



PARISH PLAN 2006

OUR VILLAGE OUR FUTURE

What we believe is important

What we like and do not like

What we wish

- to keep
- to change,
- to improve in our community



AT the request of Ilmington Parish Council a steering group was set up in December 2003 to prepare the way for creating a parish plan. During 2004, in consultations and workshops at the village hall, the pubs, the show and Christmas fete, we learned about the concerns of different age groups and sections of the community. Regular update leaflets were delivered to every household and contact was maintained throughout with the parish council.

In the light of this, a questionnaire was put together in February 2005 and delivered to every household in the parish. Four out of five households completed it, demonstrating a strong community spirit, and the energy of the volunteers who collected the surveys. Your replies were analysed and every household received a summary report. We presented a first draft plan at an open day in July 2005, when more than 30 people offered comments and suggestions, and a revised draft was put on display at Ilmington Show.

The final plan, including the village design statement, is based on your views. This key document identifies what facilities and services the people of Ilmington want to be improved and how they believe the character of the parish should be preserved.

An action plan has been drawn up and submitted to Ilmington Parish Council, Stratford on Avon District Council, Warwickshire County Council and other interested bodies. The parish plan will further strengthen our case in bidding for funds to improve local facilities.

Members of the steering group worked for two years to reach this point, and I cannot thank them and our volunteer deliverers enough for their hard work. Without the support that most people in the parish have willingly given to this project, the plan would not exist.

I thank you all for contributing to what we hope will be an effective statement of your opinions and aspirations for the community of Ilmington.

CHAIRMAN OF THE STEERING GROUP

Sheila Ribbans

MEMBERS:

Joyce Bridges, Susan Brock, Jill Coupland, Luke Hodgkin, Arthur Knapp, Michael Lodge, Judy Maguire, David Sabin, Irene Sabin, Caroline Wilber, Stephen Wright

ILMINGTON, WARWICKSHIRE

PARISH PLAN 2006



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Tucked under the highest point of Warwickshire, Ilmington is the northern gateway to the Cotswolds. The village clusters round a traffic-free green sanctuary of manor house, Norman church, allotments, remnants of orchards, and ancient ponds fed by hillside springs. Much of the village, including two greens, is a conservation area within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The name of Ilmington is said to derive from the elm trees that embroidered the landscape for centuries, until disease struck them down 30 years ago. Their disappearance has opened up wider views of hill and vale that create the particular character of Ilmington's landscape.

Why here?

The earth and the sky are the two natural influences that led man to settle where porous Cotswold limestone gave way to lowland clay and clean water flowed from the hills. Sheltered by hills from the damp south west winds on the one side and from the mist and frost of the Stour valley on the other, Ilmington enjoys an agreeable microclimate.

There is evidence of prehistoric life, and of human occupation since the iron age. The Romans came and went, the Normans rebuilt the Saxon church. Ilmington was on the front line in the English civil war. Stone from the hills provided the materials for our houses. Over the centuries the village has grown and shrunk and grown again in the changeable winds of trade, prosperity, health and climate.

The Domesday Book of 1086 logged Ilmington as three farms, 30 households and a wooden church. By 1600 church baptism records mentioned the names Sabin and Wilkins, families that still flourish today. In 1700 some 300 people lived in the village, but in a cold wet winter 29 years later many died 'of influenza'. In 1781 Ilmington grazed 157 cows, 153 horses and 1,440 sheep. A hundred years later the human population peaked at more than 900, with 350 villagers attending Saint Mary's church, 154 the Methodist chapel in Middle Street, and 140 walking up the hill to attend mass in the Roman Catholic chapel at Foxcote.

The parish today

The village owes much to its farming heritage. The landscape bears the imprint of changes over many centuries and today's farmers play a crucial role in its preservation, even if they now form only a part of the working population. Much land is under plough for cereals and animal feed but grassland, grazed by cattle and sheep, is still a distinctive landscape feature.

Horses are kept for racing or recreation. The pig is no longer reared and slaughtered for the family's winter nourishment. Orchards have come and largely gone, their remnants recalling the time when fruit, cultivated and wild, was important to the village. A little rustic cider is still made.

Wildlife, both flora and fauna, is diverse. Oak, ash, beech, sycamore, horse chestnut, lime and willow trees thrive. Local people have planted hundreds of trees along roads and in a new wood. In the 2001 Village of the Year competition Ilmington won the Central England award for environmental care.

The Foxcote estate above the village has been landscaped with 50,000 new trees and 50 miles of traditional hedgerows. Elsewhere in the village and beyond some hedges and dry stone walls are maintained, others need renewal.

Houses and cottages of character dating from the 16th to the 21st century are built of stone or brick, and a few are thatched. Many are listed and there are important houses at Compton Scorpion and Foxcote. Social housing for young couples and older people is integrated.

Ilmington has had a church since Saxon times, a school since 1858, a parish council since 1894, a village hall since 1933, a playing field since 1951, refuse collection since 1955 and a sewage system since 1960.

For centuries drinking water came from several wells and spring heads, some of which are still visible but blocked off. Between 1954 and 1959 the village was progressively connected to the mains and our water now comes recycled from the River Severn at Tewkesbury.



WHAT WE LEARNED

People



A total of 249 households of the 316 in the parish (79 per cent) contributed to this survey. Of the 563 people in those households 113 were aged 18 or under. On the basis of this return it is reasonable to estimate that our population is around 720, which is near the 734 figure of the 2001 national census.

The census found a fifth of the people in our parish were aged under 18, and another fifth over 65. Our survey shows no change in the number of under-18s, although in many other rural areas the figure is falling. But the number of over-65s has risen to form a quarter of the population. This tallies with the national trend, where the proportion of older people in rural areas is higher than in the towns.

Seven out of ten people have lived here for more than six years, and two out of ten for more than 25 years.



Homes

Three out of four properties are owned by those who live in them, a small increase since Ilmington's parish appraisal in 1999. At least 64 properties are occupied by only one person (the census recorded 96). There are a few second/holiday homes.

In 25 family households someone wants separate accommodation in the parish. Members of four families are on the district council housing list. Most wish to buy and some to rent from the housing association, others would rent privately. Most need only one or two bedrooms.

Two thirds of households responding think there is a need for more housing in the parish for local people. Given a choice of where housing might be built, 84 households favoured sites within the village, 105 liked sites on the edge and 191 were for re-using redundant buildings.



Jobs

More than half of households agree there should be more work opportunities in the parish. The creation of craft workshops and small rural businesses is much preferred to a business park. There is much interest in buying locally grown food, but less in selling.

Traditional activities endure, with ten working farms, shepherds, agricultural engineers and contractors, a forester, gamekeepers, builders and decorators, B&Bs, the shop and post office, and two pubs. The Howard Arms pub/restaurant is our largest employer. In 2005 several people pursued non-rural trades and professions from home: for instance in architecture, beauty care, chiropody, dealing in antique arms and armour, floral art, industrial design, party catering, physiotherapy, removals, water management and writing.

The census showed that three out of four people travel some miles away to work, in management, the professions, service industries and skilled trades. As a result half of our households have two cars or vans, with the inevitable increase in local traffic and demand for parking.

Traffic volume is further raised by the school run and deliveries to home-based businesses and households that shop by mail, phone or the internet.



LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Asked to say how well the local councils publicise their activities some households rated the information as poor and most thought it was only adequate. A minority said they are well informed: the parish council (65) led the district council (27) and county council (14).

Most people were aware that parish council meetings are open to the public, and over a third had attended one meeting or more. Their main reason was interest in what is happening in the parish, how the meetings are run, personal interest in planning issues and the parish plan.

Few people were aware of how the parish council uses and spends the parish's share of the council tax. Almost 90 per cent of households responding would like to know more.

ESSENTIAL SERVICES

Police, fire and ambulance

There was a low level of satisfaction with community policing. Over half the households responding would like a greater police presence and more consultation. Nearly everyone is familiar with the neighbourhood watch scheme, whose co-ordinators work with the police to keep people informed of incidents in the area.

The service provided by the fire service team from Shipston on Stour, four 4 miles, was rated as good by 89 households. The ambulance and air ambulance were rated highly by those using the service, which is seen as an important facility for a rural area. Most people would like more information about health and emergency services.



Utilities

Electricity, water and sewerage services are provided. There have been frequent electricity cuts, sometimes caused by damage to overhead lines during bad weather. An improvement in the help line and information from Central Networks is needed. Trees near high voltage wires should be kept trimmed. Most people would like the number of overhead electricity and telephone cables in the village to be reduced.



After long interruptions to the water supply during pump power failures at an electricity sub-station Severn Trent Water responded to widespread complaints in 2005 by installing a permanent standby generator. Water drainage and sewerage problems persist in lower parts of the village.

There is no mains gas supply and half of households would like to be connected.

Mail is delivered and collected daily. There are three post boxes and one public telephone box. Almost every household responding had a landline telephone and 82 per cent a mobile phone. More than half were connected to the internet for business, professional or private use, most of whom said they would find a village web site useful. Broadband was provided in 2005.



The BT phone service was considered good by 57 per cent of households but only 12 per cent were satisfied with mobile phone reception. Television and radio reception was rated good to moderate.



Asked if they would support the installation of sympathetic street lighting in appropriate areas of the village, 38 per cent of households agreed. The question as framed did not invite explicit disagreement, but in written comments it became clear that there is still much resistance to street lighting.

Waste and recycling

Refuse collection was rated good by four households in five. As well as general waste the district council collects glass, cans, paper, textiles and garden waste for recycling. Collection of plastic bottles, cardboard and electrical goods would also be welcomed.

There was general approval of the Shipston recycling and waste disposal site, but several people asked for longer opening hours, access for a wider range of vehicles and more help from the staff.

There is much concern about dog fouling. The parish council provides bins and some people would like to see more.



Public transport

Ilmington has four or five buses to and from Stratford and Shipston every day except Sunday. Onward travel is available from Stratford to Birmingham, Warwick, Leamington and beyond by bus or coach, and by train to London. The Shipston Link community bus operates to and from Shipston on Tuesdays. From Shipston buses go to Banbury, Oxford and other towns.

Moreton in Marsh offers a good train service to Worcester, Oxford and London Paddington, but there is no bus link from Ilmington. Warwick Parkway rail station serves as a hub for many journeys.

Consultation showed a need to connect Ilmington to Lower Quinton for people registered at the surgery there. This was realised in 2005 by re-routing two buses daily each way.

The timing of return services from Stratford was raised with the East of Stratford bus users' group (which has a representative from Ilmington) and with the district and county councils. In response timings were adjusted in autumn 2005.

Of the 249 households responding, 18 used the buses frequently and 57 occasionally. Half of households would use them more if the Stratford service were more conveniently timed, and some if the buses were accessible for those with disabilities. More than 40 households said they would welcome improvements to the bus shelter opposite the Red Lion.

Maintaining the bus service may depend on how many people use it. Consultations show that public transport is an important issue for young people.

Some households (45) would welcome a community bus with volunteer drivers and 35 a car-sharing scheme, and some expressed an interest in helping or taking part.

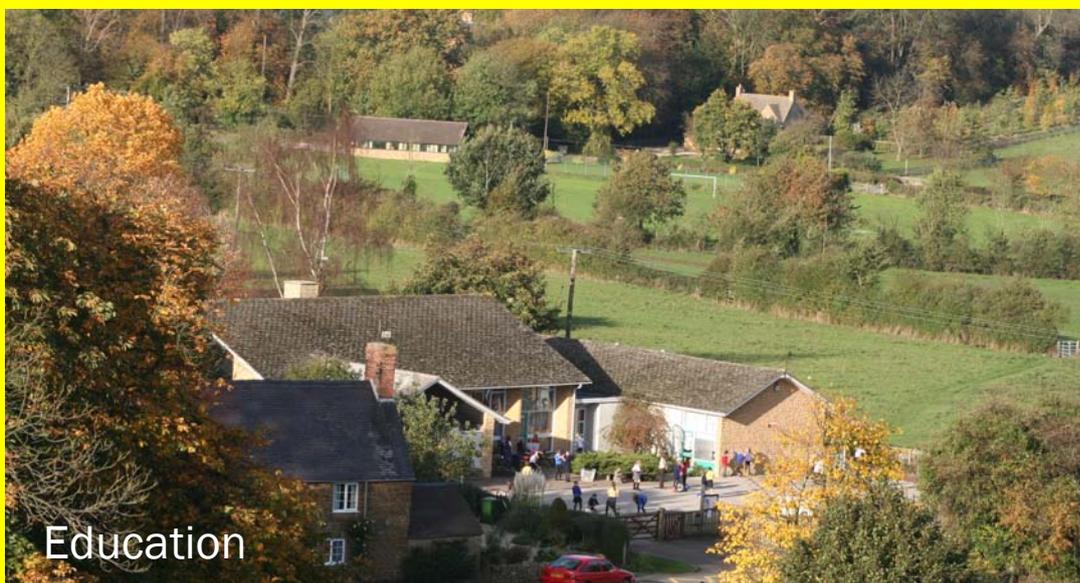


Health and welfare

The village is served by medical centres providing a range of clinical and health care at Chipping Campden, Lower Quinton and Shipston, all four miles away, and their service is considered good by 85 per cent of households. Some people say they have difficulty in travelling to medical care, perhaps unaware of the community transport scheme run by a volunteer bureau in Shipston, and of the reintroduced bus service to Quinton.

The Ellen Badger Hospital at Shipston is seen as an essential resource providing in-patient care, physiotherapy and outpatient clinics. Day care facilities are provided at the hospital and a residential home in Shipston, to which volunteer transport is provided.

Through voluntary effort a heart defibrillator was acquired in 2005 and local people are to be trained in its use. If a cancer support group were available locally 30 respondents would use it, but only a few people were interested in a similar group for alcohol/drug abuse.



Households completing the survey have 96 children in education, from nursery school to secondary school; 40 per cent of them attend Ilmington Church of England Primary School.

The school was founded in 1858, and moved to its present site in 1958. It has 107 pupils from Ilmington and surrounding parishes and 17 teaching and support staff.

The May queen ceremony and the school play are highlights in the calendar. A junior choir sings at Saint Mary's church and a Morris team performs occasionally. After harvest festival the children take baskets of fruit and vegetables to their senior friends around the parish.

There was overwhelming support for retaining the school; some families said it is what they value most about living in the parish. The creation of a nursery school was seen as an important development by 31 households. Pre-school and after-school facilities would be supported by 38 households and 43 feel the school facilities could be used more.

Secondary schools are at Shipston, Stratford and Chipping Campden (in Gloucestershire). There is a school bus to Shipston and service buses to Stratford. In 2005 a project to provide a self-funding bus service for pupils attending Campden school narrowly failed owing to insufficient support.

COMMUNITY

Community life revolves around the churches, the two pubs, the school, the village hall, the shop and post office, and the playing field on the outskirts of the village. There are some 40 active clubs and groups.

Young people

Around 60 young people aged 11-19 live in the parish. Their views became clear in 37 replies to a young people's voice survey and in a presentation to the steering group by the youth club. What they like most about living here is access to the countryside, their friends and the playing field. Drawbacks are lack of activities and geographic isolation, mainly because there are no evening buses.

Half of those responding want a youth club or a meeting place such as a youth shelter, and opinions were sought about where it should be. They would like arts, drama and film events and more opportunities for sports training.

They are divided about the need for more lighting in the village, and believe safe access to the playing field is important. Speeding traffic is a cause for concern. A survey at our primary school generally supported the teenagers' views.

The general survey recognised the need for more activities for young people. Most households are aware of existing sports activities and of the Drugs Action Shipston youth club (DASH). The lack of evening buses is seen as an obstacle to joining activities outside the village.

The children's area on the playing field is used often or occasionally by 97 households. Many respondents suggest it should be improved



Older people

Almost one person in four in the parish is aged 65 or over. Many of them take part in village organisations and clubs. Local volunteers (often senior citizens themselves) deliver meals on wheels, and drive the sick and needy to hospitals, doctors, the shops, family and friends. Many of them provide personal care and support for their neighbours, and help keep distant relatives in touch.

The Wednesday Club has around 50 members. Its monthly meetings, open to all ages, cover local history, health and other topics. The club holds outings, lunches, exhibitions, garden parties and an annual village nostalgia meeting.

Emergency services are well rated. Stratford WRVS runs a meals on wheels service to the parish. Age Concern Shipston provides various services.

Public transport needs to be maintained and a car sharing scheme would be welcome. Free transport to health services and to collect prescriptions is seen as a need. Some who are less mobile would welcome a chat group in their own homes. Information about assistance on offer should be better publicised.

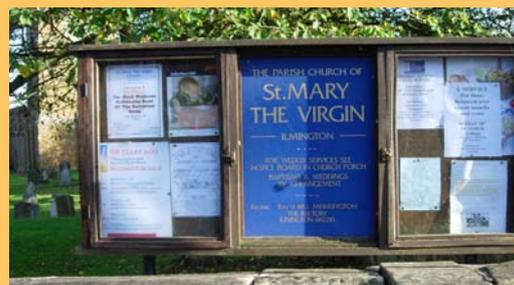
Improvement to paved footways and extra benches would be welcome. The shop is seen as a vital facility and meeting point.



Communications

Volunteers deliver the free monthly SIX PARISHES MAGAZINE to every household. It is the most important means of local information, followed by notices in the village shop window. The village directory is highly valued, especially by newcomers.

Some households would like more information about local events, organisations and the parish council's activities, and better notice boards around the village.



Shopping, post office, pubs and library service

Among the top ten favourite reasons for living in Ilmington are our two pubs and the village shop and post office. They are used by almost every household responding to the survey.

Shop and post office

The shop is highly valued, with 203 households shopping there frequently. It sells a wide range of groceries, fresh, chilled and frozen food, drinks, bread, newspapers and magazines, toys and seasonal items. The notices in the shop window are an important source of local information.

In 1985 the shop took over the role of village post office, providing a vital service for the community.

Pubs

Members of 115 households responding use the pubs occasionally and 96 of them frequently.

The Red Lion on Front Street, formerly a Flowers pub, is owned by Hook Norton brewery. For at least two centuries it has been the base for local societies such as the welfare club founded in 1815. It is home to the village darts and dominoes club and an aunt sally team.

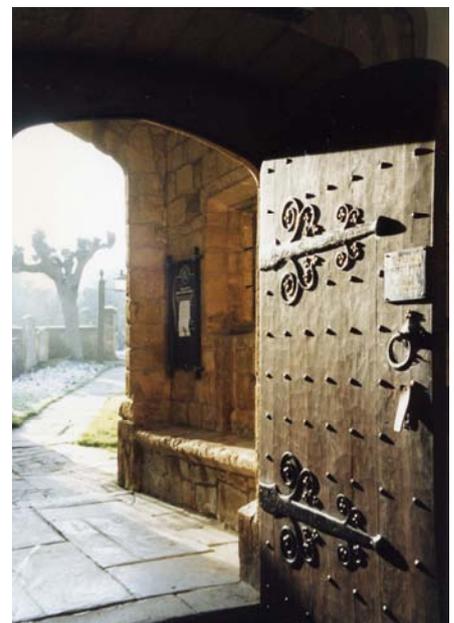
The Howard Arms on Lower Green has won many awards including the GOOD PUB GUIDE'S UK Dining Pub of the Year title in 2005.

Library service

Most households are aware that a public library van visits Ilmington regularly, but only 17 use it. This may be because the schedule of stops and visits on alternate Wednesday mornings is complex, but information is available on the county council's web site. It is a question of 'use it or lose it' and better publicity on a village web site and notice boards would encourage more use.



Churches and churchyards



Ilmington has two churches: Saint Mary's is Anglican and Saint Philip's is Roman Catholic. Both contribute to the life and character of the village.

The Catholic church, covering an area extending to Brailes eight miles away, has Saturday mass and weekday services. The Anglican church, in a group of six with Darlingscott, Preston on Stour, Stretton on Fosse, Tredington and Whitchurch, holds regular Sunday services.

The churches run regular fetes, bazaars, walks and charity cycle rides. The bells of Saint Mary's are rung regularly; two new bells were installed in 2000. Saint Mary's has a hearing loop.

Parishioners arrange the flowers and clean the churches. The cost of mowing the churchyards is shared by the churches and the parish council. There is general satisfaction with the appearance and maintenance of the churchyards. Some suggest the parish church should have toilet facilities.

A number of households would like to see the churches used for cultural activities. Some feel our churches should be better supported, and attract a wider age range.

Recreation

Hundreds of villagers – both old families and incomers – take part in community clubs, societies, groups and classes. Traditional rural activities include the WI, the bell ringers, the Ilmington singers and Morris dancing. Plant sales are organised by the horticultural society, whose annual show, the focal point of the village show, offers classes for fruit, vegetables, flower arranging, winemaking, photography, various crafts and special contests for children. Open garden events attract hundreds of visitors and raise funds for charity.

There are regular groups for literary appreciation, painting for pleasure, and yoga. A craft group led the way in creating the award-winning apple map, now hanging in Saint Mary's church. The Ilmington Morris men salute May day at sunrise on Ilmington Downs and dance at many events, occasionally performing their mummers' play. A history of the village, first published in 1974, was updated and enlarged in 1995. (A COTSWOLD VILLAGE, ILMINGTON, Stacy Pifer Ibbotson and Sylvia Gardner)

Ilmington organised a two-week village festival in 1997, marked the 2000 millennium, the Queen's golden jubilee in 2002, and the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II. Other community social or charity events have included a pantomime, old time music hall, Burns nights and valentine dances, barn dances, talents and promises auctions and village calendars. Ilmington show, one of the biggest village fetes in the county, attracts more than a thousand visitors and raises considerable funds for local good causes.

New projects

The survey showed interest in a wider range of sporting activities and in more opportunities for young people to meet together. Many people are unaware of some groups, sports clubs and other activities which would benefit from wider publicity.

People of all ages have shown an interest in a film club, groups for natural history, photography, walking, dance, music, and drama (with theatre trips) and in running an annual apple day to celebrate the heritage of Ilmington's orchards. Some are willing to help bring interested people together and organise these activities, making better use of existing facilities.



Playing field

The village playing field, created in 1951, is owned and administered by the parish council. The pavilion was built in 1956 and extended in 1989. Its changing facilities and licensed bar (operated by a sports and social club founded in 1986) are popular with sports clubs and for social events.



Volunteers helped to improve the drainage of the playing surface, enabling exiled clubs to resume playing here. There is a bowling green, where a safety net is to be erected to protect players from other ball games.

A multi-sports facility was opened in 1996, with two all-weather tennis courts and floodlighting. Achieved through a lottery grant and local fundraising, it is used regularly.

The playing field and its facilities are widely seen as important. While the facilities are rated as good for a community of 700, many felt the area could be used more if improvements were made. Suggestions include extending and improving the pavilion, changing rooms and toilets (with a disabled toilet), improving the children's area, and re-surfacing the car park.

Other ideas are for more lighting, more seats for spectators, and a fitness circuit. The creation of an all-weather cricket pitch and a tennis training wall is under discussion. The sports and social club holds fundraising events towards improving the pavilion's facilities. It was suggested that regular open days could be held.

Village hall

The village hall, built in 1933 and extended in 1999, is a valuable community asset. A registered charity managed by trustees, it is centrally located on Upper Green and has limited parking. Its extension and refurbishment were Ilmington's main millennium project. Local people raised £35,000 towards the total cost of £113,000, which was topped up by national and local grants. A new lounge and kitchen, toilets (including disabled) and a shower were created and more improvements made in 2004/5. Better heating and staging have been suggested.



Several village groups use the hall regularly. It is a popular venue for family celebrations, exhibitions, concerts, parties, dances and discos. Brownie packs come to holiday in the hall, and from 2003 to 2005 the DASH group ran youth activities there.

Fundraising events help cover operating costs. The hall was top of the list of facilities that people would like to see better used by all age groups. Asked how the cost of maintaining and improving it should be supported, 151 households said fundraising, 119 said a parish council contribution and 78 said raising the rates of hire.



LIVING IN THE COUNTRY

The landscape

An outstanding feature of our parish is the varied countryside above and around the village. For centuries it has provided a living for farmers and enjoyment of the landscape for all who live here. The fields, traversed by lanes, footpaths, hedges and dry stone walls, contain uncommon flora of great conservation value and there is a rich variety of wildlife. In recent years many families have come to live in Ilmington, where they value the opportunity to enjoy its character and surroundings alongside those whose family roots go back for generations.

Important features

Asked to say how much value they place on a list of parish features, all households gave ratings of 80 to 95 percent to:

trees	hedgerows	meadows and wild flowers
streams	stone walls	heritage and history
orchards	rural character	traditional farm buildings
allotments	country footpaths	Humpty Dumpty field *

Many additional comments showed the high value put on:

views	off the tourist route	safe for children and pets
peace and quiet	away from main roads	diversity of housing
low crime rate	an unspoilt village	enjoying the wildlife
clean air	well kept gardens	working farms
night sky	the un-manicured look	easy access to nearby towns
friendly people	active social life	range of clubs and groups
neighbourliness	the various fetes	good community spirit
enthusiasm	working village	sense of continuity

* The Humpty Dumpty field (or Dairy Ground), with its ancient quarry exposing the marlstone rock formation, is a regionally important geological site, with educational potential and rarity interest. Public access is on a footpath leading from Grump Street.

Green spaces, orchards and footpaths

The heart of Ilmington, inside the Front Street/Back Street perimeter and protected from through traffic, is our most important environmental asset. Small orchards shelter wildlife and biodiversity and help create the village's green character.

Quiet footpaths lead between stone walls and hedges, through meadows, alongside houses and a stream, to the churches, school, shop, pubs, allotments and the two greens. They allow views of the ancient fish ponds, restored in 1977.

Paths beyond give easy access to the playing fields and lead into country walks outside the village. There is widespread appreciation of their existence and character. Some people comment on dog mess and cycling on footpaths.

Part of the playing field has been identified as suitable for creating a wildlife sanctuary.

Countryside access

There are 38 public rights of way in the parish: 29 are designated footpaths (for walking) and nine are bridleways (for horses and pedal cycles). The paths to the north in the Stour valley are not widely used. To the south many paths rise on limestone grassland to the Foxcote estate, Ilmington Downs and beyond into Gloucestershire. These paths are walked frequently by local people and visitors, and provide routes for charity walks.

Many people use the rights of way, and most agree they are well signposted and maintained. A few paths are difficult because of high stiles, mud, undergrowth and fallen trees.

The replacement of 29 stiles by metal kissing gates in 2005 was welcomed (though some prefer wooden gates), and horse riders appreciate the long handled latches on bridleway gates. Dog owners want more dog flaps on remaining stiles.

There were requests for more information about village walks, for the surface of some footpaths to be improved and for more stiles to be replaced by gates.





Households were invited to name the three issues that concern them most about living in Ilmington. Almost half of all the written comments received were on this subject.

In 2001 the census found that half of Ilmington households had two or more vehicles, and almost all the rest had one. Only 27 households had no motor vehicle. These figures and other official statistics suggest that in 2006 the 600 or so adults living in Ilmington own more than 500 cars, vans or motorcycles. That is a quarter more than we did 10 years ago.

Parking

In the parish survey every household was asked how many of their vehicles were regularly parked on the road. On the basis of a 79 per cent return the response figure of 61 suggests a total of 78 vehicles for the parish. Observation on the ground suggests there are more.

Invited to voice their concerns about parking (by themselves or others) most households criticised parking by others. Issues raised most often were damage to verges and kerbs, inconsiderate or dangerous parking and the particular problem at Lower Green and Middle Street near the Howard Arms and the shop.

Parking by visitors was a matter of concern for 96 households, and cars blocking their entrance worried 53, having nowhere to park was mentioned by 33 households, and the same number were concerned about damage from passing vehicles. During consultations two particular spots were identified as where parking was dangerous and caused environmental damage, In the survey 132 households cited Lower Green/Middle Street and 64 identified Front Street from Upper Green to Campden Hill.

Consultations revealed concern about five traffic danger spots caused by parking. In the survey 106 households named Lower Green/Middle Street, 98 Back Street near the school, 96 Campden Hill, 96 the Armscote Road/Front Street junction, and 56 the Armscote road.

Invited to name other danger spots 50 responses included almost every road junction in the village and on roads leading to Armscote, Campden, Stratford, Shipston and the Fosse Way. There was also concern about dangerous parking in Front Street near Bennett Place.

Traffic

In view of worries voiced in consultations, the survey asked if the speed limit should be extended out of the village, and 73 households agreed. Top priority was the Armscote road, followed by Campden Hill, and the Mickleton and Stratford roads. Extending the 30 mph limit was marginally preferred to an approach road limit of 40 mph.



Roads

The maintenance of roads was rated moderate or poor by 210 households; roadside care was criticised by 173 and flood management by 164.

Snow clearance and gritting were rated good by 74 households, but moderate or poor by 156.

Signposting was rated good or moderate by 218 out of 231 responses. (In July 2005, after the survey was held, the surface of several roads in and approaching the village was improved.)

Footways

The standard of hard surface footways (where they exist) received moderate approval. Asked their views on the need for new footways on three roads, 118 households voted for the Mickleton Road approach to the playing field, 98 wanted a path on Front Street below Upper Green as far as the foot of Campden Hill, and 44 mentioned Armscote Road.

Some suggested there should be a footway along the road at the foot of the village from Armscote Road to Back Street, giving safe access to the school and playing field.



VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT



Purpose

The aim of this design statement is to help shape future development in Ilmington in a way that respects and enhances the village's distinctive character. Ilmington has developed gradually over the centuries and change has contributed to its variety and attractiveness.

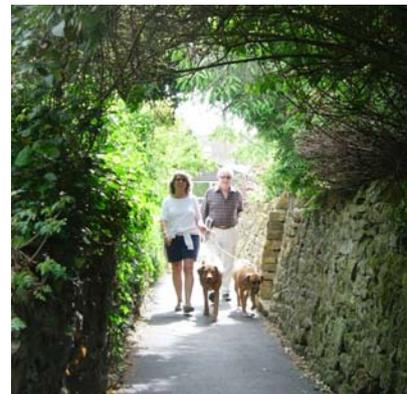
Change will continue but needs to be carefully managed if the highly valued qualities of the village are to be maintained for the benefit of present and future generations.

When adopted by the district council this statement will be a material consideration in determining planning applications. It aims to help all those planning building works. Further guidance is found in the Stratford on Avon District Council Design Guide of April 2001.

Guiding principles

Based on the results of the parish plan survey, two workshops and analysis of the character of the village, the following principles have been adopted:

- ❑ The rural character of Ilmington should be preserved and urbanisation avoided.
- ❑ The landscape setting should be preserved, protecting views into, out of and within the village.
- ❑ The important balance between open and built areas should be maintained.
- ❑ New building, including extensions, conversions and alterations, should be in sympathy with local building styles and materials



Special character

Ilmington's setting on the fringe of the Cotswolds helps define its character. The variety of building styles and materials, the mosaic of buildings and open spaces and the changes of level contribute to the village's attractiveness and identity. The hills provide a dramatic backdrop and there are significant views into, out of and within the village.

The balance between distinctive buildings such as the church and the manor and the open spaces between them contributes to Ilmington's heritage and sense of place. A network of lanes and footpaths, often defined by stonewalls, connects the principal roads and provide a sense of enclosure in contrast to the openness at the centre of the village.

Ilmington is of considerable architectural and historic importance and most of the village has been designated as a conservation area. There are some 36 listed buildings including the predominantly Norman, grade 1 listed, Saint Mary's church.

Ilmington is not a pure Cotswold village and contains a variety of architectural styles and materials. There are buildings from the 16th to the 21st century ranging from substantial Cotswold houses to simpler cottages. The 20th century saw the provision of social housing, the present school and village hall and the conversion of agricultural buildings to housing.

The predominant building material is stone although there is some brick particularly in 19th century buildings. The village includes many historical features such as the churchyard monuments, the war memorial on Upper Green, old drinking water taps and fountains (the one on Upper Green contains a stone from Newfound Well, a nearby chalybeate spring).

Details such as gateposts, post boxes and signs (including the fingerposts on Featherbed Lane and Mickleton Road) all add to the richness. Recent additions include the millennium stone and memorial seats. Man-made natural features such as allotments, orchards and fishponds testify to the village's history and collective memory.



New development: location, form and layout

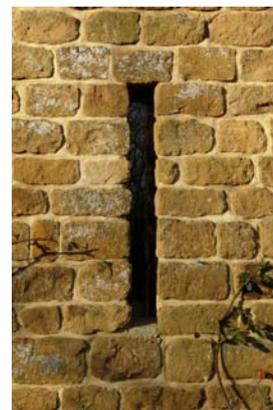


Ilmington's status in the Stratford-on-Avon District Plan as a local centre village allows only for small scale schemes which meet housing (particularly affordable housing) and employment needs identified by the community. Consultation revealed a desire for small housing units and affordable housing. There was also support for providing small-scale craft workshops and rural businesses to meet local employment needs. New development would not be appropriate in those open areas at the centre of the village such as the orchards, private gardens, the fishponds and the allotments, which contribute to the village's character and amenity.

- The location of new housing or other development should not compromise the open character of the village including significant views and aspects.
- Any new market housing should be mostly smaller units.

New development should meet high standards in terms of energy efficiency and resource use; should make a positive contribution to the village environment; and should respect local tradition and context. But houses should not necessarily copy earlier styles, there is room for a contemporary approach. Scale, form, the use of traditional materials and relation to the site and neighbouring buildings are critical. The layout of new groups of housing should respect the village tradition. For example short terraces or mews arrangement would be more appropriate than conventional estate layouts more suited to suburban or urban areas.

- New buildings should reflect the local context in materials, design and layout.
- New development should be sustainable and meet high standards of energy efficiency and resource use.





Infilling

There has been much recent infilling and there is concern that the open character of the village will be eroded if further significant infilling is allowed.

- ❑ Infilling should be modest and buildings should be in proportion to the size of the site. Cramming relatively large buildings on small sites should be avoided. Infill should be designed to respect the context of neighbouring buildings as well as the wider village.

Extensions

Extensions, the most common form of development, should reflect the scale and style of the original building.

- ❑ Extensions should be in proportion to the original building and size of the site. The design should carefully respect the character of the main building.



Conversions

Consultation showed support for the re-use of redundant buildings for housing and small-scale rural employment.

- ❑ Conversions should retain the character of the original building including distinctive features. Facades should be altered as little as possible.



Details and materials

The predominant building material is stone but there is some brick. The older buildings (including Saint Mary's church) were built from ironstone, which occurs at the Foxcote hill level.

Later Cotswold stone (oolitic limestone) was used from quarries (now disused) in the Ilmington Downs area. More recently ironstone has come from the Hornton area and oolitic limestone from Cotswold quarries. The Cotswold stone is harder wearing. The local tradition is for stone buildings to be built in coursed, squared or



random rubble with variation in the course depth and quoins of larger stones.

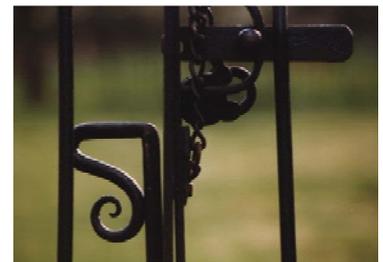
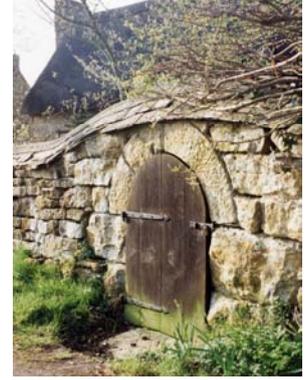
- ❑ New buildings should generally be in stone. Stonework in extensions and conversions should be matched with the original in style, colour and source of material. Pointing should be flush and mortar unobtrusive.
- ❑ Brick should be local red/brown and matched to the original. Stained timber should be used as appropriate in conversions.

Ilmington has a varied roofline and most roofs are steeply pitched with chimneys at the ends of the ridge. There are interesting construction details such as stone parapets or brick corbelling below the eaves. Roofing materials are mainly stone, slate or clay tiles with some thatch.

- ❑ New roofs should reflect the local tradition in pitch, variety and detail. Materials should be thatch, slate, stone or high quality reproduction stone slates, or plain clay tiles. Red or pink tiles are not in the local tradition and their use should be discouraged.
- ❑ Dormers and roof lights should not dominate and dormers should be designed to reflect local styles and proportions.

Attention to detail is important, for example windows in an extension should respect the original design, and typical local details such as arched lintels should be replicated. The widespread use of UPVC for new doors and windows in older buildings could have a negative impact on the character of the village.

- ❑ Traditional sustainable materials should be used in replacement doors and windows in older dwellings. Original design details should be replicated as far as possible in alterations, repairs and extensions.





There is a need to improve and maintain the quality of footpaths. Traditional granite kerbs are found in parts but recent development has used cheaper concrete kerbs and poor quality surface treatment. The replacement of wooden stiles by kissing gates has improved access to public footpaths but some people thought the galvanised metal inappropriate.

- New footpaths should be constructed in the local tradition i.e. granite kerbs with a good tarmac surface. Repairs should use robust materials. Treatment to the edges of verges or open areas to prevent vehicle damage should use traditional materials appropriate to the setting.
- Replacement kissing gates within the village should be in wood.

The many historic monuments and features contribute to Ilmington's character. Care is needed to protect them and in the choice and location of additions to avoid clutter and urbanisation.

- Historic artefacts such as the old fingerposts should be preserved and restored where necessary. Signs should be kept to a minimum but new signs, monuments or street furniture should be well designed and located to avoid clutter and an urban effect.

Boundaries, landscape and parking

Boundary treatments and landscaping contribute to the character of the village. There is a tradition of low stone walls and boundaries that allow views across the village. Boundary and surface treatment in new development should be rural in character and hard paving avoided to help prevent drainage run off. The planting of trees and hedges outside the village is welcome but care should be taken not to obscure the views that local people value.

- Boundary treatments should reflect the village tradition. Details of boundary treatments and landscaping should accompany planning applications for new dwellings. Low walling, fencing and hedges that are characteristic of Ilmington are preferred. Stone walls should be repaired in traditional style when possible.
- Surface treatment in new development should be rural in character.
- Tree planting of native species is encouraged and new woodland should avoid species such as laurel, that are not appropriate to the Cotswolds. Open views should be created or maintained. In the village vigorous conifers such as leylandii should be resisted.
- Hedges on the hills should be kept at a height that does not obscure views from footpaths.

Although parking is an inescapable need of modern life, the parish plan survey revealed concern at the way parked cars detract from the village ambience. Adequate parking provision should accompany new development but should not be visually dominant. Parking should preferably be at the side or rear of buildings.

- Adequate parking should be provided in any development, and when substantial extensions are constructed. Parking areas should be discreetly sited to avoid detracting from the village scene.

The next step

When adopted by the district council, the parish plan will provide additional guidance to the Stratford on Avon District Local Plan, which is due to be adopted in 2006. The plan's policy on local choice (Policy COM.1) states that the views of the local community as expressed in a parish plan will be fully taken into account in the planning process.

In particular they will be used:

- ❑ to assess the merits of schemes put forward to meet local needs.
- ❑ as a material consideration in making planning decisions.
- ❑ to identify opportunities for environmental and other enhancements.

The 2004 Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands also supports the production of parish plans.

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Buffy for the hedgehog
and
everyone in the 249 households who contributed to this plan,
showing that Ilmington people care about their future.

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Values and concerns

The parish survey invited everyone to describe in their own words what they valued most about living in Ilmington and what were their major concerns. These issues were the most frequently mentioned.

What we value most

- ✓ The sense of community fostered by various groups, the churches and events
- ✓ The village shop, post office and public houses
- ✓ An excellent primary school within walking distance
- ✓ Living in an active village with working farms
- ✓ The countryside, enjoying the walks, open views and natural features
- ✓ The character of Ilmington, its buildings and walls of local stone
- ✓ The village greens, orchards, allotments and gardens
- ✓ No light pollution

What concerns us

- × Inconsiderate parking, speeding and pedestrian safety
- × Lack of footpaths and off-road parking
- × Lack of affordable housing and smaller properties
- × Infilling and unsympathetic alterations to buildings.
- × Inconsistent and questionable planning decisions
- × Protection of the environment, and threat to green sites
- × Maintaining our electricity and water supply
- × A need to welcome and integrate newcomers
- × A need to improve the exchange and display of information
- × Urbanisation and proliferation of signs
- × A need for more youth activities and opportunities to meet
- × Poor afternoon bus service and no evening bus
- × Damage by vehicles to greens and verges
- × Extension of the recycling service
- × Lack of child care
- × More use of school facilities by local people