the Holly Bush Inn car park is now situated. It is possible that the earliest school was also on this site, all facing onto this Middle Green.

The Middle Green





The Green

The newest green runs south from the Holloway (Shuckburgh Road) to the Byfield Road junction and was formed in the early sixteenth century when some of the existing houses were built. Here again it is a different shape but is the most recognisable as a green. It is unlikely that it was ever used for farming purposes; there used to be a sawpit on Chestnut Bank and in recent years a bus shelter and War Memorial have been erected.

It is important that in the future wooded areas, hedges and verges are all respected and enhanced.

ACTION

- Retain the sense of enclosure, the screening and integrity of the village
- Maintain the open spaces and protect the village greens from encroachment
- Maintain the balance between housing and employment opportunities to ensure that any development evolves in a balanced way and is sufficiently flexible to enable employment opportunities to fit in
- Enter the Best Kept Village competition

2.3.4 Footpaths

There is an interesting history of paths and roads through the Parish from very early times. We are set on the very ancient Ridgeway track, an Iron Age trading route locally linking Nadbury Camp Edgehill to Arbury Camp at Catesley - then out to Borough Hill Daventry. The Salt Road dating from at least the Roman occupation links Droitwich to Northampton and was used to carry salt for meat preservation and general trading runs across the centre of the Parish east to west. The Jurassic Way dates from prehistory, stretches from the Severn to the Humber and was used by hunters and traders generally following the Jurassic Ridge, on which we lay, and is only half mile from the County border at the top of the hill. The Welsh

Drovers Road enters the Parish, and running north to south forms the boundary with Priors Hardwick. It was used for several hundred years prior to the railways to drive livestock from the Welsh farms and others on route to the London markets. The main coaching route from Warwick to London ran through the village on its way to Towcester and was such an important link a High Constable was stationed here to deter highwaymen. The Oxford-Coventry canal opened in 1778.



Blue brick footpath

The Field footpath and Bridleway network we have today has been established for several hundred years and was originally brought into use to get to places of work and adjacent villages. In turn, the paths linked to others to get further afield. They often are a shorter, more direct route than the Highways, and they take one through some interesting countryside. The Paths and Bridleways are mainly used for recreational purposes today and are surveyed, maintained and signposted by a small team of Parish volunteers in conjunction with the County Council Parish Partnership Scheme. Larger works are carried out by the County Council, as is the maintenance of the Village footpaths with tarmac and brick surfaces.



Footpath Vicarage Lane

ACTION

- Retain and maintain all roads, drainage, footpaths and verges
- Investigate provision of 'Doggy Bins'

2.3.5 Seating

There are a number of seats throughout the village, many of which were in a state of disrepair. The 2004 Survey identified that there was a requirement to repair or replace the defective ones and provide an additional one by the Village Hall. The Parish Council has already taken action on this point and will continue to review the situation.

ACTION

- Refurbish/replace existing and install additional public seating

2.4 History and Development

Because the early settlers had mainly light softwood forests to clear, they were drawn to the area to farm agricultural land and with its ready water supply it was ideal to group their dwellings together to form early villages. The Domesday survey of 1086 records very little woodland but large acreage of arable and meadow in this, the Feldon area.

The name Priors Marston is from the Anglo Saxon 'merse' meaning marsh, with 'ton' meaning town. The Priors being added by the Benedictine Priory of Coventry when the manorship was endowed to them. The village is mentioned in the Domesday survey as part of Priors Hardwick, but in 1236 was listed as a separate place. After the dissolution of Coventry Priory in 1539,

the manorship passed through several hands until it was granted to Robert Lord Spencer in 1602. About a third of the parish was owned by the Spencers, but was let to tenants so not farmed by the family. They are still Lord of the Manor.

The original water supply for the village was from numerous wells but in about 1910 a piped system from spring fed tanks on the hill was installed. A mains supply came in 1948. Electricity arrived in 1934 and mains drainage in 1962, all of which made the village expansion possible.

"A village is only as good as its inhabitants" is an often-quoted saying and Priors Marston is no exception. According to the 1837 census, about 30 percent of the population was directly employed in agriculture, with about twice that number working in the immediate area on other rural jobs such as iron ore extraction, brick making, blacksmithing, building etc. Sixty years later with the continuing impact of the Industrial Revolution and the crisis in farming, the number of labourers working on the land declined and this altered the parish structure both in housing and population. The figure for the census of 1831 was 655 inhabitants, and in 1891 was 554 with a continuing decline to a low of 386 in 1951. Since then with the extensive new building, enlargements and barn type conversions, the number of dwellings has risen from 100 to about 200. It is interesting to note that only six houses were erected between 1900 and 1950, and there were numerous demolitions. The present population of around 500 has been reasonably steady for the last three decades.



3 The Village, Its Housing and Buildings

The village includes a wide variety of different types and styles of building, from traditional Horton Stone cottages, farm houses and houses many of which are listed, through to more recent brick built structures that are not always in sympathy with earlier examples.

There are several houses dated from the mid sixteen hundreds:- The Old Manor, Westview House, and The Orchards still with thatched roofs. Court Leet Manor (dated 1663), The Chestnuts Farmhouse (dated 1659), Keys House (dated 1660), Low House (dated 1664), The Hermitage (dated 1618), Falcon House, The Cedars, The Old Vicarage. All these houses have had alterations, extensions, and general remodelling which has altered their original appearance. A further number of houses were built about the middle of the 1700s, perhaps prompted by the Enclosure Act of 1758 which so radically altered farming methods with the farm houses being built away from the village. There was also a further burst of building activity about a hundred years later.



Half of the homes are pre 20th Century with the bulk of the remainder being built post 1945 and 80% owner occupied. Less than 20% were listed buildings.

Many homes are heated by more than one energy source and about half of the Respondents want the Parish Council to investigate alternative sources of power such as wind power.

Almost all homes had a telephone and three quarters are connected to the internet.

Just over half of the properties are detached.

There are 20 former semi-detached council houses, most of which have now been privately purchased and also 7 old people's bungalows.

The Survey indicated that, although the community is divided in their support for more housing, a large majority considered that there is a need for Affordable Housing, either to rent or shared ownership.

This was borne out by a more detailed housing need investigation carried out by Warwickshire Rural Housing Association in conjunction with Priors Marston Parish Council in November 2004. It concluded that there was a need for 9 properties of 2-4 bedrooms being required on shared ownership or for rent only basis to meet the local needs of local people within the Parish. At the time of preparing this plan, negotiations are in hand to bring this to realization through Policy COM.1 and Policy CTY.5 within Stratford-on-Avon District Local Plan Review which permits the development, in special circumstances, of affordable dwellings to meet local housing need in perpetuity in settlements where residential development is normally resisted.

The Action Plan, in addition to the current need, recognises that this is an ongoing consideration.

The community was equally divided as to whether more housing would spoil the environment or not.

The community is, however, overwhelmingly in favour of trying to preserve its character and to ensure that resources are protected, thereby retaining the existing status quo of the village, being a reflection of the fact that most people enjoy Priors Marston for what it is now.

ACTION

- Provide for current identified unmet housing need in the community
- Secure appropriate agreements with SDC and WRHA to ensure that residents and their families continue to benefit from the occupancy arrangements
- Keep housing needs under review
- Investigate alternative energy sources
- Promote energy efficiency at home



4 The Village, Its facilities

Priors Marston enjoys, many good facilities namely, St. Leonard's Church, the Priors School, the Village Hall, Sub-Post Office, the Holly Bush Inn, playing field, playground and the Sports and Social Club, some of which are shared with neighbouring Priors Hardwick. Its many organisations also operate jointly with Priors Hardwick.

The village does however lack a shop and petrol station although such are available in nearby Napton and Byfield.

ACTION

- Carry out a buildings use survey
- Secure provision of a village shop
- Encourage sale of local produce

4.1 St. Leonard's Church

The site has been used for worship for more than 700 years. The earliest known church was built in the 13th century, and in 1313 William de Bourton was appointed to be parish priest to Priors Hardwick and Priors Marston.

At that time much of this area belonged to the Priory of Coventry, a gift to the Priory from Leofric, King of Mercia.



The church was extensively altered with a new roof, porch and chancel added in 1863.

There were three chapels in the village for over a hundred years but all are now closed.

Nowadays Priors Marston is linked with Priors Hardwick and Wormleighton and church services alternate between the three parishes.

Many of the duties are undertaken by the lay folk in this lively parish, and the care of the church and churchyard reflect only part of the vigorous life of the parish. We take both pride and delight in our church.

The regular congregation is very small but is better supported on an occasional basis. e.g. Christmas, weddings, funerals and christenings, and civic occasions.

NB. An equally small number attend church services outside the village.

The church building is seen very much as a focal point of the village and a place for significant events and is of historical interest and whilst only a relative few go to services regularly, the majority view the church as an important part of the Parish.

Apart from church services, the church building is also used for choirs, concerts and bell ringing.

Many respondents considered that the church building was underused and could perhaps be used on a wider basis other than for services of worship.

The main concern of the community is the maintenance of the church building and grounds and also to provide better facilities within the building such as a toilet.

ACTION

- Seek grants for maintenance and additional facilities

4.2 The Priors School

The Priors School was built in 1847 by villagers on land owned by the fourth Earl Spencer. Two years later he entrusted the land and school to the community forever so long that it was used "for the free education of the children ...of the parishes" of Priors Marston and Priors Hardwick and for nearly 150 years it continued as a Church of England and state primary school to serve the two communities until the County Council announced that it would close in August 1996.

Threatened by the closure of the school, the two communities were galvanised into action. Having already



lost the village shop they feared that the village would lose its vitality and become a geriatric community. An educational charity was formed that adopted the school and with the support of the current Earl Spencer the

communities exercised their rights under the ancient trust deed and took possession of the land and buildings. The charity also raised £25,000 through the generosity of villagers, parents and other philanthropists who cared about the survival of the school. This gave the Trustees confidence to hire two teachers and move forward.

The school generated enormous support both locally and nationally and when it reopened in September 1996 with 12 pupils the press turned out to record the event, which captured the imagination of the country that day. This in turn brought donations and enrolments from people who saw the story.

Today, as the school starts its ninth year, the two communities of Priors Marston and Priors Hardwick can be proud of the school's achievements. A nursery and an extra classroom have been built, enrolment has grown to more than seventy, and by employing four teachers, the class sizes are small delivering the national curriculum and providing excellent standard of education. The school now serves as the prototype for the future survival of small schools under threat throughout the country.

The school maintains a strong relationship with the church - the vicar is also a Trustee - and the pupils attend their own church service every Friday, sing in the choir and perform a nativity play for the village each Christmas.

Volunteers from the community run the French club and the science club, teach tennis, cricket and football. In addition, volunteers have organised monthly lunches in the school for pensioners, with pupils entertaining them with demonstrations of their activities.

Without doubt, the school has invigorated the community and provides a focal point for the villagers. The hall can also be hired outside school hours.

It costs currently £140,000 per year to maintain the school. With the exception of nursery vouchers, it is financed without state support and we have to do it without charging fees to village children. The huge fundraising efforts made each year go a long way to meeting that annual target but we believe that the future of the school is best served by ensuring a regular and guaranteed income.

If the school was forced to close for lack of money, all sections of the community would suffer - children would be transported to schools further away, fewer young families would move here, village services would decline further, a valuable institution which has served the village for generations would be lost irretrievably and the beacon of hope we have held out for other small schools would be extinguished.

4.3 The Village Hall

The village hall is known as The Priors Hall, which is the culmination of a project that was conceived by the two villages of Priors Marston and Priors Hardwick to replace the existing one. We have taken the traditional concept of the village hall and reshaped it to meet the needs of the two villages in the next millennium.



The Priors Hall not only offers a large area where sports such as badminton and volleyball can be played, but also provides an ideal space for parties, weddings and business meetings.

The hall has been designed to accommodate up to 250 people and there are good catering facilities.

The Priors Hall also houses the sub-Post Office and provides five offices for local businesses, which funds the maintenance of the building.

It also houses a broadband Base Station providing a service to the Offices and nearby residents.

The Main Hall is used by a Badminton group, a Mothers and Toddlers group, the Women's Institute and the Fun Club for young children, a Coffee and Chat group, the Priors Painters and Indoor Bowls group.

The Priors Hall was funded by a Millennium Lottery grant, a grant from Stratford-on-Avon District Council, loans and gifts from villagers and also by the residents of the two villages by way of the Parish Precept. In addition, grants were received from the Carnegie Trust to provide furniture and equipment.

The Priors Hall is a registered charity.

4.4 The Sports and Social Club

The club, which is a private members club with membership open to all, by subscription, was formed in the 1950s, as a development from the village football team, with the aim of providing sports and social facilities for Priors Marston and Priors Hardwick.



Over the following 20 years funds were accumulated, and with the help of loans, the club was able, in the 1970s, to purchase the eight acre site which it currently occupies in Byfield Road.

Over the following few years a pavilion was built by club members on a self help basis to provide changing rooms and social facilities for the village football and cricket teams.

In the 1980s further funds were obtained to enable the building of two tennis courts, which in 2003 were upgraded, by being re surfaced and having floodlighting installed.

Today, the club fields three football teams, including a junior under 10's side, two cricket teams with the First XI playing in the Premier Division of the South Northants Cricket League. The tennis courts are used throughout the year, with junior supervised coaching sessions in the summer months. A tug of war team also has training facilities at the club grounds.

The now 25 year old mainly wooden pavilion suffers from the ravages of time. The pavilion provides a venue for the village darts team, and social events. Plans have been drawn up, for a more up to date building to replace it in the not too distant future.

ACTION

- Seek grants and loans to replace the existing pavilion
- Provide footpath to Sports & Social club

4.5 The Holly Bush Inn



The Holly Bush Inn, which is now the only pub in the village was originally built in the late 17th to early 18th century with a mid 19th century addition and 20th century alterations.

Initially it was a farmhouse and where the car park now is was a centre for small businesses including a blacksmith and other small traders. It had a small shop and began to brew and sell beer. Eventually it began to buy in beer from Leamington but it was not until after the Second World War that it became fully licensed.

4.6 The Playground and Playing Field

The land for the playground belongs to the Priors School but the equipment was provided by the Parish Council and installed by volunteers from the village. The maintenance of the playground is by the Parish Council, which was paid for by Stratford-on-Avon District Council but in future will be by the Parish Council.

The playing field belongs to the Parish but is let to the Priors School who maintain it. It is however open for use by the whole community. It is free of charge for children's general use provided it is booked in advance and there is a responsible adult to supervise activities.

The playing field is also available for hire for any other suitable event, which can be booked via the school.

4.7 Information & Communications

There are two main forms of communication in the village. One is by notices in the village notice board outside the Village Hall and the other is by articles/notices in the Parish Magazine.

In addition, there is a notice board in the Village Hall and notices are also displayed on the lampposts throughout the village. Flyers are also a main source of information and these are invariably distributed with the milk delivery.

There is a Village Directory, which includes all the telephone numbers and other pertinent information concerning the villagers and the services available.

A welcome pack is provided to all newcomers to the village.

Broadband is available in the village but mobile telephone reception is variable.

ACTION

- Widen scope of Parish Magazine and provide more community information
- Update the Village Directory
- Promote the use of the Internet as a means of accessing public services, government etc

4.8 The Post Office and postal service

Priors Marston has a sub-post office, which is situated in the Village Hall and is open three days per week handling mostly pensions and, apart from general postage, is used for paying bills which is a valuable service to the community, and should it be closed it would be a considerable loss.

The collection and delivery service was rated as generally quite good.



5 Transport and Traffic

Transport to and from the village is a problem. Since the decline in rural work opportunities, many more people commute to work and to school. This has given rise to more traffic to and from and through the village.

Due to the limited availability of public transport, the commuting transport requirement is largely solved by the community itself by the use of its own private transport together with the limited provision of voluntary transport. There are areas where there is a shortfall or inconvenience at times especially as there is no doctor, dentist, emergency services, garage nor shop in the village.

This additional traffic upsets the tranquillity of the village, which the inhabitants have been used to, or seek to, enjoy.

There were 383 roadworthy motor vehicles, kept by 165 (79%) of the respondents amounting to an average of 1.8 cars per respondent to the question.

This number of vehicles has resulted in on road/verge/footpath/village green parking, there being insufficient parking spaces in the village and more are needed. It is also a safety concern.

Of those households without private transport, some clearly use public transport and make use of the WRVS voluntary car service and some may never go out of the village at all.

Almost all of the respondents who used public transport indicated that they wanted to see specific improvements to the bus service. The young people of the village also wanted so see such improvements.

A majority of the respondents expressed their concerns about traffic dangers, in particular in relation to speeding and would support speed control measures and to gritting of the major roads in winter.

NB. A large amount of traffic passes through Priors Marston on its way to Daventry, Northampton and the M1 via Hellidon and to Banbury and the M40 via Byfield.

Inspection of the results and text answers to the 2004 survey reveal a number of main concerns of the community and the following suggestions as to what actions might be taken to improve life in the village.

ACTION

- Introduce speed control measures
- Reduce on road/verge/footpath/village green parking and improve parking facilities
- Extend the gritting areas to include Napton Road, Helidon Road and Byfield Road
- Seek improvements in relation to the public transport

6 Education and Young People

A high percentage of nursery and primary school children in the village attend the Priors School and almost all of the respondents consider that it is important to keep the Priors School open. A large number support and attend the school's fundraising events.

With regard to facilities available for teenagers, most respondents mention activities at the Sports Club and the church-organised fun clubs. A substantial number believe there are no village facilities for teenagers

The remainder of schoolchildren are either attending secondary school, 6th form college or university etc outside of the village. For some of these children there is a problem in attending after school activities due to lack of adequate transport.

There is clearly a cause for concern over the free time activities of school children, or more particularly, the lack of facilities. This is expressed both in the household survey and in the young persons survey. Whilst there are some activities provided, e.g. the fun clubs, there are clearly not enough.

Most people cite a youth club or some kind of formal meeting place for teenagers as a facility that should be made available. The Village Hall and/or sports club are put forward as possible venues and a whole range of interesting and diverse activities has been suggested.

NB Please see the summary of the Young Persons Survey

Inspection of the results and text answers to the 2004 survey reveal a number of main concerns of the community and the following suggestions as to what actions might be taken to improve life in the village.

ACTION

- Provide cheaper rates for use of the Village Hall by young people
- Set up a youth club and meeting facility
- Provide greater range of activities for young people
- Improve the basketball facility

7 Design Guidelines

By the overwhelming response of the 2004 Survey, the people of Priors Marston have declared that it is their wish to retain the present distinctive character and overall setting of the village.

To this end, the Parish Plan supports the District Design Guide, where it is applicable to the village, which states that;

To achieve the objectives of this guide, the central focus is the distinctive, local qualities of the District. The guidance works on the basis that new development should share some of the characteristics that define the area in which it is located.

The Parish Plan, which incorporates these design guidelines, is put forward as Supplementary Planning Guidance and should be read in conjunction with the Stratford-on-Avon District Design Guide, Issue 1 dated 2001.

These design guidelines are intended to highlight the distinctive, local qualities of Priors Marston.

The distinctive character and overall setting of the village is described in Section 2 of the Plan. In particular, the community wishes to retain the views and open spaces within the village, the Village Green, the verges and footpaths, its trees and its buildings.

In addition to the vistas shown in Section 2 hereof, Priors Marston particularly wishes to retain the following additional vistas.



The Green from Southam Road

From Hardwick Road



School Lane towards the Old Manor

The buildings in the village comprise a wide variety of styles and materials, all of which combine to give it a special character. As most of the village is designated as a Conservation Area, the design requirements are necessarily more stringent than elsewhere and therefore, developments within that area will be expected to enhance and improve the area.

The following are considered mandatory to maintain the character of the village;

- The design and usage of materials in any alteration or extension should be at least equal to or better than that of the main structure.
- No encroachment of the building line should take place.
- All planning permissions given should seek, by condition if possible, to protect the existing roads, footpaths, verges, trees, hedges or the like and to reinstate the same.
- Additional planting of trees, shrubs and hedges to maintain the borders in keeping with the village landscape setting.

Whilst there is a variety of designs of buildings with many differing details, the following preferred materials and design details are considered appropriate to maintain the character of the village.



Shuckburgh Road

Materials

Walls

- Hornton Stone
- Red brick with blue brick damp course and cills.

Roofs

- Thatch
- Slate
- Red clay tiles

Windows

- Natural Timber

Doors

- Natural timber

Details

Roof lights

- By dormer windows to front elevation only
- By roof lights to rear elevation only

Eaves

- Dentilated brick

Verges

- Projecting header or stretcher

Typical details



8 Action Plan

The Action Plan has been derived from the results of the Survey carried out during 2004, analysis of the results of which was carried out by Warwick Network Ltd. A summary of the results was delivered to each household and which included a list of possible items to be included in the Action Plan.

Consultation opportunities have been given to the community at all stages, namely:

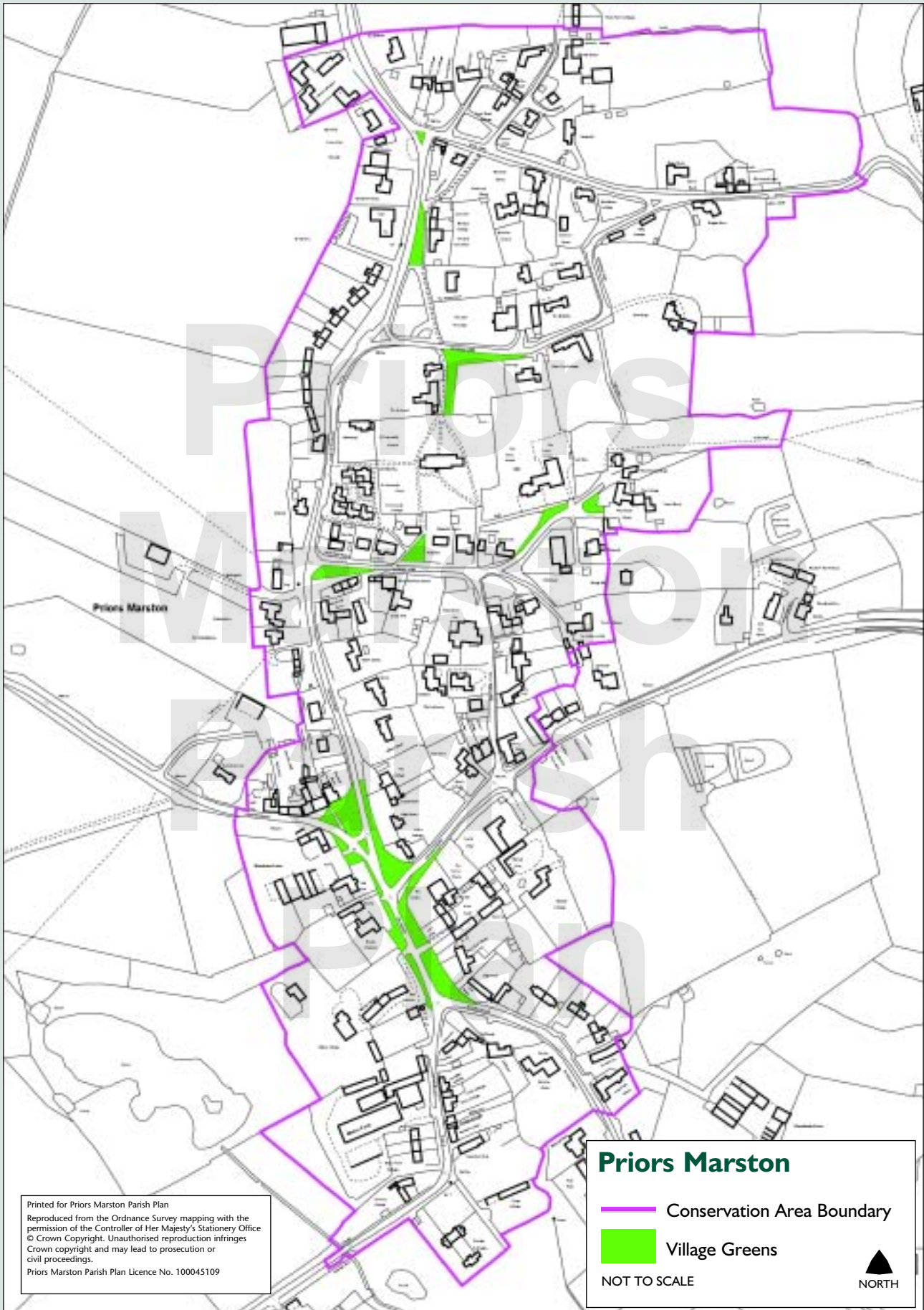
Notice of intent to develop a parish plan was given in the Parish Magazine	Feb 04
Invitations were sent to the various local organisations requesting their participation and for their list of hopes and aspirations for the future	06/02/04
Annual General Parish Meeting - Outlined the proposal to develop a plan. Linda Ridgley of WRCC gave a display and talk on the merits of a plan and how it should be conducted. A sample preliminary survey was issued and comments were invited and volunteers were requested. A special notice advertising that the Parish Plan to be discussed at the AGM was displayed at various locations within the village.	23/04/04
Distribution of the Questionnaires to each household.	16/08/04
Notice regarding the Questionnaires was given in the Parish Magazine.	Sept 04
The Survey results were put on display in the Village Hall and comments were invited.	15/01/05 - 04/08/05
A summary of the results of the Survey, together with a list of the main items to be included in the Action Plan, (the Wish List), was circulated to each household.	15/01/05
Summaries of responses concerning separate topics were given to the various local organisations concerned.	05/02/05
Draft Action Plan displayed in Village Hall at the Village AGM and comments were invited.	23/04/05
Notice was given by Flyer to all households of the Draft Plan to be displayed in the Village Hall.	16/07/05
Draft Plan was displayed in the Village Hall and comments were invited.	21/07/05 - 04/08/05

The points of action are highlighted within the appropriate sections and full details of the Action Plan are set out in Appendix B. These details include the priority and timescale, the partners and lead responsibility and resource implications.

Priors Marston Parish Council endorsed the Action Plan on Wednesday, 8th June 2005.

Priors Marston Parish Council endorsed the Parish Plan on Wednesday, 13th July 2005.

On Tuesday, 8th November 2005, Stratford-on-Avon District Council adopted Priors Marston Parish Plan as Supplementary Planning Guidance and the aims of the Action Plan are also supported by Stratford-on-Avon District Council.



Detailed Action Plan

Appendix B

Topic Area	Action	Priority P	Priority Time	Partners	Delivery	Lead Responsibility	Resource Implications
Household & Home	Investigate alternative energy sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wind • all forms of solar • electricity generating gas boilers 	Low	Long	Parish Council District Council Warwickshire County Council Warwickshire Energy Efficiency Advice Centre (WEEAC)	Set up meeting with WEEAC and circulate energy saving advice to residents.	Parish Council District Council	Secure appropriate grants from central government, and match funding, to undertake feasibility studies into alternative energy.
	Promote energy efficiency in the home.	Med	Med		Provide information on range of services accessible by internet. Establish village website.		Small cost for obtaining domain name.
	Promote use of internet as a means of accessing public services, e-government etc.	Low	Long				
	Update Village Directory.	High	Short	Priors School			Cost of production funded by subscription and advertisements.
Housing	Provide for current identified unmet housing need in the community.	High	Med	Parish Council District Council WRHA WRCC Housing Enabler	WRCC Housing Enabler Circulate results of Local Housing Need Survey to partners.	Parish Council District Council	
	Secure appropriate agreements with SDC and WRHA to ensure that residents and their families continue to benefit from the occupancy arrangements.	High	Short		Identify appropriate sites within the village. Consult with community on site selection.		
	Keep housing needs under review.	Med	Long	Parish Council District Council, WRHA			

Detailed Action Plan

Appendix B

Topic Area	Action	Priority P	Time	Partners	Delivery	Lead Responsibility	Resource Implications
Education & Young People	Cheaper rates for use of village hall by young people.	High	Short	Parish Council District Council Warwickshire County Council Rural Transport Officer	Introduce concessionary rates for Village Hall.	Parish Council County Council District Council Young People Village Hall Committee	Funds may be required to subsidise use of Village Hall – Parish precept.
	Set-up a youth club and meeting facility.	High	Med		Undertake further consultation with young people to identify activities required.		Additional resources to undertake additional consultation and deliver facilities.
	Provide greater range of activities for young people.	Med	Med		As above.		As above.
	Investigate frequency of public transport to meet young people's needs.	Med	Med		Consider transport brokerage scheme to provide bus services at required times.		Investigate capital grants that might be appropriate.
Community & Facilities	Widen scope of Parish Magazine and provide more community information.	High	Short	Parish Council PCC	Editor to consider and implement additional material in magazine as suggested in survey findings.	Parish Council PCC	Cost of production funded by subscription and advertisements.
	Encourage more use of school, sports club, church and village hall, i.e. fitness club.	High	Med	Parish Council Sports Clubs Village Hall Committee School Church	Consider promotional events and competitions. Carry out Buildings Use Survey.		Obtain quotes for refurbishment and seek grants, i.e. WRCC Village Hall Fund.
	Refurbish sports club.	Med	Long	Sports Club District Council User Groups	Appraisal of work to either renovate or, if needed replace facility.		Obtain quotes for refurbishment and seek grants, i.e. Sport England, District Council, private funding or voluntary contributions.

Detailed Action Plan

Appendix B

Topic Area	Action	Priority P	Priority Time	Partners	Delivery	Lead Responsibility	Resource Implications
Community & Facilities (contd.)	Provide footpath to Sports Club.	Med	Med	Parish Council WCC Landowners	Open discussions with relevant landowner, and WCC Rights of Way officer.		Legal expenses incurred through establishing access and construction costs of footpath. Ongoing maintenance etc.
	Make the School playing fields accessible to young people in village.	High	Short	Parish Council WCC School Trustees	Appraisal of need from potential user groups, discussions with WCC and School.		Likely to incur minimal cost.
	School holiday and evening activities at the school for all.	Med	Med	Parish Council District Council WCC School Trustees Local activity groups and sports clubs	As above.		As above.
The Church	Seek grants for church maintenance and additional facilities.	High	Med	PCC Local community	Investigate funds that might be available. Organise community wide initiative for maintenance of the church building.	PCC	In kind support and volunteer time.
Village Environment & Development	Maintain balance between housing and employment opportunities in the village, i.e. to ensure that any development evolves in a balanced way and is sufficiently flexible to enable employment opportunities to fit in.	Med	Long	Parish Council District Council County Council	Policies in the Local Plan Review support the retention of the local character and distinctiveness of the village. Policy COM.1 allows for the provision of development to meet a local identified need.	District Council County Council Parish Council	Provision of street furniture/bins through Parish precept. [Design guide section is included in Section 7 of the Parish Plan]
	Maintenance of road, drainage and pavements.	High	Short		Explore setting up of Drainage Action Group.		
	More village seats.	High	Short	Parish Council	Partly complete.	Parish Council	
	Investigate provision of 'Doggy Bins'	High	Short	Parish Council			Highly dependant upon cost of emptying.

Detailed Action Plan

Appendix B

Topic Area	Action	Priority P	Priority Time	Partners	Delivery	Lead Responsibility	Resource Implications
Transport & Traffic	Improvements to the bus service.	Low	Med	Parish Council County Council Police Public transport operators	Consider appropriate scheduling of services to meet needs of young people and access to key services, i.e. GP, Dentist etc. Complete.	Parish Council, WCC Rural Transport Officer	Funding sources through County Council. Advice and guidance on rural transport needs assessment and partner agencies from Countryside Agency.
	Introduce speed control measures.	High	Short				
	Reduce levels of on-street parking and improve parking facilities.	High	Med		Consider 'brokerage' scheme (i.e. use of vehicles during down-times).		
	Extend gritting to include the Napton, Helidon, and Byfield Roads.	High	Med		Discuss with County Council and Police measures to reduce speeding and alleviate parking problems. Discuss with County Council extension of gritting to areas identified.		
Priors Marston & the Future	Recognise the value placed by the community on village life, including services, facilities and institutions.	High	Long	Community Parish Council District Council County Council	Adopt and review Parish Plan and implement Action Plan. Lobby service providers, i.e. Post Office to make improvements to services.	Parish Council Community	Become aware of the sources of grants available from Charitable Trusts, local and regional statutory bodies, i.e. DEFRA, Advantage West Midlands etc.
	Secure provision of village shop.	Med	Long		In the absence of a commercial opportunity consider setting up community run facility. As above.		
	Encourage sale of local produce.	Med	Long		Complete.		
	Enter for 'Best Kept Village' competition.	High	Short				

Acknowledgements

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Thanks too are given to Priors Marston Parish Council who has given their unfailing support and practical help to the Plan.

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