

**Subject:** Ratley and Upton Parish Plan

**Lead Officer:** Karen Johnstone

*Contact on 01789 260332*

**Lead Member/  
Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Beese

---

### Summary

This report sets out the assessment of the Ratley and Upton Parish Plan. Ratley and Upton Parish Council adopted the Plan in April 2008.

### Recommendation

- (1) That the Parish Plan is adopted as a local information source to offer advice to the relevant services of Stratford-on-Avon District Council.
  - (2) That Stratford-on-Avon District Council seeks to respond to the Parish Plan Action Plan in the ways suggested in Appendix C of this report.
  - (3) That the Parish Plan is adopted by Stratford District Council as a material consideration in processing planning applications, in accordance with Policy COM.1 of the Local Plan Review.
  - (4) That the Parish Plan steering group, Parish Council and the residents of Ratley and Upton Parish be commended for preparing their Parish Plan and that they are encouraged to implement and review their Action Plan.
- 

## 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 many of the communities in the district having completed or in the process of undertaking detailed Parish Plans 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 Ratley and Upton Parish Plan**
    - 1.3.1 In January 2006 the Parish Council organised a public open meeting to
-

launch the Parish Plan, and a Parish Plan Steering Group was formed as a result including a member of the Parish Council to allow good communication. The Plan was funded by a community grant from the Dasset Area Community Committee of Stratford District Council, and funding from DEFRA, the Parish Council, local businesses and contributions in kind from many volunteers. Throughout the process regular update posters were used to advertise events and report back on progress.

- 1.3.2 The Steering Group raised awareness of the project and collected preliminary information by visiting the Parish Council, Women's Institute, and Ratley Welfare Trust. Suggestion boxes were put in both local pubs. Ratley Youth Club helped with an exhibition of likes and dislikes about the local area. A preliminary interview was conducted with 30 residents to help formulate the questionnaire.
- 1.3.3 This information informed the preparation of a questionnaire which was sent to every household in the Parish. 100 households completed the questionnaire out of a total of 187 households in the Parish. This gives a response rate of 53% which on its own would not be considered conclusive because of the small sample size. However the excellent opportunities for community consultation at other stages of the preparation process mean that the Plan can still be considered robust and representative of the community. A Business Questionnaire was returned by 19 of the 39 businesses in the Parish.
- 1.3.4 The steering group drafted the Parish Plan and Action Plan informed by the information gathered. The findings of the consultation, and a draft Parish Plan, were presented at a well-attended public meeting where steering group members were available to discuss any issues and written comments could be submitted.
- 1.3.5 The Parish Council adopted the Parish Plan in April 2008 and will oversee its implementation. The Parish Council has been supplied with suggestions on how to take the actions forward and a list of people who volunteered to help with specific actions. The Parish Council will monitor the ongoing actions of the Parish Plan through periodic meetings with the various teams/ groups working on the actions. Some of the actions are already being taken forward or have been completed.

#### 1.4 **Ratley and Upton Parish Plan findings**

- 1.4.1 The findings of the Parish Plan, which have informed the Action Plan, cover:
  - Communications/ Access to Information
  - Social, Community and Leisure
  - Economics and Transport
  - Health and Social Services
  - Services
  - Crime, Disorder and Prevention
  - The Environment

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 and qualitative data that has informed the Action Plan and is a useful information source.

- 1.4.2 Suggested response: Endorse – that the findings of the Ratley and Upton Parish Plan be endorsed as a true representation of the topics addressed by the Parish Plan questionnaire.

## 1.5 **Ratley and Upton 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 Ratley and Upton 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. The majority of the actions identified can be undertaken entirely by the village itself, and the Parish Plan has been very successful in encouraging volunteers to come forward for a variety of actions. The District Council can offer advice and support in undertaking some actions, and offer help in locating funding. Progress has already been made in taking forward actions including the Village Hall renovation and the Village Information Pack

- 1.5.3 SDC Housing Team and Warwickshire Rural Community Council welcome the action proposing ongoing work on local housing needs and can provide help in this area.

- 1.5.4 The Parish Plan text identifies that facilities for teenagers and disabled people are felt to be unsatisfactory and that further analysis and activities need to be identified and undertaken to resolve these issues. However there is currently no action within the Action Plan picking up on this issue, and the Steering Group have therefore agreed to highlight this omission to the Parish Council.

## 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 planning consideration.
- 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 so far been 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 Appleton offered the following comment: "I would like to see actions in the plan for the support/development by the community of the local network of rights of way, whether they are footpaths or bridleways. The County Council offers a partnership scheme which can provide advice and
-

guidance." This suggestion is included in the SDC suggested responses in Appendix C.

#### **4 Implications of the proposal**

##### **4.1 *Legal/Human Rights Implications***

4.1.1 If adopted, the Parish Plan will become a material consideration to be taken into account when determining planning applications. The Plan does not conflict with the District Council's policies.

##### **4.2 *Financial***

4.2.1 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 and Country Councils fund operates a combined grants scheme aimed at funding these types of projects, and the District Council's 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.

##### **4.3 *Environmental***

4.3.1 Many of the actions within this Parish Plan aim to increase the sustainability of life within the village and reduce the need to travel to access activities and services.

##### **4.4 *Corporate Strategy***

4.4.1 The Parish Plan is a useful source of information about local community perception of their locality. The Community Plan and Corporate Strategy 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.

##### **4.5 *Equality Impact Assessment***

4.5.1 The consultation for the Plan provided everyone within the community with an opportunity to comment.

4.5.2 The Parish Plan text identifies that facilities for teenagers and disabled people are felt to be unsatisfactory and that further analysis and activities need to be identified and undertaken to resolve these issues. However there is currently no action within the Action Plan picking up on this issue, and the Steering Group have therefore agreed to highlight this omission to the Parish Council.

#### **5 Risk assessment**

5.1 The actions recommended within this report are to commend those involved in the preparation of the Parish 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 Ratley, Upton and Edgehill should be commended and congratulated on completing their Parish Plan, and are encouraged by Stratford District Council and Warwickshire County Council to implement and periodically review the Action Plan.
- 6.2 The Ratley and Upton Parish Plan is a good example of how a community can prepare a 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:

*Ratley and Upton Parish Plan 2007*

*Stratford District Community Plan; the future to 2015*

*Stratford-on-Avon Local Plan Review 2006*

*Stratford-on-Avon District Council Corporate Strategy 2008-12*

*Officers Consulted*

*Head of Service: 21/08//2008*

*Monitoring Officer: xx/xx/xxxx (date of report consultation)*

*Chief Executive: xx/xx/xxxx (date of report consultation)*

---

## 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  
                                  WRCC= Warwickshire Rural Community Council

Appendix A gives an explanation of what is mean by each suggested response key word.

Parish Plan action	SDC Proposed Response
Parish Council to support volunteers to explore and set up a Parish Newsletter, events calendar, Parish websites, Parish information pack and a Business directory.	<b>Support</b> – The Community Plan seeks to support communities and these activities are welcomed. The Parish information pack has already been completed.
Parish Council to review communication methods and publicise more actively.	<b>Support</b> – this action point can be supported.
Parish Plan Steering Committee to investigate and publicise the SDC Community Links scheme and transport sharing opportunities.	<b>Action</b> – The Community Plan aims to support individuals by increasing the number of people using tailored transport schemes.  SDC is a partner of the Community Links, Back and 4 <sup>th</sup> , and Volunteer Centre's Medical Journeys scheme. The Social Inclusion team have sent information on Community Links to the Parish Clerk and Ward Member, and are happy to meet the Parish Council to discuss further if required.

Parish Plan action	SDC Proposed Response
<p>Parish Council to invite WCC and SDC to tour the parish and review traffic calming measures.</p>	<p><b>Investigate</b> – Joint committees now have some limited funding allocated to them for spending on road safety and maintenance. Requests for funding are likely to be considered at a seminar for Joint Committee Members in January. Some competing demands on the available money can be expected.</p> <p>The Parish Council are advised to contact the WCC Minor Works Officer if they wish consideration to be given to funding a feasibility study for traffic calming from the delegated capital budget. They are also advised to seek support from their County and District Ward members and the Joint Committee.</p>
<p>Parish Plan Steering Group to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support Communications Group to complete register of key local business and tradesmen</li> <li>- Passes data on health to the WI and Village Hall Committees for consideration</li> <li>- Send a copy of report to local GP practices with a note of thanks</li> <li>- Send note of thanks to people who organise valued events and groups in the parish.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Support</b> – these action points can be supported.</p>
<p>The following information to be fed back to WCC and SDC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Note of thanks re. road maintenance and relevant data to highlight any problems</li> <li>- Data on planning process delays</li> <li>- Information on opinion of schools with supporting data</li> </ul>	<p><b>Support</b> – this report recommends that WCC and SDC adopt Ratley Parish Plan as a local information source, and this information would be useful to inform the services of the Councils.</p>
<p>Key Volunteers to contact paramedics, e.g. St Johns ambulance, to investigate a First Aid course for those expressing interest. Volunteers to also take forward a local defibrillator scheme in liaison with health and ambulance services and first responders in local parishes.</p>	<p><b>Support/ Action</b> - this action point can be supported. The District Council Community Grants team offers help locating funding, and can advise if these projects may be eligible for the Council's Community Grants scheme.</p>

Parish Plan action	SDC Proposed Response
Parish Council to work with SDC to improve the waste recycling and collection service across the parish.	<b>Action</b> – SDC are now operating a new waste service providing doorstep collection of all recycling including plastic, cardboard and green/food waste. SDC will welcome feedback once the new scheme is established.
Parish Council to invite representatives from Police, Neighbourhood Watch and Fire Service to discuss local concerns.	<b>Support</b> – the Community Plan aims to increase public confidence and reduce fear of crime.
Parish Council to pursue possibility of limited housing development with South Warwickshire Housing Association and SDC	<b>Endorse/Action</b> - The District Council is keen to support the Parish Council and WRCC Rural Housing Enabler in their work. Policy COM.1 of the District Local Plan allows for the provision of local occupancy housing on the basis of an identified need.
Village Hall Committee to investigate refurbishment of the village hall to provide for future needs of the community.	<b>Support/ Action</b> – this project is being progressed, and has been successful in winning funding from sources including the East Joint Committee.
Village Hall Committee to consider range of ideas suggested for social, cultural and education events in conjunction with neighbouring parishes.	<b>Support/ Action</b> – the Community Plan aims to maximise the use of existing facilities. The District Council Community Grants team offers help locating funding, and can advise if projects may be eligible for the Council's Community Grants scheme.
Communications Group to contact Warwickshire Library Service to ask about mobile library usage and improvement of publicity.	<b>Support</b> – The Mobile Library Service visits several locations in the parish fortnightly and can be contacted on 01926 851 031. This action point is welcomed.
Parish Council to contact: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local bus services to investigate possibilities of improvements and changes to the services.</li> <li>- water supply company to ask for improvements and monitoring, citing concern over water pressures in survey results</li> <li>- Electricity supply company to ensure reliability of supply and discuss possibility of putting electricity cabling underground.</li> </ul>	<b>Support</b> - these action points can be supported. The Community Plan aims to increase access to key services.
Environmental Group to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draw up annual programme for</li> </ul>	<b>Support</b> – the Community Plan aims to improve the natural environment of the

Parish Plan action	SDC Proposed Response
<p>environmental improvements, e.g. hedges and verges, and seek volunteers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Investigate a programme for improving the Telecommunication services within the Parish</li> <li>- Set up a group of volunteers to map, explore and create sustainable systems for the improvements of the local environment and landscape.</li> </ul>	<p>District.</p> <p>It is also suggested that the Parish Council, possibly through the Environmental Group, could consider improving and developing the local network of footpaths and bridleways with support from the Warwickshire County Council P3 Partnership Scheme.</p>
<p>Parochial Church Council to receive requested information from survey, and liaise with Environmental Group when mobilising volunteers to help maintain grounds of the church.</p>	<p><b>Support</b> – this action point can be supported.</p>
<p>Parish Council to pursue analysis of Goggs spring water for drinking</p>	<p><b>Support</b> – this action point can be supported.</p>

**REPORT INFORMATION SHEET**

Please complete and submit to Committee Services with draft report

Committee/Date	16/09/08	
Item No/Title of report	Bishop's Itchington Parish Plan	
<b>Consultations undertaken</b>		
<b>Consultee</b>	✓	<b>Details / Date of consultation / comments received</b>
Ward Members		Cllr Simon Jackson/ 14 <sup>th</sup> August 08
Committee Chairman/ Portfolioholder * <i>*Required</i>		Cllr Beese/ 14 <sup>th</sup> August 08 Cllr John Appleton/ 14 <sup>th</sup> August 08/ reported in Section 3
Financial Services * <i>*Required</i>		Richard Burrell/ 14 <sup>th</sup> August 08/ no further comments
Legal Services * <i>*Required</i>		Leenamarie Aantaa-Collier/ 14 <sup>th</sup> August 08/ as reported within Section 4
Other Services		Housing/ 6 <sup>th</sup> August 08/ Supportive, offer help in taking forward housing needs  Policy and PR/ 6 <sup>th</sup> August 08/ Happy to supply more info on Community Links  Community Services/ 6 <sup>th</sup> August 08
Other organisations		Warwickshire Rural Community Council/ 6 <sup>th</sup> August 08 / Supportive, offer help in taking forward housing needs  Warwickshire County Council/ 10 <sup>th</sup> April 08/ notes most actions are to be undertaken by community, detailed comments on traffic calming reported in Appendix C
final decision by this Committee or recommendation to another committee/Council ?		Final decision  Recommendation to : Executive / Council  ..... Committee <i>Delete as appropriate</i>
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>
--	--	------------------------------